



## National Coalition for the Homeless Newsletter

NCH NEWS

August 19, 2010

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### Hate Crimes Against the Homeless: America's Growing Tide of Violence

*Hate Crimes Against the Homeless: America's Growing Tide of Violence* is a shocking report on the growth of biased motivated crimes of hate against America's homeless. The National Coalition for the Homeless' report marks the beginning of its second decade tracking, interviewing and classifying thousands of individuals impacted by homeless hate crimes.

This year's report has the horrifying distinction of being the deadliest, at 43 reported homicides. The research contained in this report chronicles more than a thousand separate attacks across the US, representing a fraction of the total hate crimes that remain drastically under-reported.

Individuals who commit homeless hate crimes are motivated primarily by a bias that another individual is or may be homeless. Perpetrators often give account to feelings of hostility and animosity, towards the visibly homeless, so strong they demand action. While others describe a generalized hatred, passed down from one generation to the next, resulting in a growing epidemic of violence across America.

Documented hate crimes in this report involve: dosing with gasoline and setting aflame; rape in exchange for shelter; spay painting and stomping upon while sleeping; and, repeated incidence of gang initiations involving stabbings and beatings. "On behalf of any and every victim of biased motivated crime, we must remain committed to the cause of justice, honest stewards of truth and capable recorders of the endless narrative of hate." said Neil Donovan, NCH Executive Director.

Un-housed individuals, as a target of hate, have consistently grown over the past decade. This year's report draws an especially gruesome and disturbing trend in the frequency and manner of the offenses. Violent, often fatal, attacks on homeless Americans now outnumber all other categories of hate crimes combined.

The National Coalition for the Homeless has successfully advanced its legislative agenda on hate crimes, both at the state and federal levels. Our objective is to place the responsibility of tracking statistics on hate crimes against the homeless into the hands of local and national law enforcement. Our goal is to further legitimate our analysis and quantify the growing epidemic of violence against the homeless, ultimately resulting in sufficient resources to solve the problem and create the solutions.

Download the full report at [www.nationalhomeless.org](http://www.nationalhomeless.org)

### Making the Census Work for the Homeless

NCH's Civil Rights Committee is gathering together recommendations for the 2020 Census to try to improve the counting of those who experienced homelessness. To that end, we would like to hear how this year's census was conducted in your community and what feedback you might have about the process. We have prepared a quick online survey to be filled out by those in your community who oversaw the counting and participation by homeless people in the 2010 Census. The survey takes just 10 minutes to complete, and we will compile the results and send a draft of the NCH recommendations out in October.

Click <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NCHCensusSurvey> to fill out the survey. Please circulate the survey within your local community – any social service provider, government official or advocacy staff can complete the survey. Thanks for your input!!

### Where Are They Now?

The National Coalition for the Homeless relies heavily on interns, fellows and AmeriCorps\*VISTA Volunteers to accomplish its mission of ending homelessness. In any given year, we host about thirty interns. These interns come from colleges nationwide, many have been homeless/formerly homeless, and many go on to do great work – during the summer of 1987, current HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan spent a summer away from Harvard with NCH!

Since 1996, the Congressional Hunger Center has placed "Hunger Fellows" at non-profit organizations nationwide. These Fellows do six months in the field at service organizations across the country, and five months at policy placements in Washington, DC.

Here is what some of our past Hunger Fellows are up to now:

2002

- Alma Gonzalez – Teaching nutrition to low income families in Long Beach, CA
- Mary Elizabeth May – Community Development Director in Jackson, MS

2003

- Matthew Achhammer – Photographer in Baltimore, MD
- Molly Neck – Attorney in San Antonio, TX

2004

- Lori Leibowitz – Recently graduated from Georgetown University Law School and is working at the Women's Collective in DC doing policy and advocacy work with HIV positive women

2006

- David Pope – Works at the White House Domestic Policy Council

2007

- David Coffman – Works with Second Harvest in New Orleans, LA

2008

- Corey Yarbrough – Program Manager at Let's Get Ready, a college readiness program for low income youth in Boston. He is also the co-Founder of the Hispanic Black Gay Coalition.

