Dear Friends:

The theme of our Annual Report this year is **Ripples of Hope, Waves of Change**. We chose this theme based off the Starfish Story because each and every one of us has someone who has saved us, who has picked us up and made all the difference. We also chose it because it is reflective of what our 47 member agencies do day in and day out. Whether they are providing treatment for chemical dependency, offering a safe haven from violence, helping to find an apartment or a job, offering medical care or even a shower and a clean change of clothes, the agencies that make up this coalition help people to live again, with freedom and self-determination.

But this story is not complete. It doesn't tell what happens to the starfish when they get back in the ocean. They create a ripple (see Robert F. Kennedy quote). The Coalition seeks to end homelessness from the grassroots up, by empowering individuals through advocacy and education to create these ripples. Through coordination of services, we have tried to harness all of these individual ripples into a wave of change.

We started 2005 with 5 goals. The first was to continue the operations and programming that the Coalition has become known for in the past 21 years. These include Streetvibes, the Speaker’s Bureau, Standdown for Homeless Veterans, Civil Rights Work Groups, Homeless Memorial Day, Minimum Standards for Shelters and the Annual Dinner.

In addition to the day to day, our second goal was to create a coalition of homeless coalitions throughout the state called the Ohio Coalition of Homeless Advocates or OCHA. This group contains representatives from Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Youngstown and rural counties in southeast Ohio. OCHA allows us to move forward with the courage to try new things in solidarity with friends and allies who share our passion.

The third goal of 2005 was to strengthen our Education Program. We hired a new Education Coordinator in August – Monique Little - who got our homeless curriculum introduced into new area high schools. Not only do students get to hear from homeless individuals and read Streetvibes, they also learn the critical thinking skills that they need to get at the root causes of homelessness and be the strong advocates of tomorrow.

The forth goal of the Coalition was to continue working with the Affordable Housing Advocates group or AHA. This year AHA was able to hire an intern from UC who facilitated the creation of a strategic plan. AHA was already wonderful at reacting to damaging policy and sharing information, but this strategic plan will help us move proactively into 2006 and beyond to create real change.

Finally, our fifth goal was to restore the Human Services funding cut at the end of 2004. We pulled together the 1.5% Coalition, composed of service providers, religious groups, the Human Service Advisory Committee and concerned citizens.

We all face times when we want to give up and then, magically, we come together one more time. We do it because we know that there are still people out there who are hurt, scared, sick, dirty, and cold. We do it because we know there will be children with no home tonight. We do it because somewhere, a person is being victimized in their own home. Somewhere, a person is hungry. We do it because at some point, someone threw us back in the ocean and there are still so many starfish on the beach.

So we may only be a small ripple, a tiny starfish. But together, we create a wave of change. And until there is no more poverty, no more violence, no more hunger, no more homelessness, we must continue to throw starfish in the ocean and we must continue to make waves.

Thank you for continuing to play a part.

Sincerely,

Georgine Getty

Executive Director

---

**Ripples of Hope**

* Few will have the greatness to bend history itself, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events, and in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation... It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.*  

> ~ Robert F. Kennedy  
> South Africa, 1966

**Waves of Change**

(The Starfish Story)

Once upon a time there was a wise man who used to go to the ocean to do his writing. He had a habit of walking on the beach before he began his work. One day he was walking along the shoreline as he looked down the beach, he saw a human figure moving like a dancer. He smiled to himself to think of someone who would dance to the day. So he began to walk faster to catch up. As he got closer, he saw that it was a young man and the young man wasn’t dancing, but instead he was reaching something and very gently throwing it into the ocean. As he got closer he called out,

> “Good Morning! What are you doing?” The young man paused, looked up and replied,
> 
> “Throwing starfish in the ocean.”

> “I guess I should have asked, why are you throwing starfish in the ocean?”
> 
> “The sun is up and the tide is going out. And if I don’t throw them in they’ll die.”

> “But, young man, don’t you realize that there are miles and miles of beach and starfish all along it. You can’t possibly make a difference!”

> “The young man listened politely. Then bent down, picked up another starfish and threw it into the sea, past the breaking waves and said – It made a difference for that one.”

> ~Anonymous
GCCH enters 2006 with a budget that has doubled in just a few short years, a new board of directors, and a growing staff. The agency’s funding sources have diversified, and our programs reach more people each year. It’s a time for reflection, and a time to plan for future action. Thousands of men, women, and children in our community still struggle with homelessness each day. Our member agencies struggle for adequate funding, there is a shortage of decent and safe affordable housing in our city, and many low-income people must make inhumane choices between food, shelter, and health care. GCCH itself also struggles financially to keep up with our growing programs and activities. For all these reasons and more as we pass the 20th Anniversary milestone, GCCH prepared a Strategic Plan to guide our activities, and ensure continued efficiency of programming. The full plan will be presented at the Annual Meeting in March.

