BIG NEWS!!!! Our Statesville Avenue Campus will stay open all year, providing homeless men a place to eat, sleep, bathe and participate in case management services. Traditionally, that campus closes on April 30, leaving hundreds of homeless men wondering where they will stay on May 1. “Last year, we did not have enough beds for all the men looking for shelter on May 1. We vowed that would never happen again,” says Carson Dean, Executive Director. Men’s Shelter of Charlotte is taking a leap of faith that the community will support 500 year round beds for homeless men. It will take a significant amount of money, volunteers, and community partnerships to extend our bed capacity at our two campuses, meet the basic needs of our guests, and provide quality case management services. Carson is confident that Charlotte will sustain this effort. “The citizens of this city have been asking for more shelter beds for many years. We are here to provide it with their help.” The men we serve are also excited about the news:

Keeping the Statesville Avenue Campus open all year will be a great help and benefit. It will give people who are homeless a place besides the bridges and camps to sleep. This will provide stability which will give homeless men more options.” —Sidney, guest

This is great news! I’ve been hoping this would happen. Just having a roof over your head helps so much. It gives us a chance to eat and rest.” —Granger, guest

It’s a real help to all homeless men.” —Joshua, guest

Did you know:

Homeless men can earn their GED at MSC?
MSC has a Facebook page? Become a fan today!
Guests at MSC have their own Peer Advisory Council? The group is the voice of our guests, providing feedback to the staff.

Homeless men can have many of their medical needs met at our campus? We have a nurse, dentist, chiropractor and podiatrist providing services periodically during the week.

It is a disadvantage to all homeless men for the Statesville Avenue Campus to close. Overcrowding at the Tryon Street Campus puts an impossible strain on the facility.” —William, guest

500 Beds! All year!!
My View from the Men’s Shelter of Charlotte...

When our community created More than Shelter! Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s Ten-Year Implementation Plan to End and Prevent Homelessness — One Person/One Family at a Time in October 2006, one strategy called for 200 more year round shelter beds for homeless men. Last May, a group of homeless advocates sponsored the Solidarity Sleep Out to draw immediate attention to the fact that no progress had been made towards that goal. In October 2009, the Emergency Winter Shelter and the Uptown Shelter merged to become Men’s Shelter of Charlotte. On March 23, 2010 we announced that our Statesville Avenue Campus would not close on April 30th as it has done in the past. Keeping those 240 beds available year round, in addition to the 260 beds available at our Tryon Street Campus, means that Men’s Shelter of Charlotte heard the community loud and clear and we responded!

Many people believe that when non-profits merge they save lots of money, and maybe in some cases that is true. But it’s not completely true for the Men’s Shelter. While the Men’s Shelter has saved a bit by consolidating back office functions, the dollar amount of these savings is overshadowed by the cost of providing more shelter beds, more case management, and more basic needs assistance to more men experiencing homelessness. In other words, by meeting the demands of the community we’ve created an agency that, overall, costs more to run but is able to more efficiently and effectively meet the growing needs of homeless men in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg County area.

The result of the merger and the 500 bed plan is an agency best poised to meet the collective needs of homeless men in our community. The Men’s Shelter of Charlotte is here to serve the community, but can only do so if the community ensures we have the financial resources to effectively help homeless men. The Men’s Shelter counts on individual donors, congregations, local government, foundations, businesses, and the United Way for the financial resources necessary to do the job. We approach our mission mindful of the African proverb that it takes a village. We need the village to reach out to its most vulnerable citizens – men experiencing homelessness – by financially supporting the work of the Men’s Shelter of Charlotte.

Carson Dean, Executive Director
Teamwork Places Men in Appropriate Housing

When Mr. Robert Turner tells you his life’s story, he can transport you to another place and time. He is soft spoken and proud of his accomplishments. Mr. Turner sang professionally for most of his life. Beginning in the 1940’s, he traveled internationally, performing his gospel music at many different venues. Over his lifetime, he wrote and recorded countless gospel songs. Music is still a passion of this gentle and kind man.

Mr. Turner was a guest at Men’s Shelter of Charlotte when he met a Case Manager who recognized that Mr. Turner was ready to move into housing. Jim Davis, Emergency Services Case Manager, worked with Mr. Turner and other resources to move him to an apartment. Now, he lives on his own with some help from Men’s Shelter of Charlotte staff.

What does it take to move from homelessness to housing? An individualized approach with a team effort. At Men’s Shelter of Charlotte, a guest who wants help moving beyond homelessness works with a Case Manager to identify individual goals and develop a plan. From there, his care is coordinated by the case manager. Carson Dean, Executive Director, says, “The system of care is like the spokes of a wheel. The Case Manager builds trust with the guest. Because that relationship is an important factor for success, the Case Manager connects the guest with other professionals, keeping the guest at the center of care.”

Volunteer Spotlight

Dr. Robert Simmons is a Chiropractor with a cause. About a year ago, he decided to offer his talents to a non-profit one morning a week. Men’s Shelter of Charlotte was the fortunate recipient of that decision.

Every Friday morning, Dr. Simmons comes to the shelter and sets up a Chiropractor’s office. He helps homeless men by providing relief from pain. Earl Thomas, MSC guest, has been seeing Dr. Simmons for about three weeks because of severe pain in his right shoulder. He is a painter, but is out of work because he cannot lift his arm. Dr. Simmons has given him relief from the pain and hope that he’ll be able to return to work soon. Dr. Simmons says, “Many of these men have had medical problems that have been ignored for years. It’s nice to see them healed.”

When asked why he volunteers at MSC, Dr. Simmons explains that at a time when he was without a place to live, others helped him. “It’s my turn to help others. I’m just thankful that I can be here,” he says.

We are thankful for you, Dr. Simmons! You are making a difference in the lives of homeless men.
Mr. John Lesane was born in Lumberton, NC, and spent much of his boyhood training in the boxing ring. At 16 years of age, he moved to New Jersey and became very serious about boxing. In 1948, he began boxing professionally in the middleweight and welterweight classes. He enjoyed success for the next five years.

After his boxing career, he married and had five children, opened a dry cleaning business and worked for Ford Motor Company. At some point, he lost his way and fell into the terrible cycle of addiction. When his mother died, he moved back to North Carolina to take care of the house in Lumberton. Because of his addiction and other circumstances, he could not sustain the house and became homeless.

Two years ago, he was sleeping in his car when he heard about the Men’s Shelter of Charlotte. In the fall of 2009, Mr. Lesane met our Emergency Services Case Manager, Jim Davis. Jim recognized that Mr. Lesane could live on his own with support and was able to move Mr. Lesane quickly into housing. Mr. Lesane loves his apartment and credits Jim Davis and the Men’s Shelter of Charlotte for bringing stability to his life.

Donors and volunteers make it possible for men like Mr. Lesane to get the help they need to move beyond homelessness. Thank you for making an impact!!

Please remember Men’s Shelter of Charlotte in your will and estate plans! Call 704.334.3187, ext. 109 for more details!