Mindy grew up in a family where money was tight and she rarely felt safe. She tried to find good jobs, choose the right life partner and find glimmers of light in the only life she knew – poverty and chaos. However, her problems piled up. Her partner was hurtful, not helpful. This strong mother vowed to keep her three children safe and give them a different life. Mindy returned to this community where she and her kids slept on an air mattress in a friend’s house, “doubled up” and homeless in the suburbs for five months.

She learned about Interfaith Outreach and worked with Employment Services, which linked her to a Caring for Kids scholarship for quality child care. She tells us, “I found a daycare so I could go to work and find better employment. It saved us.”

Next in Mindy’s journey was Project Success, the two-year transitional housing program at Interfaith Outreach. This allowed her to have stable housing and go back to school. Mindy shares, “I went from having nothing to renting a 4-bedroom house. I’m almost done with my degree and I’m working full time at a law firm. My kids are in one of the best public school districts and I am so thankful. We are going to be an educated and successful family from here on out. I definitely did not see that before I walked through Interfaith Outreach’s doors – never. Ever.”

I feel empowered.
Interfaith helped us build a brighter future.

Your support helps create a new life for families like Mindy’s.

The Sleep Out goal: raise $2,300,000 to support struggling local families

Double your impact! Double your dollars up to $230,000 when you donate from today until Nov. 23

The Sleep Out is our community’s warm-hearted cold weather tradition

For 22 years, caring community members have slept in boxes, tents and cars on winter nights to raise awareness and funds to support struggling local families.

One in five families who come to Interfaith Outreach is experiencing a crisis of homelessness.

The Sleep Out supports:

Your donation today sparks brighter futures – helping our neighbors stabilize, strengthen and thrive.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

• NEW! Bedless Night
• Celebrating an empathetic next generation
• Give joy this holiday season
On a frosty November night 22 years ago, Bob Fisher zipped up his tent in trust that people would respond to his novel idea of sleeping out in the cold long enough to raise $7,000 for a bountiful Thanksgiving for 100 struggling families of our community. Never did he dream that his leap of faith in the heart and will of this amazing community would not only garner a $10,000 response but inspire an annual community-wide miracle called the Sleep Out.

Planning for a Sleep Out 2017 miracle is now at fever pitch. Exactly where it needs to be. Faith communities, youth groups, schools, banks and businesses, civic and community groups, cities and neighborhoods, fire and public safety departments, social and recreational groups, media – the whole village – is mobilizing to reach its hefty $2.3M Sleep Out 2017 campaign goal.

Sleep Out 2016 helped Mindy find a safe and affordable place to live, a scholarship for her preschool-age child, and education and employment services that equipped her to land a living wage job. Your support of Sleep Out 2017 will make opportunities like these available to literally hundreds of other families and kids.

Strong futures begin at home. Mindy’s path to a strong future for her family began with a safe place to call home. Last year, 436 of the 2,005 families who came to our doors were homeless. Families like Mindy’s need a place to start from. A Sleep Out 2017 miracle will get them there. It’s what we do.

Interfaith Outreach youth enjoy camaraderie during a backyard sleep out

Brighter futures begin with home

GIVING DAY ON THE BAY
Thursday, Nov. 16, 5-7 p.m.
Wayzata Brew Works, 294 Grove Ln E, Wayzata
Kick off the Sleep Out with a local celebration of the statewide Give to the Max Day! This family-friendly party on Lake Minnetonka will include live music by Power Tap, brews, root beer, pizza for purchase and so much more. More at iocp.org/sleepoutevents.

COMMUNITY SLEEP OUT
Saturday, Nov. 18, all over town
Join hundreds of community members by pitching a tent as we ignite our collective power to support our struggling neighbors. Download your Sleep Out toolkit at iocp.org/sleepout.

SHOP WITH A PURPOSE
Friday, Dec. 15, all over town
Save some last-minute holiday shopping! All day, businesses throughout our service area are generously contributing portions of their sales to the Sleep Out. Visit iocp.org/swap to view their offers and shop, shop, shop!

Spread the warmth twice as far! Donations between now and Nov. 23 will be DOUBLED (up to $230,000) thanks to generous donors.
We know generosity is intergenerational. From students to retirees, Interfaith Outreach is deeply grateful for the thousands of volunteers dedicated to helping local families each year.

We especially celebrate the hundreds of young people who volunteer in our Homework Clubs, food shelf, Resale Select, Sleep Out and other activities. Young people are our future leaders and there is no better place to gain leadership skills and learn how to work side by side with each other – especially those who may not look, sound or act the same as we do – than being a part of Interfaith Outreach.

In particular, last year during the Sleep Out, 145 youth from seven faith communities participated in a bias training led by Dr. Abdul M. Omari. They learned that understanding their personal perceptions can shape how they interact with others.

And, this year during the Sleep Out, more than 200 youth will take a reflective glimpse into the experience of living in poverty – working through how hard it is to make ends meet with a very low income.

We honor that working together; our volunteers and young leaders make a profound difference in our ever changing, compassionate community.

Every year, groups of passionate youth give up their time, comfort and warmth to ignite the power of the Sleep Out.

NEW! Bedless Night
An indoor alternative to sleeping out

For more than two decades, thousands of community members have slept out on cold winter nights to help our neighbors during the Sleep Out. Their tents, boxes and lovingly tended fires have offered visual and inspiring reminders of both our community’s urgent need and its hopeful response.

This year, we’re creating an indoor alternative to the Sleep Out. Bedless Night is an invitation for you to stay inside while exploring some of the ways our neighbors experience homelessness.

