



Ending homelessness
Rebuilding lives

Source: Friendship Place

October 28, 2019 07:00 ET

Friendship Place wants you to know that November is National Homeless Awareness Month

Annual Walk on the National Mall offers solutions

Washington, DC, Oct. 28, 2019 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- November is National Homeless Awareness Month, and supporters of [Friendship Walks](#)—the annual walk on the National Mall aimed at fighting homelessness—want everyone to spread the news. They are asking area residents to resolve to find ways to support the work to end homelessness during November, including registering to attend the walk on November 9.

“November is the beginning of the cold months when people living on the street are especially in need of our services,” says [Friendship Place](#) President & CEO Jean-Michel Giraud. His organization organizes the annual walk and rally. “National Homeless Awareness Month is an opportunity for us to place a spotlight on the work and movement to end homelessness. And, through Friendship Walks, we’re using the collective voices of hundreds of caring and engaged people across our communities to bring others into the cause.”

Fifty-year-old William Spessard experienced homelessness in the DC area for more than 26 years. He speaks candidly about his experience during this time of the year. “When it rains for a week, it’s the worst thing,” he recalls. “Snow you can brush off, but with rain, there’s no place to get dry. You put your stuff in a bag and it still gets wet.” William received housing from Friendship Place a few days before Christmas in 2017.

Friendship Place plays a major role in the fight to end homelessness in the DC region. Proceeds from Friendship Walks allow the organization to house the greatest number of individuals experiencing homelessness in the District. Friendship Place also has an impact in Maryland and Virginia. Last year, the nonprofit ended or prevented homelessness for 1,640 people, including 572 children and 355 veterans. Across all of its programs, Friendship Place served more than 3,700 individuals with housing, jobs, food, showers, laundry, and other services.

According to the 2019 Point In Time Count, 6,521 people are living on the streets, in cars, in shelters, and in transitional housing across the Nation’s Capital. DC remains the US metropolitan area with the highest rate of homelessness. Although homelessness among families dramatically decreased in the past year, homelessness among individuals rose from 3,761 to 3,862.

“Friendship Place does an amazing job in engaging and inspiring our community to get involved in the effort to end homelessness,” says Ward 3 Councilmember Mary Cheh. “While we should all be engaged in this effort year-round, the month of November being National Homeless Awareness Month and the walk on the National Mall affords us a unique opportunity to keep our homeless neighbors at the forefront of our minds.”

Friendship Walks registrant and former Friendship Place board member Marjorie Dick Stuart explains that although Friendship Walks is fun and lively, the event brings attention and resources to the effort to house some of the most vulnerable people in the area. “It’s not just a one-day event,” she says. “People are

already spreading the message that we can indeed eradicate homelessness, and they're getting their neighbors, colleagues, family members, and social circles to play a role in the movement."

Friendship Walks will feature the voices of men and women who have rebuilt their lives following homelessness. Councilmember Cheh will be among the speakers at the event. WHUR radio personality EZ Street will be joined by the Tommy Show hosts Tommy McFLY and Kelly Collis.

To register for Friendship Walks, visit friendshipwalks.org.

To learn more about Friendship Place, go to friendshipplace.org.

Attachment

- [Postcard 2019 Front](#)

Yimka Odebode
Friendship Place
202.503.2964
yodebode@friendshipplace.org