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Dear Friend,

We've got a lot of great news to share with you! Our Point in Time Count on January 26th went very well and we had more volunteers than ever before.

We are so thankful to the volunteers who worked though the early morning hours and in cold weather to make sure every person experiencing homelessness counts.

Read news coverage of the day [here](#).

Our community members stepped up when they were needed and we want to keep this commitment going and get even more support for ending homelessness.

We expect PIT Count results in March or April - stay tuned.



Amplify Austin

Please support ECHO or one of our partner organizations this year on February 28th so we can get more people experiencing homelessness into housing! ***You can make a big difference*** by [scheduling your donation today](#). Check out our profile in the link above to learn more about our work.

Full HUD Renewal Funding Awarded to Ten Austin Organizations

Austin Continuum of Care agencies were awarded nearly \$6 million in funding for housing for people experiencing homelessness. Additionally, SAFE received \$633,000 in bonus funding for a project to provide rapid-rehousing services to victims of domestic violence. Congratulations SAFE!

City Passes Resolution on Homelessness

Our Council members showed Austin that homelessness is STILL a top priority for them. On January 31st, a [resolution](#) was passed that directs the City Manager to prepare to purchase a building structure dedicated to piloting immediate shelter and support services for those experiencing homelessness with the intent of providing a pathway to permanent housing. Additionally, the Council approved the ARCH redesign contract, which will transform the shelter

to provide more people with case management and get them into housing more quickly. The City is also hiring a high-level [Homeless Strategy Officer](#) to elevate and coordinate the City's work on homelessness.

How should the City spend money on public services?

The City of Austin wants your input on programs that serve low to moderate-income Austin residents. Please take the [survey](#) and let them know your thoughts about priority spending for federal funding.

Make Plans to Attend Homelessness Awareness Day at the Capitol!

Texas Homeless Network hosts this day of advocacy at the Capitol. Let's show up and let them know that Austin wants more state support to end homelessness. Sign up to participate [here](#).



Sharing Our Successes

SOARing Home in Austin, Texas (SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery)

Lauren Gore of Caritas of Austin tells about her experience with SOAR - Last summer I assisted a gentleman who had been experiencing chronic homelessness for much of his adult life and was very unwell at the time of intake. The gentleman had just been discharged from the hospital after a serious, life-

threatening medical event. Further, he was largely socially isolated and had little social supports or contact with his remaining family members. Now, 7 months later, thanks to the SOAR model and the help of a rapid rehousing program, he is stably housed, has Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and is happy, healthy, and sober for the first time in his adult life. Even better, the SOAR process had a hand in reuniting him with family members after they were contacted to provide information for his Medical Summary Report. Without the SOAR process to aid in painting a complete picture for the Disability Determination Services, he would likely have been denied the disability benefits he so desperately needed to get back on his feet. *ECHO Staff member Niki Kozak helps coordinate the SOAR System in Austin.*

ECHO staffing update - Axton Nichols has moved on from his job as *Coordinated Entry Specialist* at EHCO and will now join our team as a *Program Specialist*. We appreciate his work and are excited to have him join a new team!

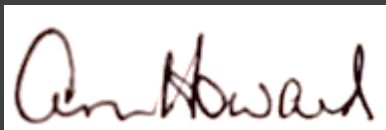
Upcoming Meetings

- Friday, February 15th, 1:00 p.m. - ***Income and Employment Workgroup***
Location: Goodwill, Norwood office
- Wednesday, February 20th, 9:00 ***Policy and Practice Workgroup***
ECHO offices
- Thursday, February 28th 9:30 a.m. - ***Rapid Rehousing Policy Workgroup***
Location: Family Eldercare
- Wednesday, March 6th, 9:00 a.m. - ***Continuum of Care (CoC) and ESG Workgroup***
Location: ECHO Office
- Monday, March 11th, 10:00 a.m. ***Austin Homeless Veterans Initiative Community Meeting***
Location: ECHO offices
- Thursday, March 14th ***City-Wide Outreach and Navigation Meeting***
Location and time: TBD

Learn more about our workgroups [here](#).

Finally, we thank you, our supporters and volunteers, for your dedication to ending homelessness. Please share this newsletters with others and spread the word. And remember to support ECHO for [Amplify Austin!](#)

With gratitude,



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