

Keeping Hunger from Becoming Another Crisis

The effects of changes to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, also known as SNAP, have become increasingly apparent at The Night Ministry. Individuals who are already juggling the daily struggles of homelessness are now confronting an additional crisis: heightened uncertainty about how they will access food.

On May 1, the federal government established new work requirements for SNAP recipients, which may affect a person's eligibility for benefits.

Marquell Jones, an outreach and health case manager at The Night Ministry, has been helping many unhoused and low-income clients understand the changes and steps necessary to maintain their access to food. "When you're already facing instability, even small changes can feel overwhelming," Marquell said. "Our role is to guide people through these challenges so they can continue to meet their basic needs."

The Night Ministry recognizes the pressing food needs within the community. In FY25, about 25% of clients reported rarely or never having enough food to eat each day. During this period, the Outreach and Health team distributed nearly 48,000 meals. With rising food prices, demand for meals is expected to increase further.

All affected clients are being screened across the agency to determine their eligibility for the homelessness waiver, which may exempt them from the work requirement. Eligible clients will receive assistance with completing waiver applications.



Marquell providing case management services to his clients at the Forest Park Blue Line stop.

"Food is not optional. When someone loses their access to food, they are not just losing a benefit. They are losing choice, and one more piece of dignity."

Marquell Jones, case manager at The Night Ministry

For those experiencing immediate food shortages, staff members provide referrals to local food pantries, enabling them to access meals and groceries while their benefit status is being resolved. The Night Ministry is also working with legal aid partners to assist clients in appealing SNAP decisions.

In addition, staff are identifying alternative supports, including programs that provide three months of gift card assistance to people losing SNAP benefits.

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George prepares a salad as part of the meal that he and his colleagues serve at The Crib.

Decades of Dedication



George Martin (center) alongside his colleagues from the Security Traders Association of Chicago (STAC).

For over two decades, George Martin, who provides Trade Support at Penserra Securities, has been showing up for The Night Ministry — and he hasn't come alone. George recruited friends and colleagues from Security Traders Association of Chicago (STAC) to help prepare and serve a monthly hot meal at The Crib, our youth emergency shelter. But they provide more than a meal. George and his team take time to sit down, share conversation, and create a warm, welcoming atmosphere for the young people in our care. And this goes a long way for many of our youth who often feel alone. We are grateful for volunteers like George and we thank him for his years of service.



Collage workshop attendees putting together their masterpieces by using newspapers, magazines and materials.

Art, Community & Generosity

Chicago artist Lo Marie believes that art has the power to unite people and foster a deeper understanding of our shared humanity. Recently, she led two groups in a guided collage workshop that focused on building community through storytelling. Proceeds from the workshop and the finished collages will be converted into print art and sold online, with 100% of the profits supporting The Night Ministry. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Lo Marie and all the participants who generously contributed their time and creativity in support of our mission.



Chicago artist Lo Marie (center) pictured alongside artists and their wonderful artwork from the workshop and fundraising event.

Make a Difference on Hope for Homes Day

Join us Thursday, July 16, for Hope 4 Homes Day, a special opportunity to raise funds and awareness for our unhoused neighbors. Last year, your support helped raise more than \$20,000!

Although the observance will take place on Thursday, July 16, fundraising will take place from July 1-31. Learn how you can make an impact by scanning the QR code.





(L-R): Harris Kay, Dean Richards, Beacon Awardee Maree Bullock, Shawna Hayes (representing Lamplighter Awardee Northern Trust), Board Chair Michael Borromeo, President and CEO Carol J. Sharp, and Joyce Chacko.



A young man who attended the gala with his family, was the first to raise his paddle during live auction.



Make Art Your Opportunity brought the glamour and then dazzled attendees with an amazing drag show during the After Party.



Attendees danced the night away. It was such a great time.

50 Years of Care, Celebrated in Style

More than 450 very generous supporters, advocates, and civic leaders gathered at The Geraghty on April 18 to celebrate The Night Ministry's 50th Anniversary Gala: A Legacy of Care, a Future of Hope. Hosted by Chicago media legend Dean Richards, the evening honored five decades of impact and recognized those who dedicated themselves to supporting people affected by homelessness and poverty. The Beacon Award was presented to Maree Bullock, and the Lamplighter Award to Northern Trust. Former client and community advocate Sharday Hamilton moved the room with her powerful testimony.

The Night Ministry's President and CEO, Carol J. Sharp, delivered inspirational remarks about her experiences navigating housing insecurity as a child and how they shaped her belief in what is possible for our unhoused neighbors. The night also marked a record-breaking milestone: nearly **\$1.1 million** raised in a single evening. We are extremely grateful to our Special Event Chair Joyce Chacko, our 50th Committee Chair Harris Kay, and everyone who attended, as well as all the sponsors, including **ComEd, Joseph and Bessie Feinberg Foundation, Magellan Corporation, and Northern Trust**, who helped make this event so successful.

Save the Date!

The Night Ministry's Associate Board will host **Night Lights: Celebrating 50 Years of Care** on **Thursday, October 22**. The annual fundraising event will support the street medicine program.

Tickets are on sale now!



Reflecting on a Legacy of Leadership

After more than 25 years of dedicated service, W. Gordon Addington has stepped down from The Night Ministry's Board of Directors and has been appointed as Director Emeritus. This title, which he will step into July 1, is reserved for individuals whose long-term commitment and dedication have made an extraordinary and lasting impact. He discusses his motivations and provides insights on how others can contribute to it.

How were you introduced to The Night Ministry, and what inspired you to get involved?

I was first introduced when I received a piece of mail, highlighting its mission of compassion and care for those struggling with homelessness, poverty, and loneliness in Chicago. I reached out and spoke with Rev. Tom Behrens. He invited me to visit the Open Door Shelter for homeless individuals.

