



Your twice-a-month e-newsletter from AGRM

Useful news and information for association members

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AGRM EVENT AND DEADLINE REMINDERS

A lot is happening for AGRM members in the weeks ahead. Below are some important reminders about events and deadlines that are coming up—including one for today.

AGRM's DC Forum Right Around the Corner

AGRM's 2018 DC Forum, which will be held March 12–14, provides a unique opportunity to connect with lawmakers and agency decision-makers in Washington, D.C. Be sure your mission is represented by a member of its leadership team. We suggest the CEO, COO, PR director, or the person on your staff who handles government relations. Check out the schedule and register today at www.agrm.org/DCForum.

Annual Convention Registration Rates Increase March 15

The next registration price increase is just two weeks away (March 15), but why risk missing out on the savings you can receive? Drop what you are doing and register now for AGRM's 2018 Annual Convention, which will be held June 12–15 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Simply head to www.agrm.org/2018convention for all the details and to register.

Scholarships Offered for AGRM's Convention: Deadline March 16

Grant money is again being made available to AGRM to significantly defray convention costs for qualifying members. The scholarship includes money for registration, partial lodging costs, and even some transportation expenses. Scholarships are intended for full-time member mission staff members whose mission operating budgets are under \$2 million. The grant allows for up to three people to attend from the same mission. If you are interested, click [here](#) for full details and to apply for the scholarship. The deadline to apply is March 16.

Today! Final Day to Submit Data for Association Health Plan

AGRM is working to design and implement an association-level health insurance program that each member ministry in the U.S. would have the opportunity to participate in. In early February, CEOs of U.S. member ministries received a link to an employee census so that each U.S. member—regardless of whether or not they currently offer health insurance—could send us limited demographic data about their workforce. This information should enable AGRM to procure a health plan that is more cost-effective and benefit-rich than what most member organizations could get on their own. In order to get as much data as possible, we extended the submission deadline to today, March 1. If your mission has not submitted the data and any health plan information (for those that currently offer it), please send the completed spreadsheet to our consultant at louis@enterpriseriskstrategies.com by the end of the day *today*. Together, we can help more members afford quality health insurance.

AGRM Board Wraps Up Meetings in San Diego

The Town & Country in San Diego, California, was the site of AGRM's just-ended three-day February board meeting. Much of the time revolved around decisions having to do with the association's refocusing and rebranding. AGRM Board Chair Bill Mollard from Union Gospel Mission (Vancouver, British Columbia), said, "I am absolutely thrilled with not only the progress that we made at this meeting, but also with the spirit of unity that enveloped the group as we discussed why and how missions need to focus on gospel-powered life transformation in the days ahead." The board also talked about future office options for the association as AGRM's current five-year lease ends before the board's next regular meeting. San Diego Rescue Mission CEO Donnie Dee and his wife, Jackie, joined the board for dinner one of the evenings.

Media Competition Begins March 15

AGRM's 2018 Media Innovation Competition call for entries begins March 15. This competition is your opportunity to enter your mission's best work in the categories of annual report, general brochure, newsletter/magazine, website, PSA and extended videos, photo, logo, and social media. Awards will be presented in each category in two different budget ranges.

There is no charge to enter the competition, which is judged by independent professionals working in the fields of the competition's categories. Awards will be presented at AGRM's Annual Convention.

Watch the next issue of *Street Smart*, as well as an email from Director of Communications Brad Lewis, for all the details on how to enter.

Looking Down the Street...

- Please welcome into AGRM membership **South Side Mission** (Peoria, Illinois), where [Craig Williams](#) serves as executive director.
- Please welcome back into AGRM membership **Peoria Rescue Ministries** (Peoria, Illinois), where [Jonathan Rocke](#) serves as executive director).
- Please welcome into AGRM membership **Nor Cal Christian Ministries, Inc.** (Ukiah, California), where [Tony Huerta](#) is the executive director.
- South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster is siding with **Miracle Hill Ministries** (Greenville, South Carolina) in a battle with government officials over the mission's requirement that foster families be Christian. According to a [Greenville News report](#), the governor said he is working with federal officials to obtain a waiver from requirements that would restrict the organization's faith-based approach or halt its work in helping to provide foster care.
- Dr. Ed Gray passed away peacefully on February 22, with his family at his bedside. A memorial service will be held at Olive Baptist Church in Pensacola, Florida, on Saturday, March 3, at 1:00 p.m. Ed pastored churches in Alabama and Florida, was CEO of **Waterfront Rescue Mission** (Pensacola, Florida) for nearly 30 years, was an AGRM president, and remained active as a volunteer at his church and at Waterfront Rescue Mission. He also had a passion for thrift stores as a help to ministry, clients, and the community, and founded the Association of Christian Thrift Stores.



Proposed Bill Aims to Combat Student Homelessness

The California State Assembly is considering a bill that aims to combat homelessness among college students. According to an [article](#) in *The Collegian*, Bill AB 2784 would implement the Emergency Student Housing Loan Program, offering a loan for housing costs that would be forgiven if a student completes the academic semester during which the loan was awarded. The program would pilot at three colleges within the California State University system.

