

# 4.06 Building Coalitions from the Ground Up

2024 NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON  
ENDING HOMELESSNESS

★ AND CAPITOL HILL DAY ★

JULY 8-10, 2024

WASHINGTON D.C.

#NAEH2024

**Donald Whitehead, Jr.**

@NationalHomeles

*Executive Director, National Coalition for the Homeless*

**India Pungarcher**

@OpenTableNash

*Associate Director of Advocacy, Open Table Nashville*

**Terry Warren**

Friend of Open Table Nashville

**Joe Wilson**

@hospitalityhousesf on Instagram

*Executive Director, Hospitality House San Francisco*

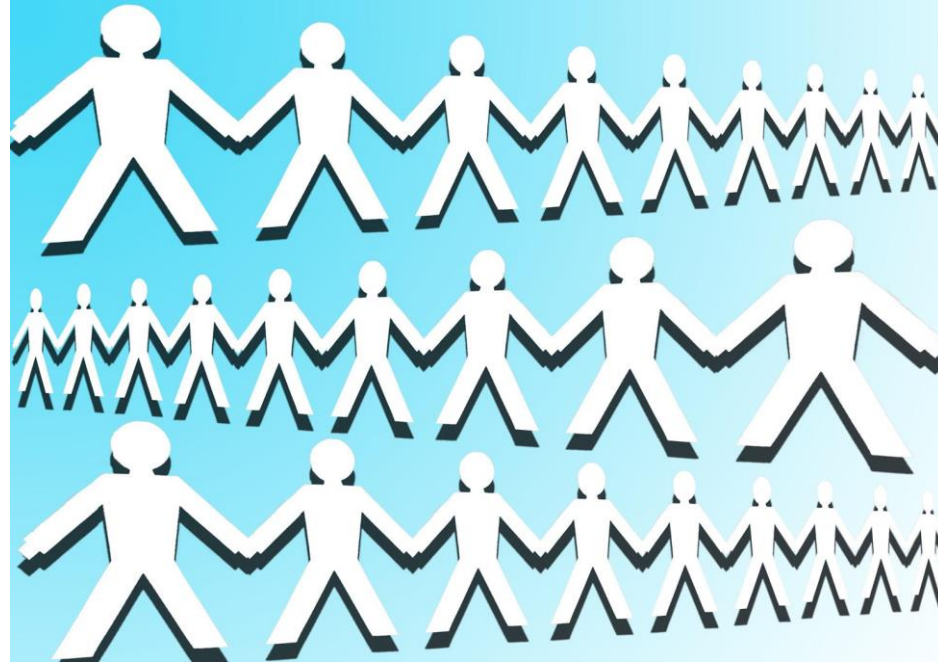


# Session Objectives

- In this session, you will:
  - Learn about the successful elements of building coalitions and why they are important
  - Learn about service provider-led coalitions from Nashville and San Francisco and tips for what to do and what to avoid
  - Learn about the importance of having people with current and past experience of homelessness at every step of building coalition



# The Nuts and Bolts of Effective Coalition Building



- What is a coalition?
- Why start a coalition? What barriers or challenges might there be?

# The Nuts and Bolts of Effective Coalition Building

## BARRIERS TO STARTING A COALITION

There are often barriers to starting a coalition, and it's important to be aware of and anticipate them, because they may dictate the process the coalition will have to follow in order to begin successfully. Among the most likely:

- Turf issues
- Bad history
- Domination by "professionals" or some other elite group
- Poor links to the community
- Minimal organizational capacity
- Funding
- Failure to provide and create leadership within the coalition
- The perceived - or actual - costs of working together outweigh the benefits for many coalition members



