

Programming in Chapel Hill / Orange County that has an Impact on Safety, Cleanliness, Panhandling, Homelessness, & Parking In Downtown Chapel Hill

1990 – Inter-Faith Council for Social Service (IFC) moves Community Kitchen and Emergency Shelter for men & woman to current location on Rosemary Street.

2000 -Continuum of Care organizes in Orange County. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires communities to form committee to oversee HUD applications to ensure there is not a duplication of funding. Predecessor to the Partnership to End Homelessness.

2003 – Major HUD funding ends; IFC reorganizes Homestart, on Homestead Road, into transitional housing program for homeless woman with children only. Community House on Rosemary Street houses men only.

2005

July – Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership hires first full-time director, Liz Parham, to begin downtown revitalization program.

October – Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership completes surveys/community assessment and determines *Safety, Cleanliness, Panhandling, Homelessness & Parking* are top five issues effecting downtown.

October – CHDP holds downtown's first *Safety Forum* at *Top of the Hill* and outcome is an increased police presence in downtown by the Chapel Hill Police Department.

Fall - Orange County announces the beginning of the Partnership to End Homelessness (PEH) and begins creating Ten Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness. Parham serves on Executive Committee.

Fall – CHDP conducts safety seminars and safety education workshops in collaboration with the Chapel Hill Police Department, for increased personal and business safety. Also, CHDP develops the Downtown Safety Kit as a means of encouraging businesses to call 911 anytime they have safety concerns.

December – CHDP conducts Clean & Safe Audits of downtown to identify programming needs.

2006

Spring - UNC intern, Ben Murphrey, develops a *Cleanliness Report Card* for the Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership as a means of grading downtown's cleanliness and identifying ongoing needs. Reports done quarterly for one year.

Summer – Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership partners with EmPOWERment to hire a dedicated summer intern, (Jarrett Dawson) to serve as a downtown groundskeeper.

Fall – Downtown Partnership contracts with Masters Degree students from the UNC City and Regional Planning to assess how communities around the country are developing programming to address panhandling

and homelessness. Report is used as the guide for developing *Real Change from Spare Change* and *Street Outreach* approach.

September – Town of Chapel Hill hires a dedicated downtown groundskeeper to address cleanliness issues.

November – Chapel Hill Police Department begins Downtown Police Patrol Unit, designed to significantly increase police presence in downtown.

2007

January – Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership partners with West End restaurants and merchants to develop the West End Valet Parking Service.

March -The Orange County Ten Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness is released.

March – CHDP begins an aggressive graffiti removal program in collaboration with Town of Chapel Hill Public Works and Police Departments, to educate and remove graffiti and tagging throughout downtown. CHDP develops a Graffiti Tech sheet to educate downtown ownership on the best way to remove graffiti from historic buildings.

April – Housing for New Hope (HNH) begins PATH street outreach in Orange County with one staff person; helping chronically homeless individuals with mental illness get into services. Establishing a street outreach team is Goal 1 & Strategy 1 of the Ten Year Plan.

Summer – Jarrett Dawson returns as the Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership intern (downtown groundskeeper), in collaboration with EmPOWERment.

July – CHDP hires Meg McGurk as first Assistant Director; in January of 2008 her work load focuses on programming for the downtown addressing these areas.

August – **April** Volunteer groups do monthly clean-up projects downtown. Groups include Volunteers for Youth, Board of Realtors and Greek organizations.

September – **April** – Town of Chapel Hill appoints a citizen parking committee to come up with parking recommendations. Recommendations used all over the country were listed, but without Chapel Hill parking analysis and data to justify the recommendations.

September – Judge Buckner establishes pre-trial release conditions for defendants accused of larceny, panhandling and (added at a later date) sleeping on benches in the central business district. Defendants are not allowed in the central business district from the time of their release from jail until their court date with exceptions.

- CHDP develops design concept plans for Amber Alley to improve cleanliness and safety of a private alleyway that is used publicly.

