



NPACH
national policy and advocacy council on homelessness

About NPACH

What does NPACH do?

The National Policy and Advocacy Council on Homelessness (NPACH) is a national grassroots organization whose primary concern is to ensure that national homelessness policy accurately reflects the needs of local communities. NPACH works to accomplish its mission through:

- **Education.** By informing the public and policy makers on the causes and consequences of homelessness, we can create the will to bring about real change.
- **Grassroots organizing.** By uniting a broad base of antipoverty organizations, we can form a powerful coalition that is heard across America.
- **Research.** Our staff joins with local, state, and national organizations to study the impact of federal legislation and policy on local communities.
- **Technical assistance.** NPACH is dedicated to helping local groups and service providers as they seek to access funding for their programs. We also assist advocacy groups in the process of building strong local coalitions that can better serve their homeless populations.

NPACH's Southern Regional Office (NPACH-SRO)

The NPACH Southern Regional Office located in New Orleans, Louisiana, was founded as part of NPACH's goal of ensuring that national policy accurately reflects local needs and experience. NPACH-SRO has worked with communities across the South, from Texas to Florida, partnering with advocates, municipal governments, service providers, and faith-based organizations. We have provided technical assistance, strategic planning and coordinated regional efforts with national strategies, providing a direct connection between national advocacy and the real experience of local communities. In the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita such work is as critical as ever if we are to guarantee a just, humane and equitable reconstruction of the Gulf South. NPACH-SRO is well positioned to help address this new challenge and assist in the region's effort to recover from the impact of these terrible storms.

NPACH's Initiatives

“Rethinking Homelessness”: Homelessness occurs in rural, urban, and suburban communities alike, and has devastating effects on families, children, youth, seniors, and individuals. Yet current federal policy, as exemplified by the Administration's “chronic” homelessness initiative, is not sensitive to the realities of all communities and to the needs of all populations experiencing homelessness. As a result, many vulnerable populations are excluded from the services and supports they need to regain stability and escape the harm of homelessness. Moreover, the Department of Housing and Urban Development statutory definition of homelessness does not include households who are sharing the housing of others temporarily because they have nowhere else to go (commonly referred to as “doubled-up”), or those who are staying in motels and similar places due to lack of alternatives. Because such households are not included in the HUD definition of homelessness, they are excluded from HUD services. NPACH is working with key partners and members of Congress to amend the HUD definition, making it more inclusive of the needs of families, children, and youth.

The “Homelessness Isn't Funny”

Campaign: In 2005, NPACH launched the “Homelessness Isn't Funny” Campaign as a new initiative to raise awareness about the crisis of homelessness in America. Designed as a series of comedy and music performances, the Campaign is led by honorary chairman Will Forte of television's “Saturday Night Live.”

Other performers who have joined the campaign include Emmy-winning writer and comedian David Feldman, Doug Ferrari, and Laura Swisher.



NPACH Accomplishments

In less than two years since our founding, NPACH has accomplished the following:

- Co-authored a policy white paper “A Matter of Definition: Responding to Homelessness Among Families, Children, and Youth,” currently being used as the organizing framework for a broad-based effort to expand the HUD definition of homelessness.
- Helped draft resolution by Anchorage, Alaska Mayor Mark Begich calling on the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness and the President to seek all federal departments and funding sources broaden the definition of homelessness based on that which is currently used by the United States Department of Education. Resolution introduced and adopted at the U.S. Conference of Mayors January 2005 meeting in Washington, D.C.
- Currently working with Congressional staff on legislative language to be introduced in 109th Congress aligning the HUD definition of homelessness with the Department of Education definition.
- Co-sponsored Congressional staff briefing on family homelessness with Catholic Charities USA, Child Welfare League of America, National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, and Volunteers of America.
- Co-sponsored and were featured speakers at the Community Action Partnership’s “No Room for Poverty” rally on September 4, 2004.
- Supported the efforts of the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth in winning passage of a critical Senate amendment to improve special education services for children and youth with disabilities who are homeless.
- Partnered with the National Fair Housing Alliance to secure funding for a fair housing center in New York, and collaborated with the National Network to End Domestic Violence to provide technical assistance for transitional housing for victims of domestic violence.
- Board members and staff have contributed articles, letters and opinion pieces to, among others, the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, *The Call*, *Clearinghouse Review*, *The Promise*, *Real Change*, San Francisco’s *Street Sheet*, and *UN Habitat Debate*.
- Conducted over a dozen trainings with local organizations.
- Presented keynote addresses and workshops at over twenty conferences.
- Appeared on C-SPAN and community radio and television programs alike.
- Partnered with the United Nations Human Settlements Program to host the 2004 World Habitat Day activities in Tampa, Florida, and 2005 events in Los Angeles, California.

