

A site of the times

Street Roots goes online with its Rose City Resource, and opens up a world of opportunities for people needing information about social services, nonprofits, employment programs and more

Online, the Rose City Resource offers the latest information on clothing, counseling and mediation, dental, domestic violence, employment and training, financial assistance, food boxes, food stamps, GLBTQI services, health care, hospital emergency rooms, hotlines, legal services, leisure and entertainment, meals, pet care, public restrooms, recovery services, renters resources, shelters, syringe exchanges, transitional housing, utility assistance, veterans and youth services.

BY ISRAEL BAYER
 STREET ROOTS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Street Roots is proud to announce the next evolution in the Rose City Resource Guide, a new Web site meant to revolutionize the way people experiencing homelessness and poverty and social workers access services available for people in the metro region.

The new Web site — www.rosecityresource.org — is user-friendly with the most updated list of services and information for people living in crisis in Multnomah, Washington and Clackamas counties.

After clicking on each service you will find mapping functions, bus lines, hours, and what specific services are offered from that specific nonprofit. Each service is displayed with easy printing functions.

Did I mention that all of this is in Spanish as well?

And that's not all. When Street Roots began this project we looked at many different Web sites that offer listings of services about poverty and homeless in Portland and across the country. While many groups offer specific information about services, none had developed a centralized place for education and empowerment. How could we create a Web site that wasn't just a hand out, but instead offered a deeper perspective on the issues of homelessness, poverty and civil rights? We wanted to dig deeper, so, we did.

You will also find on the Web site an area for "Policy" and "Know Your Rights."

Under the policy section, we offer a place for students, researchers, journalists, community organizers and others to access information about homelessness and poverty. You will find annual reports for each year of Portland's 10-year plan along with reports on affordable housing, the latest reports locally and nationally from institutes and think-tanks on the issue, the latest thinking on messaging and talking points, and white pages developed on criminalization alternatives locally. If you care about the homeless and poverty issues, and are a policy geek, this is the place for you.

Under the "Know Your Rights" section readers and organizers will find the latest laws affecting homelessness and poverty, how to appeal those laws and legal services at people's disposal. We also have the latest on tenant and foreclosure rights and property recovery information. The goal of this section is to be a centralized location for homeless folks, social services workers, and community organizers to have quick and easy access to the latest information on laws commonly directed at people living in poverty. It's also a bonus for researchers and students.

For Street Roots, the Web site serves functions as a database to update information and extract it directly into our layout programs for the print guide. We now have the ability to update the information in real

time with the help of services themselves. On the homepage you will find a link with a form that goes directly to our resource specialist if updates are needed.

The popular print guide will continue to be printed and distributed throughout the region. In the past two years more than 120,000 English and nearly 20,000 Spanish guides have been distributed to more than 300 public/private and faith-based groups working with people on the streets.

The guide has been overwhelmingly successful, cutting down on staff time for agencies creating makeshift lists. More importantly, it's a tool for relationship building, education and accessing up to date information on services available to people in need. It has been referred to locally on the streets as the "Hobo's Bible." The Web site is now icing on the cake.

■ Street Roots partnered with the city of Gresham Maps and Data Services Program, Americorps NWSA, and a slew of local Web developers and private companies, including Metal Toad, Incite Development, OpenSourcery, Creative Pickle, and the local Portland Drupal Users Group to develop the Web site.

■ Sarah Beecroft, a local Web page designer, should be thanked profusely for driving the entire project and connecting Street Roots to the many groups that helped make this project possible.

■ The print edition of the Rose City Resource is made possible through the partnership of Street Roots, the city of Portland, 211 Info and the United Way of Columbia-Willamette.

■ For more information on how you can help see page 16.



Street Roots held a party, hosted by OpenSourcery in April for everyone involved with the project. From left: Jonathan Hedstrom, Ilima Kennedy, Michael Prasuhn, Sarah Prasuhn (with Nilit), Sarah Beecroft, Israel Bayer, Melissa Anderson, Michael Halstead, Joanne Zuhl, Chelsea Clark-James, Molly Vogt, Carla Piluso.

Art Show and fund raiser for Street Roots

Featuring the work of
Elizabeth Schwartz



About the artist:

Elizabeth Schwartz uses line, color, words and software to portray the human condition. Her first show honors Transitions, the transition opportunities provided to the homeless by the nonprofit newspaper Street Roots, and the artist's own transition into early retirement and art three years ago.

The Fund Raiser

Art sale: June 5-30

With the generosity of Urban Grind and the artist, part of the proceeds will be donated to Street Roots

Reception: 1-3 p.m., Saturday June 6

Urban Grind Coffeehouse

2214 NE Oregon

503-546-0649

www.urbangrindcoffee.com

