



The Social Challenge:

There is a housing crisis in America. More than half a million people in the U.S. do not have a home, a quarter of whom are children. More than 50% of Americans are making detrimental sacrifices (getting an additional job, deferring retirement savings, cutting back on healthy foods & health care, running up credit card debt and moving to less safe communities or communities with worse schools) just to be able pay their rent or mortgage.

The traditional American Dream has changed. It is now broader than ever and reflects new and changing American values. Just having a physical shelter does not mean that individuals and families feel safe, that their children get a quality education, that the economy is improving or that they have the support necessary to thrive. People need more from home. We need to rethink the role and definition of home in the pursuit of the American Dream. We need to change the way people think about where they live. Home is not just about the four walls around us, it's about the environment that affects the choices we make in life and who we become.

The Home Matters® Solution

Home Matters is a national movement designed to ensure that every American lives in a safe, nurturing environment with access to education, healthcare, public spaces and community services. A key part of what Home Matters is doing is helping to redefine the American Dream. We believe the New American Dream is a societal commitment to improve and balance quality of life and that home is our nation's common denominator.

Why? Because a stable and affordable home impacts educational achievement, health outcomes, public safety, the economy and—ultimately—personal success.

Home Matters exists to raise funds and build awareness of the need for more affordable homes and better communities across the country. We're a national coalition with over 225 nonprofit, government and corporate partners working hard towards ambitious goals over the next decade.

Over the next 10 years, Home Matters and its supporters will affect the following change:

- ▶ Decrease Homelessness
- ▶ Increase Affordable Rent
- ▶ Increase Homeownership
- ▶ Increase the Quality of Homes and Communities

Home Matters will do this by accelerating activities in 3 areas:

- ▶ **Housing** (for example, our member organizations design, develop and construct multi-family and single-family housing and provide lending and financial assistance)



- ▶ **Community and Economic Development** (for example, our member organizations provide access to health services and health education, work with school districts to ensure children’s long-term success, partner with public safety groups, build community centers and promote workforce development and job assistance)
- ▶ **Education and Learning** (for example, our member organizations provide homebuyer and renters education, foreclosure prevention education, literacy training and job readiness and placement)

Situational Analysis:

- **Policy:** Federal, state and local funding is stagnant or diminishing. There is simply not enough public-sector funding to confront and solve the current housing issues. Capitol Hill is ambivalent, at best, to finding/funding solutions, and local and state governments can only do so much and only if they have the political will (e.g. the high number of state housing trust funds that have either been significantly decreased or done away with completely). Without strong public support for housing as an American issue, little if anything will be done (e.g. GSE reform¹).
- **Housing Non-Profits:** The non-profit housing industry in America is fragmented, siloed and generally unfamiliar to the public. Many practitioners operate on a parochial level with disparate brand identities and fragmented services, creating smaller-scale impact that elicits underwhelming public attention.
- **General Public:** People are fairly unaware about the housing issues gripping the country. Most people do not know the name of a housing non-profit organization/brand except for Habitat for Humanity, an organization that is supportive of the Home Matters movement.
- **The Timing is Right to Engage Americans in a Housing Conversation:**
 1. The Recent Great Recession: Its effect on housing woes (across all income groups and generations) is seared into the national psyche. Many people are still fighting to stay above water—they are having to start again after foreclosure or are unable to afford a home of their own, as is the case with the millennial generation.
 2. The Political Climate is Right: The lack of social mobility in America is forcing the nation into a conversation about how to create more opportunity and re-think policies that affect mobility. As such, the media landscape is rich with stories about affordable healthcare, affordable education and income disparity issues (e.g. the push for increasing the minimum wage). In addition, affordable housing is now regularly featured in national media coverage.
 3. Polarization: Major U.S. cities such as San Francisco, Los Angeles, Boston, Washington, D.C. and New York are experiencing extreme homelessness and affordable housing issues that are driving populations out of metro areas and,

¹ GSE (Government-Sponsored Enterprise) are privately held corporations with public purposes created by the U.S. Congress to reduce the cost of capital for certain borrowing sectors of the economy. Members of these sectors include students, farmers and homeowners. Examples of GSEs include: Federal Home Loan Bank, Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation (Freddie Mac), Federal Farm Credit Bank and the Resolution Funding Corporation.



thus, negatively affecting the eco-system of cities and communities. Even certain students in NYC are forced to stay in shelters or temporary accommodations.

Target Audiences: Home Matters Audience Segments

- The General Public skewing towards:
 1. Baby Boomers (persons born between 1946 and 1964)
 2. Millennials (persons born between 1997 and 1992)
 3. Young parents – especially moms

What We Want the Target Audience(s) To Think, Feel & Do

THINK & FEEL (CHANGE PERCEPTIONS):

1. Make them aware of the social issues that result from lack of housing and a safe, nurturing environment
2. Raise the awareness of the ways in which the definition of the traditional American Dream has lost its relevancy. Today, the pursuit of the American Dream is broader than ever and reflects new and changing American values. Having a physical shelter does not mean that individuals and families feel safe, that their children get a solid education, that the economy is improving or that they have the support necessary to thrive. People need more from home.
3. Mobilize them to rethink about a New American Dream and how we talk about the home, where they live and the needs of families as it relates to their community. Home is not just about the four walls around us, it's about the environment that affects the choices we make in life and who we become.
4. Increase the understanding of the impact that home contributes to our nation's success by educating them about the impact home has on education, health, public safety, economic development, personal success outcomes and other quality of life issues.

