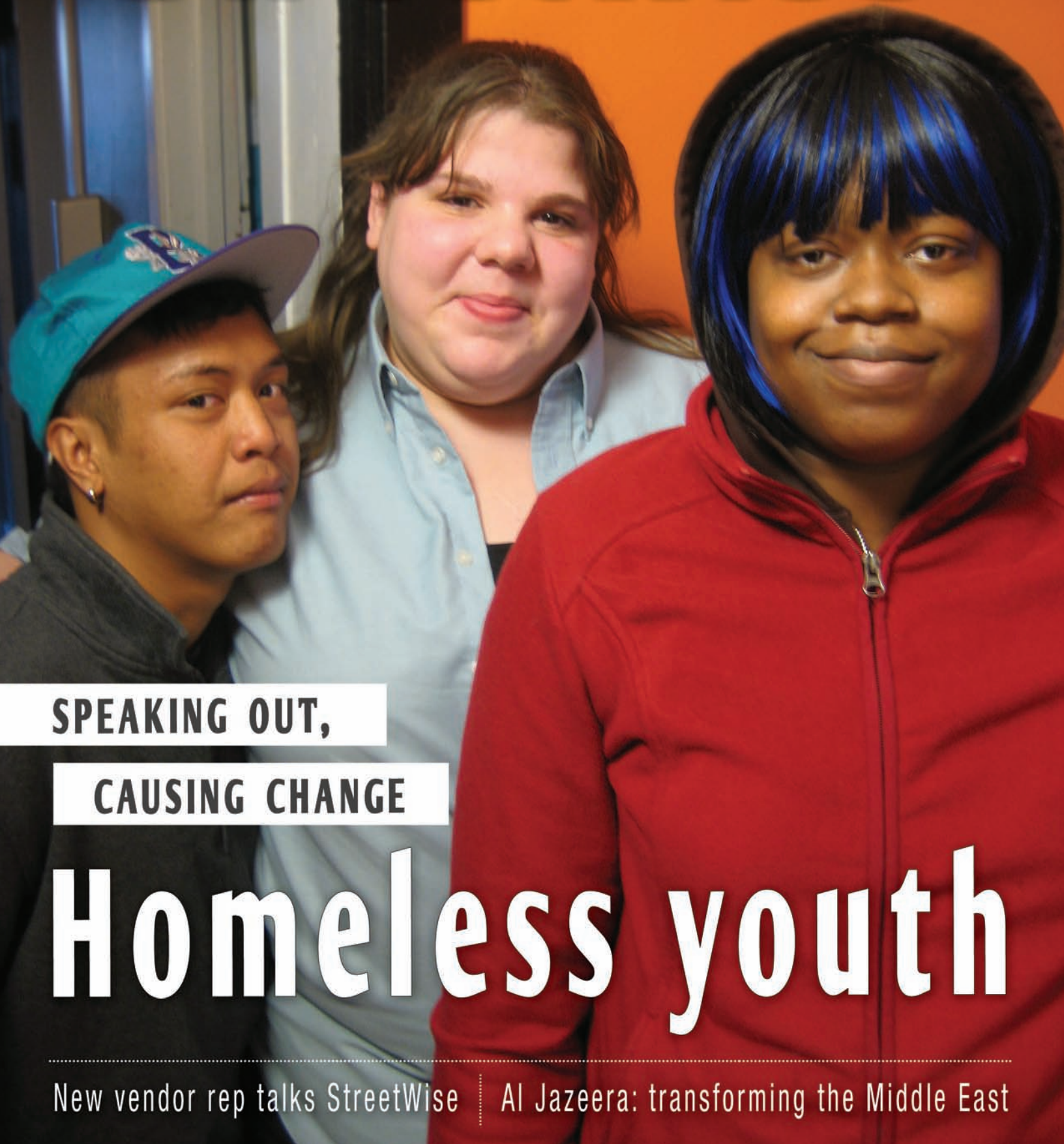


April 13-19, 2011  
Vol. 19 No. 16

chicago

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# StreetWise



**SPEAKING OUT,**

**CAUSING CHANGE**

# Homeless youth

.....  
New vendor rep talks StreetWise | Al Jazeera: transforming the Middle East



# The Shocking Lack of Services of Homeless Youth



By Jim LoBianco,  
StreetWise Executive Director

**A**cross Chicago there is a strong collaboration of groups who advocate on the issue of homelessness. However, within this collaborative, as in society in general, the voices campaigning for the needs of homeless youth are in the minority.

Unfortunately, it appears that this minority voice is not given the attention equal to the importance of its cause. As with any crisis, early intervention is its key to long-term success. When it comes to homeless youth the facts are simple: services in the city of Chicago are falling far behind the need. Because of this gross deficiency in services it is safe to assume that many of the homeless youth of today will be the homeless adults of tomorrow.

### Shelter

**Fact:** There are approximately 189 beds for homeless youth (ages 18-25) funded by the City of Chicago.

**Fact:** Over the course of 2010, agencies that oversaw those 189 beds turned away an approximate total of 4,775 homeless youth. To be clear, that was 4,775 instances where homeless youth who sought shelter were unable to find it.

**Deficiency:** Currently there are approximately 10% of the beds needed to provide safe shelter and the accompanying support programs for youth in need.

### Educational Deficiencies

**Fact:** For the 2009/2010 education year the Chicago Public School (CPS) system reported 3,682 unaccompanied homeless youth, (an approximate 26% increase over the previous school year). The total number of students reported as homeless was 15,027, (an approximate 20% increase over the previous school year).

**Fact:** As part of cost saving measures CPS eliminated the position that oversaw all homeless youth services within the school system. In addition to cutting this critical position, CPS has failed to fill other vacancies within the same unit.

**Deficiency:** At a time when the numbers of homeless youth enrolled in CPS are increasing, top school administrators are cutting the positions dedicated to serving these children.

The topics of shelter and education are just two of the critical areas in which homeless youth are grossly underserved. StreetWise is proud to dedicate the focus of this issue to ongoing efforts to increase funding and services for this most at-risk population. Working with social service providers, the City has made some positive progress, but, there is still much work to be done.

I would appreciate your feedback on the issues presented in this youth focused edition. Please share your thoughts with me at [tipline@streetwise.org](mailto:tipline@streetwise.org)

## Our Mission

To help people help themselves to self-sufficiency through gainful employment

## Where the money goes...

Vendors buy *StreetWise* for 90 cents, and sell it for \$2—the profit of \$1.10 goes directly to the licensed vendor.



## About Us

StreetWise is published weekly and is sold by the poor and homeless of Chicago.

StreetWise is a registered 501(c)3 non-profit organization and is a member of the North American Street Newspaper Association (NASNA).

1201 W. Lake, Chicago Illinois 60607  
Office: 312.829.2526 Fax: 312.829.2623

## Look for the Badge!



Please purchase your copy of *StreetWise* from a badged vendor only.

Questions/comments regarding our vendor force?  
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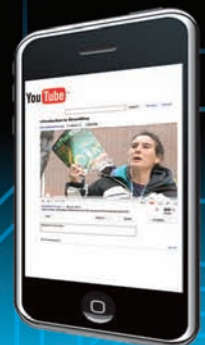
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## Your StreetWise vendor

StreetWise vendor John Corcoran, at left, works by Loyola University in Rogers Park. He is always very sweet and polite and that way the paper almost sells itself.

-Peter A. Payton

## Cover Story

### HOMELESS YOUTH



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### MAY STREET CAFE



This contemporary Latino restaurant has something for every appetite.

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## Vendor Profile

### PERCY SMITH



StreetWise vendor rep Percy Smith talks about his desire to improve StreetWise's image, and having a positive outlook.

