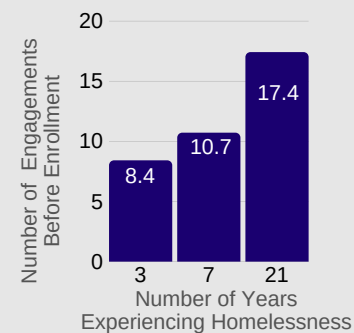


Quantifying Trust

At the end of 2018, the Homeless Outreach Program staff and members of the Board of Directors looked back upon the histories – written and unwritten – of 99 individuals served by the program. The team had questions. Does it take us longer to build trust with our more vulnerable neighbors? How much longer? The team looked at the impact time spent living unsheltered had on the number of times a Homeless Outreach Team Member interacted with an individual experiencing homelessness before there was enough trust to enroll in the program. They found that, on average, Intown's clients had experienced 6.8 years of homelessness when they began working with our team members. It takes an average of 9 engagements, or interactions with a team member, before an individual would enroll in the program. Not surprisingly, the team found that the more years an individual has experienced homelessness, the longer it took our team to build trusting relationships (see chart).



"Trust cannot be quantified as a metric," says board member Mayuri Joshi, "but trust is what makes Intown stand out." Homeless Outreach team members are now "more intentional in [their] engagements with the folks who have been on the streets longer," says Maria Carr, Director of Outreach. "We seek them out, pop by more frequently, spend more time listening."

A Name, A Step Forward

If you get the opportunity to sit next to Freddie during a service at Mercy Community Church, you're in luck. Eyes closed, swaying slowly, Freddie adds his voice to the crowd every week. While everyone else sings the melody, Freddie sings in perfect harmony, unassumingly hitting notes above and below, to lift the song and spirits of those gathered to a new place. And he does it all, for every song, from memory.

For over 20 years, though, Freddie hasn't been able to remember his proper name. Without a name, you cannot get a birth certificate, benefits, identification documents, or a place to live. In 2010, Freddie met Maurice Lattimore when they



Lattimore (left) and Freddie wait at the Department of Driver Services.

were both living at the Peachtree-Pine shelter in downtown Atlanta. Nine years later, they have reconnected. Lattimore, our Peer Support Specialist, is walking with Freddie on his journey off the streets and into his own home.

Lattimore's first step was to figure out Freddie's full name. After an intensive database search, the Outreach team found it! Finally, after living in Georgia for more than 20 years, Freddie applied for his first state identification document. Lattimore, from his years of experience living on the streets, knows that something as simple as a trip to the Department of Driver Services may be overwhelming for our clients experiencing homelessness. And so, Lattimore was by Freddie's side for the trip and helped Freddie through the application process.

In Intown's Homeless Outreach Program, this step is called navigation - where our Outreach Case Managers connect our clients with the resources and providers to address their barriers to housing. The program's growth means that Intown is able to help more of the city's residents experiencing homelessness. "We meet our clients where they are, where they live," says Lattimore, "and we walk with them. And that's why Intown is so successful."

Food Pantry Needs

The Food Pantry depends on your generous donations of shelf stable foods to provide our guests with enough food to prepare a week's worth of meals for their families. The pantry is in need of the following items. Donations can be dropped off at Mclver Hall by appointment (food@intowncm.org) or on Friday mornings.



- Plastic grocery bags
- Canned meat
- Canned vegetables
- Canned fruit
- Cereal
- Peanut butter



Growing Together in Service



Officer Breedlove (second from right) stands with youth from PYI after serving in the Food Pantry.

Once a month, the Food Pantry welcomes volunteers from the Parent Youth Initiative (PYI) of DeKalb County. These volunteers come in pairs – parent and child – not only to serve our pantry guests, but also to strengthen their own family ties. In 2017, Officer Valencia Breedlove took over the Youth Diversion Program (YDP), the parent program of the PYI. Youth in this program come through DeKalb County's Juvenile Justice Center as first-time offenders who have admitted to a minor offense. The youth agree to participate in the program and complete a community service requirement. During the initial interview process, Officer Breedlove frequently saw a disconnect between the teen and his or her parent. As a Youth Diversion program Administrator, Officer Breedlove created the Parent Youth Initiative so that, in serving their community together, the parent and youth had an opportunity to work and communicate as a team.

For Officer Breedlove, the Intown Food Pantry was the obvious choice for a supervised service opportunity for the program's youth. She began serving in the pantry in 2014 with the Junior League of DeKalb. Serving the pantry guests was "such a rewarding experience, I had to bring this to my program," Officer Breedlove remembers. The families participating in the PYI program volunteer in the pantry once a month for 3 or 4 consecutive months. The youth are given an opportunity to observe their parents as they interact with other volunteers and pantry guests. The hope is that these observations change the youths' mindsets and lead to the youths' positive interactions with community members in the future. As the overseer, Officer Breedlove volunteers with the families at the pantry, working with each pair to improve communication. The program has had 110 families volunteer in the pantry since 2017.