2009

- Stephany Whitaker – Recently began graduate studies at Eastern Kentucky University and works with at-risk youth from Appalachia in an Upward Bound program.

2010

- Donna Leuchten – Just ended her fellowship at NCH in July and will be pursuing graduate studies at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, PA

Thanks to all of our interns, fellows and other volunteers over the years!! If you have interned at NCH, we would like to know you are up to now! Take a few minutes to fill out our [survey](#) about your experience.

### Movie Review: *Free Land*

By Zachary Smith, NCH Intern

*Free Land* is a superb and insightful documentary that was shown at the National American Indian Museum during the month of July. The movie depicts the struggles filmmaker Minda J. Martin's family faced during her childhood, as they frequently relocated in search of better opportunities. During the film Martin equates her family's experiences with displacement to those faced by her American Indian ancestors.

Transcripts of conversations between her relatives and the U.S. Census Bureau in the mid-1800s concerning the family's history were also included in the film. These conversations reveal that her family's bouts of homelessness began with the forced removal of her family from Cherokee Nation in Tennessee during the Trail of Tears. Since that time, Martin's family would acquire land; however, each time they would eventually lose it either because of broken promises from the government or as a result of economic hardships.

In the film Martin shares the Native American experience with poverty and the negative consequences that have remained after being uprooted by the government. By including family photographs and using historical accounts, Martin skillfully presents a glimpse into rarely discussed issues such as rural poverty and homelessness among Native Americans.

For more information about the film, visit: <http://www.mindamartin.org/freeland/index.html>

### News from the Field

#### The 2010 Without Housing Report Update Has Arrived!

The Western Regional Advocacy Project (WRAP) is proud to announce the release of the [2010 Without Housing Report](#). The report comes at a critical juncture for housing policy in this country as millions of Americans are homeless and tens of millions more are on the brink of economic collapse. The updated report focuses public attention back on the #1 reason for the current housing troubles: the Federal Government's divestment in affordable housing programs and deregulation of the housing market. Most importantly, it helps people understand the complex issues fueling the crisis and provides a framework for turning the situation around. In the next few weeks WRAP will be launching a housing rights campaign that builds off the update and these [demands](#).

If you or your organization is interested in joining or learning more about the campaign, call Paul or Michael at 415-621-2533, or visit [www.wraphome.org](http://www.wraphome.org). A Spanish version of the report is on the way soon!

#### USICH releases update for implementation of the Federal Strategic Plan to End Homelessness

In our last newsletter, we reported on the release of the long awaited Federal Strategic Plan to End Homelessness, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness' (USICH) *Opening Doors* report. The USICH has just updated its plan for the implementation of the Federal Plan, see the details on [the USICH website](#).

**President Obama Awards Citizen Service Heroes with Medal of Honor**

Patrick A. Corvington, CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service, joined President Obama as he awarded 13 Americans the 2010 Citizens Medal, the nation's second-highest civilian honor, for their exemplary acts of service. This year's recipients are powerful reminders of the impact individuals can have on their community: a Chicago nurse and childcare professional who opened a live-in resource center to mentor hundreds of pregnant teenagers; a school bus driver who delivers hot meals and coffee to New York City's homeless daily; and a paralyzed woman who founded Kids' Food Basket, which provides meals to thousands of needy children in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Learn more about the awardees at: [www.whitehouse.gov/citizensmedal](http://www.whitehouse.gov/citizensmedal).

**Grants Address the Needs of Women in the U.S. and Puerto Rico**

The WHO Foundation: Women Helping Others supports grassroots organizations throughout the United States and Puerto Rico that serve the overlooked needs of women and children. The Foundation will consider grant requests from \$1,000 up to \$40,000 for critical health programs, social services, and education projects that give women and children the knowledge and tools they need to improve their lives. Examples of funded programs include food and shelter for the homeless, healthcare for the poor, after-school programs, career training for under-employed women, positive programs for young girls, and domestic violence prevention programs. Eligible organizations must have been incorporated for a minimum of three years. (The Foundation will consider funding projects of an original or pioneering nature within an existing organization.) Applications are due on September 7, 2010. Visit the [Foundation's website](#) to review the application criteria.

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