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## Our Staff

Executive Director/Publisher  
**Jim LoBianco**

Editor-in-Chief  
**Suzanne Hanney**  
[suzannestreetwise@yahoo.com](mailto:suzannestreetwise@yahoo.com)

Director of Distribution & Vendor Services  
**Greg Pritchett**  
[gpritchett85@yahoo.com](mailto:gpritchett85@yahoo.com)

Production & Marketing Manager  
**Ben Cook**  
[bcook@streetwise.org](mailto:bcook@streetwise.org)

Advertising Sales Executives  
**Grace Federighi**  
[grace@streetwise.org](mailto:grace@streetwise.org)

**Mary Faith Hilboldt**  
[maryfaithhilboldt@gmail.com](mailto:maryfaithhilboldt@gmail.com)

## Contributing Writers

**Cindy Kurman Barrie and Lee Barrie** are the principals of Kurman Communications, Inc., a Chicago-based marketing and public relations agency. Please follow all StreetWise restaurant features on Twitter @DineWise and subscribe to the blog at: <http://dinewise-chicago.blogspot.com>. Or visit their blog at [gotbuzzatkurman.com](http://gotbuzzatkurman.com)

**Brittany Langmeyer** is a student at Loyola University Chicago and a former StreetWise intern. She is currently finishing her last year in school with double-majors in Journalism and Theatre and minors in Political Science and Dance. During her time in school, she has been President of the LUC Dance Company and has performed in numerous school productions.

After graduation, Brittany has great aspirations for the future. She hopes to pursue both an acting and writing career and possibly delve into public relations. In her spare time, Brittany enjoys spending time with her family and friends

**Megan Millard** is a senior at Loyola University in Chicago, and is set to graduate in May with a Journalism major

and a minor in Asian Languages and Literature. She is currently an intern at StreetWise. Originally from Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin, she has had many opportunities to experience Journalism in a big city while at Loyola. She also had the opportunity to study abroad in Beijing, China for a semester where she continued to study Journalism as well as the Chinese language—two of her passions. After spending four years in the city of Chicago, she has grown to love it more and more and plans to stay after graduation continuing the pursuit of a career. Megan is thrilled to have the opportunity to intern at StreetWise and deal with issues facing Chicago firsthand.

**Mike Ortiz** is a student at Loyola University Chicago and an intern at StreetWise. He is currently majoring in Journalism and Visual Communication. Aside from his studies, he plays baseball every summer. After graduation, he plans to use both his skills in the real world and pursue his baseball career.

Catch our live call-in show  
**StreetWise Street Scene**  
On every Friday @ 5:30 p.m.  
CAN-TV Channel 21  
Call in and join the conversation



# Activists fight for safe patient handling & accessibility

**A**ctivists from across Illinois converged on the state Capitol, Wednesday, March 30 to lobby for recently introduced legislation and policies to improve the lives of people living with multiple sclerosis (MS) and other debilitating diseases. The meetings were part of the National MS Society, Greater Illinois Chapter's MS Action Day 2011 event, and part of a month-long initiative by the chapter to increase public MS awareness.

Greater Illinois Chapter President, John V. Blazek, stated "I am excited for this year's Action Day, and I am thankful for the opportunity that our staff and volunteer MS advocates have to visit with so many influential political leaders in order to make the necessary changes that will improve the lives of all people living with a disability in Illinois."

To assist people with physical disabilities in refueling their automobiles, the Illinois Public Policy Network (IPPN), composed of the Greater Illinois Chapter and Gateway Area Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, advocated for the amendment of the Motor Fuel Sales Act and sought support for SB1238, sponsored by Sen. Mike Jacobs (D-Moline).

This legislation requires that gasoline stations and service stations provide a phone number posted on the pump for readier access to the attendant, as well as providing a minimum of one fueling site with specific calling device specifications that allows the disabled operator of a motor vehicle to request refueling assistance.

"Living with a chronic condition and disability such as MS can be a challenge," said Greater Illinois Chapter board member and Advocacy and Government Relations Committee Co-Chair, Maureen Linehan Howard. "Everyday life, such as refueling your automobile or accessing a four-foot high X-ray exam table can be overwhelming and discouraging. [Those attending MS Action day] choose to make a difference [by] educating their legislators and debating their opponents armed with facts and statistics.

"Their actions not only benefit the more than 20,000 people affected by MS, but also the 782,000 people living with a mobility disability and the close to two million people with disabilities in Illinois."

The IPPN also sought support for SB1577, sponsored by Sen. Linda Holmes (D-Plainfield) and HB1684, sponsored by Rep. Lou Lang (D-Skokie). This legislation enhances the Hospital Licensing Act by ensuring patient safety, dignity, self-determination, and choice, in a safe patient handling policy that works to control the risk of injury to patients and health care workers associated with the lifting, transferring, repositioning, or movement of a patient.

The Hospital Licensing Act currently requires hospitals to adopt a policy to develop

strategies to control risk of injury to patients and staff associated with lifting, moving, transferring or repositioning a patient. It will also ensure that policies and strategies will maintain the patient's right to choose how to be moved, ensure that nurses and health care workers are trained in safe moving techniques and provide and inform the patient of a range of safe handling options, including the use of a trained safe lifting team, mechanical lifting devices and accessible medical equipment. A mobility assessment and plan for lifting, transferring, repositioning, or moving a patient, should be documented upon admission and as the patient's status changes; safe lifting procedures, techniques, and equipment will be consistent with applicable federal law.

## Letter to the Editor

DEAR MS. HANNEY,

I was left scratching my head upon reading Ralph Martire's comment in your latest issue that, given most current casino companies are owned by non-Illinoisans, gambling in Chicago would be a "net negative for local economies in the long term." First, I'd like to ask Mr. Martire whether Gary, Indiana counts as a local economy. It's the headquarters of Majestic Star Casinos, which operates casinos in Colorado, Indiana, Mississippi, Nevada. Illinois might someday be on that list.

Second, I'd like to challenge Mr. Martire's comment that gambling in Chicago would "literally" be a net negative. To the contrary, whether a casino is owned by a company in Gary or Beijing, a person's choice to spend money there creates an indisputable economic gain for everyone involved. Casinos provide valuable entertainment services to individuals who partake in their offerings. In return, casinos make profits. If a casino is unprofitable, that is a signal consumers derive no value from it, and it will likely close.

Arguments against casino gambling in Chicago are either based on the assumption that someone must be a net loser when another makes a profit or that people need to be saved from themselves. Sometimes both. Personal concerns of addiction aside, Chicagoans ought to be able to gamble closer to home if they like. Although it's difficult for Illinois legislators to write bills that don't dole favors out to those close to them, legislation enabling gambling in Chicago ought to apply universally to any and every casino that wishes to open its doors in town.

Sincerely,  
Richard Lorenc  
Cofounder Liberty Markets LLC 118 N Clinton St., Suite 102 Chicago, IL

## Street papers battle illegal sales

By Simon Ankjaergaard  
Hus Forbi (Denmark)

Street papers are a winning formula and many want a share of it. Problems with fake vendor IDs and even organized crime have been reported, but street papers are fighting back. A new, hardline approach is proving successful in Denmark.

At the start of this year, Danish street paper *Hus Forbi* introduced new, more fool-proof vendor identification badges. At the same time, the organization has tightened its existing rules for selling and distributing the street paper. It is an effort to crack down on the illegal sales of the street paper.

Ole Skou, board chairman of *Hus Forbi*, says: "We have encountered problems with illegal vendors, who amongst other things use fake vendor ID badges to sell *Hus Forbi*. We discovered that these vendors get hold of the paper through vendors with legal IDs, who—contrary to the rules—buy the paper for redistribution. Other vendors managed to get magazines from a distribution point without a valid ID."

## Fixing bikes for homeless cyclists

By Terris Harned  
Street Roots (Portland)

In April 2010, C.J. Speelman founded Wrench Raiders, a grassroots organization of volunteers who help maintain bikes for people who are homeless or who have no other source of income or transportation. The California transplant calls himself a self-taught mechanic who put himself in this line of work after seeing the need among people who were homeless who relied solely on their bikes for mobility, but who couldn't afford to fix them. A flat tire or faulty breaks could be crippling and even fatal. But equally important, a solid, well-oiled steed is independence, opportunity and survival.

Wrench Raiders operates a mobile repair shop that provides repairs at no charge, but underlying the work is a message of building community and connecting social classes, inside and outside.



By Adam Forrest  
The Big Issue in Scotland

Western media attributes the success of the Arab uprisings to Facebook and Twitter. But it is a Qatari-based news station that has truly changed the nature of free debate in the region.