"My favorite part of the experience," says Officer Breedlove, "is seeing the parents and youth serving their community. I also love to see the faces of the families that come to the pantry; they are happy and excited when I see them! I appreciate that the guests are willing to share with the youth and the parents how seeing the parent child bond makes them feel. Lastly, hearing the total number of how many families we served is a great feeling."

In Full FLOW

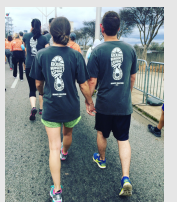
Intown is delighted to grow our Homeless Outreach team to include a FLOW Housing Specialist, Tracie Harps. Tracie's face is a familiar one to our community (she served as an Outreach Case Manager in 2017), but this position and program are new to Intown. The FLOW Housing Program of Atlanta Housing serves formerly chronically homeless residents of permanent supportive housing who no longer need the intensive case management services provided by the facility. Instead, Tracie provides "light-touch" case management focused on helping our clients maintain long-term housing stability in their own homes, increase household income, and move formerly vulnerable families toward greater self-sufficiency. This position empowers Tracie to do what she does best - give her clients a voice and connect them to services to address the barriers to long-term stability and success.



Tracie Harps
FLOW Housing Specialist

Why We Walk

On Sunday, April 28, 2019, join together with thousands of Atlantans as we take to the streets to raise awareness and funds to address food insecurity in our community. One in 7 Georgians is experiencing food insecurity, meaning they do not always know when they will get another meal. You can help! The Hunger Walk Run is a 5K Walk/Run and Family Festival. It is also a large fundraiser for Intown's Food Pantry and Co-ops, and Glenn Memorial UMC's Snack in a Backpack Program.



Anastasia Buh (left) of Focus Brand Foods walks for Intown's team in 2016 with her husband.

If you want to join Intown's Hunger Walk Team, go to: engage.acfb.org/goto/intowncm

ALL THE DETAILS

when: **Sunday**

May 5

4 - 7 pm

where:

THE
STAVE ROOM
AMERICAN SPIRIT WORKS

199 Armour Drive NE
Atlanta, GA 30324

tickets and info:

intowncm.org/artsanddeats

Join us for an evening of good food
and good friends for
a good cause!



A FUNDRAISER FOR
INTOWN COLLABORATIVE MINISTRIES
& SNACK IN A BACKPACK



THE PORCH LIGHT

SEASONAL NEWSLETTER OF
INTOWN COLLABORATIVE MINISTRIES

Spring 2019

intowncm.org

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A Season of Growth

Brad Schweers, Executive Director

In an ideal world, Intown would be shrinking its work because homelessness and hunger are becoming more rare in Atlanta. But that's not happening. Hunger remains a crippling issue for 1 in 7 of our Atlanta neighbors. Chronic homelessness is on the rise in Atlanta for the first time in a decade. As a city, we need to do better. As the needs grow, Intown is growing as well.

In 2017, Intown was a small organization in northeast Atlanta. In two short years our full-time staff has grown 433% (to 13) with our cash budget growing 246%. Intown is now a mid-sized organization, still focused on our Intown community but spreading our work throughout the entire city.

Much of our growth has been in our homeless outreach work. Two years ago we received a large federal grant that allowed us to grow our outreach team from one to four full-time staff. The results have been stunning. Intown has housed more people than any other outreach team in the city. 115 people who were chronically homeless are now stably housed. Three months ago we received another large, three-year grant from the Home First funds, an innovative public-private partnership between the City of Atlanta and local philanthropy. This new grant has allowed us to grow again, from four outreach workers to 10, taking our compassionate and effective approach city-wide.

Intown sure looks different now than we did two years ago. But Intown doesn't feel different. Not to our guests at the pantry. We still greet every guest with a warm smile, a hot cup of coffee, and healthy food choices as they shop for their own groceries. The homeless folks we find sleeping under bridges or behind dumpsters still feel warmth and love from our outreach workers. Our staff continues to trek out to where people are, take the time to build trusting relationships, and then walk with everyone who is willing from the streets to permanent housing.

Atlanta needs Intown to grow and we have stepped up to the challenge. I hope you will continue to do your part to support this growth to help so many suffering in our neighborhoods. Won't you come along on this journey with us?



Staff members joined the Board of Directors to celebrate Intown's success and growth during the Annual Board Retreat in March 2019.

THE MISSION OF INTOWN COLLABORATIVE MINISTRIES IS TO PREVENT AND REVERSE
HOMELESSNESS AND HUNGER IN INTOWN ATLANTA.

