

October, 2022

The Scope

Bigger Vision Of Athens Monthly Newsletter



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Bigger Vision Highlights:

Bigger Vision Prepares for Cooler Weather

As the cool fall weather arrives, Bigger Vision is preparing for the surge of people in need seeking shelter and winter supplies. The fall and winter are the busiest seasons for Bigger Vision, and we need the community's support more than ever. People experiencing homelessness in the area rely on Bigger Vision to keep them safe and warm during the winter. We are currently building our supply of cold-weather clothing and blankets by reaching out to different community organizations to host donation drives. As the weather grows colder, we will distribute hundreds of blankets, coats, socks, gloves, hand warmers, and other cold weather supplies. If you or someone you know is interested in collecting donations, please [reach out!](#) We accept donations until 4:00 p.m. every weekday and can schedule alternative times to accommodate busy schedules.

Beyond distributing countless clothing items and other supplies, we are also preparing to expand our shelter capacity to accommodate winter overflow. When the weather drops below 35 degrees, we welcome ten more guests into the shelter each night, raising our total capacity during times of extreme cold temperatures. Our winter overflow expansion is crucial to keep as many people out of the dangerous temperatures as possible. Presently, Bigger Vision is the only operating emergency shelter for individual adults in the city. We are prepared to provide services to as many individuals as possible during this increased activity.

Bigger Vision has celebrated some major victories this month thanks to our

amazing community! With the help of an extraordinarily generous and thoughtful family of longtime supporters, Bigger Vision was able to replace the mattresses in the guest sleeping quarters and received a \$10,000 grant to support our shelter's Emergency Shelter Program! We also celebrated the graduation of an Abundant Life participant who successfully secured his own housing and moved out of the shelter. The [Abundant Life Program](#) is one of Bigger Vision's two primary programs that shelters and supports people experiencing homelessness while they work towards getting their own housing. We welcomed two more participants into the program this month!

The fall and winter months ahead will be an especially busy time for Bigger Vision's staff, volunteers, and guests. As we experience increased seasonal demand for our services, we are more grateful than ever for the [support](#) of our donors, volunteers, and community partners in helping ensure that Bigger Vision is open to serve the community every day, 365 days out of the year.

Donor Spotlight of the Month: New Mattresses (Anonymous Donation)!

Earlier this year, a generous family of supporters donated the funds required to replace Bigger Vision's old mattresses with new, more durable replacements. Just a few weeks ago, the new mattresses finally arrived at the shelter! The new beds are one inch thicker than the previous ones the guests used and are made of durable, easy-to-clean material. This mattress upgrade will improve the comfort and cleanliness of the shelter for our guests and staff alike. The Bigger Vision team works hard to make sure our guests feel safe, comfortable, and welcome every night they stay with us, and these mattresses help to greatly improve the overall guest experience. Thank you again to the wonderful family of supporters who made this possible!



In addition, Bigger Vision of Athens would like to thank Rob Porterfield from Athens' own [Nitty Gritty Junk Removal](#) for coming to the facility to pick up and remove the old mattresses at NO CHARGE to Bigger Vision. Not only did Rob donate his time and resources to help support our mission, but he also

did it with a giant smile on his face the entire time! Thank you again to Rob and Nitty Gritty Junk Removal for your support!



New Intern Spotlight:

Meet Staci!

Staci Levine is one of Bigger Vision's new Masters of Social Work interns from the University of Georgia's School of Social Work. Staci is currently working on earning her master's degree in Clinical Social Work to become a therapist. Staci is very passionate about mental health and how trauma affects the body and mind. She loves to bake, craft, and do yoga in her free time. We can't wait to see all the great things you do for our guests here at Bigger Vision!



Meet Jake!

Jake Forgay is Bigger Vision's second new MSW intern from the University of Georgia. Jake's two main hobbies outside of his graduate work are rock climbing and playing music! Jake works at the local climbing gym and is currently training for the AthHalf at the end of the month. Some of Jake's favorite ways to decompress and stay healthy are just playing outside and jamming



with friends whenever he gets the chance!

Bigger Vision Awarded \$10,000 Grant!



The Wells Fargo Foundation recently awarded Bigger Vision a \$10,000 grant to support our Emergency Shelter Program! The funds from this grant will fully support the costs associated with supporting one bed for an entire year, as well as supporting a second bed for eight full months. This will support the costs associated with providing up to 608 shelter stays, 1,216 meals, basic necessities, and any other expenses incurred to support a bed and the individual sleeping in it on any given night. Thank you to the Wells Fargo Foundation for helping support the Athens-Clarke County community!

Volunteer Opportunities:

Serve a meal! Meal Providers can now choose between coming inside to serve our guests directly or dropping the meal off to be served by staff and Evening Volunteers as we have done during the past two years. We understand that everyone's schedules are different, and we feel that providing this choice will allow more of our supporters to provide dinner for our guests. Meal Providers will be asked to wear masks while present inside the facility and interacting with staff, guests, and other volunteers. Sign up to become a:

Meal Provider Volunteer

- In a group or individually, plan and prepare, or purchase a meal for a minimum of 40 guests.
- Deliver & drop off the meal at Bigger Vision between 5:00-5:30 pm **OR**
- Arrive between 5:30 and 5:45 to set up the meal and serve dinner between 6:00 and 6:15.

OPEN OCTOBER DATES FOR MEAL PROVIDER VOLUNTEER

October 6th

October 14th

October 18th

October 21st

October 26th

October 28th

October 30th

October 31st

Evening Volunteer

- Assisting staff with guest check-ins
- Assisting guests with minor issues
- Help facilitate a smooth dinner process
- Build relationships with guests through conversations and games
- Provide encouragement and offer advice when requested

Evening Sessions

- Provide an enriching experience for up to ten individuals that can cover any number of topics including, but not limited to:
 - Financial Literacy
 - Health/Wellness
 - Coping Strategies
 - Religious Groups
 - Local Services
 - Recreation/Hobbies
 - Education/Skill Building

To sign up for an evening session, please reach out to thebiggervisionshelter@gmail.com.