At meetings on the Egyptian uprising at the White House last month, presidential advisers followed events on Al Jazeera. More importantly, the crowds shaping events in Cairo's Tahrir Square were also watching Al Jazeera's coverage, rigging outdoor screens to alternative frequencies after Mubarak's government had disrupted the channel's regular satellite transmission. The revolution would be televised, and the revolutionaries would not be denied from witnessing the wider impact of their presence on the streets.

If dictators are toppled by people, not technology (as many have pointed out since the downfall of Presidents Mubarak and Ben Ali in Tunisia), it is impossible to ignore the power of the media, old and new, in creating the conditions for change. And if the western media has tended to overstate the dominion of Facebook and Twitter in the Arab world, the obsession has only overshadowed the most powerful media influence of all: a 15-year-old TV news network based in the Gulf peninsula.

Even egocentric rivals have been forced to pay tribute Al Jazeera. Wikileaks conceded in a tweet that, "Yes, we may have helped Tunisia, Egypt. But let us not forget the elephant in the room: Al Jazeera + sat dishes". Rached Ghannouchi, leader of Tunisia's Islamist party al-Nahda, who returned last month from exile in Britain, said the success of the revolution "is

30% to 40% thanks to Facebook, and the rest to Al Jazeera."

At the height of the demonstrations in Cairo, somewhere between one million and two million people took to the streets, perhaps as many as eight million across Egypt, numbers which eclipse even the epoch-defining revolutions in France and Russia. Clearly, in a nation where only 15 to 20 per cent of people have internet access, mass defiance required something more than social networking.

Understanding this new fearlessness, and a sizeable part of the impulse toward freedom of expression, requires a brief journey back to 1996, when the Emir of Qatar agreed to fund an Arabic satellite news channel in Dohar. The birth of Al Jazeera (The Peninsula) heralded a new kind of journalism in the Middle East, acting as the main pillar of the fourth estate in a region with only the shakiest of democratic foundations.

"Al Jazeera played the watchdog role in the region by being willing to challenge governments," says Egyptian columnist Adel Iskander. "It allowed critics and dissidents and revolutionaries to develop a voice. Of course many people had alternative visions for their particular country before, but never had an opportunity to speak on air. It pulled out the earplugs."

If some onlookers in Europe and the States remain suspicious of what they view as the network's anti-Israel and anti-US rhetoric (intervention in Pakistan, Afghanistan and elsewhere is often referred to as the "so-called war on terror"), they are being forced to adapt to the idea of well-equipped news teams surveying the globe from a non-Western perspective.

© www.streetnewsservice.org



## Theatre

### PIPPIN

You won't want to miss the last weekend for "Pippin," put on by Loyola University Chicago's Department of Fine and Performing Arts. In this rock-musical, the young prince Pippin yearns to discover the source of true happiness and goes to the earth's end to find



it. But he comes to learn that true joy may come from the simplest of things. This hip fairy tale will have you dancing in your seat and laughing hysterically the whole way through. Dates: runs April 14, 15, and 16 at 7:30 p.m. and April 17 at 2 p.m., Admission: \$7 to \$15. Go to <http://luc.fix.com/Schedule.asp?ActCode=50255> to purchase tickets.



E. Faye Butler in *Working* Photo: Amy Boyle

### WORKING

Pulitzer Prize-winning Studs Terkel is one of the most renowned Chicagoans, known for his oral history book that so finely depicts the loves, hopes and dreams of 26 working men and women. This deeply captivating picture of Chicago's people has been turned into a musical, adapted by Stephen Schwartz, known for his work on "Wicked" and "Godspell." Dates: running now until May 8. Location: Broadway Playhouse (175 E. Chestnut St.), Admission: \$67.50 to \$97.50. Go to [www.broadwayinchicago.com](http://www.broadwayinchicago.com) for more information.

## Events Calendar

### APRIL 15

For many people, high school was one of the toughest periods of life. But HighSight, a non-profit organization, is trying to reverse this pattern by providing academic and social support to Chicago high school students. Help HighSight in its efforts by attending **Happy Hour** at STATE Restaurant (935 W. Webster Ave.). Enjoy a three-hour meal and drink package that includes call level drinks, domestic drafts and gourmet passed appetizers. Half of all proceeds will go to HighSight. 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., Admission: \$30.

Attend **Socially Aware, A Non-Profit Fair** and learn more about the needs of others all around you. Find out how to be more involved in your community when you attend this event, sponsored by 220 Communications, a media group that focuses on creating experiences that bring attention to social needs. Fifteen different Chicago area nonprofits will be there to tell you more about various volunteer opportunities, upcoming events, or how to simply be more involved. 6 to 9 p.m., Location: Hotel Sax (333 N. Dearborn), Admission: \$30. Visit <http://socially-aware.eventbrite.com/> to purchase tickets.

### APRIL 16

Because the Oriental Institute firmly believes that children are our future, it will host **Día del Niño**, a celebration meant to honor the city's children. Sponsored by the Oriental Institute and the National Museum of Mexican Art, this yearly event will showcase the bilingual services and activities offered by the museums of Chicago. Kids may discover the bilingual gallery activity cards and computer interactives that will invite them to explore the mysteries of ancient tombs, find toys, games and animals of the prehistoric worlds, and dig like archaeologists to find special secrets. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Location: University of Illinois Pavilion (525 South Racine), Admission: free

While our brothers and sisters in Japan suffer after the devastating effects of the earthquake and tsunami, we must do our best to reach out to them and show them that we care. At the **Show Your Love Benefit for Japan**, musicians from the Old Town School of Folk Music will jam in honor of the Japanese. Performers will include Yoko Noge, Paulinho Garcia, Shoji Naito, John Yost, and more. 11 a.m. start., Location: Old Town School of Folk Music (909 W. Armitage Ave.), Admission: \$10 suggested donation. Call 773-728-6000 for more info.

Unleash the power of your green thumb and get ready to spruce up your yard just in time for the warm weather. And while you're at it, use your gardening talents for a good cause and join members of the **Youth Leaders Society** for spring planting at the gardens of the Northside College Prep High School. The goal of the project is to bring nature into the city while also sourcing local and reusable materials. 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Location: Northside College Prep High School (5501 N. Kedzie Ave.), Admission: free. Register at <http://springgardening-yls.eventbrite.com/>.

### APRIL 17

If your child is diabetic, you don't have to feel like you're depriving them of the food they really enjoy eating. Learn how to cook the meals they love at the **Jimmy Insulin Spring Celebration**, a healthy diabetic cooking event for kids and their families. Children will be able to interact with the chefs and enjoy mime entertainment as well as snacks and beverages. Learn a whole array of tips from Chef David Blackmon and Nutritionist David Grotto. 1 to 3 p.m., Location: Kenmore Live Cooking Studio (678 N. Wells St.), Admission: \$30 for adults, \$10 for kids. Get your tickets at <http://jjspringcelebration.eventbrite.com/>.

### APRIL 19

The 5,000 local children and adults with intellectual disabilities who participate in Special Olympics Chicago need your encouragement and support. Attend this month's **Cocktails for Causes** to benefit the Special Olympics and lend some inspiration to these amazing people who push the limits of life. The determined have been training all year and will be competing in 19 sports. With your help, they will cross the finish line and reach their goals. 5:30 to 8 p.m., Location: The Drake's Palm Court (140 E. Walton Place), Admission: free. Go to <http://cocktails-4causesapril2011.eventbrite.com/> to register.

-Compiled by Brittany Langmeyer



Check out cocktail fundraisers for Special Olympics and HighSight this week

# May Street Café: From Pioneering Latin Bistro to Thriving Contemporary Latino Restaurant

By Lee Barrie & Cindy Kurman Barrie  
StreetWise Contributors

For nine years, chef/owner Mario Santiago has been a passionate evangelist for his pride and joy, the May Street Café, located at the south end of the Pilsen neighborhood. When this pioneering contemporary Latino restaurant first opened, the area was rather bleak and colorless. Today, this strip of West Cermak is becoming a magnet for other interesting establishments, and the re-emergence of the neighborhood is now underway. Much of the credit must go to the effervescent Santiago and his indefatigable efforts to build a unique destination that attracts not only the locals, but a following from Chicagoland near and far.

