



BROTHERS BROOKS
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Special points of interest:

- **The Supreme Court says cities can punish people for sleeping in public places**
- **Why it's so hard to end homelessness in America**
- **Word on the Street**

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WE CARE NEWS!!!

An Informative Newsletter regarding the Homeless, Stranded and Down & Out in America

THE SUPREME COURT SAYS CITIES CAN PUNISH PEOPLE FOR SLEEPING IN PUBLIC PLACES

By NPR News

In its biggest decision on homelessness in decades, the U.S. Supreme Court today ruled that cities can ban people from sleeping and camping in public places. The justices, in a 6-3 decision along ideological lines, overturned lower court rulings that deemed it cruel and unusual under the Eighth Amendment to punish people for sleeping outside if they had nowhere else to go.

Writing for the majority, Justice Gorsuch said, "Homelessness is complex. Its causes are many." But he said federal judges do not have any "special competence" to decide how cities should deal with this.

"The Constitution's Eighth Amendment serves many important functions, but it does not authorize federal judges to wrest those rights and responsibilities from the American people and in their place dictate this Nation's homelessness policy," he wrote.

In a dissent, Justice Sotomayor said the decision focused only on the needs of cities but not the most vulnerable. She said sleep is a biological necessity, but this decision leaves a homeless person with "an impossible choice — either stay awake or be arrested."

The court's decision is a win not only for the small Oregon city of Grants Pass, which brought the case, but also for dozens of Western localities that had urged the high court to grant them more enforcement powers as they grapple with record high rates of homelessness. They said the lower court rulings had tied their hands in trying to keep public spaces open and safe for everyone.

But advocates for the unhoused say the decision won't solve the bigger problem, and could make life much harder for the quarter of a million people living on streets, in parks and in their cars. "Where do people experiencing homelessness go if every community decides to punish them for their homelessness?" says Diane Yentel, pres-

ident of the National Low Income Housing Coalition.

Today's ruling only changes current law in the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals, which includes California and eight other Western states where the bulk of America's unhoused population lives. But it will also determine whether similar policies elsewhere are permissible; and it will almost certainly influence homelessness policy in cities around the country.

Grants Pass and other cities argued that lower court rulings fueled the spread of homeless encampments, endangering public health and safety. Those decisions did allow cities to restrict when and where people could sleep and even to shut down encampments — but they said cities first had to offer people adequate shelter.



WHY IT'S SO HARD TO END HOMELESSNESS IN AMERICA

It took seven years for Abigail Judge to see what success looked like for one Boston homeless woman.

The woman had been sex trafficked since she was young, was a drug user, and had been abused, neglected, or exploited

in just about every relationship she'd had. If Judge was going to help her, trust had to come first. Everything else — recovery, healing, employment, rejoining society's mainstream — might be impossible without it. That meant patience despite the daily urgency of the ^{woman's} poverty, the research offers

situation.

"It's nonlinear. She gets better, stops, gets re-engaged with the trafficker and pulled back into the lifestyle. She does time because she was literally holding the bag of fentanyl for these guys," said Judge, a psychology instructor at .

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**Volunteers
of America®**



SPOT LIGHT— VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA

We help 1.5 million people a year and counting. Volunteers of America is one of the nation's largest, established comprehensive human services organizations with 16,000 mission-driven professionals, dedicated to helping those in need rebuild their lives and reach their full potential. Founded in 1896, the faith-based nonprofit has programs in 46 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, serving more than 1.5 million people a year.

Our Mission

Volunteers of America is a movement organized to reach and uplift all people and bring them to the knowledge and active service of God.

Volunteers of America, illustrating the presence of God through all that we do, serves people and communities in need and creates opportunities for people to experience the joy of serving others.

Volunteers of America measures its success in positive change in the lives of individuals and communities we serve.

Our Vision

A world where all people in our communities live with social, emotional and physical well-being, spiritual fulfillment, justice and hope. Our work touches the mind, body, heart – and ultimately the spirit – of those we serve. Volunteers of America National Services (VOANS) serves as the Housing and Healthcare affiliate of the Volunteers of America parent organization. Incorporated in 1982, the issue of providing services in senior housing served as the catalyst for this merger of housing and healthcare activities.

