

## NEWS RELEASE

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### Employee Team-Building at a Homeless Shelter?

### ARCH's "Fired Up!" Lets Businesses Help Themselves and the Homeless

AUSTIN – Front Steps, the not-for-profit that manages the Austin Resource Center for the Homeless (ARCH), announced today that it is offering Austin employers a new, unique program – Fired Up! – in which workers can gain valuable team-building skills while grappling with a sudden and tough assignment: preparing dinner for the shelter's 100 clients.

"Employees will come to the ARCH thinking they're going to help out with a few easy tasks," says Susan Morris, Community Relations Director for Front Steps. "It will come as a big surprise when they find out they have two hours to prepare a 100-person dinner in a kitchen they've never seen before."

Will they make the deadline? Will the food be good? To succeed, Morris says the employees will have to find a way to work as a team.

Meanwhile, the Front Steps team trainer will monitor their progress. Afterward, the trainer will debrief the employees and discuss how well they performed as a team, what they learned, and how they can perform better in the workplace.

Morris says the training is valuable because today's employees are often forced to suddenly take on new challenges and new roles under tight deadlines. Their success may depend upon their ability to quickly form an effective team, she says.

"We call it Fired Up! because we almost literally throw employees into the fire," Morris said. "After the training, the employees will be fired up to perform as a team at work."

Morris says companies should assign 4-6 employees to the session and that a \$450-donation to the ARCH is requested. The \$450.00 donation funds Front Steps transitional housing program, a program designed to take case-managed clients from the shelter and quickly into housing.

For more information, employers should contact Morris by email at [smorris@frontsteps.org](mailto:smorris@frontsteps.org) or by phone at 512-750-0558.

When companies begin to schedule trainings, the ARCH will re-contact the news media to arrange coverage of the training session.

"This is one of those 'only in Austin' programs," Morris says. "Where else would someone think to hold employee team training sessions at a homeless shelter?"

### ABOUT THE ARCH:

The ARCH, managed by Front Steps, is a day resource center, an emergency overnight shelter and a homeless health clinic located downtown at 500 East Seventh Street.

The day resource center provides clients access to showers, lockers, laundry facilities, clothing, telephones, mail and messaging services, A.A., community referrals and information and case management.

Co-located in the ARCH, along with Front Steps, are eleven agencies that also provide services for the homeless community including MHMR ACCESS, Family ElderCare, Legal Services, House the Homeless, Goodwill, Austin Advocate, AmeriCorps, The Men's Clothing Closet, A New Entry, ART from the Streets and the Homeless Health Clinic.

### ABOUT FRONT STEPS:

Front Steps manages the Austin Resource Center for the Homeless and co-manages Garden Terrace, Austin's first permanent supportive housing program for chronically homeless single adults.

Also in the works for Front Steps is a Central Texas Respite Care facility that will provide home health

care for homeless individuals too sick for streets and not sick enough to stay in a hospital.