May Street Café has done quite a bit of growing up during the years. What started as a modest, albeit colorful, bistro that offered quick-bite lunch and a more robust Nuevo Latino dinner menu, is now a full fledged restaurant that is stylishly decorated with rich contemporary furnishings, colorful modern Latino art, an attractive and well stocked bar with a solid wine collection, and a well appointed covered outdoor patio that doubles the seating capacity during warm weather months. Santiago's culinary skills and creativity have helped him build a strong catering business as well.

The dinner menu features many creative Latino specialties plus a full complement of steaks and chops from the noted Allen Brothers meat purveyors. The meat doesn't get much fresher—Santiago drives directly to the Allen Brothers packing facility a short distance away to pick up his supply for the day.

## Starting off right

Traditional starters include freshly made Guacamole served with delicious homemade tortilla chips and a spicy Queso Fundido. Specialty appetizers include Escargot with crispy phyllo, garlic butter and seasonal berries; Quesadillas with French double crème Brie, winter pears and homemade chipotle sauce, and Argentine-style Empanadas stuffed with prime beef. Soups include a traditional Tortilla soup—grilled chicken in a spicy tomato broth with avocado and sour cream, and a delicious Butternut Squash Soup with cranberries and crème.

Salads are creative and large-portioned. We love May Street Café's signature Chef's Salad, made with arugula, blue cheese, warm sautéed

apples and mango balsamic. Another delight is Evy's Spinach Salad, enlivened with goat cheese, avocado, pecans and red onions in a balsamic dressing.

## Signature dishes

May Street Café's signature cuisine covers several Latin American regions and the food has become so fine tuned for flavor and creativity that it really shines. The varied collection of seafood and fish dishes is original and wonderfully prepared. If you're in the mood for fish, try the Wild Salmon Blackstone in a tequila chipotle cream sauce with Spanish rice and black beans, or the pan-seared Tilapia with choice of mashed potatoes and a mango tomatillo sauce. If you're inclined toward seafood, you'll enjoy the Shrimp Diabla Pasta in a tomato cream sauce—mild, medium, or hot, take your pick. Another seafood house specialty is the hearty and addictive La Piña de la Playa de Puerto Rico, a Paella-type dish with shrimp and scallops, Spanish fried

American and South American tastes. Steak lovers have much to cheer about. All are prime Allen Brothers' meats; choose from Peppercorn Fajita, 12-ounce Rib Eye, 12-ounce New York Strip, or the 20-ounce Porterhouse. All steaks are prepared with a signature blend of peppercorn spices and can be ordered with choice of mashed potatoes, sautéed mushrooms, grilled asparagus and cranberry butter.

Other meat dishes include a Grilled Boneless Center Cut Pork Chop served with a cilantro mango salsa, jasmine coconut rice and Cuban black beans; the very popular Lechon Asado, slow cooked oven roasted pork marinated with mojo criollo Puerto Rican spices; Lamb Chops and penne pesto pasta, and Beef Tenderloin Skewers. There is also a tasty gourmet burger rendition: the May Street Mexican Burger, made with 10 ounces of prime ground beef, chipotle ketchup, fresh crema, avocado, red onions and cilantro and served with yucca fries.



rice in a chipotle coconut sauce, served inside a hollowed-out half pineapple.

Poultry and vegetarian options abound. The Cinnamon Chipotle Chicken Fajitas include yellow squash, zucchini, Portobello mushrooms in a chipotle cream sauce (they can be ordered vegetarian style if you so choose). Another standout is Abuela Ines' Chicken Con Mole, prepared Michoacan style with apricots, nuts, chocolate, peppers, and pumpkin seeds. Vegetarian specialties include Chiles Rellenos a la Lupita, a poblano pepper coated in egg batter, stuffed with Chihuahua cheese, and covered in a Michoacan tomato sauce, and a Grilled Portobello Mushroom with wilted greens, sautéed organic seasonal vegetables and goat cheese.

The meat and chops collection enables May Street Café to stand out from other Latino restaurants while paying homage to both North

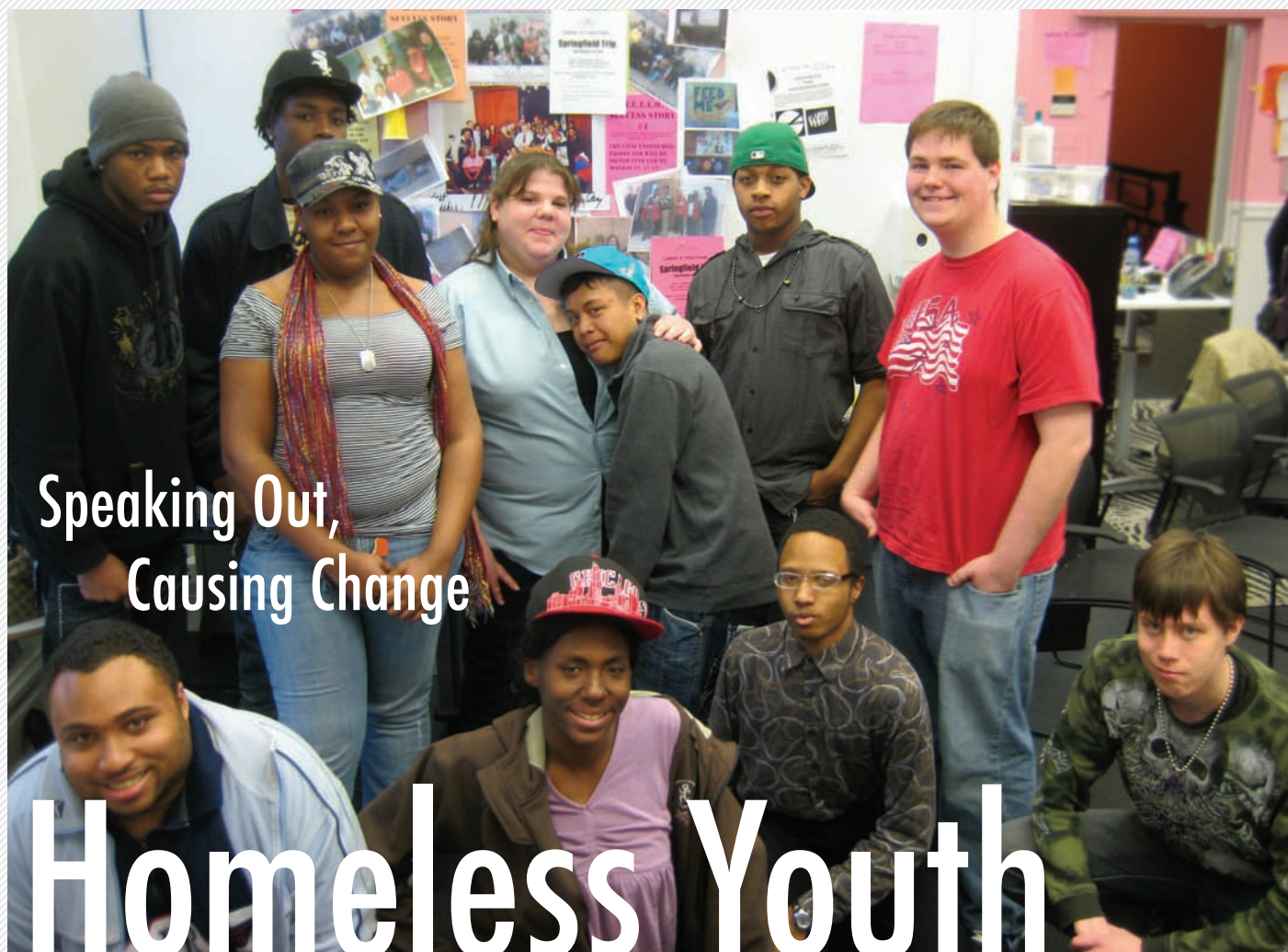
## Miscellaneous

Additional notes: Don't forget the creative side dishes and the desserts, which get equal attention here. Among the desserts are several delicious flans and a semi-decadent Double Chocolate Lava Cake. Finish off your meal with an *anejo*, a top-quality sipping tequila. The bar also offers many original muddled specialty margaritas, mojitos and martinis. May Street Café is open on Thursdays and Fridays for lunch.