# Nuts and Bolts Cont'd...



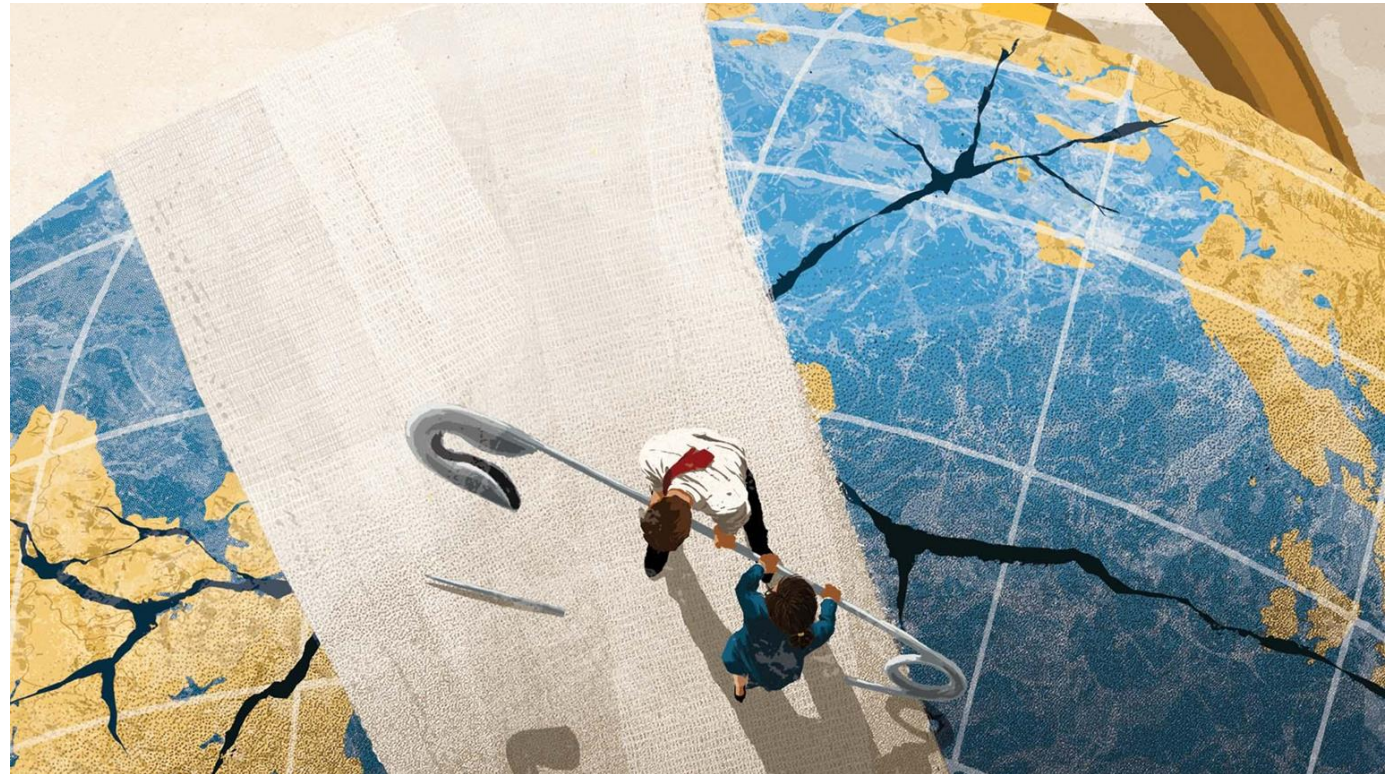
## Guidelines for getting a coalition off the ground

- *Communicate, communicate, communicate.*
- *Be as inclusive and participatory as you can.*
- *Network like crazy.*
- *Try, at least at the beginning, to set concrete, reachable goals.*
- *Be creative about meetings.*
- *Be realistic, and keep your promises.*
- *Acknowledge diversity among your members, and among their ideas and beliefs.*



# Six Principles in Creating High Impact Coalitions

1. Open Boundaries
2. Moral Leadership
3. Speed of Trust
4. Balance of Commitments
5. Navigating other Coalitions
6. Focus on Solutions



# Integrating People with Lived Experience Authentically

Avoid	Do
Transactional Only relationships	<b>Create meaningful partnerships based on mutual respect</b>
Tokenism	<b>Include people of different experiences and backgrounds</b>
Having decision making conversations in silos	<b>Engage in transparency</b>
Making decisions about how, when, and where conversations will be had without consultation	<b>Create safe, trusting spaces that involve inclusion from the start</b>
Limiting participation to only parts of the process	<b>Support meaningful, inclusive participation throughout the full life cycle of the project/process</b>