The Strategic Planning process began when GCCH brought together member agency representatives, coalition founders, stakeholders, the board of directors, and coalition staff to take part in an afternoon of visioning. All of those in attendance were asked to reflect on the current mission of GCCH, and to envision a brighter future for our community. We worked individually and in small groups. Several major themes and issue areas arose from this process. Based on this visioning the coalition identified key issue areas to guide our activities.

GCCH will develop strategies around the following areas:
1. Organizational Structure/Self Sufficiency
2. Homeless Relations
3. Advocacy: affordable housing, policy, living wage/economic issues
4. Collaboration
5. Coordination of Services: members/agency needs, shelters and supportive services
6. Education Program: Streetvibes, education project, speaker’s bureau

Stage two of the vision process involved the board and staff of GCCH assessing the current environment based on these issue areas. An analysis of the internal Strengths and Weaknesses, as well as the external Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) was employed.

Stage three of the strategic planning process involved the board and staff strategizing around the results of the SWOT analysis. The SWOT analysis allows for an examination of the organization’s weaknesses, and an identification of outside threats to GCCH programs. These deficiencies represent areas in need of attention, and point to future action. The strengths and opportunities define where GCCH has the potential for growth, and also define possible future strategies and action steps.

For more information about the Strategic Plan contact GCCH at 513.421.7803.
The Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless provides a space for collaboration and information sharing for the homeless community and social service providers. Our Coordination of Services activities allow for social service agencies, advocates, and homeless individuals alike to come together and address the problem of homelessness in our community.

MINIMUM STANDARDS
In order to ensure that the shelters of Cincinnati are providing safe, hygienic care to residents while protecting the civil rights of homeless people, the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless conducts its biannual Minimum Standards for Shelters Inspection. In 2005 a committee was formed of volunteers from our General Body, a representative from the City’s Department of Community Development and a representative from the Health Department. The committee toured and evaluated all of the shelters receiving City funding. We were able to successfully pass 22 emergency and transitional shelters in Cincinnati.

STANDDOWN
This national event dedicated to providing homeless veterans and other homeless individuals with a day of rest and relaxation is sponsored locally by the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless. Every year, 40 service providers attend Standdown and serve over 500 homeless individuals by providing them with access to and information about housing, health care, dental care, HIV/AIDS services, eye care, drug and alcohol treatment, haircuts and other services. In 2005 the event was held on September 16th in Washington Park and was a great success.

GENERAL BODY MEETINGS
Eleven General Body Meetings were held in 2005. The heart and soul of the Coalition, General Body meetings bring together representatives from all of our member agencies in order to exchange information and vote as a community on future courses of action. In 2005 the Coalition focused on specific issues at each meeting as requested by members.

THE OHIO COALITION FOR HOMELESS ADVOCATES (OCHA)
In 2005, GCCH along with Dayton’s The Other Place, the Columbus Coalition for the Homeless & the Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless collaborated in forming the Ohio Coalition of Homeless Advocates (OCHA). The mission of OCHA is to eradicate homelessness by promoting collaboration and advocacy within the state of Ohio among local homeless coalitions. OCHA coordinates statewide advocacy in areas not currently being addressed with regard to homelessness, statewide projects that benefit homeless people, facilitate information sharing across county lines, and develop mutually beneficial funding and supportive activities among the local coalitions. In November 2005, OCHA expanded its reach of advocacy by coordinating with the Mahoney County Homeless Coalition in Youngstown, and Southeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless.

STREETVIBES
Streetvibes began in February 1997 as a one-page insert in Cleveland’s street newspaper, The Grapevine. Since then, Streetvibes has become an award-winning alternative newspaper and GCCH’s most recognized educational tool. In 2005 we had an average of 30 active vendors each month. We sold 20,069 papers and gave away 15,048 to schools and civic groups for a total distribution of over 35,000 papers.

SPEAKER’S BUREAU
We have four homeless/formerly homeless speakers in our Speaker’s Bureau. In 2005, GCCH held 67 speaking engagements at 16 different schools (10 private, 6 public), 6 colleges, and 5 churches. We reached no less than 2,500 people in speaking engagements in 2005.