**May Street Café**  
1146 W. Cermak, Chicago  
(312) 421-4442; [www.maystcafe.com](http://www.maystcafe.com)

Hours: 5-10 p.m., Tues.-Thurs.; 5-11 p.m., Fri.-Sat.; 5-9 p.m., Sun.; lunch is served from 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m. on Thurs. and Fri.  
Entrée prices: \$15-\$25; steak prices: \$25-\$50





Speaking Out,  
Causing Change

# Homeless Youth

By Ben Cook  
StreetWise Staff

**H**.E.L.L.O. (Homeless Experts Living Life's Obstacles) meets every Tuesday night at the Broadway Youth Center to share insights, troubles and strategies concerning being young and homeless in Chicago. Active for seven years, the weekly discussion is “self-perpetuation,” says cofounder and group leader Anne Holcomb. “They have a yearly agenda, and all the content is youth-driven.”

Last featured on the cover of *StreetWise* in early July 2009, the group discussion has taken on a bolder, more self-assured tone—with good reason—their voice has been heard. By Mayor Richard M. Daley no less.

After years of sharpening their issues and devising practical, street-smart solutions, H.E.L.L.O. caught the Mayor's attention at an August 2009 city budget hearing. Moved by the group's proposals, Mayor Daley followed one of the youth presenters out into the hallway to talk—where he was promptly invited to H.E.L.L.O.'s annual art show. He came. Thrilled, the group asked to meet with him at his office to present their best ideas, and the

Chicago Homeless Youth Task Force was born. (See the rough draft of their report on page 10)

The reoccurring, preventable issues that Chicago homeless youth face can be branched under sufficient access to safe shelter, education at both the high school and college levels, transportation, employment, and drop-in shelters/street outreach.

Empowered with their recent success, and energized to make positive change for themselves and their peers, the group expanded on their core issues at a March 29 H.E.L.L.O. meeting.

Crystal, a formerly homeless youth who's been extremely involved in H.E.L.L.O.'s activism, kicks off the discussion.

“The task force has been going extremely well—we have been doing fantastic work. I was really excited when we got the request for a proposal (RFP) for The Crib, [see page 11-12] I feel that we are really rocking out with the Task Force, and I wouldn't change anything about it. I'm still going to every meeting. I love what I do.”

A youth who's come to only three to four H.E.L.L.O. meetings so far was enthusiastic. “I think that this group is a really good outlet for people who want to make a change in their community. It's so open to any teenager who wants

to come in off the street. They can just sit down and express how they feel about things that are going on in their community. Those ideas get put up onto an agenda, and can make a change. It makes it easy for a person to make a change in their community, even if they don't know how, or never had before. I think that's really great.”

## Gimme Shelter

Access to a safe, clean shelter was one of the most talked-about issues.

Conrad, one of the most vocal representatives of the H.E.L.L.O. group, represents the collective groups' housing goals when he attends meetings for the Chicago Task Force on Homeless Youth (CTFHY). He said that the goal to double youth housing over the next few years was unacceptable—it needs to be tripled and immediately.

Anne Holcomb commented, “Homeless youth are homeless right now. I mean, we do care about the shorties that come after us as well, and we hope that they don't go through some of the things that we're going through right now.”

Crystal agreed. “We still need our drop-ins. We need a 24-hour drop-in, but it's something that the city keeps putting on the back burner. I feel that if they aren't going to do anything to



increase shelter beds right now then they need create someplace safe to go at night.”

A youth commented, “I’ve been at The Crib for the last two months now. Even though it’s new, they still have to turn people away every night because there’s no more room. There’s 15 kids turned away every night. You have to get there between 8:30–45 p.m. to get a bed, but if there’s more than 20 kids then they do a lottery.”

Holcomb added, “A lot of the veteran kids will see the line, and know how many beds there are, so they’ll leave and try to find a bed on the train for the night. We need more Cribs all over the city.”

The youth continued, “If The Crib closes down [April 30] I’ll have to go couch surfing... I go from one friend to another, back on the streets, back on the train.” Currently Crystal puts him up for two nights a week—as much as her rental agreement permits.

Another youth introduced himself. “My name’s James, and I think that shelter is the most important thing—the rest we can take care of on our own if we really want to. I can get transportation, I can get to school.”

LeRoy, a formerly homeless youth currently enrolled at school who is a six-year H.E.L.L.O participant, added that “I like the drop-in idea. We need more on the South Side, there needs to be more on the West Side. (James chimes in: “They’re in all the wrong places, like out in the suburbs and stuff like that.”) We come here to the North Side drop ins. The YMCA cuts you off at 18, the Boys and Girls Club cuts you off at 18—unless you’re playing basketball or something like that. So we need more spaces.”

Another youth, Ilene added, “There’s too many kids walking around Belmont for no reason—up all night, and then sitting in Starbucks when it opens. It’s cold out there. They need a place to go so they’re not outside doing nothing.”

A relatively new youth added, “I think a com-

**“I think that this group [H.E.L.L.O] is a really good outlet for people who want to make a change in their community. It makes it easy for a person to make a change in their community, even if they don’t know how, or never had before.”** —HOMELESS YOUTH

bination of housing and drop-ins, something with a time limit. Maybe people can’t stay all night, but even just for a few hours to stop by and get something to eat for a little bit. I think just a few of those would cover a large need in the community.”

### Job/Education Opportunities

Another youth changed the conversation to job training and education.

“I’m not even able to get a job, and there are lots of college students who graduated college who still can’t get a job (amazingly, he still wants to attend despite this fact). Some of the kids who managed to go from the streets and get into college can’t afford housing when they go—they don’t have a family to go to.”

Holcomb added, “I’ve had a lot of H.E.L.L.O. youth drop out of college because they couldn’t afford housing, or they lose their food stamps when they enroll—I have one dropping out right now because of the food thing.”

To amend this situation there’s currently efforts underway to have enrollment at city colleges declared work training in order to allow attendees to continue using food stamps.

Another youth, new that week, clarifies that he’s not homeless and is instead staying with a street family, where residents compile resources to stay housed. He said that making education easier to access is the biggest roadblock between being homeless and success.

Another youth, Tobias, said that jobs are the most important issue. “Everybody needs a place to stay, but on the other hand, if you have a job and you’re bringing in money—you can take care of your other issues. Without a job you can’t really do anything else.”

Holcomb said that “Tobias was employed through the ‘Put Illinois to Work Program and was able to get an apartment, but now the program’s over he’s unemployed. He’s somebody who has a recent work record, but he’s unable to find a job, and I know he’s really been looking. Having a job program for youth who have been homeless is something I think is very important to help them get out of homelessness. Right now a lot of the youth, when they find a job, it’s an entry level job, or a service-industry job, a job that’s one of the first things to be cut when a company needs to save a little money.”

While Anne talks, Tobias receives a text message from his pastor about an upcoming job fair. He lets everyone else at the meeting know where and when it is. This simple act exemplifies how tightly knit the participants of H.E.L.L.O are—even if they’re meeting each other for the first time on that particular Tuesday meeting. The youth live in a situation that could easily dissolve into desperate decision-making, yet they are not competitive with each other over jobs or housing. Rather, they view their condition as the common enemy.

The youth are currently working on a “dream book” of ideas for a better future for homeless youth to hand-deliver as a gift to the mayor.



# GIVING HOPE: Chicago Homeless Youth Task Force Report

By Suzanne Hanney  
StreetWise Editor-in-Chief

**H**OUSING IS THE TOP NEED for homeless youth age 14 to 25, according to a citywide task force formed in a meeting with Mayor Richard M. Daley over a year ago. Education, youth employment, transportation and drop-in services are other facets of the draft plan that the task force seeks to push onto Mayor-Elect Rahm Emanuel's agenda.

Youth activists of the Homeless Experts Living Life's Obstacles (H.E.L.L.O.) group testified at a city budget hearing in 2009, after which Daley said he was moved, noted Julie Dworkin, policy director at the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless.

Daley came to the H.E.L.L.O. art show, then met with the youths and other city officials two months later. "He thought they were very articulate and asked for achievable things. He said, 'we can do these, they are not pie in the sky,'" Dworkin said.

Some youth get kicked out of their homes because of conflicts over sexual orientation or pregnancy, Dworkin said. Others are "leaving a totally unbearable situation. They've fallen through the cracks of the child welfare system and have not been identified as being abused," whether physically or sexually.