Questions?

Please don't hesitate to reach out for assistance! We are always available to help with the volunteer sign-up process. To contact us via email, please send your questions to thebiggervisionshelter@gmail.com. To reach us by phone, dial the shelter number at 706-340-6062 and hit extension 3.

[Learn More](#)

Opportunities for Financial Donations:

Bed Sponsorship Program: While any donation is greatly appreciated, we have a goal of raising enough money to sponsor all of the beds for the guests of our overnight stay program. One night's stay includes two meals, a shower/laundry, and any basic necessities a guest may need. Please email Director@BiggerVisionOfAthens.org or go to our website if you are interested in donating to one of our three commitment tiers:

BRONZE LEVEL



Bronze Bed Sponsorship: \$20/Monthly Commitment

Contributions are recognized with:
Standard magnet with chosen name on bed & recognition on the Bigger Vision of Athens website & social media

1 bed for 1 night each month

SILVER LEVEL



Silver Bed Sponsorship: \$250/Monthly Commitment

Contributions are recognized with:
Custom magnet with chosen name, a photo op with you/your group, & recognition on the Bigger Vision of Athens website & social media

1 bed for 182 nights each year

GOLD LEVEL



Gold Bed Sponsorship: \$500/Monthly Commitment

Contributions are recognized with:
Stand-alone custom magnet with chosen name & logo on bed, a photo-op with you/your group, & recognition on the Bigger Vision of Athens website & social media

1 bed for 365 nights each year

Givebutter – Using Givebutter, you will be able to contribute as a one-time donation or as a monthly contribution to the Bed Sponsorship program through the portal on our [website](#) or by scanning the QR code provided.



Check – If your check represents a Bed Sponsorship, please indicate so in the memo line. Either drop them off in-person M-F between 9am-4pm, or mail it to:

**The Bigger Vision of Athens, Inc.,
P.O. Box 8022, Athens, GA 30603**

Other Opportunities: If the bed sponsorship program isn't right for you, we appreciate one-time donations as well through the avenues listed above. In addition, we provide the option for you to donate while also shopping online or for your groceries:

Amazon Smile – When using [Smile.Amazon.com](#) (instead of Amazon.com), a percentage of every purchase you make will be donated to Bigger Vision of Athens if you select our organization.

Kroger Plus – Activate [Kroger Community Rewards](#) to donate a percentage of every purchase you make using your Kroger Plus card to BVOA if you select our organization.

Creative Ways to Donate: Here are some fun ways to get your network

involved in your support of Bigger Vision!



Host a Blanket Drive!

Want to help keep people experiencing homelessness safe and comfortable during the fall and winter? Ask your friends and family to collect blankets to donate to Bigger Vision!

Collect Grocery Bags!

Do you have a massive collection of plastic grocery bags you don't want to throw away and can't recycle? Drop them off at Bigger Vision and we will put them to good use! We use these bags to package snacks bags and hygiene kits!

Halloween Party Fundraiser!

Planning a Halloween Party? Ask everyone you invite to bring \$10 to donate! Help support our mission while having a great time with your friends!

Opportunities for Item Donations:

Amazon Donation List: Our supply of items fluctuates, so we keep a list of items we're currently most in need of on [Amazon](#).

Walmart Registry for Good – Visit our [Walmart](#) registry to see more items the shelter is in need of, including gift cards that can be used for future purchases!

This month's **greatest** needs:

- **BLANKETS**
- **EMERGENCY BLANKETS**
- **NEW/GENTLY USED WINTER APPAREL**
- **MEN'S UNDERWEAR**
- **EARPLUGS**
- **RAZORS**
- **DEODORANT**
- Assorted Snacks
- Disposable Water Bottles

COVID-19 Shelter Updates:

In an effort to continue placing the health and safety of guests, volunteers, and staff as a top priority, the board has determined that some existing precautions **will continue to remain in place**. These precautions include:

- Guests are asked to provide proof of at least one COVID-19 vaccination.

Upcoming Events

October 9th:
Street Love Ministries
Monthly Giveaway
11:00 – 1:00
FREE

October 12th:
1:00 – 6:00

- Guests are having their temperature checked, are asked to sanitize their hands & are required to wear a mask.
- Volunteers are asked to wear a mask while inside the facility and interacting with guests.
- In the case of an outbreak, we will close the shelter until we deem it safe to return.

ACC Department of
Health COVID-19
Vaccine Event
FREE



FAQ:

What donated goods are guests most in need of during the fall?

- With the cool weather officially here, our guests are most in need of warm clothing and other items to keep them comfortable while not present inside the facility. The most requested cold weather items are blankets, hand warmers, beanie caps, and gloves.

Are there any volunteer opportunities for large groups (10+ people)?

- Bigger Vision does not have any recurring volunteer opportunities for groups larger than six (Meal Provider). If you are interested in bringing a large group, please [contact us](#) to talk more about potential special projects.

Are there any special dates during the fall/winter when Bigger Vision won't be open?

- No, way! Barring any unforeseen circumstances (e.g., positive COVID-19 cases among staff), Bigger Vision is open every single night of the year, including holidays.

Connect with us

Bigger Vision of Athens, Inc. | 706-340-6062 | [Volunteer](#) | [Website](#)



The Bigger Vision of Athens, Inc. | 95 North Avenue, Athens, GA 30601

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