Homelessness in America: Statistics, Analysis, and Trends

Despite rising inflation rates, the U.S. economy is holding up impressively. As of the first quarter of 2024, unemployment is low and inflation – although still elevated – is slowing down. That doesn't mean, however, that every American is doing well. One harsh indicator of that was the significant jump in homelessness over the past year. According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), a record number of people are currently unhoused in the U.S. Several factors are driving this increase, such as rising housing

costs, surging immigration, and the end of many COVID-19 relief programs.

HUD's 2023 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR) found that more than 650,000 people in America lack permanent shelters. That represents the most documented homeless individuals since the inaugural report produced in 2007 and reflects a 12 percent increase over 2022.

653,104 people experienced homelessness in the U.S. in 2023. That number represents a record-high tally and a 12 percent increase over 2022.

111,620 children were without homes in America last year.

Homelessness increased in 41 states between 2022 and 2023, with New Hampshire, New Mexico, and New York having the highest percentage increases.

More than one-half of America's homeless individuals reside in the nation's 50 largest cities. New York City and Los Angeles alone contain one-quarter of the country's unhoused people.

Every ethnic group endured an increase in homelessness last year. The Asian community experienced the most significant percentage increase (64 percent), while Hispanics/Latinos saw the most significant surge

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 WHY IT'S SO HARD TO END HOMELESSNESS IN AMERICA

Havard Medical School whose outreach program, Boston Human Exploitation and Sex Trafficking (HEAT), is supported by Massachusetts General Hospital and the Boston Police Department. "This is someone who'd been initially trafficked as a kid and when I met her was 23 or 24. She turned 30 last year, and now she's housed, she's abstinent, she's on suboxone.

And she's super involved in her community."

It's a success story, but one that illustrates some of the difficulties of finding solutions to the nation's homeless problem. And it's not a small problem. A December 2023 report by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development said 653,104 Americans experienced homelessness, tallied on a single night in January last year. That

figure was the highest since HUD began reporting on the issue to Congress in 2007.

Scholars, healthcare workers, and homeless advocates agree that two major contributing factors are poverty and a lack of affordable housing, both stubbornly intractable societal challenges.

Alvin Powell
Harvard Staff Writer

THE MILLIPEDE EFFECT

Several years in the making, "The Millipede Effect" has been released by Authorhouse Publishing this past January. The book lays out BBV2M LLC founder and President Rodney Brooks quest to understand the homeless, stranded and down & out. From movies to our own perceptions, it all shapes how we approach this situation. Brooks looks at Government, Civic Organizations and religion (the Church) as all play a major part in finding ways to help the plight of the homeless. These different groups

display on a daily basis their commitment to service, financial giving and voluntary work. Like the millipede with its many body parts/ compartments (government, civic, religion) and its many legs (the people driving these various groups); there are many misconceptions about those that are homeless. The book looks at those various challenges as well hear from several of those that are homeless, stranded and down & out. Brooks introduces us to his spirit filled purpose and calling in helping the homeless, stranded and down & out

as well he walks us through what the various religions say about each individual of faith and their role in being a part of the solution. The book can be ordered through [Authorhouse Publishing](http://bookstore.authorhouse.com/Products/SKU-001092211/The--Millipede-Effect.aspx) at <http://bookstore.authorhouse.com/Products/SKU-001092211/The--Millipede-Effect.aspx> or [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com/) at <https://www.amazon.com/>

Word on The Street— D.C. increases homeless encampment clearings

D.C. has increased its efforts against homeless encampments this year.

Why it matters: Homelessness has risen two years in a row, drawing questions around whether the city is being effective in reducing the unhoused population.

The big picture: A Supreme Court decision in June effectively allows cities to ban people from sleeping in public spaces — a ruling advocates argue criminalizes homeless-

ness. The ruling most directly impacted cities in the West, but others have since been emboldened to enact more restrictive policies. Virginia Beach, for example, has recently picked up the pace of its encampment clearing.

Zoom in: D.C. says the ruling hasn't impacted its policy.

The District "will always work to treat all people with dignity and respect," the deputy mayor's office told Axios. "Our policies are designed to protect

the health and safety of our residents while connecting them to housing and other resources."

"The Supreme Court's recent ruling does not change this," it added. Yes, but: Encampment clearings have increased in D.C.

There have been on average 8 "encampment engagements" — defined as city crews cleaning or disbanding encampments — per month since July, according to city data.