“For years, we have acted as if college students were immune to homelessness, that they had the resources and that the community had the housing availability to meet the students’ housing needs, but this is no longer the case,” said Assemblywoman Anna Caballero. She also emphasized the prevalence of homelessness at CSU campuses. According to a 2018 CSU study, 10.9 percent of students have experienced homelessness one or more times within the past 12 months.

Scientists Find Toxic Metals in E-Cigarettes

For those who think that vaping is a safe alternative to smoking, new research suggests that users might inadvertently be inhaling unsafe levels of toxic metals. Scientists say the tiny metal coils that heat the liquid nitrogen in vaping devices may contaminate the resulting vapor with lead, chromium, manganese, and nickel. The finding raises the possibility that e-cigarettes are not harmless to users.

According to an [report](#) on WebMD, researchers analyzed 15 metals in e-liquid from the refill dispenser before the liquid meets the heating element in the vapor, and in the remaining e-liquid in the tank after vaping. They found that the metal concentrations were generally higher in the tank and aerosol compared to the refill dispenser. That suggests that the heating coil is the smoking gun.

They also found the presence of metals in some of the liquids even before they are in contact with the coil. That could mean that in addition to the metal coil, other factors could play a role in e-cigarette metal exposure.

House Passes Bill Limiting Websites’ Immunity in Sex-Trafficking Cases

On Tuesday, the U.S. House of Representatives passed far-reaching legislation that aims to curb online sex trafficking by holding websites more accountable for their users’ activities, a rare political defeat for internet companies.

According to a *Wall Street Journal* [report](#), the final vote on the bill was 388 to 25, with strong support among both Republicans and Democrats. The legislation is also expected to pass the Senate by a wide margin, although that vote could be delayed by lawmakers allied with the tech industry.

Supporters argued that the legislation is necessary to combat a growing epidemic of sex trafficking online that often involves children. The bill would give sex-trafficking victims a stronger chance of winning civil lawsuits against websites by limiting the broad federal immunity online businesses now enjoy for actions of their users. The immunity law was adopted in the 1990s as a way to nurture the fledgling internet. Trafficking lawsuits against online businesses have usually been tossed out of court because of the immunity.



Researchers Say Fetal Alcohol Disorder May Be Underdiagnosed

In a new JAMA study of more than 6,000 first-graders, researchers estimate that between 1.1 percent and 9.8 percent of American children have developmental or neurological problems caused by fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASDs).

According to an [article](#) in *Time* magazine, FASD is an umbrella term for health abnormalities caused by exposure to alcohol in the womb; it includes fetal alcohol syndrome, partial fetal alcohol syndrome, and alcohol-related neurodevelopmental disorder. FASDs are a leading cause of developmental disabilities around the world, and people with these conditions can experience growth deficiencies, facial abnormalities, and organ damage. They often have physical, cognitive, and social challenges throughout life, and have an increased risk of premature death.

Researchers determined that FASD affected between 11 and 50 out of every 1,000 children they examined. That translates to between 1.1 and 5 percent, which they say is a conservative estimate: It assumes that no additional FASD cases would be found in children in those communities that hadn't participated in the study.

The study provided additional evidence to suggest that FASD is currently underdiagnosed and underreported, as well: Of the 222 children whom researchers determined had FASD during the study, only two had been previously diagnosed. Many of these children's parents and guardians were, however, aware of their learning and behavior challenges.

Research Shows DASH Diet Could Reduce Depression Risk

The DASH diet isn't just good for lowering your blood pressure and helping you lose weight. It might also lower your risk for depression. A study from Rush University Medical Center in Chicago finds people who followed DASH—short for Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension—had a lower chance of developing depression.

According to an [article](#) in *USA Today*, the DASH diet emphasizes eating fruits and vegetables along with low-fat or nonfat dairy, lean meats, and avoiding foods high in salt and sugar. The plan was created to help people with high blood pressure.

The study evaluated 964 participants with an average age of 81 annually for an average of six-and-a-half years. Researchers monitored symptoms of depression such as "being bothered by things that usually didn't affect them and feeling hopeless about the future," said a statement detailing the study. Participants also filled out questionnaires about their diets.

Results showed the odds of becoming depressed over time was 11 percent lower among people who followed the DASH diet closest compared to participants who didn't adhere to the plan. It also showed participants with diets high in saturated fats and red meats and low in fruits and vegetables were more likely to develop depression.

Study Finds Link Between Specific Gene and Addiction

Researchers have identified another gene that could influence the risk of opioid dependence, a new study shows, adding to the evidence that genetic factors play a crucial role in determining who develops addiction.

According to a CNN [report](#), the study analyzed the genomes of more than 5,000 Americans who had been exposed to opioids, looking at the differences between those who developed opioid dependence and those who didn't.