STREETVIBES VENDOR PROFILE:
ALFRED E. WOOLFOLK, JR.
Alfred Woolfolk has sold Streetvibes for three years. It is a venture that’s enabled him to move from sleeping on the streets and shelters into his own apartment in College Hill. Alfred’s story is one that is painfully familiar and a lesson for many of us. His story is an illustration of how a simple twist of fate can put any one of us on an unexpected path. After a car accident left him unable to drive his cab, Alfred found himself homeless and wondering where his next meal would come from. It was only after he found Streetvibes that he was able to get his life back on track. When asked what he’d like to say to the public, Alfred said he’d like the paper to get everyone’s support, specifically support in providing new and improved shelters for the homeless. Alfred has been a vendor for 21/2 years. He was named Vendor of the Year in 2005 for his continued dedication to the paper and the compassion he shows to help others at GCCH.
At the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless we realize the importance of addressing the systemic causes of homelessness in order to institute lasting and permanent change. To this end, GCCH advocates with police, city officials, community groups, and more to encourage and support homeless people to advocate on their own behalf.

HUMAN SERVICE FUNDING CUTS
Prior to 2005, 1.5% of the General Operating Budget was made available for Human Services delivery. This funding was allocated to agencies according to recommendations by the Human Services Advisory Committee, an objective group of citizens who volunteer to review agency applications based on priority objectives and guidelines proposed by City Council. In late 2004 the mayor and city manager struck all funding for human services from the budget, resulting in hundreds of citizens attending public hearings and extensive lobbying efforts by agencies directed at City Council. GCCH was the lead agency that spoke out against the city’s budget cuts by mobilizing our member organizations to voice opposition at City Hall meetings, write letters of support for the services, and meet with City Council members. After this dramatic show of support, City Council reallocated .06% of the general operating budget to individual agencies without consideration to the Human Services Advisory Committee’s recommendations. The 2005 funding reductions resulted in considerable decreases of services to at risk citizens.

In the summer of 2005, executives of 35 out of 44 city funded agencies attended the GCCH General Body meeting, reviewed the Human Services Advisory Committee's process and voted to support its continuation, forming the 1.5% Coalition. GCCH has taken the lead in organizing and implementing the 1.5% Coalition’s agenda. GCCH staff coordinated efforts by the 1.5% Coalition resulting in City Council unanimously approving a motion to reinstate the 1.5% Human Services funding to the budget and to use the Human Services Advisory Committee recommendation process, in October 2005. In addition, GCCH continued education efforts after the City of Cincinnati’s new council approved the 2006 annual budget leaving Human Service funding at the reduced 2005 rate. Members of the 1.5% Coalition hosted an informational breakfast for Cincinnati’s new Mayor and Council that included a proclamation by Mayor Mark Mallory recognizing January 26, 2006 as “Human Services Day.” GCCH continues to facilitate the 1.5% Coalition and stays committed to advocating for our member agencies, until both the 1.5% and a fair process are permanently restored.

TEMP LABOR ORGANIZING
GCCH has been collaborating with the Cincinnati Interfaith Worker Center in helping temp labor workers organize to improve their wages and working conditions. Light industrial temporary labor halls in downtown Cincinnati offer what is often the only viable source of employment for individuals who are experiencing homelessness, have a criminal record, or are unable to commit to or obtain permanent employment. Unfortunately, many of these same labor halls exploit low-income and homeless individuals' need for such employment by exercising poor and sometimes illegal labor practices. Complaints from workers include: wages at or below minimum wage, lack of work breaks, unsafe or life-threatening working conditions and transportation, withholding checks, charging for transportation and safety equipment, harassment, termination without cause or explanation, lack of bathrooms, discrimination, and employer malfeasance. Weekly meetings at the Worker Center and the Drop Inn Center have been occurring where temp laborers can share their stories, voice their concerns, engage their fellow workers, and strategize ways to change the practices of local labor halls. Others cities have engaged in similar worker-led campaigns that have resulted in new labor laws and drastically improved conditions.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADVOCATES
In 2005 GCCH continued our involvement with the Affordable Housing Advocates (AHA). AHA is a group of housing providers, advocates and consumers dedicated to the goal of ensuring good, safe, accessible, affordable housing for all people in the Cincinnati area. This group formed to share the expertise and information gathered by its members over decades of service to the Greater Cincinnati community in the area of affordable housing and to initiate and support plans of action that will further the creation, retention and accessibility of affordable housing in our community. GCCH houses the AHA Project Coordinator staff. AHA developed a Strategic Plan that was completed and approved by the board at the end of 2005. The plan focuses on 4 main categories: Structure of AHA, Resource Sharing, Public Education and Awareness, and Sustainable Housing Policy.
Member Organizations

AIDS Volunteers of Cincinnati provides support services, prevention education and housing assistance to homeless individuals living with HIV/AIDS in Cincinnati. (513) 421-2437, www.avoc.org

Alcoholism Council provides programming falls into four main categories: professional and community education, prevention, counseling and advocacy. (513) 281-7880.