# Homeless Emergency Service Providers Association (HESPA)



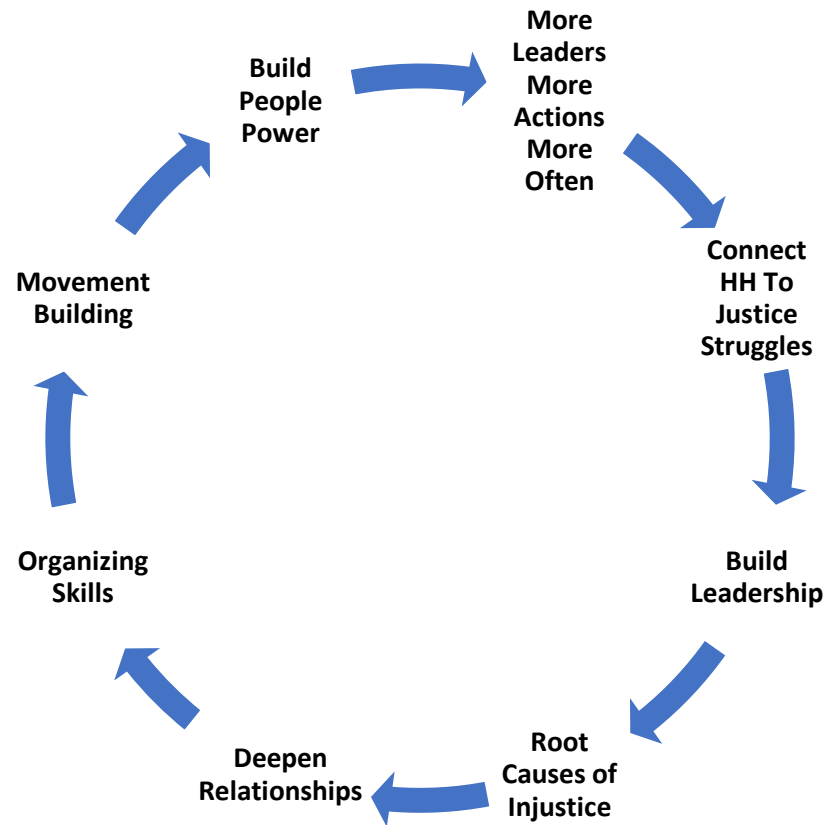


# Homeless Emergency Service Providers Association (HESPA)

- Co-founded by HH & COH to 1) build a broader voice for people experiencing homelessness and 2) strengthen citywide homelessness response services, beyond individual providers
- HH is current Co-Chair
- 30-plus member organizations – budget advocacy and systems change with Mayor's Office, major City Departments, and Board of Supervisors, and citywide human services field
- Annual Budget document guides advocacy work – committees develop proposals, 8 -member Executive Committee (50% POC) guides overall work. Explicit commitment to racial justice
- More than \$60M added to City Budget – for shelters, services for youth and families, housing subsidies, prevention and mental health services



# Theory of Change: Build Leadership, Build Community Power



# Building People Power Starts Within

## Opportunities Every Day

- **“Every meeting is an organizing opportunity, every person is a potential activist, every moment is a chance to change [something in] the world...”**
  - **Dolores Huerta, Co-founder, UFW**

## Principles Into Practice

- **Create learning and engagement culture in your organization – one on one supervision, team meetings, coaching and mentoring by leadership team**
- **Include advocacy, civic engagement, community outreach, etc., in job descriptions**
- **Value / acknowledge life experience/expertise as well as educational attainment**
- **In-service trainings with grassroots organizing / advocacy organizations**
- **Labor history / civil rights / women’s & indigenous people’s movements**
- **Books and artwork in all sites/programs**



# Some Thoughts

- Human services field has responsibility to alleviate the harms **CAUSED BY** injustice & inequality **AND** fight to eliminate the **CAUSES OF** injustice and inequality
- Power is exercised collectively, must be opposed collectively
- The communities that human services orgs represent are oppressed – the orgs that spring from that are also oppressed
- Those over-represented *in the problem* must be over-represented *in the solution*, that is what equity means
- Never forget what brought you to this work, that personal experience, that founding fire should guide you, fuel you, motivate you
- There is organizational risk in publicly opposing funders, especially for orgs that depend on government funding





