



# Chattanooga Community Kitchen

Help from the Heart of the City

## 2020 Summer Newsletter



## 30th Annual Fast Day Campaign Chairs: Sam and Tina Currin

We are honored to announce that Sam and Tina Currin are chairing the 2020 Fast Day Campaign. This year marks the thirtieth anniversary of the campaign, which is critical to our ability to meet the most basic needs of hungry, homeless and vulnerable people in our community.

Sam and Tina are well established in Chattanooga. Tina grew up here, attending GPS before heading off to Davidson College, where she met Sam. Following college, Sam enrolled in medical school; upon completing his residency at Duke, they settled on Lookout Mountain, with Sam joining

Memorial Hospital and Tina staying home to raise their four boys.

Sam and Tina love family, which is fitting for their campaign. After all, Tina's father Hardwick chaired the fifth Fast Day campaign, and her brother Hacker chaired the tenth! In addition, they believe in helping others, feeding people and meeting needs – all because "it's the right thing."

Please join us in thanking Sam and Tina for their leadership, and please consider joining Sam and Tina in making our thirtieth annual campaign a success!

Thank you.

**FAST**  **day**

Visit our website:  
[homelesschattanooga.org/fast-day](http://homelesschattanooga.org/fast-day)  
for more info and promotional  
ideas.

# Volunteering from Home

When Trish King started her role as our Volunteer and Church Relations Coordinator a few months ago, she was presented with a unique set of circumstances as a result of the pandemic. While on-site volunteering became challenging, the need for volunteers remained great.



Trish and Alex making a socially distant baking swap.

As she began to determine the resources available, Trish noticed quite a bit of baking supplies in our pantry. She saw this as an opportunity to channel the energy of students into baking projects while they were distance learning. After reaching out to several people, nine students from 5th grade to college-level participated.

Some volunteers picked up the materials and brought back the baked goods the next time they volunteered while others picked up and dropped off from sidewalks and front porches!

Alex has been baking since early May and greatly enjoys it. From cakes to unicorn cookies, her commitment has been enjoyed by our guests each week. Her mom says she takes pride in her baking for the Kitchen and doing it makes her feel good.



## Silver Lining for Single Mother

Life has been difficult for just about everyone over the last several months. From loss of income and housing to the cancellation of plans and health issues, the impact of the pandemic has been far-reaching and has affected our world in immeasurable ways.

A single mother with a son came to our family shelter recently after losing her job due to the virus. Her son did not want to be in shelter. His year was not what he had planned. He was unable to attend his prom, had no graduation ceremony and missed just being with his friends.

But soon, his attitude changed. His mother found employment right away; she's actually making more money now than she did at her former job. Her outlook on life is incredibly positive and has directly impacted her son who is now excited at the prospect of going to trade school. He has a big interest in the automotive industry and also likes the idea of welding.

Mom continues to search for housing and is very thankful for the opportunity to have a safe, clean place to stay and save her money. She has great plans and a bright future. We are confident that she'll succeed. Thank you for your support of families as they transition to greater stability.



# Groups Filling Needs This Summer

Summers around the Community Kitchen usually involve dozens of volunteer groups doing all kinds of projects from cooking and cleaning to construction and general maintenance. This summer, of course, has been different for everyone; however, we have been fortunate to have volunteers help us fill important roles and donate needed supplies.



U.S. Xpress sorted hygiene items and assembled them into bags for guests.



Yogi's PrimoPromo donated 1,000 face masks.

Joy and Friends celebrated Christmas in July with our guests by cooking and serving a great meal and distributing gift bags to those we served.



U.S Xpress stocked and organized our pantry area.

These and other opportunities are available for small groups or anyone who would like to volunteer with us. Some groups have held off-site donation drives and other activities to help out. Contact our volunteer coordinator: [volunteer@homelesschattanooga.org](mailto:volunteer@homelesschattanooga.org) or (423) 756-4222 to find out more.

# A Note From Our CEO



Jens  
Christensen,  
CEO

Sometimes a little destruction can be a good thing. You tear down a wall to build a new room. You rip out cabinets to build a new kitchen. A street is closed so a new road can be built.

This type of destruction is inconvenient for us all. It disrupts our daily life. It frustrates our habits. It alters our patterns. But, it is necessary for growth, for improvement, for positive change. We know that there's something better to come, that the aggravation is temporary.

