



Your twice-a-month e-newsletter from AGRM

Useful news and information for association members

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ourstreet
News from AGRM and our members

DC Forum Wraps Up Today

As you read this issue of *Street Smart*, U.S. rescue mission leaders from as far away as Alaska are in their third day of meetings on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., as part of AGRM's annual DC Forum. Today they are holding meetings with their lawmakers from both the Senate and House of Representatives, talking about issues critical to nonprofits—particularly organizations that are meeting the needs of poor and powerless people.

Yesterday, the group of 45 went to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for an hour-long parley with new HHS staff to discuss the possible ramifications of health care reform and gaps in Medicaid for homeless and struggling individuals and families.

As DC Forum participants visit lawmakers' offices today, they are also handing out and going over the new Baylor University study that shows outcome data and the extensive reach of rescue missions and other faith-based organizations. This study continues to turn heads, and is now finding its way all over Capitol Hill.

Check Out Fantastic Education Offerings at AGRM's Annual Convention

Have you been curious about the content of this year's convention seminars? Click [here](#) to see the extensive education offerings at this year's event in Dallas, May 31–June 3. The convention features 60 seminars in 12 tracks.

Of course, the convention also offers much more. Visit www.agrm.org/convention to take a

look at the full program.

A reminder that you might consider stretching your budget if you are within driving distance of the convention. Check out this [map](#) to determine if your mission is within driving distance of Dallas. Instead of a few folks attending by flying in, load up a van with staff members and drive to the event!

Media Innovation Competition Now Open

AGRM's 2017 Media Innovation Competition has begun! This is your opportunity to enter your mission's best work in the following categories: annual report, general brochure, newsletter/magazine, website, PSA/commercial, extended video, social media, logo, and photo. An Award of Excellence, an Award of Merit, and up to three Honorable Mention winners will be presented in each category for each budget size group. AGRM will honor winners at the 2017 Annual Convention in Dallas, Texas.

The 2017 Media Innovation Competition will again be judged by independent professionals working in the fields of the competition's categories. The entry deadline this year is April 15. Start the entry process by visiting the competition's main page at www.agrm.org/MIC.

If you have questions, feel free to contact Director of Communications Brad Lewis at blewis@agrm.org. As we do each year, we are excited to honor the great print and electronic media work member missions are doing!

Application Approaches Quickly for Convention Scholarships

AGRM has again received a grant to provide scholarships for 70 or more people to attend this year's convention in Dallas May 31–June 3. The scholarships include money for registration, partial lodging costs, and even some transportation expenses, and are intended for full-time staff of member missions whose annual operating budgets are under \$2 million. The grant allows for up to three scholarship recipients per mission.

Primary consideration will be given to applicants who have never attended a convention before, as well as those whose mission is paying for at least one other staff member to attend. Secondary consideration will be given to those who have not received scholarship assistance for the past two years, and any remaining funds will be awarded to applicants who have not received scholarships for three straight years, or who are just seeking partial scholarships.

The application deadline March 17, so don't delay. Click [here](#) now for full details and to apply.

Reports Show Continuing Interest in Baylor Case Study on Homelessness

The Baylor University Institute for the Studies of Religion case study Assessing the Faith-Based Response to Homelessness in America continues to generate great interest. The project was in part coordinated by AGRM and our member missions in the 11 cities studied.

You can read two behind-the-scenes reports that reflect the results of the public relations campaign connected to the release of the study:

1. [Summary memo](#) of PR results, as well as future opportunities to increase visibility and application of the study. Please note that the Baylor research will be presented to some 1,500 Christian influencers April 26–28, 2017, at the “Q” conference in Nashville. The story will again be offered to news media.
2. [Detailed report](#) on Influencer and Media campaigns, prepared by Potomac Communications Group in Washington, D.C.

A PDF of the full case study can be downloaded [here](#).

Help Us Undergird the Dallas Convention with Prayer

Please continue to be in prayer ahead of AGRM’s 2017 Annual Convention in Dallas, May 31–June 3. As we draw closer to the event, we want to ask God to fortify our ministries, prepare our hearts, and undergird this gathering.

You can join with others praying for the event by participating in 90 Days of Prayer. The [calendar page](#) on AGRM’s website that will guide you each day. The prayers focus on the convention theme, the ministry of AGRM’s members in the Dallas area, the staff and board of AGRM, leaders and businesses in the city of Dallas, those on the frontlines of mission ministry across North America, and the people served by rescue missions, as well as the convention itself.

Dates Set for Most Fall District Conferences

Locations and dates are in place for nearly all of AGRM’s district conferences. Head to www.agrm.org and choose *Events* in the top blue menu bar, then click on your district for the information, and mark those dates on your calendar now.