# Building Coalitions from the Ground Up

---

India Pungarcher, MPH, Associate Director of Advocacy

Terry Warren, JSB Camp Leader, Lived Experience

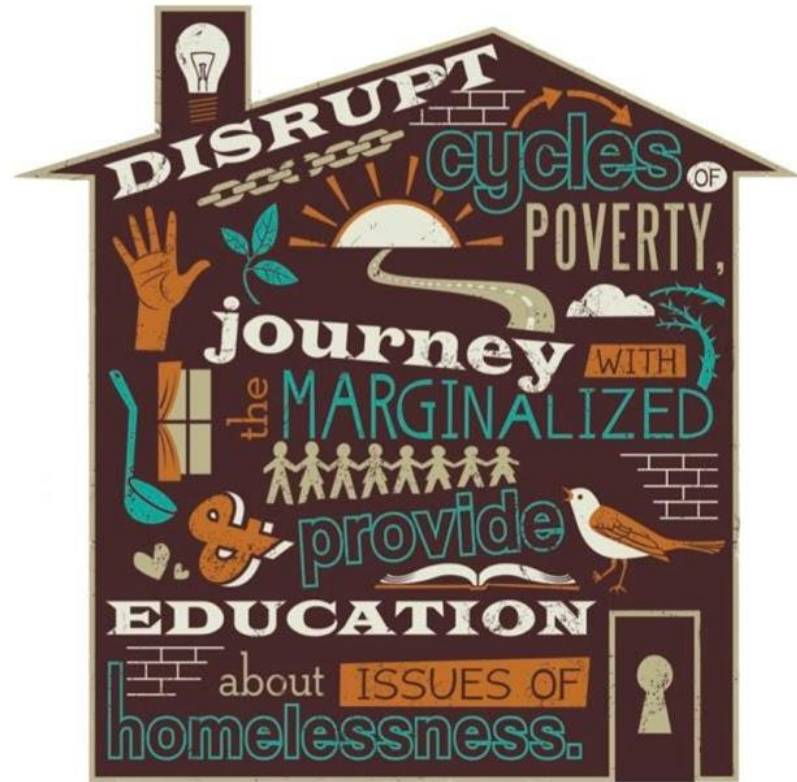
July 2024











**OPEN TABLE NASHVILLE**

HOUSING. HEALING. HOPE.  
[opentablenashville.org](http://opentablenashville.org)

## Open Table Nashville

“...disrupt cycles of poverty, journey with the marginalized, and provide education on issues of homelessness.”

RELATIONAL APPROACH

ADVOCATING WITH NOT FOR

PEOPLE ARE NOT VOICELESS, THEY  
ARE UNHEARD

# Open Table Nashville

## DIRECT SERVICE

- Homeless outreach
- Housing support
- Emergency weather response
- Foot clinic
- Interfaith chaplaincy



## EDUCATION

- Trainings
- Education sessions
- Urban immersions
- Internships



## ADVOCACY/POLICY

- Advocacy efforts
- Legislative work
- Community organizing
- Direct actions
- Media
- Community meetings



**DIRECT SERVICE**

**ADVOCACY/POLICY**



Jefferson Street Camp resident, Terry, stands next to his generator. PHOTO BY HANNAH HERNER.

## UNCERTAINTY REMAINS AT JEFFERSON STREET BRIDGE ENCAMPMENT

BY HANNAH HERNER



# Jefferson Street Bridge



Hi India,

Per **MNPD**, one of their officers was the one that called the **port-a-potty** company (called Liberty) and asked that they be taken away

6. Ending homelessness under the bridge will result only one major camp in the down town area, the Anthes Drive Camp (Old Tent City). Ensuring there that is only one major camp will have massive benefits to displaced individuals in the area.

3. Limit the amount of resources that are being delivered to The Jefferson St Bridge Camp so to discourage any new tenants.





