

**FROM HOMELESS  
TO HOPEFUL  
IMPACT REPORT**



PRESIDENT'S  
MESSAGE

**YOU**  
**HAVE**  
**HELPED**  
**HIS**  
**PEOPLE**

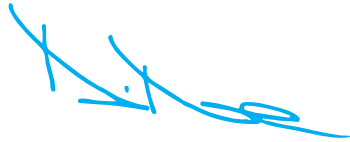
What a year it has been! There is so much to celebrate about the many lives that have been transformed through your support.

Because of you, we served over 229,000 meals, provided 2,170 showers and gave out 11,000 “I See You” kits to our neighbors without homes. Most importantly, we were able to get 1,249 people off the streets **immediately** through our emergency shelter and 188 individuals off the streets **permanently** through Mission Academy and our outreach efforts.

I am encouraged by Hebrews 6:10 that says, *“God is not unjust, He will not forget your work and love you have shown Him as you have helped His people and continue to help them.”*

So many of you have prayed fervently for the Mission, given generously and served wholeheartedly with us. Thank you! Our impact in 2022 isn't possible without you and your heart for helping those experiencing homelessness.

I hope you are inspired by the stories shared in our 2022 Impact Report and encouraged by the overall results. **Your love changes lives.**



**Donnie Dee**



## 2022 GRADUATIONS

*115 total graduates*

# CHANGING THE STATE OF HOMELESSNESS

What does it take to change the life of someone experiencing homelessness? It's more than providing immediate needs like food and shelter. It's about helping each person find their path to healing and self-sufficiency.

**It's about getting people off the streets for good.**

OUR  
APPROACH





Our approach begins with **STRATEGIC OUTREACH**, a focused effort to meet vulnerable neighbors right where they are – on the streets – through our Mobile Shower Ministry, Walk With Me friendship initiative, and our Street Outreach programs.

Through a relational approach to build trust, we meet their immediate need of shelter at a **NAVIGATION CENTER** and provide case management to help them access social services.

Next, they will transition to longer-term housing or our 12-month rehabilitation program, **MISSION ACADEMY**. Here, we move students forward into long-term life change. Our approach is holistic,



trauma-informed and person-centered, because we believe homelessness is an issue of the heart. The culmination of their hard work is celebrated with a **GRADUATION** ceremony – and the entire community (including you) is invited to celebrate!

Who better to share the hope of transformation than those once homeless?

Through our **ALUMNI AMBASSADOR** program, we encourage graduates and empower them to influence those currently experiencing homelessness.



**The path to life change is not easy, but it is POSSIBLE. Through your support, hearts are transformed, impacting San Diego one life at a time.**

# SEARCH & RESCUE

STRATEGIC  
OUTREACH

**For people living on the streets, it's easy to lose hope. Getting out of homelessness can be confusing and overwhelming. That's where we come in.**

On sidewalks, in alleys, under bridges, and into encampments – we meet people where they are to offer hope and a hand-up. Through strategic outreach, we build relationships with our unsheltered neighbors and help them figure out their next step forward. We connect them to resources and make referrals to temporary or long-term shelter.

**Lives are being changed through the power of relationship.**





## ROBERT'S STORY: HOUSED AFTER 20 YEARS ON THE STREETS

**Our Outreach Coordinator, Carla Vanegas, met Robert and his dog Jolee in Little Italy in late 2021 during her daily rounds through the neighborhood.**

He introduced himself as a former doctor in the military. So, Carla tried to connect him to the Veteran's Administration. She took Robert to the VA office, but they had no record of him. She was confused, but not discouraged.

Over time, Carla's compassion and consistency showed Robert that she really cared about him. It was only then that he told her his real last name!

Long ago he lost hope for a better life. Robert's long-term addiction and mental health challenge with Schizophrenia made it so he couldn't work in his family's business. He had been living on the streets for over 20 years.

That's when Carla went the extra mile to help him. "She spoiled me. She brought me coffee and breakfast. It's neat to have somebody show up that you look forward to. Me and the dog are doing a lot better because of her."

He was entered into the Homeless Management Information System so he could be matched to housing. She worked hard to get his documents and health insurance in place so he could get the help he desperately needed.

**After 7 months of appointments and advocacy, Robert and his beloved dog, Jolee, were finally placed in permanent supportive housing in April of 2022. They now have a safe place to call home!**

**"WE'RE HAPPY.  
I HAVE EVERYTHING I NEED NOW."**



# MEET FATIMA

**Fatima grew up in San Diego. After high school she went to UCSD and SDSU, even graduating with honors. On the outside, it looked like she had a bright future, but a secret from her past was destroying her on the inside.**

She lived her entire life trying to forget what happened to her, but the dark memories of childhood sexual abuse by an uncle kept haunting her. When she finally had the courage to speak up, she was told to keep it a secret.

“I believed it was my fault. That I brought shame to my family as a Middle Eastern woman. I carried that with me.”

