

“WHAT I CARRY” shines a light on Portland's homeless population

"What I Carry "by Jim Lommasson shares stories of Portland’s homeless through cherished items. It fosters understanding, challenges stigmas, empowers participants, and inspires compassion by highlighting shared humanity and confronting biases

what i carry

A collaborative photo+writing storytelling project
with Portland’s Street Community

Portland, Oregon Jan 15, 2025 (IssueWire.com) - A transformative initiative, [What I Carry](#), is set to inspire communities by sharing deeply personal and universal stories of resilience, identity, and connection. This innovative project highlights the burdens, hopes, and dreams of Portland’s homeless population through the cherished items they carry, fostering compassion and understanding in a divided world.

Through compelling storytelling and creative expression, "What I Carry" provides a platform to amplify voices from all walks of life, addressing themes of mental health, addiction, personal growth, and family dynamics. The project resonates for its message of shared humanity and the healing power of empathy.

“Some people feel What I Carry humanizes the homeless population, but it’s not the homeless who need to be humanized—it’s us,” said Jim Lommasson, founder of the [“What We Carried”](#) projects, which inspired this initiative.

“At its core, What I Carry is about the things we hold—whether they weigh us down or propel us

forward,” Lommasson added. “By sharing these stories, we aim to connect people, foster understanding, and open pathways for healing.”

Key Features of the Project

- **Personal Stories of Strength and Struggle:** Highlighting the human experiences behind the things people carry—both physical objects and emotional burdens.
- **Focus on Addiction, Trauma, and Mental Health:** Breaking stigmas by showcasing stories of recovery, resilience, and the challenges faced by individuals and their families.
- **Multimedia Engagement:** Featuring written narratives, music, videos, and live events to deepen connections and inspire community involvement.
- **Community Impact:** Encouraging reflection, empathy, and creative solutions to address the burdens of homelessness.

Blending honest storytelling with inclusivity, "What I Carry" resonates across diverse backgrounds and experiences, inspiring change and understanding.

Upcoming Events and Launch Details

- **Launch Event:** January 18, 2025, from 2–4 PM
- **Location:** Multnomah County Central Library, Collins Gallery (3rd Floor)

801 SW 10th Avenue, Portland, OR 97205

- **Exhibit Duration:** Open to the public through March 15, 2025



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