

## Commission to collaborate

**New manuals detail work to connect spiritual and social service ministry.**

*By Christopher Doughty –*

The Salvation Army Western Territory Social Services Department released new manuals for Pathway of Hope—a strengths-based case management approach to produce positive long-term change in the lives of families—and

MissionBridge Soldier Training—a curriculum for corps soldiery and social services personnel with instruction in the history and theology of The Salvation Army’s social services and training in how to appropriately and competently interact with social services clients in a pastoral role.

Each begins with a foreword from Territorial Commander Commissioner James Knaggs compelling “Salvationists and social services personnel [to] work together to offer hope and love and fellowship to the lost and the discouraged of this world.”

Pathway of Hope, initiated in the Central Territory, adopts a holistic approach to addressing individual struggle—from housing or employment to relationships or spirituality. The MissionBridge Soldier Training will be used in the West as a mechanism through which soldiers and social services personnel can become certified to facilitate assistance as “MissionBridge Soldier” and “Pastoral Care Representatives,” respectively.

Moving forward, all divisional Pathway of Hope trainings conducted by the Territorial Social Services Department will be followed by a voluntary MissionBridge Soldier Training the following day.

It is hoped that the heightened collaboration between corps soldiery and social services personnel will help mend the longstanding rift that has existed between The Salvation Army’s spiritual and social service ministries. To that end, a new statistical line (3805) was added to the National Social Services System in order to allow corps to record the number of “new individuals linked to corps through social service programs.”

In preparation for the National Pathway of Hope Steering Committee meeting in mid-November, the Western Territory compiled its first set of data for Pathway of Hope participants, drawn mostly from a handful of sites piloting it in the Intermountain Division. Data indicates that a total of 229 people have participated in Pathway of Hope in the West in some way thus far, including 48 individuals, 55



families, and 112 children.

Both new manuals are available to Salvation Army personnel on the Social Service Resource Database in Lotus Notes.