NPACH Consulting and Technical Assistance Projects:

- **1-2-1 Haven House**, *Hattiesburg, Mississippi*
- **Open Doors Coalition**, *Biloxi/Gulfport, Mississippi*
- **Mayors Task Force on Homelessness**, *City of Biloxi, Mississippi*
- **Hillsborough County Coalition for the Homeless**, *Florida*
- **City/County Housing Task Force**, *(Whitfield County) Dalton, Georgia*
- **Balance of State Continuum of Care**, *Philadelphia, Mississippi*
- **People's Emergency Center**, *Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*
- **Home Depot Foundation**, *Atlanta, Georgia*

NPACH BOARD OF DIRECTORS & STAFF

Robyn Frost, President *Executive Director, Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless*

Robyn Frost has worked with the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless for over 15 years, serving as Director of the Coalition's Donations Assistance Program, Director of Development and currently as Executive Director. Ms. Frost has served as President of the Board of Spare Change, the Homeless Empowerment Project, as well as a trustee of the Affordable Housing and Homeless Trust for the Credit Union League of Massachusetts. She has also served on the board of other organizations, including the Revolving Museum. Ms. Frost is a member of The Mayor's Emergency Shelter Commission and serves on the Special Fund of the United Way.

Paul Boden *Director, Western Regional Advocacy Project-San Francisco*

After experiencing homelessness in his youth, Paul Boden began working on the issue as a volunteer at a shelter where he was staying in 1983. Mr. Boden was then hired as a social worker/advocate for homeless families, youth and single adults, later to work as a supportive housing supervisor in a hotel program serving mentally ill people. He served as the Director of the Coalition on Homelessness-San Francisco for sixteen years and is the current Director of the Western Regional Advocacy Project (WRAP).

William Cobbett *Senior Urban Upgrade Advisor, Cities Alliance and United Nations Habitat*

William Cobbett is Senior Urban Upgrading Advisor for the Cities Alliance, a global partnership based at the World Bank in Washington DC. William is a senior manager in UN-HABITAT in Nairobi, from where he was integrally involved in designing and launching the Global Campaign for Secure Tenure. He was previously Director-General for Housing in South Africa after the 1994 elections, and was Director of Housing in Cape Town before joining the United Nations.

Barbara Duffield *Director of Policy, National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth*

Ms. Duffield's involvement in homeless issues began in 1990 as a tutor for homeless children in Washington, D.C. She served as Director of Education for the National Coalition for the Homeless from 1994-2003, working closely with educators, service providers, federal agencies and Congressional offices to strengthen policy and practice on children's issues. In addition to her work with NAEHCY, Ms. Duffield was a founding Advisory Committee member for the LeTendre Education Fund for Homeless Children, and continues to serve in this capacity.

Rene Heybach *Director of Law Project, Chicago Coalition for the Homeless*

Rene Heybach founded the Law Project of the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, and has served as its Director for the past 7 years. Before joining the Chicago Coalition, Ms. Heybach served for 10 years at the Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago. She is a recipient of the lifetime achievement award from the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth for her work on the rights of homeless children, and the Thomas Morsch Public Service Award from the Chicago Bar Foundation for excellence in legal work on behalf of low-income people. Among her accomplishments is a decision in *Norman v. Johnson*, which halted the Illinois child welfare agency from taking children into custody for lack of housing, and subsequently created a multi-million dollar housing assistance program.

Dr. Mary Joyce *Gianneschi Professor of Nonprofit Marketing at California State University, Fullerton*

Dr. Joyce serves on the boards of Goodwill Industries of Orange County, and the Council on Aging of Orange County. Her research encompasses the effects of aging on memory and physical health, psychological gender and women's health, social entrepreneurship & capital, and quality-of-life issues. She has published in the *Journal of Regional Analysis and Policy*, *Social Marketing Quarterly*, *Journal of Health Care Marketing*, *Journal of Social Psychology*, and the *American Journal of Small Business*. Her industry experience includes serving as Director of Marketing & Operations for the Irwin Memorial Blood Bank of the San Francisco Medical Society.

Greg Mellowe *Housing Advocate*

Greg Mellowe is the former Executive Director of the Florida Coalition for the Homeless, the statewide network for education and advocacy relating to homelessness. Prior to that, he helped develop and administer emergency shelter, transitional housing and health care programs serving homeless persons, and held a leadership position in his local homeless coalition for seven years.

Dr. Brad A. Paul, Executive Director

Has been involved in homeless advocacy since the Housing Now! march of 1989. He is the former Director of Policy with the National Coalition for the Homeless, and is the primary architect of the Bringing America Home Act and contributed to the drafting of the National Housing Trust Fund Act. Dr. Paul earned his Ph.D. from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, where his areas of study included comparative labor and industrialization in South Africa and the American South. He served as an Assistant Professor in the Department of History at the University of South Florida. His writings on housing, homelessness, and labor have appeared in such journals as the *Atlantic Monthly*, *ShelterForce*, *Clearinghouse Review*, *The Promise*, *Seattle's Real Change*, *San Francisco's Street Sheet*, and *International Union Rights*. In addition, he has appeared on C-SPAN, numerous community radio and television programs, and been quoted extensively in print media and on NPR. He currently serves on the Board of Directors for Families Forward (Baltimore-Washington), and has previously worked for Metro Atlanta Fair Housing and as housing director for the Coalition for the Homeless of Orlando. Brad is a native of Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Yonce Shelton *Director of Public Policy, Call to Renewal*

Yonce Shelton, national coordinator and policy director for Call to Renewal, manages Call's public policy initiatives and acts as Call's liaison to national partners and organizations. Central to Yonce's role are efforts to build and maintain ongoing dialogue with Members of Congress so that he may reinforce the importance of introducing and supporting anti-poverty policies which ensure that social programs are properly structured. Yonce spent four years on Capitol Hill as a Congressional staffer for Rick Boucher, a U.S. Representative from the state of Virginia. He is a graduate of Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, DC where he earned a Master of Theological Studies with a concentration in Christian Ethics.

