



**DOWNTOWN  
LONG BEACH  
ALLIANCE**

August 11, 2020

Mayor and City Council  
Civic Center Plaza  
411 West Ocean Blvd.  
Long Beach, CA 90802

**SUBJECT: LBFD Homeless Education And Response Team (HEART)**

Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers:

This letter aims to provide you with a testimonial of Downtown Long Beach Alliance's (DLBA) interaction with and support for Long Beach Fire Department's HEART program in its current composition.

The DLBA is a non-profit organization representing more than 1,600 businesses and 4,000 commercial and residential property owners within the two Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in Downtown Long Beach. During its normal course of service delivery, DLBA's Clean and Safe Team interact with the HEART program to meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness in our Downtown and ultimately benefit its residents, business/property owners, and visitors.

On several occasions, DLBA has contacted Joel Davis (HEART Firefighter/Paramedic) to discuss individuals who appear to need medical services but are resistant to visiting the Emergency Room or Multi-Service Center for medical assistance. In some cases, the person was either transported willingly to the hospital or put on a Lanterman-Petris-Short (LPS) hold due to the severity of their medical situation. Our Clean Team has responded to HEART requests for cleanup at locations where individuals have left trash and other substances after being transported to the hospital.

DLBA's Homeless Outreach Specialist would often coordinate with HEART and other service providers to reach persons living on the street in Downtown. In fact, many persons living on the streets hold HEART in high regard for their willingness to listen to their personal and medical history with a non-judgmental demeanor. Individuals also appreciate the no lights and siren approach, as it is less embarrassing than the traditional fire department response of two fire engines. Without a doubt, it is very beneficial to have trained paramedics that have earned an individual's trust on hand to address an assortment of medical issues in the field or assure the individual that a hospital emergency room is the best course of care.

DLBA appreciates the opportunities to partner with HEART in Downtown and encourages the Mayor, City Council, and staff to maintain the current departmental composition and funding level for this highly effective and beneficial service to persons experiencing homelessness.



**DOWNTOWN  
LONG BEACH  
ALLIANCE**

Thank you for your consideration and continued support of the HEART program.

Sincerely,

Kraig Kojian

cc: DLBA Board of Directors  
Xavier Espino, Chief of the Long Beach Fire Department

**From:** [Broc Coward](#)  
**To:** [Broc Coward](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Homeless Education And Response Team (HEART) Testimonials  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 11, 2020 3:42:30 PM

---

**From:** Jina Lawler <[jlawler@tccfamilyhealth.org](mailto:jlawler@tccfamilyhealth.org)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 11, 2020 2:25 PM  
**To:** Broc Coward <[brocc@dlba.org](mailto:brocc@dlba.org)>  
**Cc:** Steve Be Cotte <[SteveB@dlba.org](mailto:SteveB@dlba.org)>  
**Subject:** RE: Homeless Education And Response Team (HEART) Testimonials

Hi Broc,

My name is Jina Lee Lawler and I am the Chief Operations Officer at The Children's Clinic, "Serving Children & Their Families", DBA TCC Family Health.

The Children's Clinic, "Serving Children and Their Families", DBA TCC Family Health (TCC) is an independent not-for-profit 501(c)(3) licensed 330(c) FQHC community health center with 12 clinical sites, two mobile clinic and an administrative site in the Greater Long Beach area in the state of California. TCC was founded in 1939 when physicians and community leaders came together to provide access to health care for all children, particularly those affected by poverty. Since then, TCC has expanded to serve adults and has undergone tremendous growth, garnering local, state and national respect for the work we do under our guiding mission to provide quality integrated, innovative health care that will contribute to a healthy community, by focusing on those in need and working with patients and the community as partners in their overall well-being.

This week is **National Health Center Week**, and I wanted to take this opportunity, **Health Care for the Homeless Day**, to thank the HEART Team for your continued partnership caring for one of the most vulnerable populations in our community. Providing housing, health care, and basic necessities is a human right, and you all have done tremendous work to ensure those experiencing homelessness have their needs met and also to advocate on their behalf. We honor you and thank you for your commitment and work.

