

AUGUST 2021

CHANGING LIVES

129 YEARS OF SERVICE



THE FRONT LINES

**DENVER
RESCUE
MISSION**

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A SHELTER EMPLOYEE

MISSION DONOR SHARES ABOUT LEGACY GIVING

Dear Friends,

Every day in Emergency Services, our frontline staff is hard at work. They show up 365 days a year, 24 hours a day to minister and build relationships with individuals who are experiencing the most difficult times of their lives. Their days are full of listening, talking, directing, organizing, and finding solutions for our homeless neighbors. Lynette's story in this edition of *Changing Lives* is a glimpse into the multiple talents and skills our frontline staff utilize each day.

We believe shelters should not be a long-term solution for anyone. However, just like all of us, there are times when we need someone to encourage us and help walk us through the hard seasons of life. That is the purpose of our shelters, along with providing emergency services such as meals, showers and beds.

At our shelter facilities, individuals who are new to our services are greeted by Guest Services team members like Lynette. This team is the first group of faces that guests who are new to homelessness interact with. During this initial conversation, they find out information that helps us connect them to services and offer solutions. Some of our guests are connected to a Peer Navigator, a staff member who has lived experience with homelessness. For others, it is assigning them to a bed at one of our 24/7 shelters at 48th Avenue Center or Lawrence Street Shelter, where they are paired with a case manager to work through long-term housing solutions. At all of our locations, they will connect with our Emergency Services Coordinators, who are on site every hour of the day to build relationships, help them manage day-to-day challenges and be a friendly ear when they need someone to listen. When our guests are in a crisis, we now have dedicated chaplains to minister to them as well.

This year, as Mission facilities have grown and expanded, our staff has adjusted. I am humbled to work alongside them and to be working as their Vice President. I am looking forward to this coming year as we continue to refine and settle into our new rhythms. I am blessed to have a staff that loves the Lord and shares that love with those we serve. And I am always grateful for you, our dedicated donors, who are standing beside us in prayer and support. We could not stand without you.

God bless,



Tracy Brooks
VP of Emergency Services



PATHWAYS OF HOPE



Become a member of our monthly giving program!

As part of this group of supporters, you will receive regular updates, including:

- Stories of the lives you change
- Progress of our programs and services
- Ways your support helps our community

Learn more at DenverRescueMission.org/PathwaysOfHope.



Back to School BACKPACKS

The youth living at The Crossing are headed back to school this month. Thanks to generous donations, they have new backpacks and school supplies to kick off the school year!

THE FRONT LINES



Being on the front lines at the Mission means showing up physically, mentally and spiritually every day to be a shining light for those living in darkness. “To be on the front lines means to be here with our guests no matter what,” said Lynette Badasarian. “We need to show up, not just for the guests, but for our team.” Lynette leads 48th Avenue Center’s Guest Services team, which serves as the first point of contact as guests enter our shelters. Here’s a glimpse into their daily tasks.



INITIATE

When Lynette arrives at the 48th Avenue Center* at 7 a.m., her first task is to update the guest information in our system to ensure organization, safety and efficiency. She reviews the bed check numbers from the previous night so her team can see how many beds are available for the day.

**48th Avenue Center is operated by the Mission in partnership with the City of Denver.*



INTERACT

At 8 a.m., the doors open for guests. Lynette welcomes them with a warm smile, knowing that behind each guest is a unique story and reason for facing homelessness. She scans their Mission ID cards or creates ID cards for new guests, assigns them to beds and gives out hygiene or clothing items they may need. She also explains the operations of the shelter, including hours of entry, meal times, and more.

"We want people to come in the door feeling like they know how things work, because that gives them more sense of control and de-escalates them in an emotional crisis experience," said Deb Butte, director of homelessness resolution.



LISTEN

Making time throughout the day to talk with guests and hear their stories is a huge priority for Lynette and her team. For many guests, talking with Mission staff is the first sense of normalcy and community they've had in a while.

"It has been mind-blowing [to hear] the stories that people have been through, and sometimes guests just want you to listen without judgment," Lynette said. "A smile and a friendly ear are often all they want. They just want to be heard."