Foreclosures, job loss and overall unstable housing contribute to youth homelessness, said Jeri Linas, executive director of Teen Living Program.

Most young people today do not become independent until their 20s, so homeless youth need the same kind of integrated solutions to become stable, Linas said.

"You can't look at youth experiencing homelessness in a vacuum," she said. "We need to be looking at how we help these young people to get employed, how they get educated, where they live if they are going to the City Colleges. And what about transportation, if I can't get to my job to pay my rent to go to school. If we are going to do it well as a city, we have to do it in a comprehensive way."

Last year, there were 15,027 homeless students in Chicago Public Schools,

of whom 3,782 were unaccompanied by parents, according to the draft report.

Meanwhile, Chicago's eight providers of housing to homeless youth have a total of 189 beds. Last year they turned away 4,775 young people—including 706 under age 18.

The task force seeks to double the number of beds to 378 by 2016, using state and federal money. By 2012, its goal is to expand housing for partially emancipated minors by partnering with large banks to acquire foreclosed properties and rehab them through the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP).

The H.E.L.L.O. youth also wanted a "low-threshold" shelter with fewer restrictions such as curfews. The City Department of Family and Support Services funded such a pilot—The Crib—on the North Side during the work of the group.

"The youth need a safe place to get off the street at night, to start to build relationships and trust to be ready for a more structured program," Dworkin said. "These youth have been so abused, it's hard to trust adults, hard to jump into a program with rules and expectations."

Instability in their lives also makes it hard to stay on track academically, the report notes. Roughly half of homeless youth age 16 or older had dropped out of school after being expelled or suspended, according to the National Runaway Switchboard.

**Education working group** recommendations call for restoration of three administrative Students in Temporary Living Situations (STLS) positions within CPS along with seven VISTA volunteers, using federal Title I low-income achievement and McKinney-Vento Homeless assistance funds.

The group also seeks a dorm-like building for eight to 10 youths enrolled in City Colleges. Funding would come from tax increment finance (TIF) money, donated bank-owned property, Chicago Housing Authority subsidies.

*Other education suggestions were nearly no-cost:*

- work-study and subsidized internships
- mentoring program by college-educated adults
- opening high schools early so kids could shower using donated hygiene products.

Similarly, the **Youth Employment working** group is ready to roll out a low-cost proposal this year for a council of job providers such as Dominick's, Bank of America and Whole Foods. This council would partner with the Chicago-land Chamber of Commerce and youth providers and receive mayoral recognition at bi-annual events.

"Transitional employment is important because money-making opportunities are few and far between for young people experiencing homelessness, said Joe Hollendonner, chief program officer at Howard Brown Health Center. "They are often forced to engage in the street economy, which can include sex work."

Up to 43 percent of youths identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual, with transgender underreported, Hollendonner said. Rejection or running away are not the sole reasons for their homelessness, he said. They may also come from chronically homeless families.

**Transportation working group** suggestions included:

- monthly CTA passes at the reduced student rate of \$35
- scholarships for 20 youth to attend driving school and to take the driving test using its vehicles.

Homeless service agencies would pick up the cost of the CTA passes. The driving school scholarships were estimated at \$420 each or \$8,400 overall in City of Chicago funding.

**The Drop-in working group** said centers such as Howard Brown's Broadway Youth Center can be the first place where youth form trusting relationships to access substance abuse or mental health services.

*Recommendations include:*

- five new drop-in programs across the city and expansion of existing programs
- a daylong forum on the state of drop-in youth services in the city
- creation of a map and calendar of drop-in resources
- three new pick-up sites (North, South and West) for youth to access overnight shelter by calling 311.





What the beds look like at The Crib, at Lakeview Lutheran Church, 835 W. Addison. (Teddy bear not guaranteed with all beds.)

# Youth find shelter at The Crib

By Ben Cook  
StreetWise Staff

## Q & A with Heather Lipe Bradley, Youth Outreach Manager at The Night Ministry

**StreetWise:** When did *The Crib* open?

**Bradley:** The Crib opened on January 7, 2011, and it's closing on April 30—that's almost 100% certain. We were given a four-month pilot grant from the city to demonstrate the need. I don't feel that we should have had to demonstrate anything—we know there are homeless youth out there and not enough shelter spaces. And the young people were clambering for this [shelter]: All of the leaders in the H.E.L.L.O group, the youth task force have expressed how important this new program would be.

**StreetWise:** Why such a short time frame?

**Bradley:** I think the idea was that afterward the city would evaluate what we had done and potentially refund it—we could reopen in October. What we'd really like to do is not close at all. We're turning away 15-20 young people a night as it is and it's pretty heartbreaking.

We'll be turning them all away on May 1.

**StreetWise:** How many youth routinely utilize your shelter?

**Bradley:** We have 20 beds and we're always full. The doors open at 9 p.m. but we had to make a rule where youth can't line up

before 8:30 p.m. There were complaints from the police department across the street and the Wrigleyville neighbors. We draw a lottery because we don't want just the biggest and fastest kids to get in every night—we had people sprinting across traffic to make it in time. The kids that get turned away receive a bus card so they can at least sleep on the trains.

**StreetWise:** This is the first emergency homeless shelter aimed at specifically serving homeless youth, correct?

**Bradley:** It's a pretty innovative and different model than anything else in the Midwest.

This is the first low-threshold emergency shelter geared toward homeless youth—specifically ages 18-24. The other thing about us that's unique is that we're an all-gender shelter—we serve all genders of people including trans people—and we don't segregate people in terms of bedrooms or bathrooms in any of our services. They city's still trying to get their mind around that fact. They can't quite understand that there are more than two genders. That's something the city is growing into with us.

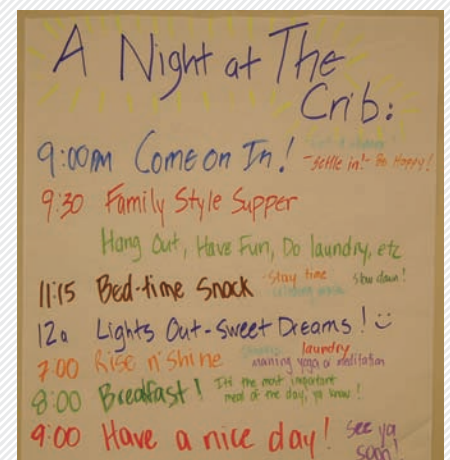
**StreetWise:** What kind of dynamic is that integrated setting creating?

**Bradley:** The young people love it. The young people are teaching us that the world doesn't work in the binary system; people don't like to be put in boxes and segregated away from each other. I think that's one of the big strengths and beautiful things about The Crib. There are plenty of places in Chicago where

it's unsafe to be trans[gendered] or even be out and gay. Folks will come into the shelter presenting as a boy, but as soon as they get there they change their clothes and put on different hair and make-up because they identify as female. And they didn't feel safe to identify like that anywhere else in their day. They need a space where they can be themselves. We have 20 people (25 in emergency weather conditions) sleeping on the floor of the church basement. They choose where they want to sleep, who they sleep next to. The kids generally prefer to cuddle up next to each other. And nobody seems to have any problem whatsoever about sleeping next to all genders. It's a beautiful thing.

**StreetWise:** On May 1 what kind of options are these youth going to have in terms of shelter?

**Bradley:** Homeless youth survive because



they're incredibly resilient, resourceful. They're used to making their lives work by being a part of the street economy—with everything that implies. They find places to get out of the elements; those places aren't always safe or legal. That's what they do when they can't get into The Crib or another place, and that's what they'll have to do after we close. We've developed some really important relationships with the street youth community over the years and a keen sense of how precarious their situation is when they don't have a place to sleep. At the same time, we're really impressed and inspired by how resilient young are at finding ways to make their lives work.

**StreetWise:** But it seems that The Crib's atmosphere provides more than just a safe place to sleep...

**Bradley:** Yes, fairly quickly people began to think of it as their home base. They think of the folks that gather each night as their family. Our philosophy really tries to cultivate that sense of "family" and "home." Youth who are hardened about the reality of having to sleep on the street have started believing there's a chance they don't have



ABOVE, TOP LEFT: The Night Ministry staff.  
BOTTOM LEFT: Towels, underwear, hygiene supplies, first aid kit, etc.,

to sleep on the train, stay awake for days at a time or do survival sex—trading and all the other things young people have to do.

