



## Phoenix Drop-In Center

Hope is Rising! We don't know about you, but we are thrilled that the warm spring weather has finally arrived! In the last month we saw 756 individuals come through the doors of the drop-in center. As the emergency shelters closed in early April, we began to see more people coming to our doors for help. It continually reminds us of the need our community has for year-round emergency shelter (more on that in the ED Corner on the next page).

April is a busy month as well with many volunteer groups coming in to help us with various projects. Last Thursday evening a service course, SHS 375, from the University of Illinois came and helped us pack shower bags for our friends without an address. Their work helps us easily distribute hygiene items to our friends that come in and need to take a shower. Then, last Saturday, we had a group of Centennial High School students participate in Austin's Day from 9-11:30am. Austin's Day is an annual day of service in Champaign-Urbana

that honors the life of Austin Cloyd, a victim of the Virginia Tech School Shootings. The group helped us clean up the yard at one of our transitional houses and did a deep clean that was much needed at the Phoenix.

Later this week, we have a VIP social empowerment group that will be coming to help us with another project.

What a blessing all of these groups have been (and will be) to us! If you are interested in volunteering in any capacity with us check out [www.cuathome.us/volunteer/!](http://www.cuathome.us/volunteer/)

## SNEAK PEEK

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## Executive Director Corner



Hi friends!

As the calendar has turned and the season has changed we are once again reminded of how incredibly unpredictable the Central Illinois weather can be. Where else in the world can you experience all four seasons in a four day period? And sometimes in an even shorter span of time! As I ponder the ever changing nature and unpredictability of our Midwest weather, I am reminded of **two things that are UN-changing**. The first is **our Savior's love for us**. With Easter still fresh in our minds, may we remember the sacrifice that was made on Calvary for you and for me. We strive to show love, compassion, and grace to each individual we encounter through C-U at Home, but let us never forget that we can show love because **He first loved us**.

The other item that remains constant is the **need of our friends without an address**. The winter season brings with it an awareness that there are those on the street suffering each day and at risk of freezing each night. The local news media, concerned citizens, and others flock to our doorstep as they attempt to better understand the needs of our friends who have to brave the winter cold. Winter is a time when homelessness is highlighted and the image of someone suffering on the streets paints a vivid picture in our minds. I'm thrilled we are given this platform during the winter, however, **my hope and prayer is that we would work to keep homelessness on our minds 365 days-a-year**.

Friends, let's not lose momentum when spring comes and the thermometer begins to rise; but instead gain a newfound vigor to advocate for our friends on the street! The seasons may change, the snow may fly one day and melt the next, but **may our passion and compassion for our friends never falter or fail**.

In closing, it is such a blessing to collaborate with the C-U Men's Shelter as we continue to work towards a long-term emergency shelter solution for our friends on the street. This year, the shelter saw its average attendance rise from **21 men per night to 38 men per night**. With that in mind, would you please join me in prayer for those on the streets and for ministries like ours and the C-U Men's Shelter as we work together to bring this permanent solution to our community?

Thank you for your support; we couldn't do what we do without you!

**In His Service,  
Rob Dalhaus III**

**One Winter Night, our annual community awareness event, was held on Friday, February 2, 2018 from 6pm to 6am. Nearly 200 box dweller participants braved the winter cold as they slept on the streets in a cardboard box to get a first-hand experience of what it might be like to be homeless.**

## **ONE WINTER NIGHT 2018 RECAP**



It takes a large amount of volunteers for One Winter Night to happen. Besides those that came during the week, **we had 150 volunteers come out** for the event itself, which included everything from outside set-up, box dweller registration, serving at our hospitality station, street team, and security.

We also had key leaders to head up each area of the event, such as hospitality, security, and volunteers. In the week leading up to the event, we had groups of volunteers come in each night, helping us prepare for the big day. **Our volunteers helped us pack box dweller bags, create street team volunteer packs, put together sandwich boards, organize the event space, and more.** One of the largest projects for this year, was putting together our bright yellow cubes that displayed box set numbers, box dweller names, and business logos. It took two full nights to attach all of our signs to the yellow cubes with industrial grade velcro.

However, all of the work was more than worth it! One of our goals for this year's event was to make sure that our business sponsors were more prominently displayed, and our bright yellow cubes did just that. We are so thankful for the community members that came out that week to help out, many of whom came a few nights in a row!

Geri Goldberg, who has been leading Hospitality for the past few years was asked why she keeps coming back to help out. "It is a joy each year to serve with others for a ministry that does so much good for those in our community on the streets. I am always blessed to work with the great staff and volunteers and to experience an atmosphere of joy and giving. **I have learned it is more blessed to give than it is to receive,**" she said.



Volunteers having fun!



Volunteers outside & in headquarters.



Small group from local church that came to volunteer!



Speaker presentations!



Our new yellow cubes that displayed business sponsors!



The Canteen Run delivering dinner.



A box dweller trying to keep warm!



Box dweller Aaron, has his box set up for the night.

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*Throughout the evening, we had many fun activities, such as the Kid's Corner, educational speaker presentations, and viewings of our documentary!*

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One of our largest goals for One Winter Night is to provide education and advocacy to our community. **We were blessed to have nearly 250 box dweller participants come out and sleep in a cardboard box overnight.** They were able to experience just a small portion of what our friends without an address go through each night. Box dwellers checked in at registration, got their assigned location, and then went to go set up their temporary homes for the night.

After getting settled in, dinner (PB&J, chips, fruit, water) was served at 7pm by the Canteen Run, a retired ambulance that delivers sack dinners and warm clothing to those on the street. From 7-10pm, there were educational speaker presentations on everything from law enforcement and substance abuse in homelessness and updates about the local men's emergency winter shelter. Following presentations, box dwellers mostly settled into their cardboard boxes for the rest of the evening.

Headquarters was open all night as a warming center, including hot coffee, snacks, and viewings of our documentary, *The Phoenix: Hope is Rising*. At 5:30am box dwellers headed to the Daily Bread Soup Kitchen where hot coffee and a delicious breakfast was served. Everyone enjoyed a wonderful (and much warmer) time of fellowship!



**This year One Winter Night 2018 brought in \$190,000 for C-U at Home. We are immensely grateful for the involvement of each and every volunteer, participant, local business, and the community as a whole.** The event wouldn't happen without all of these amazing people coming together!