October – Orange County holds first Project Homeless Connect (PHC); a community wide effort to bring together providers in a one-stop location for homeless clients to access a wide variety of services. The event serves 133 total guests; with 1 placed in permanent housing that afternoon, 3 placed in emergency shelter

and 77 guests filled out permanent housing applications. At the event 29 guests apply for jobs with employers and 33 guests sign up for job education services. McGurk heads Donations Committee for PHC.

November – Real Change from Spare Change launches through Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership. Real Change raises funds for the street outreach team and engages in community wide educational efforts surrounding panhandling and homelessness advocacy. Parham and McGurk lead educational and fundraising efforts for the initiative with strong partnerships with HNH, IFC, PHC, PEH, and Campus Y committees.

2008

January - Community House for men begins operating again on a 24 hour basis. **Other services currently offered by IFC** – emergency financial assistance (rent and utilities), clothing vouchers, free groceries from food pantry, community resource referral for English and Spanish speaking clients, free weekly medical clinic, job mentoring for homeless clients, and three free meals a day/everyday at Community Kitchen.

January – The Downtown Partnership contracts with Rich & Associates to conduct a comprehensive parking study for downtown. Expect study to be completed in July, 2008.

March – Carson Dean, hired as coordinator of the Partnership to End Homelessness. McGurk serves on Executive Committee and Working Group for PEH. Daily Tar Heel donates \$10,000 to Real Change from Spare Change.

April - The PATH street outreach team has grown to three individuals with nearly 45 hours a week of outreach work being done. As of December 2007, 174 persons have been outreached with 25 enrolled in services including substance abuse treatment and stabilized housing.

Spring - CHDP develops design plans for outdoor dining at 101 - 105 West Franklin Street / Columbia Street corner that would remove streetscape furniture and install sidewalk dining furniture to encourage commerce and sidewalk activity. Worked with property owners, Town of Chapel Hill and Josh Gurlitz on this plan. Business owners have installed colorful umbrellas and are responsible for keeping the area clean and monitored.

May – The Town of Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina- Chapel Hill, United Church of Chapel Hill and the Inter-Faith Council announce unique partnership to move the Community House to a new location in Chapel Hill. The new location will allow transitional housing and more in depth services offered.

-As of May 21st PATH street outreach team has helped **eight** chronically homeless individuals with mental health disabilities into stable, subsidized housing in Orange County!

Summer – Jarrett Dawson returns as the Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership intern (downtown groundskeeper), in collaboration with EmPOWERment.

June – CHDP receives grant from Keep America Beautiful to address cigarette litter in the downtown. Volunteers complete cigarette butt counts of East and West Ends; committee formed to decide where to locate ash receptacles, conduct community awareness campaign, and distribute free pocket ashtrays.

-CHDP applies for Keep America Beautiful grant to address graffiti; will know in August if received.

July- Housing for New Hope will increase PATH street outreach hours in Orange County again; with first full-time street outreach worker beginning July 1. With grant from OPC Mental Health Foundation, HNH will form housing support team to help homeless client with wrap-around services once in stabilized housing.

-Town of Chapel Hill grants Real Change from Spare Change \$15,000 through the Community Development Block Grant. * To date - \$29,000 raised for this program.

September- Second Project Homeless Connect event will be held on Thursday, September 25. Over 250 clients are expected. McGurk serves on PHC Steering Committee & heads Donations Committee for event.

Next Steps for 2008-2009 for Partnership to End Homelessness:

-Create Housing Support Team – team will identify chronically homeless individuals and support them through the entire process of getting into affordable housing.

-Create Community Support Team – team will provide wrap around services once a client is in stabilized housing to ensure client can stay in housing.

-Implement SOAR (SSI / SSDI Outreach Access and Recovery) – The SOAR program's sole role is to help chronically homeless with the disability application process which is an extremely involved and lengthy process. SOAR can work with an individual from the moment they are outreached by the PATH team until after they are in stabilized housing.

-Take Real Change from Spare Change county wide.

-Establish community voice mail access for all homeless individuals, as first step in Employment Initiatives of PEH.