

Cohort Committee
Addressing Homelessness

Let us take a look at the Faces of the Homeless in our Community, Northern Ocean County.

When we think of the homeless, we think of men and women panhandling and sleeping on the street. But those men and women aren't the only Homeless people in our community.

The faces of the Homeless here in Ocean County include the working poor struggling to keep their family together. On an average day here in Ocean County we have 224 people who are homeless and many of them are women and children.

Although minimum wage has been increased to \$8.60, at this rate a person would need to work 3.3 Full-Time jobs to afford a 2-bedroom apartment, in Ocean County, at \$1461 per month (according to NJ Out of Reach 2018 report). An average person would need to earn \$28.00 an hour if he/she wanted to work just one job.

Therefore, many families must sacrifice proper healthcare, nutrition and childcare in order to cover the rent. Any emergency that strikes, for example; a car breaks down, sickness, or loss of a job can often lead to homelessness for struggling parents with children.

So we ask, "What can we do?"

We can make a difference by getting involved, by bringing awareness, by caring and by teaching our children the value of reaching out and helping our sisters and brothers.

Here in Ocean County we have a program called Interfaith Hospitality Network which is a nonprofit organization uniting the religious in Ocean County to provide shelter, meals, professional case management services and other assistance to homeless families.

To Be Continued.....