# Jefferson Street Bridge

**Was living in a boarding house destroyed by March 2020 tornado**

**Landlord brought him to Jefferson Street Bridge**

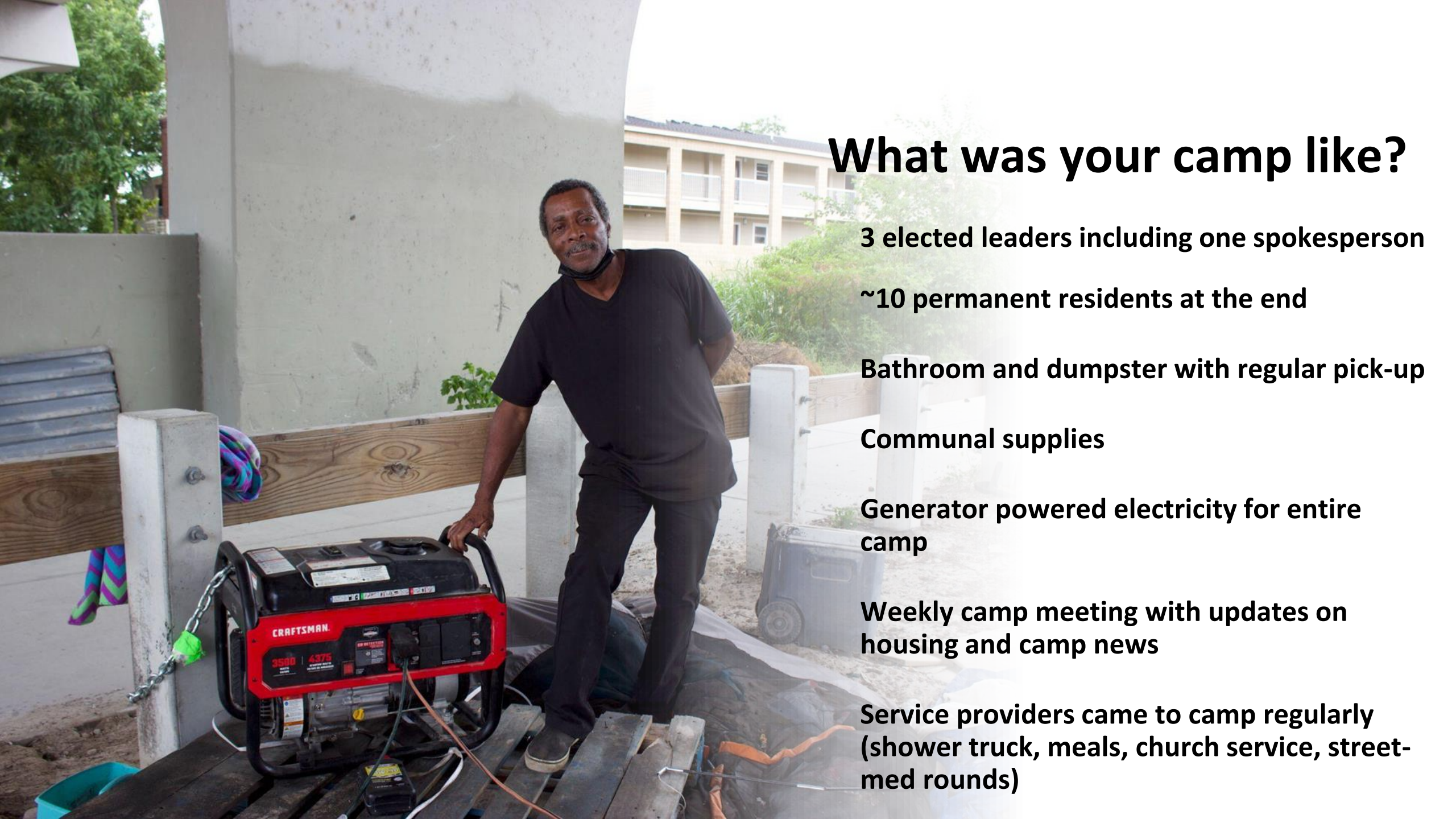
**COVID-19 pandemic affected his employment**