**TCC Family Health (TCC)**, serves as a **Patient Centered Medical Home for over 40,000 patients of all ages in more than 140,000 visits per year** focusing on moving further upstream with prevention and early intervention services to prevent health and psychosocial issues from becoming chronic health conditions that place individuals at risk for homelessness. TCC also works to address issues and connect individuals and families experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness to community resources to help them stabilize their lives and link them to needed resources. TCC is honored to serve almost **1,800 patients** experiencing homelessness in over **5,000 visits** at the Multi Service Center for Homeless

(MSC), at the Long Beach Rescue Mission, and at our other sites.

While we have not directly worked with the HEART team, I have heard of their work. During this time, where trust between those in uniform and those in our marginalized communities, the HEART team is a model of how those in uniform are part of our network of caring. I have seen HEART team members at community advocacy events speaking about unhoused residents in Long Beach. They work tirelessly to link these individuals to services. Often they are the first point of contact when a unhoused individual is in crisis.

Again, thank you for providing care for those who often are the most marginalized. I look forward to our continued partnerships in the future.

**Jina Lee Lawler, MSW**

**Chief Operating Officer**, The Children's Clinic, "Serving Children and Their Families"

**p** 562.264.3985 **a** 562.264-3560

**s** [www.thechildrensclinic.org](http://www.thechildrensclinic.org) **e** [jlawler@tcc-care.org](mailto:jlawler@tcc-care.org)

---



NOTICE: This email may contain PRIVILEGED and CONFIDENTIAL information and is intended only for the use of the specific individual(s) to which it is addressed. It may contain Protected Health Information that is privileged and confidential. Protected Health Information may be used or disclosed in accordance with law and you may be subject to penalties under law for improper use or further disclosure of the Protected Health Information in this email. If you are not an intended recipient of this email, you are hereby notified that any unauthorized use, dissemination or copying of this email or the information contained in it or attached to it is strictly prohibited. If you have received this email in error, please delete it and immediately notify the person named above by reply email. Thank you.



August 11, 2020

To: Broc Coward, COO  
Downtown LB Alliance  
Councilmember Jeannine Pearce  
Second District, Long Beach

Re: Testimonial and Letter of Support for HEART

On behalf of Long Beach Rescue Mission, I thank you for the opportunity to write this letter of support for our LB Fire Department's Homeless Education And Response Team (HEART).

The HEART team is very valued by Long Beach Rescue Mission as we collaborate together with helping those who are most vulnerable, our homeless. The HEART team is the first point of contact, the message of "hope" to the homeless individual on the street while providing medical attention, resources, shelter, housing and services. Over the last few years, some of the clients of the Long Beach Rescue Mission were brought here by the HEART team, and many of these clients are now graduates of our 1-year New Life Program, with independent living, employment and reconciliation to their families.

I would like to share with you a testimony from one of our Case Managers who works with the HEART team:

*"The HEART team has been very supportive in assisting us with getting homeless individuals living on the street the proper medical attention needed, allowing them to save a life that otherwise would have just died on the street. Joel and Justin are continuously serving the needs of our community, and what I have found so amazing about these guys is they do follow-ups with individuals who they have helped place and never forget them. I salute Long Beach HEART TEAMS!"*

I believe that their service is truly needed, and "vital" to our community during this challenging time as we navigate our way through this pandemic. Especially valuable is that the team is certified in MHFA (Mental Health First Aid), which gives the opportunity to help those who are suffering from mental illness. Long Beach Rescue Mission is grateful to be in partnership with such an outstanding team of compassionate and caring first responders, and we support and value the work they do.

If you have any questions, or for further comments, please feel free to call me directly at: 562) 216-7611.

Thank you.

Robert Probst, Executive Director  
Long Beach Rescue Mission



1430 Pacific Avenue • P.O. Box 1969 • Long Beach, California 90801  
Phone: (562) 591-1292 • FAX: (562) 218-1154 • www.LBRM.org



**From:** [Broc Coward](#)  
**To:** [Broc Coward](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Homeless Education And Response Team (HEART) Testimonials  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 11, 2020 3:25:35 PM

---

August 10th 2020

Broc Coward  
COO, Downtown Long Beach Alliance  
100 West Broadway Suite 101  
Long Beach CA. 90802

Dear Mr Coward,

I am writing today in support of the Homeless Education and Response Team (HEART) and the plan for this team in the Long Beach 2021 Proposed budget. "Redesign and restructure the HEART team model with a greater public health focus and utilize Nurse positions in the Health Department instead of Firefighters" is what the proposed budget states.

