



Media Advisory  
6/13/2011

Contact: Mitchell Gibbs – 512-305-4156

## Austin's Homeless Receive Gift Of Water Homeless Get A Hydration Break During Summer Heat

Austin, (TX) – As summer temperatures set in, two Austin non-profits will distribute 76,000 bottles of water to the homeless thanks to a donation from the *I Am Waters Foundation*. *Front Steps*, which manages the men's emergency shelter and *Mobile Loaves & Fishes*, which distributes meals to the homeless, will each receive a tractor-trailer load of bottled water from the *I Am Waters Foundation* for distribution to the homeless throughout the summer months.

**The water will arrive at the Austin Resource Center for the Homeless on Wednesday, June 15<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m. and will be presented to the organizations by the Founder of *I Am Waters*, Ms. Elena Davis. The media is invited to attend.**

The mission of the *I Am Waters Foundation* is to hydrate the bodies of homeless women, children and men who don't have access to life's most basic necessities. Water is on the top of that list. A 2010 Summer Water Pilot by I Am Waters in Houston resulted in the distribution of 80,000 bottles of water. With the success of that project and the swift embrace by nonprofit service providers, I Am Waters will increase their distribution this year to 300,000 in three cities across the nation.

Each bottle of water is designed with a simple inspirational message in a single word. "In the life of a person who is homeless, surviving comes before everything. Over time, life on the streets often erodes one's feelings of love, hope, and faith," says Elena Davis, the Foundation's founder and driving force behind the effort. "Holding a bottle with an inspirational word provides a powerful affirmation that is important for those who are not being replenished emotionally or spiritually."

But survival on the street, facing heat exhaustion, dehydration and the ill effects the heat can create our moods and attitudes is the issue most concerning to Jim Ormand, Executive Director of *Front Steps, Inc.* "Already this spring, we've seen temperatures climb into the 100 degree range and when that happens, the homeless who are in our city-center, surrounded by concrete and asphalt, are struck hardest." Ormand says the Austin Resource Center for the Homeless (ARCH) will see upward of 25 to 50 people a day exhibiting symptoms of heat-related injury when hydration resources are scarce and temperatures soar. "This donation of water will save lives in Austin this summer, I have no doubt."

Similarly, Alan Graham, President of *Mobile Loaves & Fishes, Inc.*, says the organization's mobile food trucks see a shift in the homeless community's basic needs as temperatures rise, "The kind of heat we

are facing will decrease appetites, but not the need to hydrate. Food is a necessary component to our lives, but for the homeless, access to clean, safe water is essential for survival.”

*Front Steps* and *Mobile Loaves & Fishes* will distribute upwards of 700 bottles of water each day through September. *Front Steps* will distribute bottles of water to homeless visitors to the ARCH while *Mobile Loaves & Fishes* will concentrate distribution as a component of food truck meal delivery. Both organizations are urging the homeless to reuse and recycle the plastic bottles. *I Am Waters* will provide recycling containers as part of the water donation and the organizations are coordinating additional recycling efforts with local leaders and entities.

###

**What:** 76,000 bottles of water donated for homeless distribution

**When:** Water Presentation and Distribution begins with a ceremony, June 15, 10 a.m.

**Where:** The Austin Resource Center for the Homeless (ARCH)  
500 E. 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Austin, Texas

**Who:** I Am Waters Foundation, Mobile Loaves & Fishes, Inc., Front Steps, Inc.

**Why:** An effort to save lives and eliminate heat-related illness among Austin’s homeless by providing safe drinking water for health and hydration.

**About I Am Waters Foundation:**

I Am Waters Foundation was founded in 2008, driven by a mission to provide spiritual and physical hydration to the American homeless. We are committed to helping the American homeless meet their most basic human need for clean, safe drinking water, while encouraging their spiritual connection to others and themselves which we believe is absolutely necessary for their reengagement with society.

[www.iamwaters.com](http://www.iamwaters.com)

**About Mobile Loaves & Fishes, Inc.:**

Founded in 1998, Mobile Loaves & Fishes, Inc. is a social outreach ministry for the homeless. Mobile Loaves & Fishes is committed to serving our brothers and sisters in need, by providing permanent, sustainable solutions for the chronically homeless, with compassion, love and dignity. Our mission relieves the struggles homeless individuals face in obtaining their basic needs, food, community and a place to call home. We accomplish our goal through our core missions, our Mobile Loaves & Fishes Trucks and through Community First!, a unique outreach program which provides supportive, affordable and sustainable housing to the chronically homeless. [www.mlf.org](http://www.mlf.org)

**About Front Steps, Inc.:**

Front Steps, based on the belief that all people deserve the dignity of a safe place to call home, seeks to end homelessness by providing shelter, affordable housing and community education. While managing the City of Austin’s emergency overnight shelter for men and day resource center for the homeless, Front Steps is also developing permanent supportive housing opportunities and places an average of 200 chronically homeless men and women into safe, securing housing each year.

[www.frontsteps.org](http://www.frontsteps.org)