When families come to us having lost their housing, they are often doubled up with family or friends. To experience some of their struggle, invite extended family, friends or neighbors to an organized sleep over. Crash on couches, carpets or in cars, have conversations about what it feels like to be without a bed, and help raise support for families in need.

We will provide you with a resource guide that includes real-life stories to illuminate the challenges, hopes and choices that our struggling neighbors share with us every day, as well as conversation prompts and suggested activities to guide exploration and build empathy.

Just like the outdoor Sleep Out, the indoor Bedless Night’s goal is to raise awareness and funds that support struggling local families.

Download your Bedless Night guide at iocp.org/bedlessnight.
It started with a simple idea: how can we make more local businesses aware and willing to help meet the human needs of our community? In 2008, Gordy Engel, owner of The Foursome, asked that question before creating Shop with a Purpose. Generosity and community outreach have always been pivotal values for the Engels and is part of the family’s local business legacy.

Shop with a Purpose is a single day when local businesses donate a portion of the day’s proceeds to the Sleep Out. From clothing stores to restaurants, jewelers to art galleries, gas stations to chiropractic clinics, local businesses have embraced the cause. Last year, 33 businesses raised $8,741 to support local families and kids.

“It has really gained momentum over the years.” said Gordy. “I’m grateful to do business in a community that cares for its neighbors.”

Mark your calendars for this year’s event on Friday, Dec. 15! (more at iocp.org/swap)

Generosity – a Family Business

A workplace warmed by compassion

For almost a decade the folks at American Financial have pitched tents and pitched in. Employees sleep out and fundraise – and, thanks to a corporate match, their efforts to help neighbors thrive go twice as far.

“Not only are we helping families in our community,” said Scott Wheeler, President of American Financial, a subsidiary of Allianz. “But the personal bonding and connection that comes from our efforts each year is hard to beat.”

When the December nights get cold, these good-hearted folks look not only to winter gear, but also to their lively group camaraderie to get them through.

How can you bring your workplace along for the Sleep Out? Call Lani at 763-489-7704 to brainstorm.

MEMORIALS June-August 2017


GRANTS June-August 2017

- Edina Realty Foundation
  - Back to School
  - Food Shelf
- FEMA – Emergency Food and Shelter Program
- Housing and Food Shelf
- Sheltering Arms Foundation
  - Caring for Kids/Parent-Child Interaction Therapy
The 2017 Sleep Out Campaign
Goal: raise $2,300,000 between Nov. 16-Dec. 31

The Sleep Out is our community's way to address poverty and work toward our vision of a community where everyone thrives.

One in five of the 2,005 families that came to Interfaith Outreach for help last year were experiencing homelessness.

Affordable rental housing is being converted to market rate units at alarming rates, creating a bleak situation for our community's families with limited incomes. Spending 30% of a household income on housing is considered sustainable, but Interfaith families often pay 65% or more to keep a roof over their heads.

Housing is the foundation of family stability. We've seen it again and again - with a safe, stable place to call home, other dreams become possible.

Not only does your contribution to the Sleep Out help stabilize a family by addressing their immediate crisis, but those dollars also work to strengthen our neighbors through services including family support, food, housing & neighborhoods, education & youth, employment, and transportation.

Thank you for providing local families and kids the hope they so urgently need. Your gifts to the Sleep Out can and do break the cycle of poverty. Because of you, lives are changed, forever.

SHELTER
Since the Sleep Out began, funds raised have prevented homelessness and costly shelter stays 30,895 times to stabilize local families.

SUPPORTIVE, AFFORDABLE HOUSING
Affordable housing with supportive on-site services provide a network of resources that strengthen families and build strong community connections.

STABLE MARKET RATE HOUSING
Working with Interfaith Outreach toward their long-term goals, families find better paying jobs and thrive, moving into market rate housing. Even home ownership can be within reach!

Thanks to your contributions, the Sleep Out supported 2,005 families last year, helping them stabilize, strengthen and thrive.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

DONATE  Donate to the Sleep Out by Nov. 23 to have your impact DOUBLED
   iocp.org/donate

SLEEP OUT  Host your own Sleep Out or Bedless Night on the date and place of your choosing Nov. 16-Dec. 31
   iocp.org/sleepout

GET SOCIAL  Ask family, friends, workplaces and faith communities for their support
   iocp.org/sleepoutresources
Please help us serve even more families this year by sponsoring a family or making a financial gift this holiday season. Here are some ways you can make the experience even bigger and better!

- Make it a work, neighborhood or other group project to sponsor a larger family.
- Have birthday or allowance money to spend in a meaningful way? Encourage your child to give back.

Go to iocp/holidaygift to sign up to be a sponsor and buy gifts for individuals or families. Or make a financial contribution at iocp.org/donate.

---

GIVE THE GIFT OF JOY TO OUR NEIGHBORS

Volunteer: The holiday program needs 300 volunteers between now and December. Please consider giving a few hours of your time! Sign up at iocp.org/holidaygift.

Donate holiday food: Donate Thanksgiving or holiday food items to the food shelf to help families celebrate. Go to iocp.org/holidayfood for a list of our most-needed items.

Donate baked goods: You can even help from your own kitchen. Holiday cookies and bars are needed for the client Christmas party. Items should be securely packaged, labeled with quantity and type, and delivered to Interfaith Outreach Nov. 27-29, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. **THANK YOU!**

---

MISSION – To engage the heart and will of the community to respond to emergency needs and create opportunities for all to thrive.

VISION – To build a vibrant community where everyone counts and all sectors and systems work together for the good of all.

---

It is so inspiring to know there are good people like you who help others. We are so grateful for the gifts. - 2016 program participant