The Shack Author Discusses Connection to Those Struggling with Addiction

You might wonder how the faith-based movie *The Shack* could have a powerful connection with rescue missions. Interestingly, Wm. Paul Young, author of the book, says that men and women struggling with addiction resonate deeply with his story. Mark P. Fisher, AGRM’s strategic initiatives architect, had opportunity to interview Young. The [video](#) is divided into seven topics, including grace, prisons, secrets, survival, accusations, and Young’s hopes for those when they leave the theater.

Looking Down the Street...

- Pat Chastain is now president/CEO at **Rescue Mission of Middle Georgia** (Macon, Georgia).
- Please welcome AGRM’s newest mission member, **Agape House of Prescott** (Prescott, Arizona). [Cindy Campbell](#) serves as executive director.
- Please join us in welcoming the following new AGRM business members: [Relias Learning](#) (Cary, North Carolina); [The Life I Now Live](#) (Fresno,

California); [VisionLynk](#) (Phoenix, Arizona); and [WaterStone](#) (Colorado Springs, Colorado). AGRM currently has 92 business members and partners that serve our mission members with a variety of products and services. Use our [business member directory](#) to search for companies and organizations that can help meet your needs.

- **New Orleans Mission** (New Orleans, Louisiana) has produced a documentary of a jam session at the mission that resulted in creation of the song “Hard Times Don’t Hit Me No More.” Written by top Louisiana artists with the help of more than 100 homeless men and women, the song was considered for a Grammy last year. The resulting film has been selected to screen in two top film festivals this year: the First Glance Los Angeles Film Festival and the International Christian Film Festival (where the film is nominated for “Most Creative Documentary”). Click [here](#) to see a video of the song and for a link to the full 30-minute documentary.
- Leonard E. Klassen, the second president of **Union Gospel Mission** (Vancouver, British Columbia), passed away recently. Current President Bill Mollard reports that under Klassen’s direction, the mission established more programs and activities to meet the core needs of the community. He served for 37 years. In 1953, UGM acquired official ownership of its first property—a five-acre farm in North Burnaby, providing rehabilitation for those in need and housing for staff. A wealth of life-saving programs were added during Klassen’s ministry.
- Bruce Butler, a CPA as well as a senior pastor, has been named the new CEO of **Union Gospel Mission** (Dallas, Texas), replacing Bill Thompson. Bill, a venerated AGRM member, went to be with the Lord earlier this year after a lingering battle with cancer. Bruce was previously the board chair at the mission.



AGRM Member Benefit: Government Relations

AGRM has become an influential voice in Washington, D.C. For many years the association has been building in-roads in the nation’s capital and strengthening relationships with legislators and government agencies. What’s more, we equip our members to engage elected officials, congressional staff, and other decision makers through various education and advocacy opportunities, including webinars about priority topics, legislative and policy updates, the annual DC Forum event, and assistance with direct advocacy.

Being a part of AGRM means that you’re “in the know” and that you’ll be prepared to handle whatever comes your way from the halls of government. To learn more about the work we do in this area, go to www.agrm.org/gov.



Students Create Vending Machine for Homeless

Before they start building, Gulfport High School robotics class students have to first find a reason to build. For every piece of machinery his students envision, teacher Clinton Brawley says there must be a real-world, community benefit.

This time, Brawley's students might have outdone themselves. The school is attracting national attention for building a solar-powered vending machine that supplies free hygiene products to homeless people, [reports](#) the *SunHerald*.

After learning there are 143 homeless students in the Gulfport (Mississippi) School District, the robotics class came up with the idea to gear something specifically for the homeless population—starting first with homeless students in the district. Inside the unique machine they created are toothbrushes, toothpaste, shaving cream, disposable razors, bars of soap, and feminine hygiene products. While the first machine is for use within the school district, the students hope to place similar machines across the city. They plan to power the machines with solar panels and add a shower that uses rainwater or reusable water called “gray water.”

For now, the machine operates on tokens that will be given to district counselors, who know which students are homeless.

Synthetic Pot Poses Additional Danger

Marijuana is often seen as a relatively benign drug that produces a typically mellow high, but new U.S. government research shows that the drugs called synthetic pot appear to be much different, [reports](#) the *Chicago Tribune*.

Teens who use synthetic pot are at a heightened risk for violent behavior, risky sex, and abuse of other drugs. Synthetic pot—sometimes called fake weed—covers a variety of drugs sold under hundreds of brand names. Spice and K2 were common brands in the past. Some of the chemicals in fake weed are similar to those in marijuana.