**StreetWise:** What can people do to help alleviate the day-to-day struggle of homeless youth?

**Bradley:** Volunteer at organizations like The Night Ministry, Broadway Youth Center,

Teen Living Programs and La Casa Norte who serve homeless youth. Make contributions of toiletries and socks and new coats and warm cloths. We at the Night Ministry distribute thousands of items every week—harm-reduction supplies, toiletries, baby care supplies. Any of those things that are donated to us make a real difference in the lives of people who are living on the street.

## Englewood's Frontline: After foster care

By Suzanne Hanney  
StreetWise Editor-in-Chief

The Frontline Youth Opportunity at Olive Branch Mission was created for young men age 18 to 24 in what Pastor David Bates calls the "foster care afterlife."

"Kids who max out of foster care and end up on the street on their 18th birthday because the checks stop coming," said Bates, who is president and CEO of Olive Branch, whose shelters are located in the former St. Rita Monastery, 6310 S. Claremont.

"Literally, their foster parents give them their book bag and say it's over," Bates said. "They have it waiting at the door. Their parents put them out and they end up under a bridge somewhere, sneaking into a McDonald's to wash up so they don't have that stigma at high school."

Frontline evolved from Olive Branch's Daybreak interim housing program, which accommodates 125 men up to 60 years old. Bates said he reserved 20 beds for young men 18 to 24 because he didn't want to see those at the beginning of their lives intermingling with older men who had been on the street a long time and who may have addiction and mental health issues.

"I want to see them regain their footing, reclaim their opportunities as quickly as possible so they can go on through life with their full potential in hand," Bates said.

As Bates saw the demand, he approached the City of Chicago Department of Family and Support Services, which started funding Frontline on January 1 so renovations could begin. Formal intake began April 1.

Frontline offers case management and classes geared toward preparing the youths for college. Daybreak will remain as a backup

program for youths who aren't ready for that much structure, those who may have addiction issues, those who want to roam the streets, those who just need a place to bunk—or those whose needs haven't yet been assessed by Olive Branch staff.

"I just have a policy that we don't turn anyone away, especially in winter," Bates said. "If we can't serve them because they have more complicated needs, we definitely work through our referrals to get them placed elsewhere."

Father Michael Pfleger brought an 18-year-old to Olive Branch a year ago after fellow parishioners realized he was homeless, Bates said. "Staff put it on themselves to help him, every way they can," even attending parent-teacher conferences. The science fair winner will graduate high school this year.



# LGBTQ Host Home Program

An innovative approach to moving Chicago's LGBTQ youth beyond life on the streets

On any given night within greater Chicago 9,000 youth experience homelessness and 2,000 of those youth are on the city streets without a safe place to sleep. A recent study from the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force stated 20 percent to 42 percent of these youth on our streets self-identify as LGBTQ.

## Let's get right to the bottom line

The truth is, emergency and long term shelters aren't enough. Chicago has 189 emergency and long term shelter spaces for youth. With limited space and long waiting lists, many youth remain on the streets. By working together we can solve this problem.

## What can you do?

There is a way to help—become a part of the LGBTQ Host Home Program. The Host Home Program is a housing model that provides an alternative to the shelter system for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Questioning homeless youth. Host Home volunteers step forward and open their home for a period of time to a youth ages 18-24. Both the youth and the host volunteer go through a rigorous screening and training process facilitated and supported by trained social work professionals.

All youth accepted into the program have demonstrated the desire and ability for self-improvement. The goal is to create the safety and stability necessary for the youth to work towards their goal of self-sufficiency. Whether the focus is on education or vocational skills, the stability and safety from the streets that host volunteers provide help make this happen. The overall goal of the program—a “permanent” transition from homelessness to independence for many LGBTQ youth who experience homelessness.

## Want to become a host?

LGBTQ Host Home volunteers are committed to building community in innovative ways by opening their homes to homeless LGBTQ youth. They believe that while LGBTQ young people are experts in their lives they might not necessarily be experts in negotiating the transition to adulthood and would benefit from a safe and supportive living environment!

“Host Homes give youth support so that money can be saved and can lead to independent living versus life on the streets,” said a youth member of the Host Home Program.

## Still interested?

Check out the criteria below:

- Be at least 25 years old
- Complete background checks
- Provide three references
- Complete an initial interview and follow up home interview
- Have an extra bedroom for the youth
- Complete a comprehensive training with in an LGBTQ affirmative practice model.

“We are excited to partner with caring host volunteers to offer a concrete solution for homeless youth,” said Bonnie Wade, associate director of UCAN's LGBTQ Host Home Program. “Together we feel we can combat this crisis and offer youth an opportunity to heal and thrive. There is a readiness within many youth who are experiencing homelessness, a readiness that pushes them forward to move beyond life on the streets.”

## Support their work

To learn more about becoming a part of the LGBTQ Host Home Program please contact: Bonnie Wade, A.M., Associate Director 1340 S. Damen, Suite 205 Chicago, IL Phone: (312) 738.5966 or (312) 666.6906 E-mail: wadeb@ucan-chicago.org

## About UCAN

For over a century, UCAN (Uhlrich Children's Advantage Network) has served as a safe harbor for traumatized youth and families at-risk. UCAN serves over 10,000 youth each year through a variety of programs aimed at healing trauma, educating youth and family preventing violence. UCAN is accredited through the Council on Accreditation.

UCAN is partnering with Howard Brown Health Center for this new program.

Howard Brown Health Center is one of the nation's largest LGBT healthcare organizations. Its Broadway Youth Center is a collaborative program with 17 community partners, and provides comprehensive, no-cost services to at-risk LGBT and homeless youth, ages 12 to 24.

—Megan Millard contributing



# National Runaway Switchboard

## provides youth with resources free of judgment

By Megan Millard  
StreetWise Contributor

A young man calls 1-800-RUNAWAY because he does not get along with his mom's new boyfriend. He wants to know if there are any places in his area that would provide him with a place to stay for a few months until he goes off to college.

This young man represents just one of the approximately 300 calls every day received by the National Runaway Switchboard (NRS). Located in Chicago, the organization fields calls from all over the United States.

One of the National Runaway Switchboard's volunteers searches for a resource to give the young man as he waits on the other line. While the volunteer searches for facilities in the requested area, often volunteers have no indication of where in the United States callers are located.

"We do not have caller I.D., we don't know [where they are]," said Maureen Blaha, executive director of the NRS.

In fact, the purpose of the NRS is to provide youth with assistance without judgment.

"This is a safe place to call," Blaha said.

### An overwhelming need

While it may seem like a problem that doesn't hold much weight, the numbers are overwhelming. According to Blaha and the NRS web site, 1800Runaway.org, between 1.6 and 2.8 million youth run away each year.

"It's really an overwhelming number," Blaha said. "I think of it as a silent crisis."

Blaha said that the statistics highlight a problem that exists throughout the country. While

kidnappings and abductions may seem like a major issue, Blaha said that the number is miniscule compared to the number of youth who run away.

According to Blaha, often people are under the impression that kids who run away are troubled, being labeled as "bad kids." She said most often the youth are running away from bad situations.

### Unstable homes a factor

Many of the calls fielded by the NRS have to do with family dynamics, much like the situation of the young man mentioned above. There may be a divorce in the family or youth struggling to get along with stepparents. Additionally, calls may be tied to a youth feeling as though they have disappointed a parent. In cases with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) youth, there are some parents who do not accept the sexual orientation of the child.

Another factor to be considered is whether or not the youth was thrown out of the home or left willingly. NRS 2010 statistics collected for a *Why They Run* report showed that almost half (48 percent) of youth described being kicked out of their home, while 30 percent said they ran away. The remaining 22 percent described their situation as being a combination of both.

Blaha said that certain situations could lead a youth to believe they could make it on their own, and then realize it is not easy.

"It's very unsafe on the streets," she said.

While NRS statistics reported that the most popular means of making money is panhandling, youth also reported getting a job or receiving money from a family member. The more dangerous means reported were youth be-



Roberta Shields, president of the Ludacris Foundation, Ludacris, and Executive Director of NRS, Maureen Blaha meet at NRS.

coming involved in the sex industry or selling drugs.

