

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date: October 18, 2022

From: Amy Johnston, Community Collaborative Planner

Re: Livingston County Homeless Continuum of Care invites the community to participate in local Homeless Awareness Month events



This year's theme "Homeless, not Hopeless"

Howell, Mich. – The Livingston County Homeless Continuum of Care (HCC) invites the community to participate in a **screening of the movie "The Pursuit of Happyness" as part of November's Homeless Awareness Month at The Historic Howell Theater, Friday November 11:**

- Doors open at 6:00 pm with showtime at 7:00 pm.
- Cash donations will be accepted at the door.

The movie will be preceded by remarks from Continuum of Care service providers and include a guest speaker who has lived experience of homelessness in our county. The event will also include a display of art created by homelessness survivors.

While Livingston is a relatively affluent community and it can be hard to identify individuals at risk of or experiencing homelessness, **the January 26, 2022 "Point in Time" count conducted by member agencies of the Homeless Continuum of Care confirmed 131 people experiencing homelessness in Livingston County at that time.**

The movie event is planned for Veteran's Day. Donna Bunin Assistant Director for Supportive Services for Veteran Families, Oakland Livingston Human Services Agency shared that *"Over the past 12 months OLHSA's Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program has served a total of 31 Veteran households, 52 total individuals, with Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing services totaling \$138,435.82 in financial assistance."*

*"This year's Homeless Awareness Month theme is Homeless, not Hopeless. As a community, we want to raise awareness of this issue. We want to ensure homeless individuals have a community of support, and that they know where to turn if they should find themselves in this situation. We want them to help them to have hope, and real solutions that bring them to stability,"* said Marlena Poff, Director of Social Services at The Salvation Army of Livingston County.

**The November 11 movie event provides an opportunity for residents to think and learn about homelessness, and to better understand the challenges homeless and at-risk individuals face as they seek shelter and work to establish stability.** Event organizers are reserving priority seating at the event for youth, individuals, and veterans who are survivors of homelessness in Livingston County. Tickets for these priority guests will be distributed through select local agencies who provide housing and sheltering services.

Homeless Awareness Month is promoted in conjunction with the Michigan Coalition Against Homelessness (MCAH), and will be held throughout the month of November statewide. It is a concerted effort to raise the public's awareness about issues relating to homelessness in the state of

Michigan. The Livingston County Homeless Continuum of Care and member agencies sponsor this event locally; **In addition to the movie event, this year's activities included:**

- Free, open art sessions for those experiencing homelessness which was held October 10th,
- An awareness-raising social media blitz to take place at various locations throughout the county and online on October 25<sup>th</sup>, and
- A [merchandise fundraiser](https://keephopealive.tenmerch.com/) to take place throughout the month of November. All funds raised will be used by the Livingston County Homeless Continuum of Care to provide individuals experiencing homelessness with barrier reducing services and supports. Link to the fundraiser: <https://keephopealive.tenmerch.com/>.

For community members seeking additional background information about the landscape of homelessness in our county, visit the Human Services Collaborative Body's website at <https://www.livgov.com/hscb/Pages/assessmentandevaluation.aspx>, to view these resources and additional fact sheets: [Housing in Livingston County Fact Sheet](#), [Runaway and Homeless Youth in Livingston County Fact Sheet](#), [Financial Stability Fact Sheet](#)

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