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Friendship Place is walking to help end homelessness

Friendship Place's annual walk to combat homelessness has a big name sponsor and even bigger goals

By [John Riley](#) on October 27, 2017 @[JohnAndresRiley](#)

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Friendship Walks — Photo: Rod Hill

“Several years ago, Fannie Mae held a big walk on the National Mall to bring attention to ending homelessness in the D.C. Metro area,” says Jean-Michel Giraud, executive director of Friendship Place. “When Fannie Mae stopped doing it, we decided, in our much smaller way, to take it over, and try to grow the walk over the years.”

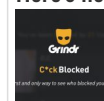
For the fourth year, Friendship Place will host Friendship Walks, an annual 1.5-mile trek around the Mall that raises money for the organization's various initiatives, including programming geared toward homeless LGBTQ youth.


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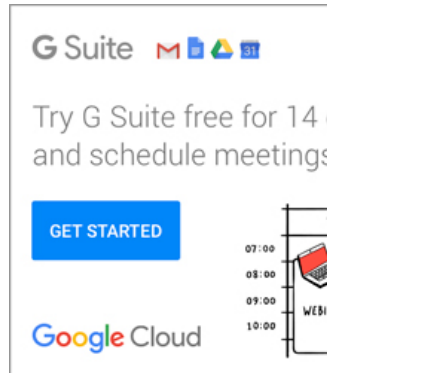
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Just prior to the walk, which kicks off at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 4, Friendship Place will hold a short program on homelessness and its efforts to combat it, in order to get people energized. A short ceremony involving Mayor Muriel Bowser will take place following the walk, which is expected to end around noon. The day will also feature music by DJ EZ Street, a podcaster and former radio personality for 93.9 WKYS.



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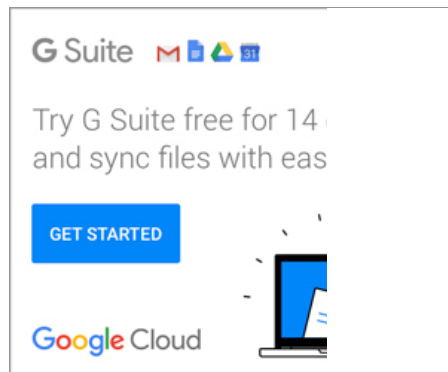
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Amazon has announced that it will match all funds raised for the walk up to \$1 million. "We're hoping Amazon's involvement can help attract more corporate sponsors for future events and help make significant investments in the fight against homelessness in our area," Giraud says. He is especially excited about funding a new initiative known as Family Connect, launched last month.

"We are doing things that are very creative, blending some of our best practices to keep people in their homes, like rapid rehousing, employment-first, providing immediate cash assistance, food assistance, paying for security deposits or first and last month's rent, and paying to save storage unit contents," he says. "We're just doing anything we need to do to find solutions for these families."



The 4th Annual Friendship Walks is on Saturday, Oct. 4, from 10 a.m.-noon. The walk kicks off at 10:30 a.m. in front of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on the Mall. To register, or for more information, visit friendshipwalk.org.



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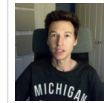
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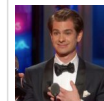
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