Teens who used synthetic pot were more prone to being injured or to engage in violent behaviors than those who used only marijuana. They were also more likely to have been the victims of sexual or physical dating violence. Teens who tried synthetic pot had increased risk of being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property.

Synthetic pot is illegal, and is listed as a schedule 1 drug by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. But dealers try to skirt the law by continually tinkering with the formula and labeling the products as “not fit for human consumption.”

Can Regulating Your Sleep Cycle Help with Depression?

Much like a clock on the wall, our cells have their own 24-hour timeline. When they're in sync, our body clock can act as a protective barrier against mental and physical illnesses.

But throw in some jet lag, a night shift, or a bout of insomnia, and suddenly the clock's hands are spinning out of control—potentially leaving us more vulnerable to viral infections and depression, [reports](#) Mashable.

That's not to say restoring your internally driven cycles will rid you of depression or make you immune to the flu. But a growing number of studies in recent years indicate that maintaining our internal rhythm is important for our overall health. This rhythm represents the biochemical and physiological processes that rise and fall over the course of 24 hours, including those related to hormones, body temperatures, and eating and digesting food.

Researchers found that for people without depression, the gene activity in their brains aligned with the usual solar day: active and alert when the sun is out; at rest during the dark hours. But in patients with severe depression, their pattern of gene activity was not synchronized with sunlight. In some, their “day” pattern looked more like a “night” pattern, and vice versa.



Ranking Reveals Top U.S. Communities for Health and Well-Being

For the second year in a row, Naples-Immokalee-Marco Island in Florida remains the top U.S. metro community for overall well-being, according to a newly released ranking by Gallup and Healthways, [reports](#) CBS News.

The report, titled State of American Well-Being: 2016 Community Well-Being Rankings, looked at 189 communities across the country. Barnstable Town, Massachusetts, and Santa Cruz-Watsonville, California—both of which ranked in the top six last year—came in second- and third-highest, respectively.

The well-being index is calculated on a scale of 0 to 100, with 0 representing the lowest possible rating and 100 the highest. Each score is made up of metrics in the following five categories: purpose, social, financial, community, and physical. To assess these measures, researchers conducted more than 350,000 telephone interviews with U.S. adults across all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

“The data and insights from this report can be used as a call-to-action for communities around the country, leveraging it to benchmark and identify opportunities for well-being improvement,” the report concludes.

Report Shows Latest Giving Trends

Increases in online giving outpaced overall giving nearly eight-fold in 2016, 7.9 percent versus just 1 percent, [reports](#) *The NonProfit Times*.

Blackbaud's Charitable Giving Report tracked year-to-year giving of 6,845 individuals during 2016. The report also includes giving data from 5,210 organizations representing \$2.6 billion in online donations. Though the online giving figure represents a 7.9 percent monetary

increase, the portion of donations made online increased by just one-tenth of a point, 7.2 percent in 2016 as compared to 7.1 percent in 2015.

Other elements of this year's report and trends to keep an eye on in 2017 include:

- How do donors give? After numerous inquiries over the years, the 2016 report includes donor data such as average age (62), average gifts per year (1.4), and median donation amount for gifts under \$1,000 (\$20).
- When will Gen Y emerge? Despite making up the largest portion of the potential donor population (30.4 percent), members of Gen Y (those who were born between 1981 and 1997) represented the second smallest percentage of actual donors (7.1 percent) and smallest portion of total giving (5.4 percent).
- What's next for online giving? Mobile giving is on the rise, accounting for 17 percent of online gifts in 2016. First-year retention rates for online-only donors stand at 21 percent as compared to 29 percent for first-year offline-only donors. Multi-year retention rates also skew in favor of off-line only, 60 percent to 58 percent.

Can Too Much Social Media Make You Lonely?

For young adults, social media may not be so social after all. Heavy use of platforms such as Facebook, Snapchat, and Instagram was associated with feelings of social isolation, [reports](#) NPR.

While face-to-face social connectedness is strongly associated with well-being, it's not clear what happens when those interactions happen virtually. To investigate, 1,787 U.S. adults ages 19 to 32 were asked about their usage of 11 social media platforms outside of work. The survey also gauged social isolation by asking participants questions such as how often they felt left out.

It turns out that the people who reported spending the most time on social media— more than two hours a day—had twice the odds of perceived social isolation than those who said they spent a half hour per day or less on those sites. And people who visited social media platforms most frequently, 58 visits per week or more, had more than three times the odds of perceived social isolation than those who visited fewer than nine times per week.

Both social isolation and social media use are very different across the age spectrum, so the news isn't all bad. For example, young adults generally have a lot of different opportunities for in-person experiences and social media use may represent a retreat from that, while older adults are more likely to feel socially isolated and might benefit from having opportunities to connect online.