Caracole provides affordable housing and supportive services for persons living with HIV/AIDS and technology solutions for non-profit organizations. Their SOPHIA program coordinates the Homeless Management Information System. (513) 761-1480, www.caracole.org.

Center for Independent Living Options provides vital resources and services to enable children and adults with disabilities, in Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky, to live and work independently in the community. (513) 241-2600, www.cilso.net.

Center for Chemical Addictions Treatment provides a wide range of quality treatment services for alcoholism and other chemical addictions to adults in the Greater Cincinnati area without regard to financial status. (513) 381-6672, www.ccsotober.org.

Center for Respite Care provides housing for homeless individuals who are too sick to be in the shelter, yet not sick enough to be hospitalized. (513) 621-1688.

Cincinnati Health Network provides access to care and enhances the overall health status of the people in the greater Cincinnati area, particularly that of medically underserved and high-risk populations. (513) 961-0600.


Contact Center performs community organizing of low and moderate-income individuals in Over the Rhine around issues of affordable housing, safety and economic opportunity. (513) 381-4262, www.overtherhine.org/contactcenter/.

Drop Inn Center is a homeless shelter in Cincinnati’s Over-the-Rhine neighborhood. We work to provide essential services to people experiencing homelessness, and to empower people to move from homelessness to housing. (513) 721-8943, www.overtherhine.org/dopcim/.

Emancipated Community Center provides technical and training programs, self-sufficiency workshops for families, adults and youth. (513) 241-2563.

Excel Development Co. working with the mental health community, provides suitable, affordable housing for independent living. (513) 632-7149.


Franciscan Haircuts from the Heart restores dignity, self-esteem and personal confidence are restored to the homeless and poor through professional hair care. (513) 381-0111, www.haircutsfromheart.org.

Franciscan JPIC Office works on supports and advocates for various social justice issues in Cincinnati. (513) 721-4700.

Goodwill Industries provides employment, training and housing assistance to homeless individuals in Cincinnati. (513) 771-4800, www.cincinnati goodwill.org

Grace Place Catholic Worker House where women - with or without children - who are in transition from homelessness and temporary residence in an atmosphere of hospitality and hope and receive the support they need to move forward and achieve their goals and dreams. (513) 681-2365

Greater Cincinnati Oral Health Council provides or arranges for dental disease prevention and treatment services for low-income or homeless individuals and other special needs populations. (513) 621-0248.

Hamiltion County Department of Community Development fosters development of viable urban communities by providing decent housing, suitable living environments, and expanded economic opportunities, principally for persons of low and moderate income. (513) 946-4888, www.hamilton-co.oh/commdv.

Healing Connections provides quality employment and support for women seeking self-sufficiency and competent paraprofessional home care services to persons who are underserved by existing programs, especially the elderly poor. (513) 751-0600, www.healing-connection.org.


Interfaith Hospitality Network teams homeless families with volunteers from 50 area churches, 16 host congregations and 34 support congregations to provide needed food and shelter. (513) 471-1100, www.mtsouobvpresby.org/ihn.html.

Joseph House for Homeless Veterans helps men and women recover from alcoholism and drug addiction by providing outreach, treatment, counseling and housing in a safe, supportive, abstinence-based environment. (513) 241-2965, www.josephhouse.net.


Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati works to resolve serious legal problems of low-income people, to promote economic and family stability, and to reduce poverty through effective legal assistance. (513) 241-8400, www.lascinti.org.

Lighthouse Youth Services provides comprehensive social services to encourage good citizenship, responsible behavior and self-reliance. (513) 961-4080, www.lys.org.

Mary Magdalene House provides showers and other services to homeless individuals. (513) 721-4811.

Mercy Franciscan at St. John’s improves the health of the community with emphasis on people who are poor and underserved. (513) 651-7482.

NAHM of Hamilton County works to offer hope and help to all affected by mental illness through educational programs, support groups and phone support, and advocating for better services, legislative changes, and increased research on mental illnesses. (513) 948-3094, www.nahm-hc.org.

