

# CHOM

Contact: Cydney Cameron  
713-220-9737  
ccameron@chomhouston.org

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## UNIVERSITY STUDENTS SPEND SPRING BREAK VOLUNTEERING IN THE BEACON *Students Choose Philanthropy to Partying*

Houston, TX – Cathedral Health & Outreach Ministries (CHOM) has been thrilled to receive support this month from some unexpected places. Many university students have been choosing to volunteer in its day center, The Beacon, during their spring break, rather than venturing off to Cancun or South Padre. The Beacon provides hot meals, clothing, laundry services, private shower and lavatory facilities, and case management to the homeless of Houston and Harris County. With 85% of its services provided by volunteers, The Beacon requires at least 72 volunteers each day of operation to run smoothly.

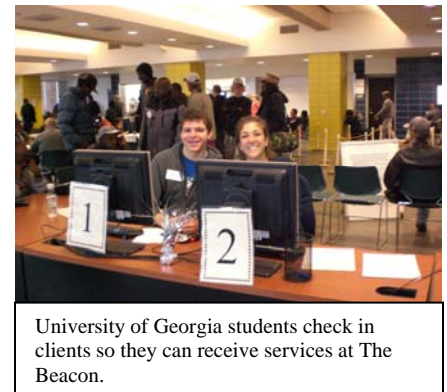


“We are really excited to see university students choosing to be involved in their community,” said Tracy L. Burnett, LCSW, Executive Director for CHOM. “There seems to be a trend this year to spend spring break making the world a better place and we hope this trend continues far into the future.”

The Beacon serves approximately 525 clients daily and some days, surpasses 600 or even 700 clients. Its days of operation include both Saturdays and Sundays, days that most other homeless service providers are closed. One of the most important services provided by The Beacon is case management, which helps clients identify, locate, and access services that can help them address the root causes of their homelessness and begin the journey of moving off the street and becoming self-sufficient.

During 2008, The Beacon served a total of 8,471 unduplicated men, women, children, and youth. This day center received 87,142 visits; served a total of 72,614 hot meals; provided 15,476 showers; laundered 16,977 loads of laundry; provided 7,128 clothing distributions; and provided 1,357 case management sessions to 965 unduplicated clients. In 2009, The Beacon will serve more than 9,000 unduplicated individuals.

A number of university student groups will be coming to The Beacon during spring break to serve the homeless including students from University of Georgia, University of Houston, Spring Arbor University, Tulane University, and Texas A&M, among others.



*CHOM is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization providing social and health services to poor and homeless men, women, children, and youth living in the Houston area. The mission of CHOM is to respect the human dignity of the poor and improve their lives. CHOM is serving the poor and homeless through four distinct programs: The Beacon, a day center providing essential services (food, clothing, laundry services, and shower facilities) and case management to help individuals address the root causes of their homelessness, and also includes the Homeless Youth Street Outreach Project, an off-site component that provides case management and licensed mental health counseling services to homeless youth; Brigid's Hope, a transitional residence serving homeless women who have left the Texas prison and jail system; Cathedral Justice Project, a legal aid program providing pro-bono legal services to the homeless; and Cathedral Clinic, a health clinic providing medical and mental health services to poor and homeless men, women, children, and youth.*