Dr. Theresa Singleton *Research and Information Director, Housing Assistance Council*

Theresa Singleton is the director of the Housing Assistance Council's (HAC's) research and information division, which is responsible for the organization's research, communications, and Rural Gateway activities. In addition to her project and program management responsibilities, Dr. Singleton is engaged in several current research projects. Her research interests include community reinvestment, homelessness, health and housing, and race. She is a contributing author of HAC's most recent publication, *Race, Place, and Housing*, as well as several other publications. She holds a Ph.D. in political science from Temple University.

Rob Wilbanks, Director of Development and Communications

Rob Wilbanks served as a communications assistant and assistant to the Director of External Affairs for the City of Atlanta under Mayor Maynard H. Jackson. During his tenure with the City of Atlanta, Rob created original television programming for City Channel 5, acting as producer, writer, and editor. He also published the newsletter of the Office of External Affairs and assisted in the City's legislative and policy advocacy efforts at the Georgia General Assembly. Following his career in public service, Rob spent nearly a decade as a consultant and project manager in the private sector, working for Arthur Andersen Business Consulting and in the manufacturing and software implementation service lines. He is a 1990 graduate of Georgia State University with a BA degree in Communications.

Homelessness in America

How many people experience homelessness? Who are they?

- 3.5 million people are likely to experience homelessness in the course of a year.
- 1.35 million of those people are children under the age of 18.
- 42% of homeless adults are employed, but do not earn enough to afford housing and basic necessities.
- Armed forces veterans comprise 40% of the male homeless population.
- In rural areas, research indicates that families, single mothers, and children make up the largest group of people who are homeless.

Why has homelessness increased?

People find themselves homeless for many reasons—loss of a job, health crisis or natural disasters—but one thing is certain: what we think of as modern homelessness did not become widespread until major changes in federal housing policy occurred.

Between 1978 and 2003, the Department of Housing and Urban Development budget was cut by more than 60%, while the overall federal budget increased.

Funding for rural housing assistance through the USDA has been drastically reduced: from an inflation-adjusted \$2.2 billion in fiscal year 1980 to just \$99 million in fiscal year 2005.

FACT SHEET: HOMELESSNESS

One of the primary sources for observing trends in homelessness is the annual U.S. Conference of Mayors Hunger and Homelessness Survey. 27 U.S. cities participated in the 2004 survey, which revealed the following:

- Lack of affordable housing leads the list of causes of homelessness identified by the city officials. Other causes cited, in order of frequency, include mental illness and the lack of needed services, substance abuse and the lack of needed services, low-paying jobs, unemployment, domestic violence, poverty, and prisoner re-entry.
- During the past year, requests for emergency shelter increased in the survey cities by an average of 6%, with 70% of the cities registering an increase. Requests for shelter by homeless families alone increased by 7%, with 78% of the cities reporting an increase.
- An average of 23% of the requests for emergency shelter by homeless people overall and **32% of the requests by homeless families alone are estimated to have gone unmet during the last year**. In 81% of the cities, emergency shelters may have to turn away homeless families due to lack of resources; in 81% they may also have to turn away other homeless people.
- People remain homeless an average of eight months in the survey cities. 46% of the cities said that the length of time people were homeless increased during the last year.
- Officials estimate that, on average, single men comprise 41% of the homeless population, families with children 40%, single women 14% and unaccompanied youth 5%. The homeless population is estimated to be 49% African-American, 35% white, 13% Hispanic, 2% Native American and 1% Asian. 10% are veterans.
- In 56% of the cities, **families may have to break up in order to be sheltered**. In 52% of the cities families may have to spend their daytime hours outside of the shelter they use at night.
- Requests for assisted housing by low-income families and individuals increased in 68% of the cities during the last year. Assisted housing programs currently serve 32% of eligible low-income households. City officials estimate that low-income households spend an average of 45% of their income on housing.
- Applicants must wait an average of 20 months for public housing in the survey cities. The wait for Section 8 certificates is 30 months, and for Section 8 Vouchers it's 35 months. **59% of the cities have stopped accepting applications for at least one assisted housing program due to the excessive length of the waiting list.**



national policy and advocacy council on homelessness

www.npach.org

National Headquarters: 1100 17th Street NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20036 • (202) 714-5378
Southern Regional Office: 916 St. Andrew Street New Orleans, LA 70130 • (504) 524-8751