

Brunch Update

Issue 65 – Dec 2014

House of Sufism Charity Initiative

Addressing the most pressing needs of our community



Greetings from House of Sufism! Once again, this month has seen our volunteers brave the inclement Boston weather in the name of service. Our service this month has ranged from delicious meals, to thorough cleaning, to visits to friends in need of some cheer. We have been continuing our new tradition of a monthly brunch service at Boston's only all-youth shelter, Bridge Over Troubled Waters, supported by the limitless enthusiasm of our ever-growing volunteer crew and the sincere warmth and gratitude of hungry teens. On Sundays when we aren't able to serve a meal, volunteers offer their time and willing hands to the humbling work of cleaning the shelter's kitchen. This functions both as a means to "clean within" - ridding oneself of negative feelings and egocentrism through a grueling but rewarding task – but it also ensures that our friends at Bridge can eat in a high quality, sanitary environment.



Other notable happenings this month included the visit of some of our volunteers to the Children's Services of Roxbury homeless shelter in response to a call for help. The sobering experience of waiting in line for a meal and receiving only the bare minimum of food renewed our commitment to providing quality, nutritious meals to those in need. We are continuing to reach out to more shelters in Boston to expand our efforts to their fullest capacity.

As we enter the holiday season, we welcome times of celebration and joy with new friends and old. This time of year also marks the most crucial point in our fundraising campaign. More than ever, the homeless members of our community are in need of our support to face the coming winter. Please consider giving to House of Sufism Charity Initiative via cash, check, or through the Paypal link on our website. May you have a warm and wonderful holiday!

A message from a friend:

"Hi Mohammad,

It was great to finally meet you in person! The conversation we had made me remember a quote from Harry Truman: 'It is amazing what you can get done if you don't care who gets the credit.'"

– Teenage resident at Bridge Over Troubled Waters



Volunteer Reflection – The Chain of Giving

Previous essays in this space have pointed out the many psychological/ spiritual advantages accruing to those who participate in activities such the House of Sufism Charity Initiative. The advantages to the homeless and low-income people that we serve are obvious. And the companies who donate their leftover food to the charity also benefit, as they would otherwise have to pay for the food to be disposed of. But it's easy to overlook the fact that our charitable effort also transforms other people's activities into acts of charity.



The most obvious examples of this transformation include the volunteers who produce the homemade food for our brunch services, the workers who package leftover food at

donor companies (such as the Danish Pastry House, Pepperidge Farm, Panera and Au Bon Pain), and the workers at shelters and food pantries who make it possible for us to distribute this food to those in need.

Whether we're picking up food, delivering it, or serving it, we always produce smiles on the faces of the other people directly involved in the process.

One could even reach back further to include the farmworkers who plant and harvest the raw food materials, the truck drivers that transport these products to the bakeries and supermarkets and the bakers and food processors that produce the final product. While they may not be aware of it, they too are participating in our acts of charity: when leftover food is thrown away, all the effort that's gone into producing it has been wasted. When it's delivered to shelters and food pantries, it means these people have played a role in helping the most needy members of our community.



HOW TO GET INVOLVED



1. **Volunteer!** Sunday Brunch is a time commitment of only a few hours. Help us cook and clean or just spend time with our friends in need! Also, we need volunteers throughout the week to pick up donations from bakeries and deliver them to food pantries the next day.

2. **Monetary donations:** If you would like to make a contribution to House of Sufism Charity Initiative, you can write a check (payable to KN), use any credit card, or wire money through PayPal.

3. **In-kind donations:** We are always in need for milk, eggs, fruit, plastic bags, etc. for our Sunday Brunch. We also accept donations of items like household goods and furniture. All donations are tax-deductible.

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