

# Showers of Blessing

## Annual Report for 2015 – with June 2016 Update

Showers of Blessing (SHoB), created by HEAL (Health, Empowerment and Love) a project of the non-profit Interfaith Initiative of Santa Barbara began operation November 17, 2014 and operated at two weekly locations (St. Michael's University Church and St Mark's University Parish in Isla Vista) and one monthly location (Goleta Valley Community Center tied to HEAL's Meet and Greet with the houseless) through November 2015 at which time SHOB added weekly showers at St. Athanasius Orthodox Church in Santa Barbara (bordering Goleta) and discontinued their operation at the Goleta Community Center – resulting in showers being provided Monday, Wednesday and Friday. April 7, 2016 we added Alameda Park / Our Lady of Sorrows in downtown Santa Barbara. HEAL was co-founded by Rev. Dr. Doug Miller and his wife Sandie. Doug serves as General Manager of Showers of Blessing.

SHOB provides not only a hot shower, but also provides new or nearly new clothes, washes and returns client clothes the next week and gives out hygiene products. Sandie Miller purchases the clothes (cost \$3,000 in 2015) each week and also washes the clothes that our clients ask to have washed each week. In January 2016 we had our first volunteer cut hair – which was well received and we hope to expand.

During 2015, SHOB provided 1598 showers to 60 different houseless people, 85% of which were men and 15% women. Total income was \$63,000 and total expenses \$28,000. As of June 15, 2016, Showers of Blessing has provided 2740 total showers (since Nov 17, 2014) and are now averaging 85 showers a week at our four locations. We have served over 150 individual clients. Our 2016 Operating Budget is \$60,000. During the nine months that we will be at our new location in Santa Barbara, we expect to provide 1,100 showers there – making our total for all locations to be 3,700 showers in 2016.

The cost of the Shower Trailer and first year insurance was \$35,000 and was paid by the Lutheran Church from funds from the sale of their portion of the University Religious Center in Isla Vista. By the end of 2015, the Lutheran Church, led by Rev. Ron Cox of Christ Lutheran Church (who also serves as Chairman of Showers of Blessing), donated an additional \$20,000 to go into a Maintenance Reserve fund to provide repairs or replacement of the truck (which was donated) and shower. B'nai B'rith Congregation and one of its anonymous congregants (who also donates sweat socks with each shower) donated \$24,000 based on a program with SHOB visiting the Temple at one of their Friday night services at which time Rabbi Suzy Stone delivered a sermon on supporting the homeless and this project and Linda McDaid, Operations Manager and a formerly homeless woman shared her story. Cantor Childs, a member of the Interfaith Initiative Board also played a major role in the dramatic support that came from CBB.

Showers of Blessing not only makes a major difference in the lives of its clients through providing showers, clothes, clothes washing and hygiene products but it provides a path to the ultimate goal of helping the houseless in our community find jobs and be able to afford moving into housing. One of the ways that we are doing this is that four of our clients became volunteers performing the various operations of the shower and by mid-year their performance and our finances allowed us to start paying stipends for their work and by year end, those stipends were increased. Two of those individuals became married, and with the help of C3H we were able to locate and purchase an RV and get them into the Safe Parking Program – providing them a level of housing before El Nino fully hits.

**2016 Plans** – SHOB has targeted doing 2,600 showers at its base three locations – a 60% increase from 2015 (we are on track to do that). April 7, 2016, on Thursdays we added showers at Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church, across the street from Alameda Park where dinners have been provided to the houseless for years. We are in the process (well along as of this update) of building a Consortium of eight or so Churches around Alameda Park. A Consortium Manager – Ken Ralph began in March 2016. SHOB is providing the truck and trailer, the Operations Manager and Assistant Manager, soap/cleaning products, gas, propane and socks. The annual cost of this part of the SHoB operation will be \$12,000 a year and our program of Showers of Blessing Going to Houses of Worship has raised most of that already (as of June 16, 2016) Showers of Blessing is managed by a thirteen member Steering Committee (including three formerly houseless individuals), there are two part time staff members, and additional adult and student volunteers operating the shower. At our base three locations in Isla Vista/Goleta there are four houseless persons that are paid stipends to help operate the Shower.

Marty Jenkins, Business Manager Showers of Blessing – updated June 2016.