

Ideas for causes you can contribute to from the Los Angeles Dream Center (PDF)

Agency Mission and History. Founded in 1994, The Dream Center is a faith-based organization with a mission to transform the inner city of Los Angeles by providing opportunities and resources for those facing homelessness, poverty, and hopelessness. Currently it serves over 40,000 people each month through programs that offer assistance in the areas of food, clothing, shelter, health care, education, career development, counseling and abuse/addiction recovery.

Programs. Since its inception, the Dream Center has grown to over 85 on-site and mobile outreach programs to provide critical services free of charge to multiple distressed communities. Major program areas include:

- **Transitional Family Housing Program:** Established to provide families with much more than a temporary solution to homelessness. Services help families to address the fundamental issues and obstacles that led to homelessness and the insidious cycle of poverty, while providing them with food, clothing shelter, education, job search, and life skills. The staff also advocates for families that are in need of rental assistance, parenting classes, and various forms of counseling.
- **Mobile Food Distribution:** Delivers bagged groceries of USDA and rescued foods to homeless, low-income and food insecure families at over 20 sites throughout Los Angeles. Recipients include single mothers, families living below the poverty level, disabled individuals, the unemployed, and the elderly. This program helps to alleviate hunger in some of Los Angeles' most impoverished communities.
- **Project Hope:** Established to address the specific needs faced by victims of the growing human trafficking industry, which includes forced labor, involuntary domestic servitude and forced prostitution. The program offers safe refuge and specialized counseling so that victims of human trafficking in all its forms can be restored as functioning members of society.
- **Dream Center Discipleship:** A one-year, faith-based, residential program that helps adults ages 18-59 overcome substance abuse, anger management and emotional struggles.
- **DC Teen Discipleship:** Specializes in academics, substance abuse training, anger management, character development and behavior management. Students are between the ages of 12 and 17 years of age. Average length of stay is 10 to 24 months.
- **Career Development:** Part of a comprehensive transition program that covers job readiness and life management skills. Adult education services provide: Adult Basic Education and General Education Development (GED). Career Development services include soft skills training, employment search, job placement, and/or assistance in applying for college. The GED program currently has an 88% success rate.
- **Project Prevention:** Works closely with Los Angeles County's Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) in cases of poverty providing furnishings, food, and social services that will allow families to stay together or to be reunited. Project Prevention provides items such as extra beds and bedding, appliances, clothing, baby formula, diapers and other items as required to bring the family's living conditions up to DCFS code. Parents that benefit from Project Prevention resources are introduced to the other Dream Center programs such as the GED prep, food and clothing, parenting classes and soon, a counseling center offering programs that will work to understand every aspect of each client and address emotional needs so that he or she can begin to develop the self-awareness and sense of direction that will lead to a better life.

