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Help Tiny Homes Make A Big Difference

Posted By *Jelena Dopudj* On December 30, 2015 @ 10:43 am In Community, Livable Communities, Volunteering | [No Comments](#)

Sometimes, small things can have a big impact. That is what George Bolden and Celebrate Outreach are hoping. Bolden has launched an initiative to help St. Petersburg's homeless veterans by building "tiny houses" that can become permanent residences.

In 2014 alone, there were some 250 homeless Tampa Bay veterans, according to the [Tampa Tribune](#) [2].

This initiative is not the first of its kind. A Tiny House movement is gaining popularity across the United States. Tiny houses are fully-functional homes with low impacts on the environment that may take up as little as 200 square feet, while still providing adequate living space due to innovative design. Celebrate Outreach's initiative is among the first efforts in St. Petersburg to respond to a 2014 challenge by President Obama to the nation's mayors to resolve homelessness for American veterans.



[1]

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Bolden, president of Celebrate Outreach, has worked with the group to provide food and shelter for the homeless in St. Petersburg since 2007. His idea for the tiny houses project builds on similar initiatives on the West Coast. Bolden is in the process of setting up the projects with city officials, architects and veterans who would like to be part of the program.

Housing can be expensive and can have a big impact on a family's finances, a community's resources and the environment anywhere. [AARP's Livability Index](#) [3] ranks communities nationwide on eight areas of livability, including housing. On the housing scale, St. Petersburg ranks somewhere in the middle of the nation at 53 points, but fares worst under the housing category, with only 35. The tiny houses program would help raise that score since according to Bolden, veterans make up half of St. Petersburg's homeless population.

"AARP applauds this effort to help homeless veterans, who have earned a place to call home," said Jeff Johnson, AARP's Florida state director. "At AARP Florida we hope this initiative starts a conversation in our community about how to create housing that works for all generations of Tampa Bay residents throughout their lives."

Bolden is seeking help from the community, in two forms. First, he's seeking volunteers to help build tiny houses in the homeless veterans project, or to contribute to fundraising, sharing news about the effort with the news media and the public, or in other ways. If interested, please fill out the Tiny Homes Volunteer Form at: <http://www.celebrateoutreach.org/tiny-homes.html> ^[4]

Bolden also is seeking donations. Donations are tax-deductible. Individual or group donations may be mailed to Celebrate Outreach, 401 Fifth St. N., St. Petersburg, FL 33701 or you can give securely through this link on the Celebrate Outreach website (by clicking the blue "donate" button on the right): <http://www.celebrateoutreach.org/giving.html> ^[5]

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[1] Image: http://states.aarp.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/iStock_000006738221_Medium1.jpg

[2] Tampa Tribune: <http://www.tbo.com/list/military-news/number-of-homeless-veterans-in-the-area-spikes-20140511/>

[3] AARP's Livability Index: <http://livabilityindex.aarp.org/>

[4] <http://www.celebrateoutreach.org/tiny-homes.html>: <http://www.celebrateoutreach.org/tiny-homes.html>

[5] <http://www.celebrateoutreach.org/giving.html>: <http://www.celebrateoutreach.org/giving.html>

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