While I agree with more collaboration and having more clinicians available to assist with HEARTS mission...this plan is not fully thought out. Not only for the reason that the HEART team should remain under the Homeless Services "umbrella" but the outreach training that will need to occur for our Nurses and Social workers that do not serve on the front lines of outreach. As of now, the Health Department Outreach teams require QOL, LBPD Quality of Life (and MET) teams to go with them on outreach. They do not approach homeless people themselves and require the QOL officer to ask the person experiencing homelessness if they want services. Then, if they do, they bring them over to the outreach worker. ( Case workers at MHA still go out by themselves.. Not City Outreach. )

For the collaboration piece, prior to losing our Homeless Services Director a few months back, our HEART and QOL would work together in teams with our city's outreach (many times) Churches and Non Profits that help those experiencing homelessness. ( currently, they still do work in teams but since the loss of the Homeless Services Outreach director, the regular meetings have stopped)

As, a board member of Beacon for Him, I can't count how many times I was able to contact both of these teams to help asses and outreach those that needed services. On many occasions I have called the HEART/QOL teams directly to sit in the Beacon building with me when someone was sick, needed a bus ticket to get home, transport to the MSC, help with paperwork, or just talk to someone that needed another perspective and many other occasions when I needed help advocating for a person in need.

In regards to HEART, The call volume the Fire Department gets related to homelessness is highest in the Downtown area. Having the HEART unit there to intercept those calls, spend the time with the individual, and connect them with the most appropriate and definitive care is a major piece in helping someone from the streets to homeless services. We need our street outreached experienced paramedics to continue to grow where they are at and collaborate (again) with QOL, MET, Non Profits, Churches and add LSW's and Nurses. This collaboration would help bridge many of those gaps between services that we see everyday working with someone experiencing homelessness navigating street to home.

These teams are a great example of what we have in place and where to amplify or redirect funding within our LBFD and LBPD in regards to the motivated reconciliation research/conversation and proposed 2021 budget.

Thank you for a moment in your day for my "two cents"

In Service,  
Allison Kripp

**From:** [Broc Coward](#)  
**To:** [Broc Coward](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Homeless Education And Response Team (HEART) Testimonials  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 11, 2020 3:28:17 PM

---

**From:** sheila gibbons <giomigibbons@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 10, 2020 3:52 PM  
**To:** Broc Coward <brocc@dlba.org>  
**Subject:** Re: Homeless Education And Response Team (HEART) Testimonials

Broc, I have had dealings with the Fire Department's HEART program. I have nothing but great things to say about this nationally recognized team. While working at a soup kitchen here in Long Beach I had many opportunities to see them in action. There are always "regulars" in attendance that would show up for a meal. Many were seniors and or veterans. On several occasions we had to call the fire department to our site for medical assistance with this fragile group. Many of them also became regulars with the LBFD. Often it was because they couldn't get to followup appointments or get their refills of blood pressure medications. It was then HEART would get involved .

One case comes to mind of a very gentle man who was living on the streets. I watched his health go down hill over a few weeks. HEART got involved with his care. The team treated him with respect and offered him the dignity he deserved, not something this population is used to receiving. This man was very recalcitrant to even go to the hospital before HEART got involved in his care. They convinced him because of his blood pressure and chronic headache to go to the emergency room. . They continued to follow up with him and eventually convinced him to make contact with his family. He did which, led to him returning to his family and getting off the streets.

In my opinion, if HEART hadn't developed this relationship with our friend he would have remained on the streets until his early death. HEART needs to stay fully funded. The work they do is essential to the care of our most vulnerable people .

Respectfully submitted,  
Sheila Gibbons  
Willmore Baking Company  
Willmore City Heritage Association