**Fixed income, cannot get VA benefits**

**On waiting lists for housing**

**Could not seek shelter – adult daughter in his care**





# What was your camp like?

**3 elected leaders including one spokesperson**

**~10 permanent residents at the end**

**Bathroom and dumpster with regular pick-up**

**Communal supplies**

**Generator powered electricity for entire camp**

**Weekly camp meeting with updates on housing and camp news**

**Service providers came to camp regularly (shower truck, meals, church service, street-med rounds)**



# Campsite Defense

**Kept camp open until everyone secures housing or another place to live**

**Hosted regular camp meetings**

**Provided non-police safety and presence**

**Created a makeshift bathroom**

**Organized regular trash pick up**

**Press conference, op-ed, media**



**OPINION** *This piece expresses the views of its author(s), separate from those of this publication.*

# Taking away Jefferson St. Bridge encampment rips foundation from Nashville's most vulnerable | Opinion

*We must meet complex situations like the Jefferson Street Bridge with the compassion, care, patience, resources, and dignity that all people deserve—not with an eviction notice.*

**Lindsey Krinks and India Pungarcher** Guest Columnists

Published 4:00 p.m. CT May 29, 2021

[View Comments](#)



**Community organizers have long held that there  
are two forms of power for social change.**

**Organized money or organized people.**

**When we don't have money, we build power  
together by organizing ourselves.**







JULY 1, 2022  
THIS BECAME  
ILLEGAL

NO HOUSING,  
NO CAMP  
EVICTIONS

HANDS OUT  
GRACE OR

HANDS OUT  
GRACE OR

Mayor  
Please  
Affordable  
for

This is more  
(\$700 million)





**HOMELESSNESS**

IS NOT  
**A CRIME!**

@OPENTABLENSANTLE

#HOMES  
NOT  
SWEEPS

NO HOUSING,  
NO CAMP  
EVICTIONS

EXISTING  
IN PUBLIC  
SHOULD NOT BE  
CRIMINALIZED

House keys

Handcuffs

STOP

HOMES  
NOT  
SWEEPS

HOUSING  
IS A  
HUMAN  
RIGHT













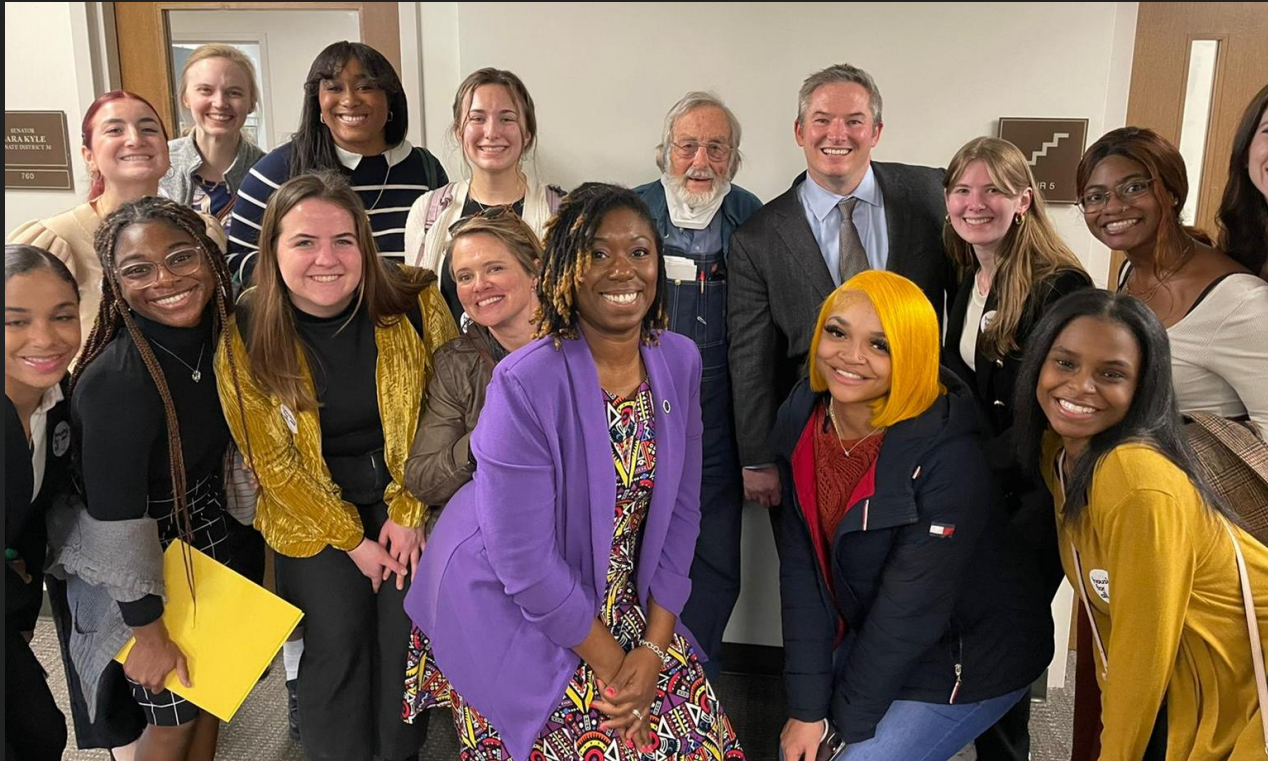
# Tennessee Solidarity Network for Housing & Homelessness