The last several months have felt disruptive and destructive for practically everyone I know. The uncertainty of daily life, fear of an unknown virus, closure of businesses we know and love – all of these things have culminated to make us uneasy, to raise tensions, to create uncertainty.

But this type of uncertainty, this type of disruption, this type of fear – too often it defines the lives of those we serve. For so many, the destruction and disruption we've seen of late is nothing new. They face it every day, often without hope that things will ever get better. There's no doubt that homelessness is hard, so hard, in fact, that even a pandemic doesn't seem real.

Many of the folks we serve didn't understand why our services started changing in March – why we suddenly had masks on; why we were adding services to provide greater outreach to camps; why we were limiting the number of people who could enter the building at a time; why we were monitoring the bathrooms. All they knew was that one major constant in their world, the one place they could turn for help, it was changing. Their world was being disrupted.

Today, the folks we serve have grown accustomed to the new normal. We haven't missed a meal. Our shelters are open. Our bathrooms and showers are available. Mail is delivered. Case managers help people find housing and jobs. Our work continues.

And, while the COVID-19 Pandemic has not been a positive experience for anyone, good will most certainly come out of it. Some of that good is already here – positive changes in our programs to help people escape homelessness, increased outreach to encampments, food delivery, agility and flexibility in our staff and volunteers to meet needs.

Of course, some of this good has never left – like the good that drives you to support our programs and services, the good work you do in our community, and the good job our staff and volunteers do in meeting needs. But we certainly didn't need a pandemic to see that. That's been here all along.

For this, I thank you.

## In Their Own Words...

When asked about her experiences at the Community Kitchen, Stephanie laughs and says, "Well, I went from Maclellan to manager!" Two years ago, Stephanie decided she wanted to give back to a place that had given much to her and her family, our Maclellan Shelter for Families, where she and her family were once guests.

At first, she worked as a part-time, on-call supervisor employee at the shelter. Soon, however, a position in our Day Center opened. "I never intended to work anywhere but the shelter," she laughs, but she applied anyway. She quickly progressed to not just being a worker, but being the supervisor of the Hospitality Programs in the Day Center and at the Front Desk

"I'm so glad this opportunity became available. With my team, it really doesn't feel like management, it feels like family. It is the best thing ever; I really enjoy it!"

The Day Center has many opportunities to meet people in their greatest times of need. For Stephanie, it is a ministry. "A lot of our guests call me Mom, Aunt, Sis, or Friend. Many of them

don't have a family member or friend so that is what I am to them. I realize that there are professional boundaries, but too often, we are the only friends they have."



Stephanie McIntyre  
Hospitality Manager

One day a man who had recently lost his wife came in and sat down in her office.

She let him sit there for as long as he needed. They cried through a box of tissues together, and in the end he said, "You don't understand what you just did for me."

Stephanie's goal is self-sufficiency for all of our guests. "I want to help them without handicapping them. I didn't realize the impact being here was going to have on me. Our guests have varied and different needs, and I want the Day Center to be a place they can learn skills and improve their lives."

## Street Chapel Celebrates Fourth Year

In August 2016, Father Dale Hall began leading a small volunteer team that hosted weekly prayer meetings in our Day Center.



Father Dale would pray with guests, offer a sympathetic ear and even lead a communion service on Thursday mornings.

Since that time, our relationship with Father Dale and his parishioners has grown to include service on our board, a weekly adoption of items on our needs list and much more.

This January, the relationship grew again thanks to a partnership with the Maclellan Foundation; Father Dale joined our staff as chaplain, serving our staff, our guests and the families at the Maclellan Shelter.



Father Dale Hall

Today his duties look a little different, but Dale remains engaged, serving in the shelter and providing street outreach to the people we serve.



**Chattanooga**  
Community Kitchen

P.O. Box 11203  
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Chattanooga, TN 37401



We value your support and regard ourselves as accountable not only to you but also to God for stewardship of the funds you entrust to us. We are audited by a recognized, local independent CPA firm and publish an audited annual financial statement.

The Chattanooga Community Kitchen is a 501(c)3 organization.  
Qualified contributions are tax deductible.

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**Thank you for making our work possible!**