While NRS has found in the past that girls were more likely to call the switchboard than boys, the gap is slowly closing. Blaha believes that while boys may be less likely to reach out for help, the gap could be closing due to rapper Ludacris teaming up with the NRS to promote awareness of runaways in 2006, providing a male spokesman for the problem.

NRS volunteers discuss options for youth but also take calls from adults. A situation that NRS has found themselves dealing with in the past is when a youth calls and asks the NRS volunteer to inform her family member he or she is alright. Parents can sometimes be desperate in obtaining information that the NRS often does not have, such as the whereabouts of their child.

While Blaha said the NRS tries to reunite families when possible, it does not force such meetings. It only offers resources for youth in crisis and sometimes serves as a messenger between the two. For example, the youth can call and leave a message for a parent, should the parent choose to call. A par-

ent can also leave a message for a youth if a youth decides to call.

### Volunteer-driven

The NRS has 150 volunteers of many ages and all "walks of life." They typically work a few hours per week and go through 40 hours of training beforehand. The NRS is always accepting new volunteers and there are classes every month of the year with the exception of April and December. Anyone interested in volunteering can call 773-289-1726.

1-800-RUNAWAY is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. On March 23, the NRS launched its Live Chat service, which serves to provide assistance to youth via the web.

"Live Chat is a new service that is another option for youth and teens in crisis to get in touch with NRS online and to resources that will improve their situation," Blaha said.

The NRS hopes they can provide an outlet for youth to get the assistance they need to stay safe and happy.

"I think all of us want our kids safe," Blaha said.



# New vendor rep's positive vision

By Ben Cook  
StreetWise Staff

**N**ewly-elected as the vendor representative on the StreetWise board of directors, Percy Smith has done a lot to better his life since his last *StreetWise* magazine profile in summer 2009.

"I'm still doing my substance abuse counseling. Also, my health has gotten a lot better—for the most part my breathing has been okay (Percy has one lung—he lost the other in 2005). I have to devote an hour a day to an oxygen machine, and I try to stay away from aerosol sprays and cigarette smoke. I really am grateful that I'm still here. The doctor's called me a miracle case.

"Not only am I still here, but now I've been elected the Vendor Representative, which feels good. One of the things I'm going to push for is to make vendors more identifiable through hats, or vests, shirts, pins...something. I think uniforms might help improve the public perception of *StreetWise* vendors, and hopefully do away with some of the stereotypes."

He would also like to see more vendors scattered throughout the city, and hopefully even a marketing campaign on CTA bus billboards.

"I believe that *StreetWise* is God-given. It's something that allows people to help other people, and that's a wonderful thing. We've been doing it for 19 years, and I think

we can take it further and help even more people. It's allowing people to feel good about themselves, interact with people, and rebuilding their lives.

"And people need *StreetWise* right now—I see people driving nice big Mercedes Benz cars and they're pulling up to Aldi—where I shop. People all over the world are just people."

Although Percy loves his job, there are plenty of personal challenges that come with the territory. "When people are rude to me or look down on me I don't take it personal—I just take it as their lack of knowledge. I guess they can't help it. I'm just out here selling a magazine.

"Buying *StreetWise* is no different than going into Walgreens and buying a pack of gum. You buy the magazine, you take the magazine with you. Walgreen's buys their gum at a low price and sells it at a higher price. *StreetWise* vendors buy *StreetWise* magazine at a low price and sell it at a higher price—there's no difference. Both are trying to make a profit.

He continued, "I really love *StreetWise*. Not just the part where I'm helping myself and my situation, but the part that helps so many people, giving people the opportunity to help themselves. It just makes me feel like I'm on the path in my walk with God. I might not be right on the path, but I'm close to it."



Percy Smith

"I believe that *StreetWise* is God-given. It's something that allows people to help other people—and that's a wonderful thing."

SEE SOMEONE PANHANDLING, OUT OF WORK, OR IN NEED? CUT OUT THE FLYER BELOW AND PASS IT ALONG!

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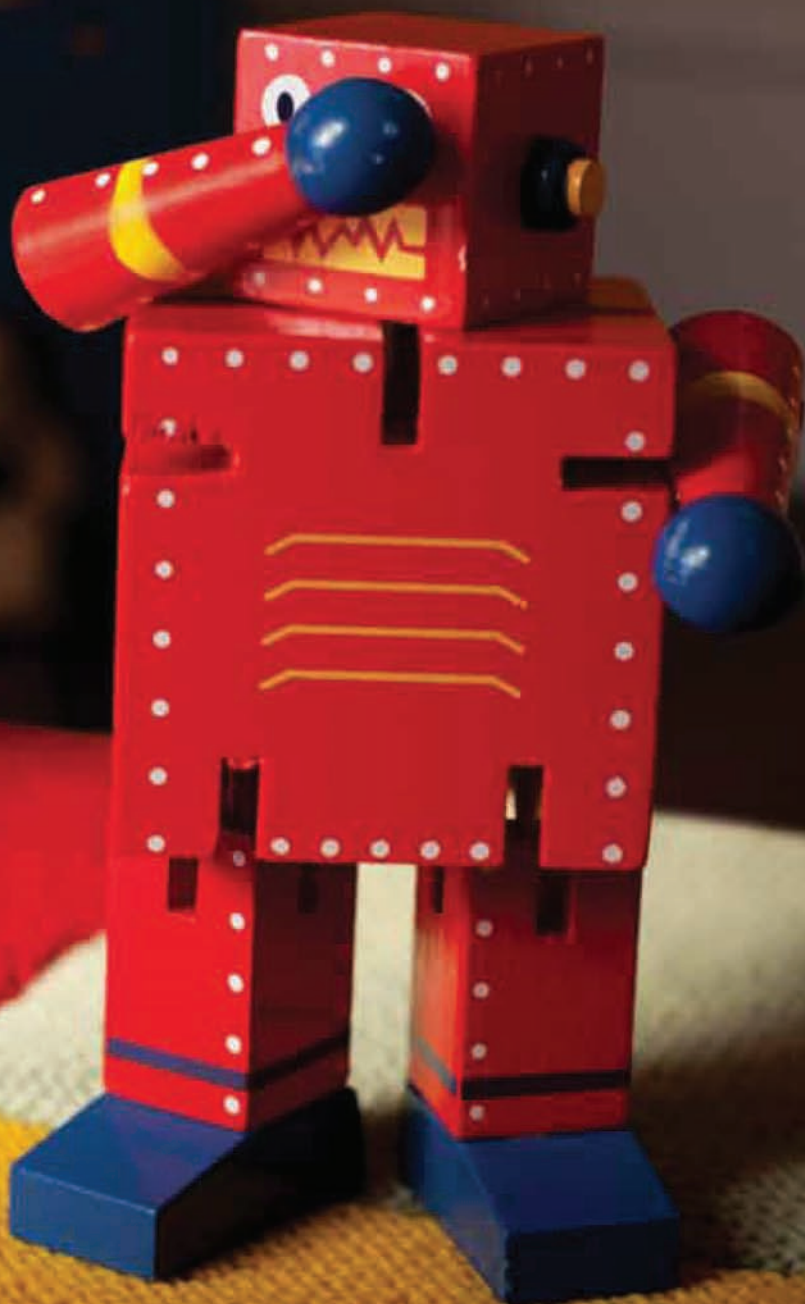
**WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BEING A VENDOR?**

- Work for yourself, at your own pace and set your own hours.
- Start immediately—everyone qualifies, no exceptions.

Vendor orientation is held every Monday at 10 a.m. at our office,  
1201 W. Lake (Lake & Racine).

Bring this flyer with you when you attend orientation  
For more info visit [www.streetwise.org](http://www.streetwise.org) or call us at 312.829.2526 **Ask for Greg or Linda.**

Sexual abuse of children is a reality we must all face.



Sadly, it is a reality that over 2,000 children in the City of Chicago endure every year. In the last 10 years, the Chicago Children's Advocacy Center, in collaboration with our public partners, has helped over 20,000 sexually abused children and their families to restore their lives. You can help too. Visit [chicagocac.org](http://chicagocac.org) or call 312-492-3700.