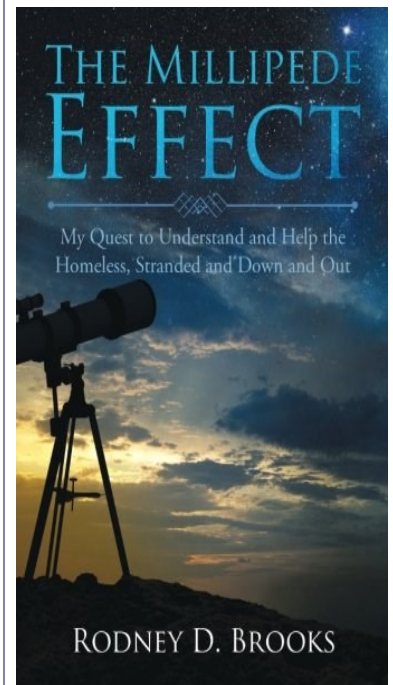
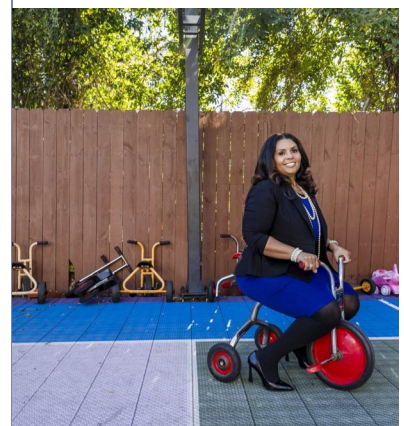
THESE NONPROFITS PROVIDE HOUSING TO MIAMI'S HOMELESS. NEW PRESSURES CREATING NEW DEMANDS



Homeless nonprofits face rising demand for housing from seniors and working professionals struggling to keep pace with the cost of living in Miami-Dade County. And with new

legislation pressing down on the unhoused and their communities, these organizations need support to meet demand. The Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust, Camillus House, United Way Miami and Chapman Partnership need money, from \$7 million to \$35 million each, to maintain and expand their services. According to the Miami-Dade Homeless Trust, Miami-Dade has a homeless population of 1,004 people and one with a changing demographic. Due to the increased

cost of housing and inflation, these nonprofit leaders see rising demand from the elderly and working professionals.



HOMELESS
Give them a hand
not the boot



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*A Heritage of Excellence
in Helping Others!!!*

Brothers Brooks
Vision 2 Mission LLC

"WE CARE PROGRAM"

Helping the Homeless, Stranded and Down & Out



WE ARE.....

At BBV2M LLC our vision is to help all people excel in all aspects of life. The challenges facing the homeless, stranded and down & out is such a daunting task. There are great organizations in both the public and private sector with many wonderful people who are on the frontline in ensuring that these individual are taken care of and have a voice. Our goal is to due our part by assistance , education and support. Although our organization was founded in 2015 our heritage stretches back over seven decades of assisting and helping others. The patriarchs of the family instilled the values and beliefs of helping others through the biblical teaching of God's word. Our goal is to be the bridge that helps those in need that are homeless, stranded and down & out get to the proper resources to assist them in their endeavors. This has been spiritually rewarding for us as we truly look to fulfill our purpose of helping others.

You Can Help.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

James says it best "If a brother or sister is poorly clothed or lacks daily food, and one of you say to them , "Go in peace, keep warm and eat well," but does not give them what the body needs, what good is it? (James 2:15-16) Those of us who have been given the ability to practice our faith through our works should do so. The opportunity to help our brothers and sisters in need are tremendous. If you are already doing so then I salute you and ask as well as pray that you continue to do so. If you are not or have wondered how then let me give you a couple of suggestions. Your preference in helping is based how you feel in your heart assist.

There are many national and local charitable agencies that work with the homeless. Each of these organizations have a platform and plan on who and how they help those that are homeless. Most organization do take financial donations but they also look for volunteers and advocates. Your local Church or other places of worship also has various types of ministries that are deigned to help the poor and down trodden. Your local or national Wounded Warrior chapter that is designed to help our veterans who are homeless. Whatever your preference in helping; it all starts with you. Let's each do our part in 2022 and be exceptional stewards of Love!



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Founder of Brothers Brooks
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