GUIDE

The Guest Services team also helps guests schedule appointments with case managers who connect them to resources, programs and services that help them transition out of homelessness and secure housing.

"What we want to do is get people in and out [of the shelter] as fast as possible so they don't end up in a cycle," Lynette said. "A lot of our guests are coming in and getting the help they need."



PRAY

Lynette and her team have daily conversations with guests about their cause of homelessness. At times, this can lead to vicarious traumatization for our frontline staff, which is when staff internalize the pain and trauma of our guests due to the amount of difficult stories they hear and empathize with. This makes debrief and prayer with other employees crucial.

"I think the biggest challenge is the emotional toll the job can take," Lynette said. "Trying to de-escalate [conflict] can be really hard and heartbreaking at the same time. I debrief a lot. I say a lot of prayers. I know that my team can talk at any time if I'm just really struggling."

The dedication of frontline staff members like Lynette is essential in breaking the cycle of homelessness. Guests need to feel supported, not alone; accepted, not judged. Your support is enabling us to do this work.

Give today at DenverRescueMission.org/ChangingLives.

THE LITTLE VICTORIES



“It is about the little victories, like a guest getting food stamps after waiting on the phone for an hour and [seeing his] excitement. I’m blessed and thankful for the rapport I’ve built among the guests. They teach me more than I will ever teach them. They’re teaching me about resiliency and how to appreciate the little victories in life, because if you don’t appreciate the little victories, the big ones don’t taste as good.”

-Lynette Badasarian, Guest Services Lead, Denver Rescue Mission

Jonathan first came to the Mission in November 2020 after a car accident left him with many medical issues. This Mission helped him get access to vital medical care. “They knew what I was going through—that I was in a lot of pain and had a lot of problems,” Jonathan said. “[Lynette] helped me out a lot. All of these people have helped me out a lot.”

THE MISSION in my words




RANDY LEWIS

Randy Lewis is a risk manager for a commercial insurance company. He and his wife, Carol, are members of Denver Rescue Mission's Goodheart Society, a group of supporters who have chosen to include a gift to the Mission in their Will.

What inspired you to join the Goodheart Society?

Carol and I have been blessed with many opportunities and gifts. As it says in the Bible, to whom much is given, much will be required. To us, this means we are held responsible for what we have and how we use these gifts for the benefit of others.

The Goodheart Society offers a unique opportunity to leave a legacy that will impact individuals in need for years to come. Why does this form of giving stand out to you?

We have a great deal of respect and faith in the leadership of DRM because they maximize the resources made available to them. Also, we do not see ourselves as owners of our assets as much as we are stewards. As stewards, we have an obligation to help others who are less fortunate, and we know their needs will remain far past our demise.

In what other ways have you been involved with the Mission?

For those who are working to rebuild their lives, reliable transportation is critical for employment and providing for their needs. After learning about the Vehicle Donation Program, we looked forward to the day we could help someone in this way because we knew it would make a difference. Upon meeting the recipient of our car, he expressed his gratitude to us and said he fully intends to "pay it forward" to others. It reinforces the impact of helping others, because doing so places them in a position to do the same, and that is powerful.

OUR CORE STRATEGIES



EMERGENCY SERVICES



REHABILITATION



TRANSITIONAL PROGRAMS



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

LOCATIONS

Lawrence Street Community Center: Meals, restrooms, showers, laundry, clean drinking water, and access to Mission staff for encouragement and guidance 

Lawrence Street Shelter: 24/7 shelter for men and chapel 

Holly Center: Overnight shelter for men assigned weekly and lockers for storage 

The Crossing: Transitional program for families and rehabilitation program for men 

Harvest Farm: Rural rehabilitation program near Fort Collins 

Fort Collins Rescue Mission: Meals, shelter and access to resources and services 

Ministry Outreach Center: Central warehouse facility including food, clothing and furniture distribution 

Administration & Education: Entry point for Mission transitional programs and home to the Mission's administrative and development staff 

48th Avenue Center: 24/7 shelter for men, operated in partnership with the City of Denver 

Learn more at DenverRescueMission.org/LegacyGiving.

THOUGHTS?

Send your questions and comments to Newsletter@DenRescue.org.



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