- Representing 45/95 counties and growing
- Organizing with a focus on rural areas
  - Homelessness is not just an urban, big-city issue





# Day on the Hill for Housing & Homelessness

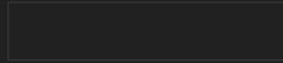




# Documentation

- 1 misdemeanor citation under new anti-camping law in Nashville (TN Code 39-14-414)

MISDEMEANOR CITATION										<input type="checkbox"/> CONTINUED ON MNPD FORM #100D		
STATE OF TENNESSEE - COUNTY OF DAVIDSON										sc1149027		
In The Metropolitan General Sessions Court										MNPB COMPLAINT NO.		
I, THE UNDERSIGNED, HAVE PROBABLE CAUSE THAT THE FOLLOWING NAMED DEFENDANT DID UNLAWFULLY COMMIT THE FOLLOWING OFFENSE IN VIOLATION OF THE APPROPRIATE LAWS CITED.										23-041597		
<b>ARRESTEE INFORMATION</b>			REPORTING AGENCY OTHER THAN MNPD <input type="checkbox"/> A.P. <input type="checkbox"/> BELLE MEADE P.D. <input type="checkbox"/> BERRY HILL P.D. <input type="checkbox"/> GOODLETTSVILLE P.D. <input type="checkbox"/> PARK POLICE <input type="checkbox"/> V.P.D. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER <i>TSU PD</i>					AGENCY'S CASE / COMP. NO. OF REPORTING AGENCY				
ARRESTEE'S NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE) <input type="checkbox"/> UNK. [REDACTED]						<input type="checkbox"/> SR. <input type="checkbox"/> JR. <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER		PLACE OF BIRTH <i>HOT SPRINGS, AR.</i>				
OTHER NAME(S) USED: (MAIDEN, NICKNAME, ALIAS, ETC.) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NONE <input type="checkbox"/> SEE ATTACHED						MARITAL STATUS <input type="checkbox"/> UNK. <input type="checkbox"/> DIVORCED <input type="checkbox"/> MARRIED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SINGLE		ARREST NO. <i>230002553</i>				
M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		RACE <input type="checkbox"/> AM IND/ALASKAN <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WHITE <input type="checkbox"/> ASIAN/PAC ISLANDER <input type="checkbox"/> BLACK <input type="checkbox"/> UNK <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		ETHNICITY <input type="checkbox"/> UNK <input type="checkbox"/> HISPANIC <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NON-HISPANIC		HEIGHT <i>5' 7 1/2</i>	WEIGHT <i>140</i>	EYES <i>BL</i>	HAIR <i>BR</i>	D.O.B. <i>2/14/83</i>	AGE <i>39</i>	SUSPECTED OF USING <input type="checkbox"/> ALCOHOL <input type="checkbox"/> COMPUTER <input type="checkbox"/> DRUGS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
RESIDENCE ADDRESS (STREET, APT. NO., CITY) <i>639 CANYONITE ST.</i>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NASHVILLE		STATE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TN	ZIP CODE <i>37203</i>	TELEPHONE NO. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NONE ( ) -		
PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT / SCHOOL (NAME & ADDRESS) <i>N/A</i>						<input type="checkbox"/> NASHVILLE		STATE <input type="checkbox"/> TN	ZIP CODE	RESIDENT STATUS DAVIDSON CO. RESIDENT? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		