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Employment and product ads

The following job positions are currently open at AGRM member missions. Please visit www.agrm.org/careers to view full descriptions and to apply. Click [here](#) for instructions on using AGRM's Recruiting Center to post open positions for your mission.

Accounting Assistant: Light of Life Ministries, Inc., Pittsburgh, PA

Assistant Director: Rescue Mission Alliance, Oxnard, CA

Care Support Specialist: Light of Life Ministries, Inc., Pittsburgh, PA

Case Manager for Women, Children & Families: Open Door Mission, Omaha, NE

Case Manager, Men's Ministries: Seattle's Union Gospel Mission, Seattle, WA

Casework Services Supervisor: The City Mission, Cleveland, OH

Chief Financial Officer: Yakima Union Gospel Mission, Yakima, WA

Cook: Light of Life Ministries, Inc., Pittsburgh, PA

Counselor, Men's Ministries: Seattle's Union Gospel Mission, Seattle, WA

Development Associate: The Path of Citrus County, Beverly Hills, FL

Development Director: Winston-Salem Rescue Mission, Inc., Winston-Salem, NC

Director of Development: Rockford Rescue Mission Ministries, Inc., Rockford, IL

Director of Development: Union Gospel Mission of Salem, Salem OR

Director of Emergency Services: Denver Rescue Mission, Denver, CO

Driver, Food Pantry & Distribution Center: Bay Area Rescue Mission, Richmond, CA

Executive Director: Union Gospel Mission of Missoula, Missoula, MT

Health and Wellness Center Director: San Francisco Rescue Mission, San Francisco, CA

HR Manager: Rescue Mission Alliance, Oxnard, CA

Human Resources Manager: Seattle's Union Gospel Mission, Seattle, WA

Maintenance Worker: Open Door Mission, Omaha, NE

Ministry Director: Campus of Hope Rescue Mission, Conroe, TX

Overnight Supervisor: Hope Gospel Mission, Eau Claire, WI

President/CEO: San Diego Rescue Mission, San Diego, CA

Program Director/Associate Director: King's Gospel Mission, Hanford, CA

Receiving Clerk: Open Door Mission, Omaha, NE

Receiving Supervisor: Open Door Mission, Omaha, NE

Recovery Program Coordinator: Westminster Rescue Mission, Westminster, MD

Resident Advisors: Hope Gospel Mission, Eau Claire, WI

Resident Assistant, Center for Women & Children: Bay Area Rescue Mission, Richmond, CA

Residential Coordinator_Cornerstone Manor Facility: Buffalo City Mission, Buffalo, NY

Senior Marketing Coordinator: Buffalo City Mission, Buffalo, NY

Shelter Desk Manager: Jericho Road Ministries, Inc., Brooksville, FL

Sous Chef: Open Door Mission, Omaha, NE

Thrift Store Supervisor: Victor Valley Super Thrift, Hesperia, CA

Thrift Store Supervisor: Central Coast Super Thrift, Santa Maria, CA

Transitional Programs Case Manager, Part-Time : Seattle's Union Gospel Mission, Seattle, WA

Vice President for People and Culture: Seattle's Union Gospel Mission, Seattle, WA

Volunteer Coordinator: Open Door Mission, Omaha, NE

VP of Advancement: Water Street Ministries, Lancaster, PA

Women's Shelter Support Staff Women's Ministry: Kalamazoo Gospel Mission, Kalamazoo, MI



Kindling

*And the strong shall become tinder,
and his work a spark,
and both of them shall burn together,
with none to quench them (Isaiah 1:31, ESV).*

Humankind is possessed of a self-destructive bent. We consistently over-indulge in lifestyles and behaviors that will ultimately bring about our demise.

When we live life outside of God's will and companionship, many of us follow our sinful tendency of utter selfishness. We live and work for ourselves, and essentially pursue first and foremost that which will bring us pleasure.

In a sense, what Isaiah was so eloquently speaking of here is that when we live worshipping ourselves or idols, we become kindling, and everything we put our hand to acts like a spark. This epitomizes the destructive nature of sin—that we would labor toward the very thing that will destroy us! It's like a full gas can and playing with matches.

Be wary then, because although sinful living can be immediately gratifying, our adversary the devil "prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour" (1 Peter 5:8). Living in habitual sin and disregard of the Lord will bring about our ultimate judgment, and there will be no one "to quench" the agony of eternal separation from God.

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To contribute: If you would like to write a devotional thought for StreetLight, please make it about 200 words and include at least one Bible verse or passage, and submit via [email](mailto:).

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