



OUR HOUSE

For volunteers & supporters of the homeless and our neighbors in need



Volunteers with CMC Food donate their time and goods



An Elizabeth High School player prepares to shoot.

26th Annual Hoops to End Homelessness

Whoosh! They rushed back and forth, up and down, the Dunn Center basketball court, spurred on by the cheers of their fans. On Feb 6th, the Elizabeth and Roselle Catholic JV and Varsity basketball teams played one of the hottest games of the season. The bleachers were packed, the Elizabeth High School Band played, and the cheerleaders got the crowd to their feet.

"I look forward to this event every year because it brings together the entire community to resolve the issue of homelessness," said Linda Flores-Tober, ECHH's executive director. Many of the young participants had never encountered homelessness before, and it was an eye-opening experience. "It was good to know we were helping people who really need it," said Roselle Catholic JV player Christian Pierre-Louis.

"It was an honor for us to be included in this annual event that makes a difference in so many lives," said Roselle Catholic JV coach Marcus Jones. "Giving back is something I teach my own children and those I teach."

EHS students Darlene Kintsangoula-Mbaya, a senior, and Chelsea Maldonado, a freshman, who were selling homemade brownies, proved that some of the most important lessons are not taught in a classroom.

"It is good to give back to your community especially since we have so many homeless in Elizabeth," said Darlene. "The Coalition is so empowering in the way they give back." Added Chelsea, "Everyone thinks I am so young because I am a freshman, but if they see me volunteering, it may encourage them to help, too."

Thank you to everyone who supported the event making it such a great success!

SAVE THE DATE

APR

24

**Operation Warm
Heart Appreciation
Dinner**

MAY

27

**5th Annual There's
No Place Like
Home Reception**

SEPT

25

**Four Seasons
tribute band
featuring Joe Long**

SEPT

26

Family Fun Day



(from left to right) Arlene Yanogacio, Lorena Bellomo, Robert Schilare, Garwood Council President Jennifer Blumenstock, Garwood Mayor Sara Todisco, Courtney Calhoun and Michele Tortorici.

Volunteer Spotlight: Robert Schilare

When you meet Robert Schilare, you immediately see his commitment to helping the homeless. While he works as a contractor and political activist, he is also an Elizabeth Coalition volunteer. "I volunteer so that I can help people more directly and more significantly than I do with my other careers. I like knowing that I can make even a small difference in the lives of others."

Robert started volunteering two years ago by organizing a sandwich drive to honor the work and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He has since motivated so many others to get involved. "The Coalition is responding directly to a real emergency. It is the most direct way I can think of to help people locally."

Without volunteers like Robert, we wouldn't be able to help the homeless and near homeless in our community. Thank you, Robert for inspiring us every day! To find out how you can volunteer, contact Kim Ventura at kventura@theelizabethcoalition.org.

Operation Warm Heart: A Story

Daquan has experienced homelessness on and off throughout his life. Born in 1968, he was raised by his grandmother. When she died, Daquan fell into a debilitating depression. That's when he found himself homeless.

For the next 10 years, Daquan lived on the streets, experiencing violence, mental illness and drug addiction. But Daquan's life changed for the better when he became an Operation Warm Heart client.

The Coalition founded Operation Warm Heart to serve the needs of the streetbound chronic homeless in the Elizabeth area. With the Coalition's help, Daquan completed his application for a Housing Choice Voucher with Bridgeway Rehabilitation Services. The Coalition also helped Daquan get a 30-day voucher to remain in the YMCA while his application is pending approval. Daquan is thankful for Operation Warm Heart helping him get his life back on track.

You can help others like Daquan by giving generously to Operation Warm Heart. Call Sheila Casey for more information, (908) 355-2060, ext. 202



At last year's Annual Point-in-Time Count, 68 people were counted as chronically homeless in Union County. (Monarch Housing Associates)

Give Us A Hand!

- **Help make sandwiches in July and August!** For info, call Sheila Casey, (908) 355-2060, ext. 202
- **Operation Warm Heart needs weekend volunteers** to help host the guests during the day! Volunteers stay for two-hour shifts at Zion Lutheran Evangelical Church (215 Elm Ave, Rahway). For info, email Catherine Felegi at Catherine.Felegi@gmail.com
- **Donate a spring cleaning basket** - We need 15 laundry baskets filled with cleaning supplies such as surface, floor, and glass cleaners, paper towels, tissue, sponges, dish and laundry detergents. No bleach please! For info, call Sheila Casey, (908) 355-2060, ext. 202

The Elizabeth Coalition to House the Homeless, located in Elizabeth, NJ, is a nonprofit formed in 1981. Now over 35 years old, we are on a mission to serve the needs of the homeless and near homeless. We empower people with tools and support to transition to safe, affordable, permanent housing so that they can live healthy, productive lives. We believe everyone deserves safe, affordable housing and should be an active part of their community, treating everyone with dignity and respect.