



IF OUR MATTRESSES COULD TALK...

“There is never a dull moment at The Mission. Quiet, yes...dull – NEVER. From the early morning hours to way past midnight, there are stories to be told. I get to hear many of those stories from my staff and our residents. But one day as I walked through the building to survey what improvements we need to make this Spring and take inventory of the furniture and equipment used by our Mission guests, I began to wonder what stories of hope and new beginnings we would hear from *them*. I mean what if the *mattresses* where our shelter guests lay their heads for the night - could *talk*?”

La Forice Nealy, President/CEO

It's 7:00am. All of the men, women and children have had their breakfast and gone about their day. Now the mattresses in each program can have a little breather - and chat...

Frontline Youth Mattress 1: Hey, remember James? *His* first night he had *no* trouble falling asleep. He hadn't slept on a bed for so long...His foster parents kicked him out when he turned 18. Can you imagine? Homeless, sleeping on the streets...but he *continued* going to school, kept his grades up and *graduated!* I hear he's an Officer in the US Navy now! Wow! That was over 5 years ago! **Frontline Youth Mattress 2:** (Yawning) What a night! I thought AJ would *never* go to sleep! Security noticed he kept sitting up in the bed, looking all around and rambling through his bag, so the guard came over to check on him. AJ said at the last shelter where he stayed, some guy kept threatening him because he thought he knew him. One night, he woke up and caught the same guy going through his bag. Before AJ could even say or do anything, the guy punched him in the face! Poor kid! OBM Security is always right here, making regular rounds 24/7 checking on *everyone*. When AJ realized he's in a *safe* place, he slept like a baby and snored like a bear...(chuckle).

Daybreak Mattress 1: Earl...he walked a *long* way to get here. When he finally made it, his feet were frostbitten...still feeling that “sting”. After getting medical treatment he eventually settled down and slept through the night. He's talking with his Case Manager right now about his next steps... Thank God he made it to The Mission in time! **Daybreak Mattress 2:** You know, I've been here for the longest and (pause, sniff) well I really feel like *my* time is just about out. I'm...not sure how much longer I can hold up. Last year was really rough – when that kind gentleman passed away in his sleep...I've never experienced anything like that before. Yeah, that got to all of us. But you know what the good thing in that is? He slipped away peacefully, on a comfortable bed instead of alone outside on the cold ground under a viaduct. And he made his transition surrounded by people that truly cared.

Life Transformation Mattress: Johnny came to us severely addicted to drugs and alcohol. His first week was terrible. I wasn't sure he was going to make it. He wore me out! The night sweats, the tears, the tremors and crying – my God the crying...But it's amazing to see him 7 months later sitting here studying for his GED.

Lamplight Mattress 1: I remember 12 year old Darryl was awake all night practicing his valedictorian speech!
Lamplight Mattress 2: And 17 year old Gina! She was so happy to see Ms. Jackson (The Lamplight Director) and her family's Case Manager at her graduation ceremony...She actually slept with her graduation cap! I was so proud of her!
Lamplight Mattress 1: I remember the first night I spent wet with tears! A sweet lady, in her 70's; never been homeless before. She lost her job, then her home when the company she was employed with went out of business. She cried all night. But her Case Manager helped her get signed up for computer classes – she finished the classes, got a job and found a place of her own. She was so grateful for all the help she received at The Mission...she just couldn't stop crying. That had to be 6 or 7 years ago. Wow, we are *old!* Hey, how was your night, “Mattie”?
Lamplight Mattress 3: How was *my* night? Oh, I had a wet one too! But who could get mad? I had the young lady that fled and left everything to get away from her abuser. That first night she cried and shook like a leaf all night long. Finally she realized she was safe and drifted into a peaceful sleep. *Continued on next page...*

Continued from other side...Hundreds of people have come through these doors about to give up on life. But after good meals, hot showers, a fresh change of clothes, and working with staff to plan and pursue their goals, they end their busy days right here on us – getting a good night’s sleep! And think about all of The Mission Partners - total strangers that donate what they can to Olive Branch Mission to keep those fresh linens on us every night! All of us will be moving on real soon to make room for the new mattresses. We have served much too long. But at least we know while we were here, we served a wonderful purpose! Who would have imagined when we were shipped from the factory that we would end up someplace where we would make such a big difference in so many people’s lives?

And ALL of the mattresses said, “AMEN!”

2018 Funding Opportunities to Support The Olive Branch Mission

- **Spring Cleaning at OBM** – Olive Branch Mission will replace 350 mattresses. All of our mattresses are nearing the end of their lifecycle. This **\$25,000** project will help us replace every mattress in our shelter system.
- **Linens/Blankets** – Olive Branch Mission will replace all the linens/blankets. This **\$2500** project will ensure new linens/blankets for each client sleeping space.
- **Storage Bins** – Olive Branch Mission will provide a storage bin for single women and families. This **\$2000** project will allow each woman and/or her family to safely and securely store their possessions while residing at The Mission.
- **Comfort Kits** – Olive Branch Mission serves over 2500 clients each year. This **\$2500** project will allow us to provide each new client with personal hygiene and toiletry items (soap, towel, toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, feminine products, etc.) that aid in restoring and preserving health and dignity.
- **Back to School Celebration** – Each year Olive Branch Mission provides over 250 backpacks filled with essential school supplies. This **\$2500** project will help ensure that the children in our care start the year off prepared to learn.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Olive Branch Mission continually strives to meet the ever increasing needs of the precious souls God has entrusted to our care.



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Truly makes
a difference.**

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