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## PRESS RELEASE – 501C3

### AUSTIN HUMANISTS AT WORK APPROVED FOR 501(c)(3) NONPROFIT STATUS, LAUNCHES FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN TO EXPAND OFFERINGS FOR AUSTIN'S HOMELESS POPULATION

Austin, Tx, November 14, 2017– Austin Humanists at Work (ATXHAW) has received a 501(c)(3) designation, officially establishing it as a nonprofit organization.

Since 2014, ATXHAW has collected donations of personal care items to help people in Central Austin who are experiencing homelessness or who have limited means. With the 501(c)(3) status, ATXHAW can accept nonprofit monetary donations to fund the most-needed items for clients. Additionally, monetary and in-kind donations are tax-deductible.

"This is a major milestone for our organization," ATXHAW President Virginia Miller said. "Acquiring our 501(c)(3) designation means a lot in terms of how we operate, and will help us better serve the people who need it most in Central Austin."

"Being able to receive monetary donations will have a huge impact on the roughly 150 people we serve at each of our monthly giveaways. I am humbled to how far we've come, and hope to grow to help cure chronic homelessness and poverty in Austin."

The items ATXHAW collects are distributed during giveaways in downtown Austin on the third Sunday of each month. Until now, only in-kind donations were accepted and were not tax-deductible. Despite the limitations of not being an officially registered nonprofit, the total number of individuals served each month during the last year has been between 106 to 246. Essential items include basic living supplies such as soap, toothpaste and underwear.

"There are many reasons why we incorporated and became a nonprofit, including the ability to apply for private and federal grants reserved for nonprofits," said Donations Director Laura Tanner. "We will be exempt from paying state and federal taxes. Making donations tax-exempt will expand our donor base and allow corporations to match donations. And we will be exempt from paying property taxes, which will help us greatly when the time comes for us to get an office. All of these benefits will help us to uphold our mission of assisting as many people in need as possible."

In honor of this huge milestone, ATXHAW is launching a fundraising campaign, [Hooray for \\$2,017](#), with the goal to raise \$2,017 before the end of the year. All donation dollars go directly to purchasing the most-needed items for monthly giveaways. Monetary donations can be made online at <https://www.austinhumanistsatwork.org/donate> and checks can be mailed to

Austin Humanists at Work  
11900 Metric Blvd. #J-172  
Austin, TX 78758

"Getting registered as an official charity is a huge step forward for us," said Technical Director Mike Guentzel. "So many of our volunteers have employers that will match donations they make to registered 501(c)3 organizations, and there are many online resources that are now available to us. This should expand our support for the people we serve." "Everyone behind the scenes of Austin Humanists at Work loves our volunteers, donors, and the people we serve. It has been a labor of love to give back to our community. We genuinely believe human hands can solve human problems," Miller said.

The next giveaway is scheduled for Sunday, Nov. 19 at 8:40 a.m., under the I-35 bridge in front of the Austin Police Department building, 742 I-35 Frontage Road, Austin.

For information on donations, contact Donations Director Laura Tanner at [donations@austinhumanistsatwork.org](mailto:donations@austinhumanistsatwork.org).

Additional inquiries should be sent to President Virginia Miller at [communications@austinhumanistsatwork.org](mailto:communications@austinhumanistsatwork.org)

### **History of how ATXHAW applied for 501(c)(3)**

"The process took about 21 months from start to finish," Tanner said "It's not just filing an application with the IRS; there's much more to it than that. There have been some bumps in the road, but we have worked together to iron things out."

In 2016, ATXHAW started the process of applying for a 501(c)(3) status with a six-person board of directors. With the help of [Texas C-Bar](#), an organization which provides free legal resources and business law services to organizations working to improve the quality of life in low-income neighborhoods, ATXHAW was assigned a team of lawyers from [Dykema Cox Smith](#) in San Antonio, and they guided the organization's leaders through the entire application and filing process.

In [October 2016](#), the board worked with the lawyers to form bylaws, and launched a fundraiser using the crowdfunding site [Indiegogo](#) to pay the 501(c)(3) application fee. In only six days, ATXHAW collected \$500 dollars from nine donors and sent the application to the Internal Revenue Service in June 2017. ATXHAW received the approval letter from the IRS on November 2, 2017, indicating permission to immediately begin accepting taxdeductible monetary donations.

### **More about Austin Humanists at Work**

The mission of Austin Humanists at Work to uphold the values of humanism by assisting people in need in the Austin community. The main focus is to provide a short-term supply of basic living items at our monthly giveaways.

Volunteers and donors of ATXHAW are an inclusive bunch of everyday folks including humanists, agnostics, freethinkers, atheists, and theists looking to give back to the community with no strings attached. Regardless of what they do or don't believe, they all hold humanistic values and choose to give back to the community not because we want to advance a specific agenda, not as part of any movement, but because it's the right thing to do. Simply put, ATXHAW members believe human hands solve human problems.

ATXHAW has two simple goals: give humanists a place to come help their community with other like-minded individuals, and allow people in need to receive assistance without any preaching or expectation of something in return for what they receive.

ATXHAW strives to fulfill these goals through various community projects, primarily monthly giveaways, usually on the third Sunday of every month, where they distribute basic living items to people working through homelessness and limited means. In preparation for the giveaways, volunteers collect, sort, and store the items in their homes until the next event date. Because the group is 100 percent volunteer-based, the success of giveaways depends on the community's generous contributions.

More information about Austin Humanists at Work can be found at [atxhaw.org](http://atxhaw.org).

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