When you think about your "why," what moment stands out most clearly?

I was truly impressed by the dedication of the staff and volunteers. This was the mission that I was seeking: one that helps both young and older people get their lives back on track. There is a valid point to be made: if a program like this were available, these individuals would not have to continue living their lives on the margins.

A Gift That Lives On

We are deeply grateful to The Addington Heritage Society, whose planned gifts help sustain our mission for generations to come, ensuring compassionate care, housing, and support remain available to those who need it most.

To join The Addington Heritage Society, contact Raeann Olsen-Jackson at raeann@thenightministry.org



Michael Borromeo, TNM Board Chair and Carol J. Sharp, TNM President & CEO, present Gordon Addington with a caricature depicting his 25 years of volunteer service at The Night Ministry.

What are you most proud of from your time on the board?

Throughout the years, my wife Paula and I have lived in several large cities. In each location, we have made it our mission to freely give our time, money, and other resources. We take great pride in the 25 years of support we have provided The Night Ministry.

Why do you believe it is important for others to support The Night Ministry's work right now?

We have witnessed one man's dream grow into over 50 years of service to the community. What began as a single shelter for the homeless has evolved into a nationally recognized leader in the providing specialized services for those experiencing homelessness. This momentum must continue for another 50 years and beyond. We are the leaders that deeply care.

What would you say to someone who is considering getting more involved, whether through giving, volunteering, advocacy, or leadership?

One postcard in the mail turned into 26 years. As I step down, I have gained a deeper understanding of the impact of homelessness and the need to continue to have compassion. We need people who can be leaders, doers, funders, and listeners to serve our programs and our mission. The Night Ministry was "born in Chicago," and our most vulnerable Chicagoans need you.



A Place for Healing and Hope

Help us create a Garden of Inspiration at our West Town shelter. Your \$200 gift sponsors an inscribed paver with words of encouragement for young people and families experiencing homelessness, creating a peaceful space where hope, healing, and possibility can bloom.

For more information, contact ericas@thenightministry.org.



From the Streets to the Classroom: Michael's Story



Michael proudly smiles as he holds his college identification badge. This summer, he will be starting the EMT program at Malcolm X College.

At 20 years old, Michael has already lived several lifetimes' worth of experiences, and he's just getting started.

Born in Kankakee, raised in Mississippi, Michael now calls Chicago home. He arrived in the city as many young people do: through a combination of necessity and hope. After a difficult period of homelessness, he found his way to The Crib, The Night Ministry's youth emergency shelter, where he describes his experience as genuinely life-changing.

"They want to see us succeed," he says simply. "But we can only succeed if we put in the work."

Michael has taken those words seriously. This fall, he'll begin studying to become an emergency medical

technician (EMT) at Malcolm X College, a career choice that reflects both ambition and a deep desire to give back.

"It's something that helps the community, especially the homeless community," he explains. "I want to help others."

That instinct to help runs through everything Michael does. He's been known to stop and check on younger people he sees struggling on the streets, connecting them with resources such as The Streetlight app and services at the Harold Washington Library. He's also an active member of Youth 4 Truth, the Night Ministry's youth advocacy committee, where he lends his voice to conversations about homelessness, gun violence, and the environment.

Michael describes The Crib as "a pit stop, a foundation from which to build something better." One day, he hopes to take that drive all the way to City Hall with his eye on becoming Mayor of Chicago.

"I'm a living, walking miracle," he says, leaning heavily on his faith and the belief that divine intervention has kept him alive despite his setbacks.

His advice to other young people navigating similar struggles is characteristically direct:

**"Never give up.
Only you can make
it happen."**

NOTE: We are happy to share that Michael is now a part of our Pathways Program and will be moving into his very own apartment in June. Way to go!



Michelle Thomas, Client Development Supervisor, with Michael during a recent Youth 4 Truth meeting.

Youth Voices Leading the Way

We are proud of Youth 4 Truth members for leading a panel discussion during the Home Illinois Summit in Springfield, IL, on May 12. Their voices, experiences, and leadership helped elevate the urgent needs of young people experiencing homelessness. We are inspired by their courage and grateful for the powerful advocacy they bring to this important statewide conversation.



Allison McCann-Stevenson, Vice President of Programs and Services, (center) with Youth 4 Truth members during the summit.

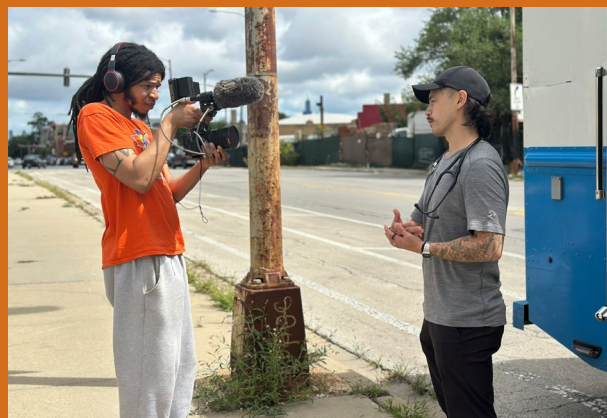
Launch of New Docuseries

We're excited to share our docuseries, **"The Night Ministry: On the Front Lines,"** which highlights the lives and incredible work of our staff in action. Filmed by young, talented Chicago filmmaker Jean Lamont, this series promises to inspire and uplift as we showcase our heartfelt mission.

Watch the first film in the series featuring our Clinical Supervisor Derek Ma, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC.



Scan to watch



Filmmaker Jean Lamont (left) on location with Derek Ma (right).

The Night Ministry is a Chicago-based organization whose mission is to provide human connection, housing support, and health care to members of our community who are unhoused or experiencing poverty.

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