DO (OUR PR GOALS/CALLS TO ACTION):

1. Raise awareness of Home Matters and its mission
2. Encourage target audiences to join the Home Matters Movement.
3. Encourage target audiences to follow Home Matters on Facebook, Twitter and share the Home Matters content.
4. Develop a campaign to provide information to the general public about how they may become more involved and help their local Home Matters housing non-profit. e.g. Volunteering
5. Build awareness and understanding of the financial needs and the uses of funding by Home Matters in the respective communities.
6. Encourage the general public to visit www.HomeMattersAmerica.com and - donate to the cause



Guidelines & Resources:

- This year, you will have the option of one of two clients – Home Matters Movement (national) or a Home Matters movement non-profit supporter in your market (local). Both programs will have the same requirements and objectives, but for campuses or teams that do not have access or interest from their local Home Matters supporter to participate, they will still have an opportunity to participate.
- Working with a Home Matters local supporter you will have more opportunity to have face-to-face meetings and integrate your campaign into ongoing initiatives in the local community. This will, however, add additional parameters on what you might be able to include in your campaign as you are asked to work closely and cooperatively with the local Home Matters supporter to ensure your campaign supports other activities they are conducting in the community.
- As Home Matters supporters have their own brands in their markets, any local campaign will have to be executed as a co-branded initiative.

Research: Some Resources Proving Why Housing Matters:

- Housing and asset building/economic self-sufficiency
 - "I've achieved the American Dream"
 - "Housing Challenges Real for Many Americans"
 - "Some Of Us Sacrifice More To Stay In Home Sweet Home"
 - "Rethinking the American Dream"
 - "The American Dream isn't as dead as it seems"
 - "The myth of the American Dream"
- Housing and economic development
 - "This Texas Professor Is Turning A Dumpster Into The World's Ultimate Tiny Home"
 - "Jewel Asks Americans 'Why Housing Matters' to Inspire a New Song and Raise Awareness for the Benefits of Public Housing"
- Housing and education
 - "Affordable Housing Leads To Smarter Kids"
- Housing and health
 - "Where You Live Can Impact Premature Births"
- Housing and older adults
- Housing and transportation

The Opportunity

The campaign should include the four components of a campaign: research, planning, implementation and evaluation. It should assist the non-profit supporter in raising awareness, increasing local media coverage, suggest potential fundraising initiatives (NOTE: No fundraising activities by the team should be implemented as part of the campaign) and securing volunteers and materials for the member organizations. In addition, a successful



campaign will introduce sustainable learning and implementation tools that can continue to be used in coming years. The students have an opportunity to serve as consultants to local supporters and to train volunteer organizations in effective public relations and communications.

Objectives

1. Your campaign must engage both the supporter member (if selecting that campaign track) and the local community, demonstrating an increase in awareness and involvement for Home Matters.
2. Your public relations campaign should include all the elements of a complete public relations plan, including a situational analysis of the local/national organization, research, goals, measurable objectives, strategies, tactics and a timeline and evaluation in coordination with the local supporter staff and board of directors, even if the supporter client campaign track is not chosen.
3. Your program and campaign should make considerations for the target audience demographic (see above) that closely matches your community, or if all audiences fall into your community, deciding on whether to build a program that addresses one or all of the target audiences. For all demographic groups you wish to reach, you should research and address barriers to participation and giving as well as provide a competitive analysis.
4. Please include measurable results in your final presentation. Your team may define its own measurements.

PRSSA and Home Matters will provide a variety of background materials, including videos, fact sheets, co-branding guidelines, contacts for local supporters, access to collaterals, and details about who to contact for more information to registered teams.

Judging Criteria

- A. **Four Step Process** (60 points total)
 1. **Research:** Thoughtful analysis of the situation; primary and secondary research; fact-finding to determine statistics, trends and attitudes in marketplace in relation to not-for-profit; peer research (e.g. focus groups, surveys, etc.); use of information to determine tactics. (15 points)
 2. **Planning:** Development of public relations plan, including statement of goal, objectives and strategies, key messages, target audiences, description of tactics, timeline and evaluation. Should include rationale for design of plan. (15 points)
 3. **Implementation:** Outline how you implemented the tactics; detail and document your activities. (15 points)



4. **Evaluation:** Provide the methods of evaluation you used to measure the campaign results. Did the methods support the campaign objectives? Did you achieve the intended results? (15 points)
- B. **Effectiveness:** How well did the team understand the situation on a local level? On a national level? How well did the public relations and development communications plan apply to the situation? How well did the team work with and meet the expectations of their client? Was the resulting plan appropriate for the audience affiliated? Were the results of the campaign aligned with the intended objectives? Did the message reach the intended target audience? Were there demonstrated results based upon the team's planning and implementation? (20 points)
- C. **Creativity:** What creativity did the team show in the development of the public relations campaign? What kinds of creative strategies and tactics were proposed or pursued throughout the campaign? How did the creativity positively affect the results? What parts of the campaign have legacy effects for the affiliate? (20 points)

Your PRSSA Chapter and its team can make an important contribution to your school, the education and the future of your fellow students. Submit your Intent-To-Enter form now!