

TX BoS CoC Board Nominations – Seat 4 – Homeless Families

Crystal BlackRaven

Organization (if applicable): The Salvation Army of Abilene

Job Title (if applicable): Case Management Supervisor

Do you live and/or work in the TX BoS CoC's geographic area?

Yes

If yes, in which TX BoS CoC county and/or counties do you live and/or work and would you represent on the CoC Board?

Taylor, Shackelford, Nolan, Runnels, Fisher, Jones Haskell, and Callahan

Which seat you are seeking?

Seat 4 -- Homeless Families

Do you have lived experience of homelessness? In other words, have you ever lived in a homeless situation?

Yes

Are you affiliated with a HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) Program-funded project and/or Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program-funded project operating in the TX BoS CoC?

Unsure

If yes, indicate your role:

Are you the Chair of a Local Homeless Coalition (LHC)?

No

If yes, which LHC? (No response)

1. Please describe your personal and/or work experience with the population you would be representing in the designated seat, if elected.

I am a 2010 graduate of Hardin Simmons University with a Bachelor of Behavioral Science. My degree is something that I am very proud to have accomplished. It is also one of the most humbling experiences. I started my journey in 2005. I found myself homeless as a single mother of a four month old when I started classes. I took a break from school in 2007 to care for a ill family member. I still recall sitting with my college advisor and hearing "more than likely you will not return to school... you are homeless... you are a single mother... you are a minority... the odds are against you." In December 2009, I was able to find permanent housing and prepare for my graduation. By that time, I had experienced a short marriage and subsequent divorce and given birth to my son. I was fortunate to have a support system and the right people in my life to navigate my barriers. I would like to be a resource to help others do the same.

2. Please describe how you have participated in the TX BoS CoC in the past.

I have not participated in the past. My last 10 years of work has been in the Medical/Health field with an emphasis in mental health and elderly populations.

3. Please describe your experience, if any, working with the HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) Program or similar programs focused on ending homelessness (ESG, SSVF, PATH, and RHY).

I shifted my career focus this year, when I felt led to serve our guests and neighbors. As such, I do not have experience with working with the HUD Continuum of Care Program or other similar programs. I am currently working the The Salvation Army of Abilene to begin working with ESG.

4. Please describe your experience, if any, serving on a board of directors, including any leadership roles.

I currently serve as the president of the Adult Protective Services (APS) Partners Board. APS Partners is a nonprofit organization, charged with promoting and supporting a partnership between the community and APS, in order to better serve the elderly and persons with disabilities age 18 and over, through assistance to front-line caseworkers.

5. Please describe your experience, if any, with managing grants.

As president of the Adult Protective Services (APS) Partners Board I assist with managing grant cycles and the allocation of the funds we receive. I assist with financial reporting to the Board, our grant providers and other invested parties.

6. Please describe your specific skills that can benefit the CoC.

I have ten years of social service experience and I am certified as a Case Manager through the National Board of Case Managers. I am community involved with our local Chamber of Commerce, Abilene Young Professionals, and greatly enjoy networking. I have experience in leadership, management of resources, risk management and root cause analysis.

7. Why do you want to serve on the CoC Board?

I am invested in making a difference to at risk populations. I highly value the worth, intrinsic value, and dignity of our guests and neighbors. I believe that we should always serve in the ways we are capable.

8. If you are elected to the board, what do you plan to work on and accomplish?

I would work to help bridge the gap for families experiencing homelessness in Abilene and statewide. Currently, we are offering programs for families who are learning to budget, find jobs, and learning parenting skills.

9. What else would you like the CoC members to know about you?

I am mother of four wonderful children ages five years to fifteen years old. I believe that the example we set for our children is important. I always want my children to know that when I could serve others, I did so.