



## Haven of Hope History

It all started in a 100-year-old, 800 sq. ft. house at 707 Lipan Street back in 1998. The house was purchased by two Secular Franciscans, Larry Gosselin and Baldemar Garza, who lived in the basement of the residence full-time. After the Franciscans purchased the property, they began using it to provide showers, wash clothing, give haircuts, and feed hot breakfast and lunch 5 days a week to the homeless population of Denver. The meals were served outside in tents and even on the coldest of mornings and afternoons, the Franciscans would average 50 to 60 guests per day, sometimes reaching close to 100. In 2004, Jay Gould joined the Franciscans, eventually becoming President, and chose to live in the house full-time, as well.

A small group of individuals who were dedicated to caring for the “least of his brothers and sisters” purchased the property adjacent to the 707 location with the goal of erecting a larger facility. At the time, there were only 240 benefactors. With relentless optimism from the group, and support from these benefactors, the decision was made to move forward with the hope of raising the money for the new building in due time. Within two years, the number of benefactors grew to over 1,500, which provided the resources necessary to complete the project. The goal was to continue to serve the guests, and in return restore dignity within them through compassion and love.

In October 2007, the new, 5,700 sq. ft. facility was opened. The cost, totaling \$1,500,000, was completely paid for by the time of opening day. Guests continued to enjoy hot meals, breakfast, and lunch, as well as private showers. Additional services included internet access, mail and document safe-keeping, the distribution of clothing, over-the-counter medication, and hygiene packs. The shelter works with outside organizations such as Denver Health to provide lung and heart testing, with additional support from Denver Human Services to assist guests with any questions regarding food stamps, housing issues, and Medicaid. On top of all of these services and supports, guests were also served by volunteers who would take meals to their tables instead of having guests wait in line; a tradition that has continued to this day



As time went on, the Board felt it was imperative to develop a holistic and restorative system designed to walk alongside the community as they transition back into society-. To accomplish this, construction of an expanded, 6,000 sq. ft. addition to the already standing facility was completed. In this additional space, Haven of Hope added a multi-use classroom, public bathrooms and office space on the third floor, Chapel, conference room, mental health office and art therapy room on the 4th floor, additional dining and commercial kitchen on the main floor, a fully equipped eye clinic, additional storage, laundry and food storage on the 1st floor. This also allowed for more ancillary services to utilize the excellent facility to provide an array of services from housing inquiries to job/career education to health care. All of these services are being made possible by the generosity of volunteers in their respective fields of expertise.

The expanded building was completed in 2017 and completely paid for due to Haven of Hope's wonderful benefactors' and their commitment to the shelter's success.

Haven of Hope has come a long way since the "Miracle of Lipan Street," as the former President Jay Gould would name it. It is truly a blessing and would not have been possible without the contributions from the nearly 7,000 benefactors. Within the community, Haven of Hope is often referred to as "The Brown Palace for the Homeless," and will continue to be a place of safety and comfort for the community for as long as possible. Haven of Hope would like to encourage anyone interested to stop by and see for themselves the services provided because, as one volunteer wrote, "No one can understand what is happening here, unless you experience it first-hand."

Today, Haven of Hope continues to fight the good fight. The shelter has survived a pandemic, increased the number of service days to include weekends and holidays, and in order to meet the increasing demand for space to provide services as well as provide the space needed for the return to self-sufficiency (Fresh Tracks) program, bought the neighboring property and continues to push forward doing this awesome work of God, "For I was



hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, ..., Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, and naked and clothe you? ... And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'" Matthew 25:35-40.

The same mission that motivated Larry Gosselin and Baldemar Garza, motivates Haven of Hope today! This passion burns ever brightly in the hearts of the board, the staff and all of the faithful and generous donors!

Haven of Hope continues to meet the emergency needs of its guests with excellence, demonstrating the love of God to a broken and downtrodden community.

"Anyone that comes to our door with a need, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation or preference, if we have it or the ability to get it, we will share it with them." All are welcome and all will be shown the love of Christ!