



Donors' strong response helps restore Passages Case Management program!

"Who you gonna call?" is a famous refrain from a popular movie.

"Who you gonna call?" also became the alarm of the Somerville Homeless Coalition (SHC), when the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced they were no longer supporting our housing search services in 2016. SHC reluctantly had to suspend the Passages Case Management program on July 1 until a new source of funding could be secured.

Fortunately, the base of supporters for the Homeless Coalition answered the call and donated a remarkable \$50,000 in the span of a couple of months to help restore the Passages Case Management Program. "We usually receive about \$10,000 in donations from the Spring Appeal. This year, the appeal message really spoke to our supporters. We told them that **Case Management is an essential entry service to help people move out of being homeless.** And they responded generously and immediately," reported Kathryn Benjamin, SHC's Director of Development.

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Brian Sokol, one of those supporters, was so moved to help that he participated in the SHC's CrowdRise campaign online, raising \$3,000 for the Passages Case Management Program from family and friends near and far. "Case management is perhaps the most critical type of

work, and is something I have never done and I never could do," Brian shared on his fundraising page. "It is the program that homeless people need most: simply a person who listens and who can help...[the client] become self sufficient.... [Supporting Case Management programs] is a small contribution that can go a long way."



This incredible showing of community support has now been augmented with funding from the City of Somerville's Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF). In August, they granted SHC with \$275,000 over the next two years to restore this service. "Once again, we're proving that it takes a "Somervillage" to care for everyone. We are so grateful to the many people who donated, and to the AHTF for their grant," commented Mark Alston-Follansbee, SHC's Executive Director.

Thanks to the generous support of so many in our community, **the Passages Case Management Program will resume services on September 6.**

Partner Spot-Light: Second Chances

Have you ever wondered how your donated clothing helps people who are homeless? If you drop it in one of Second Chances' colorful donation bins, it may find its way to the Somerville Homeless Coalition (SHC), or any of a number of other agencies serving homeless and low-income people in Somerville and Cambridge.



“Second Chances has really been amazing for our clients and guests, especially people transitioning back into the work force,” stated Mark Alston-Follansbee, Executive Director of the Somerville Homeless Coalition. A case manager at SHC can contact Second Chances and request specific sizes and styles of clothing for clients, anything from school clothes for children to work clothes for adults. “It makes a world of difference for a child in school to have clothes that are in good condition, to be able to fit in, feel good about themselves, and succeed in school. Similarly, for adults seeking employment, the availability of these quality clothes makes it that much easier for them to make and maintain a good impression when interviewing and working,” Alston-Follansbee added.

The personalized service approach offered by Second Chances is one of the things that sets them apart – and why we’re so grateful for our partnership with them. There is no need for clients to wait in long lines or dig through anonymous bins hoping to find something in their size and in good condition. And all clothes are delivered washed, neatly folded, and ready to wear.

“The idea came to me when I was working as a consultant with several nonprofits,” explained Andrea Shapiro, founder and CEO of Second Chances. “I’d see overflowing closets and conference rooms filled with donated clothing and household items that weren’t quite the right match for their existing clients. **I knew there had to be a better way for people’s generous donations to get to the clients who needed them.**”



Second Chances’ CEO, Andrea Shapiro, at their warehouse.

Second Chances provides a much needed resource to the community, especially for smaller organizations such as Somerville Homeless Coalition, which does not have the space for clothing storage or the staff available to source and sort clothing. Over the past ten years, more than 2,600 lower income and homeless people have received free packages of clothing, shoes and accessories.

So, wonder no more, and donate generously! Your clothes will have a second chance and so will a person in need.

*For locations of donation bins, visit www.secondchances.org. Their next **clothing drive is on September 21** from 4:30 – 7:00 p.m. at the Somerville Community Growing Center, 22 Vinal Ave.*

Somervilleans Help Families Made Homeless by Rush Street Fire

On Thursday night, May 5, 2016, a three alarm fire on Rush Street in East Somerville completely destroyed a 9-family building, displacing approximately 35 people, including 12 children from 9 households.

The Somerville Homeless Coalition, along with City agencies and the Community Action Agency of Somerville (CAAS), immediately jumped into action to help people find temporary places to stay and get connected with the resources needed to recover from this tragedy.

The morning after the fire, the Somerville Homeless Coalition set up an online fundraising campaign to raise money for the families. Friends, neighbors, and the community quickly joined the campaign -- by the end of the day, 67 people had donated \$4,665; one week after the fire 275 people had donated a total of \$20,726. All funds raised were used to assist the families with start-up costs for moving into new housing and replacing items lost in the blaze.

The Somerville Arts Council's PorchFest designated the Rush Street Fire Fund as the beneficiary of donations this year.

After the fire, five families had no place to go. In two days, the Somerville Homeless Coalition was able to create an emergency shelter. "Just A Start (JAS) had recently discontinued their transitional housing program. Doug Kress from the City of Somerville worked with JAS and SHC to open the facility up to five families displaced by the Rush Street fire," explained Lisa Davidson, Program Director of the Somerville Homeless Coalition.

Thanks to the overwhelming community response, all of the families have now found permanent housing.



Save Our Homes Walk to Prevent Homelessness Raises nearly \$50,000



Eastern Bank was the Lead Sponsor for the Walk and Flatbread hosted a fundraising night.

About 100 people enjoyed a beautiful Sunday in May to walk 3.1 miles (5K) to help prevent homelessness. Employees from **Eastern Bank**, the lead sponsor for the Walk, joined with members of the organizing agencies (Somerville Homeless Coalition, Somerville Community Corporation, Community Action Agency of Somerville, and Cambridge and Somerville Legal Services) and teams from **First Church** and **Temple B'Nai Brith**.

Lively music, provided by members of the Second Line Band, got the group started. The Walk route included stops at a number of affordable housing sites in Somerville. These houses and complexes, nestled in our neighborhoods, help make Somerville a community where all are welcome to live, work, and raise a family.

Somerville 5K: Running to Help End Homelessness



Lace up your shoes, grab a friend or two, and join us on October 1st!



On Saturday, October 1st, will you be one of the nearly 1,000 runners setting out from Somerville's Davis Square in the 21st Annual Somerville 5K?

All proceeds go to support SHC's programs serving homeless families and individuals: shelters, supportive services, prevention assistance, and a food pantry.

Did we mention the **amazing brunch afterwards**? It's delicious and provided by local Somerville restaurants. There are also **great prizes** for our top finishers and fundraisers!

Register by September 12th for early bird rates and a free race t-shirt! Go to:

<http://www.somervillehomelesscoalition.org/upcoming-events/road-race/>

There's still time to register!

Somerville Homeless Coalition
14th Annual


Thursday, September 22
Sandy Burr Country Club, Wayland

www.shcinc.org/upcoming-events/golf-tournament/

Upcoming Events to Benefit SHC:

Concert at The Burren

Hosted by Brian O'Donovan of
A Celtic Sojourn
Wednesday, November 30, 2016
247 Elm Street, Somerville

Christmas Cavalcade

At ONCE Lounge and Ballroom
December 21, 2016
156 Highland Avenue, Somerville

*To get notices of upcoming events
emailed to you, please sign up for the
'All Events' email list at
www.shcinc.org*