The researchers found a genetic variant, near a gene called RGMA, that was associated with opioid dependence in European- and African-Americans. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, between 40 percent and 60 percent of a person's vulnerability to addiction is related to genetic factors. The RGMA gene originates a signal that tells nerve fibers where they need to go. Changes to these molecules could disrupt the brain's circuits, which experts say may predispose someone to neurological and psychiatric diseases. Still, how genes like RGMA could impact addiction risk remains unclear.

Researchers say that continued research could further unravel the biology of addiction, enabling them to better predict when someone is at greater risk for addiction and other mental health conditions. This information potentially could also be used to develop new treatments.



The following job positions are currently open at AGRM member missions. Please visit www.agrm.org/careers to view full descriptions and to apply. Click [here](#) for instructions on using AGRM's Recruiting Center to post open positions for your mission.

[Administrative Assistant \(work from home\)](#): City Vision University, Kansas City, MO

[Care Support Specialist](#): Light of Life Ministries, Inc., Pittsburgh, PA

[Case Manager, Men's Shelter](#): Seattle's Union Gospel Mission, Seattle, WA

[Development Associate](#): The Path of Citrus County, Beverly Hills, FL

[Development Director](#): Home of Grace, Vancleave, MS

[Director of Development](#): Rockford Rescue Mission Ministries, Inc., Rockford, IL

[Director of Development & Community Relations](#): Good News Rescue Mission, Redding, CA

[Director of IT](#): Career Cross Training, Colorado Springs, CO

[Director of Major Gifts](#): Waterfront Rescue Mission, Inc., Pensacola, FL

[DIRECTOR, LIGHTHOUSE FOR WOMEN & CHILDREN](#): Rescue Mission Alliance, Oxnard, CA

[Domestic Violence Advocate](#): Seattle's Union Gospel Mission, Seattle, WA

Donor Development Professional: Madera Rescue Mission, Madera, CA
Executive Director: Lewis County Gospel Mission, Chehalis, WA
Executive Director: Jericho Road Ministries, Inc., Brooksville, FL
Executive Director: The Rescue Mission, Tacoma, WA
Food and Beverage Driver: San Francisco City Impact, San Francisco, CA
Health and Wellness Center Manager: San Francisco City Impact, San Francisco, CA
Hotel Manager: St. Matthew's House/Port LaBelle Inn, LaBelle, FL
Kitchen Ministry Coordinator: Seattle's Union Gospel Mission, Seattle, WA
Major Gifts Officer: Seattle's Union Gospel Mission, Seattle, WA
Major Gifts Officer: Buffalo City Mission, Buffalo, NY
Manager, Center for Women & Children: Career Cross Training, Colorado Springs, CO
Overnight Supervisor: Hope Gospel Mission, Eau Claire, WI
Resident Advisors: Hope Gospel Mission, Eau Claire, WI
Residential Coordinator_Cornerstone Manor Facility: Buffalo City Mission, Buffalo, NY
Salesforce Data Analyst: Atlanta Mission, Atlanta, GA
Sous Chef: Open Door Mission, Glens Falls, NY
STAR Counseling Supervisor: Denver Rescue Mission, Denver, CO
Transportation Specialist: Union Gospel Mission, Spokane, WA
Women's Growth Leader: Portland Rescue Mission - Shepherd's Door, Portland, OR
Women's Recovery Manager: Portland Rescue Mission - Shepherd's Door, Portland, OR



Finding Hope

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Romans 15:13).

When we're battling difficult circumstances, how do our friends or colleagues respond? Usually with encouraging words like, "I'll be hoping for the best" or "hopefully things turn around soon." They hope for the best on our behalf.

However, hope isn't a verb. It's not something we can do for ourselves, let alone decide to do on a whim for someone else.

Then where do we find hope?

We find hope in God's presence. When life feels out of control, turn to Him in prayer. "He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress where I will not be shaken. My victory and honor come from God alone" (Psalm 62:6–7, NLT).

We find hope in God's promise—His living Word. "My soul longs for your salvation; I hope in your word" (Psalm 119:81 ESV).

We find hope in God's process. Of course, His way of doing things almost never matches our own human understanding. But even in our pain, God is at work sewing things together for good. This may not translate to our comfort; it's meant to conform us to be more like Christ (Romans 8:28). God uses our struggles to produce endurance, which produces character, and character produces hope (Romans 5:3–5).

We find hope in God's purpose for our lives. Every single one of us has been created with a divine plan in mind. "'For I know the plans I have for you,' says the Lord. 'They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope'" (Jeremiah 29:11 NLT).

We find hope in the promise of things yet to come. In John 14:1–2 (NLT), Christ says, "Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. There is more than enough room in my Father's home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?"

Hope is not something we do; it's something we possess, gifted to us by God's unending grace and the power of the Holy Spirit. Hope is the anchor for our soul (Hebrews 6:19) and without it, we're incomplete (Proverbs 13:12).

Devotional by Mark Henderson; used with permission of Daily Devotionals, www.shortdailydevotions.com.

To contribute: If you would like to write a devotional thought for StreetLight, please make it about 200 words and include at least one Bible verse or passage, and submit via email.

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