SOCIAL SECURITY NO. <input type="checkbox"/> UNK <i>430-51-7792</i>			DRIVER LICENSE NO. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NONE <input type="checkbox"/> VISUALLY CHECKED			STATE		STATUS <input type="checkbox"/> VALID <input type="checkbox"/> REVOKED <input type="checkbox"/> I.D. <input type="checkbox"/> SUSPENDED <input type="checkbox"/> CANCELLED <input type="checkbox"/> RESTRICTED				
LOCATION OF ARREST (STREET ADDRESS, INTERSECTION) <i>1ST AVE N. @ BIRMINGHAM AVE</i>							DATE & TIME OF ARREST <i>1/20/23 0940 HRS.</i>			DAY OF WEEK <input type="checkbox"/> SU <input type="checkbox"/> MO <input type="checkbox"/> TU <input type="checkbox"/> WE <input type="checkbox"/> TH <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FR <input type="checkbox"/> SA		
<b>VEHICLES</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A		LIC. NO.		STATE	YEAR	YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	STYLE	COLOR		
WEAPON/ TOOL (ENTER UP TO 3)		<input type="checkbox"/> HANDGUN <input type="checkbox"/> SHOTGUN <input type="checkbox"/> RIFLE		<input type="checkbox"/> REVOLVER <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER FIREARM <input type="checkbox"/> BLUNT OBJECT		<input type="checkbox"/> MOTOR VEHICLE <input type="checkbox"/> CUTTING INSTRUMENT <input type="checkbox"/> PERSONAL (HANDS, ETC.)		<input type="checkbox"/> FIRE/INCENDIARY <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLOSIVES <input type="checkbox"/> POISON		<input type="checkbox"/> DRUGS <input type="checkbox"/> ASPHYXIATION <input type="checkbox"/> UNK <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NONE		
CHARGE/OFFENSE <i>CAMPING IN A PARK</i>						TCA CODE <i>39-14-414</i>			BODY WORN CAMERA OR IN-CAR CAMERA EVIDENCE MAY EXIST RELATED TO THIS ARREST: <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NONE KNOWN AT TIME OF ARREST			
NARRATIVE: <i>MS CAMP WAS OBSERVED SLEEPING IN RIVERFRONT PARK UNHAPPY IN A SLEEPING BAG AND ALL OF HER BELONGINGS AROUND HER. MS CAMP WAS 'CAMPING' IN THE PARK.</i>												
<b>BOOKING</b>												



NARRATIVE:

MS CAMP WAS OBSERVED SLEEPING IN RIVERFRONT PARK WRAPPED  
IN A SLEEPING-BAG AND ALL OF HER BELONGINGS AROUND HER.  
MS CAMP WAS "CAMPING" IN THE PARK.

# We're Building Power!

- Using power, relationships, connections we have built over the past 3 years to defeat other harmful pieces of legislation

***...but we need to build out our network into a coalition so we can have proactive legislative wins!***

HB 1192  
GOVERNMENT SANCTIONED CAMP  
ANTI-PERMANENT HOUSING BILL

# DEFEATED

Today, sections 2-4 that aimed to make it easier for third parties to involuntarily commit folks was amended out of HB 1192.

HB 1192 failed to pass in the House Property & Planning Subcommittee!








# Questions?

FELONIES  
DON'T END  
HOMELESSNESS

HOUSING  
KEYS 

India Pungarcher  
[india@opentablenashville.org](mailto:india@opentablenashville.org)  
615-972-9680

# Join us!

TN Solidarity Network for Housing & Homelessness:

<https://bit.ly/TNSolidaritySignUp>

@OpenTableNashville (Instagram & Facebook)

[linktr.ee/OpenTableNashville](https://linktr.ee/OpenTableNashville)

India Pungarcher

[india@opentablenashville.org](mailto:india@opentablenashville.org)

615-972-9680







