

Youth Venture

BOX CITY VIGIL FOR YOUTH HOMELESSNESS



In February 2005, a group of High School students from Bloomington, Minnesota got together to start the Box City Vigil for Youth Homelessness. Box City is an annual all-night vigil on the Minnesota state capital lawn. It increases awareness of youth homelessness in Minnesota by creating a city out of cardboard boxes to visually symbolize youth that spend their nights on the streets.

The event consists of speakers from agencies, legislators, and educators that are active participants in the fight to end homelessness on the local, state, and federal levels. Throughout the night, students from around the state listen to stories and statistics about homelessness and learn how they can make an impact.

In April 2006, the 2nd Annual Box City Vigil attracted even more attention by bringing together nearly 500 youth from all over Minnesota. All money raised from the Box City Vigil for Youth Homelessness goes directly to the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless, a nonprofit network comprised of over 150 partner organizations with the goal generating policy change, community support, and resources that will help communities to meet their local housing and homelessness system needs.



Box City Vigil was one of the 30 finalists and one of the 15 winning Venture Teams in the Youth Venture Best Buy @15 Challenge in January 2009. The team received \$10,000 to expand their Venture. Visit their blog at www.bcv09.blogspot.com and their Youth Venture profile at www.GenV.net/en-us/team/box_city_vigil_0.

THE IDEA

- Increase awareness about the reality of youth homelessness in Minnesota.
- Raise money for the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless.

IMPACT

- Contribute to the efforts to end long-term homelessness in Minnesota.
- Help fund education and advocacy about youth homelessness and long-term homelessness.



Box City Vigil being recognized by members of Congress

“PEOPLE CAME TOGETHER TO FIGHT FOR A COMMON CAUSE. LEGISLATORS, YOUNG PEOPLE, LOBBYISTS, HOMELESS PEOPLE ALL CAME TOGETHER BECAUSE THEY CARE ABOUT OR ARE AFFECTED BY HOMELESSNESS.”