At 22 when her daughter was born prematurely, postpartum depression overcame her. She feared she'd failed her daughter the way her parents had failed her, so she started using drugs to escape. By the time she turned 30, her addiction had spiraled out of control. When she lost custody of her daughter, Fatima fell into complete hopelessness.

She knew she hit rock bottom when the only relationship she had left was with her drug dealer. Holed up in the basement of

MISSION  
ACADEMY  
STUDENT





a drug house in El Centro, she had nothing. This is where God found her.

She noticed a Bible sitting on the desk. She thought about growing up in the mosque and not feeling anything, about crying out as a child, “Allah are you even real? Please let my uncle leave me alone.”

Then God spoke to her through Psalm 91:1. “I immediately felt a surge of peace even while going through withdrawals.” She called her family and then a drug rehab facility. As soon as she got there, she asked for a Bible. Within 2 days she gave her life to Christ.

Once back home, Fatima’s parents kicked her out because she wouldn’t renounce Jesus. “I was scared because it’s the first time living outside the shadows of my family.”

At the library, she searched “homeless for the first time and scared.” That’s how

she found the Rescue Mission. Hungry and tired, Fatima came to our emergency shelter for women and children where she felt accepted and loved for who she was. Within weeks, she entered Mission Academy, ready to embrace our year-long program.

Here, she worked through past trauma, learned to hold herself accountable and set healthy boundaries.

**“Through therapy I acknowledged the abuse happened and now I’ve given it all to God. My life has forever changed for the better.”**

Fatima graduated in October, is working as an office manager at a construction company, and has a place of her own. While she continues to pray she will be reunited with her daughter, Fatima can’t help but celebrate how her life has been transformed.

**“GOD CALLS ME HIS FAVORITE. NOBODY HAS EVER CALLED ME THEIR FAVORITE.”**





MISSION  
ACADEMY  
STUDENT

# MEET CHRISTOPHER & HIS KIDS

**For the first 20 years of his life in San Diego, Christopher's father was in prison. While the love and support from his mom, grandparents and aunts filled that gap, they couldn't shield him from the violence that would shake his world.**

He grew up in a dangerous neighborhood and at 6, he saw a man get killed in front of his house. When his father was murdered in 2008, Christopher was devastated. He had finally built a relationship with his dad, and even lived with him for a while, only to lose him again.

Christopher started drinking to drown his grief and the paranoid feeling that he might suffer a similar fate. He questioned why God would allow his father to be taken from him.

"It changed my whole being. I felt like I had to put this tough guy mask on. I didn't want to be another victim."

Christopher married and started a family in Texas. Yet his heavy drinking continued, and he knew his life was completely off track. His wife moved back to San Diego with their 3 youngest kids while he stayed in Texas with his son. As he sank deeper into his addiction, his wife ended their marriage. Finally at his lowest point, he decided to get sober.

He longed to see his other children, so he came back to San Diego with his son, staying in hotels before ending up homeless. Depression and despair set in because he couldn't provide the basics for his son who was hungry and tired from walking miles on the streets in search of food and shelter.

That's when the Rescue Mission contacted him. "They said they were opening up their residential program for single fathers with kids. That I'd be the first father to participate, and it would help dads because of the good that would come

from it. I kept thinking that I can help other fathers." Christopher entered Mission Academy in May and his four kids ages 3-9 now live with him here.

**"I missed being a full-time father. I'm a very hands-on Dad. I have to carry myself higher than what I was carrying myself in my previous life."**

The love he feels from staff has positively impacted him along with the support of other single dads in the program. He's learned to press on when things get hard. "This place makes it so that I can't be a quitter. My brothers in here won't let me."

Christopher has a job and is working toward being self-sufficient again when he graduates next spring. His greatest joy is becoming the best dad he can be, so he can give his kids the life they deserve.



**"FATHERHOOD IS VERY IMPORTANT TO ME, BECAUSE I DIDN'T GROW UP WITH MY FATHER."**

ALUMNI  
AMBASSADOR  
PROGRAM

WE'RE  
HELPING  
ENSURE  
SUCCESS





## FOR STUDENTS WHO GRADUATE, A NEW CHAPTER OF LIFE AWAITS!

When students complete their 12-month program, they become a part of our Alumni Ambassador program – designed to ensure sustained success and to empower them to become beacons of light in the community.

Lasting life change requires having a healthy support system. Through our Alumni program, our team stays connected with our Mission Academy graduates to encourage their ongoing rehabilitation and recovery.

Our Alumni program tracks each person to determine if they are thriving or in need of help, so we can step in to support and prevent a return to homelessness. Their long-term success is the key to keeping people off the streets permanently.

**Our Alumni Ambassadors are also charged with giving back to the community – volunteering at the Mission, doing street outreach and inspiring other students that change is possible.**

IN OUR RECENT SURVEY  
OF 207 ALUMNI, WE  
FOUND THAT THE VAST  
MAJORITY ARE SAFE,  
STABLE AND THRIVING:

60%  
Working

80%  
Churchgoer

84%  
Housed

94%  
Sober



ALUMNI  
AMBASSADOR

# LISA'S STORY



**Lisa graduated from Mission Academy in May. At the ceremony, she drove around on her electric scooter handing out heart and cross charms to celebrate her transformation.**

Back in July 2021, Lisa was living under the freeway. She was drunk and her legs wouldn't work. Someone called an ambulance and once in the emergency room, they gave her a choice: "You can either go back to the cement or there's a bed at the Rescue Mission's emergency shelter."