Over the Rhine Housing Network provides affordable housing in Over the Rhine and shares resources, information and experiences among the member housing organizations. (513) 369-0004, www.overtherhine.org/housingnetwork.

Over the Rhine/Walnut Hills Soup Kitchen works to alleviate hunger and promote socialization among those living in poverty and homelessness and low income situations. (513) 961-1983.

Peaslee Neighborhood Center works to welcome and nurture the involvement of the neighborhood in building a stronger, healthier community. (513) 621-5514, www.overtherhine.org/peaslee/.

People Working Cooperatively performs essential home repairs and services so that low-income homeowners can remain in their homes living independently in a safe, sound environment. (513) 351-7921, www.pwcmhrepairs.org.

Project Connect Homeless Childrens Fund keeps children experiencing homelessness connected to their education by providing supplies, transportation, uniforms and enrichment activities in summer, after-school, and shelter tutoring programs. (513) 242-0008, www.pcfund.org.

Prospect House provides high quality drug and alcohol treatment in a long-term residential setting to men who are without money, insurance or other resources. (513) 921-1613, www.prospecthouse.org.

ReSTOC provides decent, safe, racially integrated, low-income housing in Over the Rhine, especially for homeless or chemically dependent persons. Its co-op structure enhances self-determination. (513) 381-1173, www.restoc.org

Services United for Mothers and Adolescents (SUMA) works to educate adolescents on preventing unintended pregnancy, making healthy decisions and providing parenting skills for young mothers and fathers. SUMA seeks to increase young people’s chances of becoming responsible, self sufficient and productive members of society. (513) 487-7862, www.sumaservices.org.

Society of St. Vincent DePaul provides a unique style of personal assistance with food, clothing, rent, utilities, transportation and companionship to people facing economic, emotional or spiritual crises. (513) 562-8841, www.svdpcincinnati.org.

St. Francis/South Catholic Worker House is a community of volunteers who are dedicated to feeding the hungry and providing dignified hospitality to the poor. (513) 831-4941.

Tabert House provides services in mental health, criminal justice and substance abuse in order to improve social behavior and enhance personal recovery and growth. (513) 751-7747, www.taberthouse.org.

Tender Mercies provides housing and individualized supportive services to homeless persons with histories of mental illness. (513) 721-8666, www.tendermerciesinc.org.

The Caring Place providing food, counseling, and rental assistance. (513) 631-1114.

Tom Geiger House provides supportive housing for homeless women and their children. (513) 961-4555.

Transitions, Inc. provides a variety of services for people in Northern Kentucky to help them overcome chemical dependency and stay clean and sober. (859) 491-4435, www.transitionsky.org.


Xavier University Peace and Justice Programs advocates and works for the liberation of the poor, oppressed and voiceless in our world. (513) 745-3046, www.xaveri.edu/peace_justice.

Financial Statement

GCCH has an endowment fund with The Greater Cincinnati Foundation. Ending market value as of December 31, 2005 was $151,119.

Join the Effort to End Homelessness

The more support we have from the community, the further our efforts reach. GCCH’s work is possible only with the help from member organizations and generous individual gifts.

Organization Members Our members may receive: voting rights at our General Body meetings, Streetvibes subscriptions, Speaker's Bureau engagements, discounted printing services, and more depending on membership type.

Individual Members (at a minimum of a $50 donation) receive a one-year subscription to Streetvibes, and our quarterly newsletter.

If you are interested in an individual or organizational membership please contact the Coalition at 513.421.7803

Please consider making a contribution today!

Name: ____________________________

Address: ____________________________

City/State/Zip: ____________________________

Email: ____________________________

YES! I want to end homelessness in Cincinnati!

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution of:

☐ $25  ☐ $50  ☐ $100  ☐ $150  ☐ Other $________

☐ Enclosed is my individual membership (minimum of $50) including a one-year subscription to Streetvibes.

I would like to receive more information about:

☐ Speaker's Bureau  ☐ Action Alerts and Action Committees

☐ National Homeless Civil Rights Organizing Project

Please fill out and return to:
Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless
117 E. 12th Street, Cincinnati, OH 45202

Thank you for giving generously!
Greater Cincinnati Coalition For The Homeless
117 East 12th Street
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
Phone (513) 421-7803
www.CinciHomeless.org

is a unified, social action agency, fully committed to its ultimate goal: the eradication of homelessness with respect for the dignity and diversity of its membership, the homeless and the community. The Coalition works towards this by coordinating services, educating the public, and doing grassroots organizing and advocacy.