Lisa's life wasn't always this way. She had a career as a paralegal and was married to a welder. Life was good. Until he took his own life. Then her mother fell ill and needed her care. "I made an agreement with myself to hold off mourning my husband's loss. I didn't have time for it."

When her mom passed away, Lisa still didn't allow herself to grieve. Instead, she married a man who was homeless. They went through all of her savings before he left her alone on the streets. Devastated, she turned to alcohol to push down the loss and pain. "I'm an alcoholic because I was homeless. I was drinking, just trying to get through every day. I became disabled while I was out there." Twice she tried to take her life.

**“I HAD A HOLE IN MY HEART.  
NOW MY HEART IS WHOLE.”**

In our emergency shelter, Lisa was grateful for a safe place to sleep. When she transitioned into our residential program, she was overwhelmed by the support of staff, the classes and therapy she received.

**Lisa has her own place now and is thriving. She's found a supportive community as a member of the Voices of our City Choir – San Diego's homeless choir.** A singer/songwriter, she's found her “place, with song, to belong.” She's performed for the Mayor of San Diego and she's sharing her lived experience to help change the perception of homelessness.

Her health has improved significantly and soon she'll have the hip surgery she needs to hopefully regain mobility. In the meantime, she serves the unsheltered by doing her own street outreach with boldness and love.

As part of the Alumni Ambassador program, Lisa is a vibrant example of life after the Mission. She stays in touch with staff, encourages students, volunteers, and cheers others on at graduation.







# BECAUSE OF YOU

**Your support has a tremendous impact!**

Because of you, men, women and children experiencing homelessness have renewed hope for a better life.

YEAR AT  
A GLANCE



**230,190**

**MEALS** SERVED WITH  
3 MILLION POUNDS  
OF DONATED FOOD

**39,940**

**HOURS** OF EARLY  
CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FOR  
PRESCHOOL CHILDREN



**54%**

**OF EMERGENCY  
SHELTER GUESTS**  
CONNECTED TO  
LONGER-TERM  
CARE OR HOUSING



**107,640**

**HOURS** OF JOB TRAINING



**11,000**

**HYGIENE KITS** GIVEN  
TO OUR NEIGHBORS  
ON THE STREETS

**74,194**

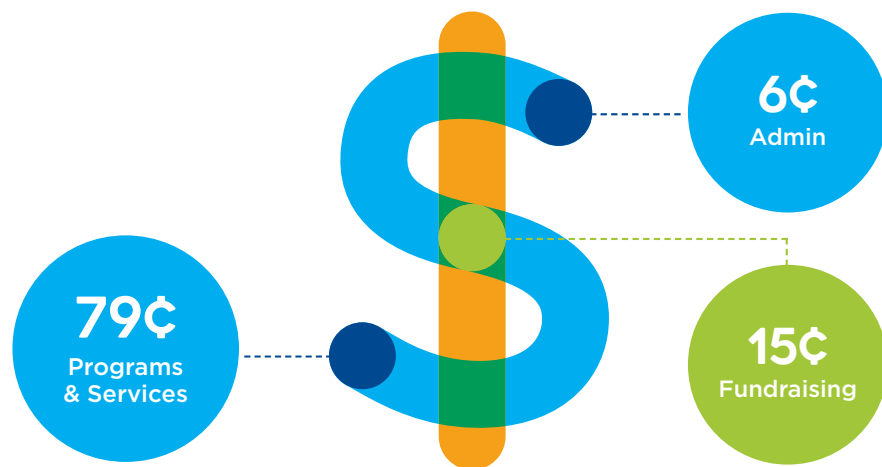
**NIGHTS** OF SHELTER FOR  
MEN, WOMEN & CHILDREN



## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Our Values of Faith, Integrity, Compassion and Excellence guide everything we do, including our financial stewardship. We are committed to ensuring that we maximize the use of every dollar received to benefit those in need.

### WHERE EACH DOLLAR GOES



### INCOME\*

Donated Income	\$14,673,414
Business Revenue	\$66,931
Material Donations	\$488,956
Food Donations	\$8,404,584
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$23,633,885</b>

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### EXPENSE\*

Programs	\$17,066,120
Administrative	\$1,284,020
Fundraising	\$3,336,271
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$21,686,411</b>

\*Fiscal year October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022. These numbers are unaudited. We receive an annual independent financial audit at the end of every year. Tax ID 95-1874073





[sdrescue.org](https://sdrescue.org) • (619) 687-3720

The San Diego Rescue Mission is a non-profit recovery and rehabilitation center serving thousands of men, women and children experiencing homelessness in San Diego since 1955.