



GARRETT GILKEY

# MOBILE LAUNDRY UNIT



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The Laundry Project is an initiative of Current Initiatives, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization incorporated in Florida committed to educating communities and mobilizing them through the Laundry Project, Hope For Homes Project and Affordable Christmas.

The Laundry Project assists lower-income families and residents with meeting a basic need – washing and drying clothes and linens, by turning laundromats into community centers of hope. Laundry fees are paid while volunteers assist with laundry services, help entertain children and work to create a caring space at the laundromat.

## What is the Mobile Laundry Unit?

Clean laundry is one of the most overlooked, basic human needs. It provides dignity, better health conditions and an all-around sense of pride in oneself. For the people who will be served by the Mobile Laundry Unit, washing clothes is a burden - financially & logistically - from living on the streets, lack of access to laundromats and/or funds for laundromat cost, and natural disaster. As a result, they may be unable to wash as frequently as needed.

### **The Garrett Gilkey Mobile Laundry Unit seeks to relieve this burden by:**

Providing a laundry facility to gathering spots within homeless communities for residents to wash their clothes while providing dignity and better health conditions.

Partnering with homeless shelters to provide an on-site mobile laundromat-style facility for residents of the shelter, as well as laundering the shelter's linens and towels.

Bringing a mobile laundry facility to areas of natural disaster to provide clean laundry for families impacted by disaster while lifting spirits and dignity in time of trouble.

During Current Initiatives' Laundry Projects at local laundromats with facilities that are smaller than an average laundromat's size, the Mobile Laundry Unit will be used on-site to provide additional washing and drying machines. This will increase the overall output during projects.

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“The world wants to tell us that life is about us. Well, **I'm here to say it's not.**”

-Garrett Gilkey

# HOW YOU CAN HELP

The Mobile Laundry Unit relies on financial partners to meet our goal of \$300,000. We are able to help others because of the generosity of local businesses, faith communities, social activist groups, families, corporations and individuals.



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## Garrett Gilkey, Former NFL Offensive Lineman

When I began my journey in the NFL, one of my biggest culture shocks was realizing the daily responsibility of the incredible crew dedicated to washing, folding and hanging up players' soiled clothes worn to work out, train or practice.

In the NFL, I am provided a locker three times the size of a college player's, official towels embroidered with my jersey number and five times the number of uniforms. Every day, the entire team threw soiled practice clothes into a bin and in a matter of hours, fresh clothes are returned to assigned lockers. This incredible resource seemed greatly under-appreciated by most NFL players and sadly, many assumed these services should be provided for them, resulting in a very entitled mentality.

Another shock to me was the hotels we would stay before games, which were 5-star hotels, with the best food catered, the most comfortable beds, and the most hospitable service. In every city, I noticed pockets of homeless people, obscure huddles of almost out of reach clusters of the homeless.

I couldn't help but compare the opposites of our culture: an elite group of individuals who are virtually handed every privilege and an entire society that have only the clothes on their back.

The idea came to me: provide a mobile laundromat for the city's homeless. As an NFL player, the world wants to tell us that life is about us, well I'm here to say it's not, I want to branch the opposites of our society and bring them together by taking the resources and platform of the NFL to the most neglected, overlooked, under-appreciated people group in our communities. I decided we needed to build a laundry truck, we could design and construct a self-contained Laundromat.

In February 2015, I was introduced to Jason Sowell who told me about his nonprofit organization, Current Initiatives. It wasn't long after that we put our heads together and realized this dream could be bigger than we both imagined. We joined forces with companies such as The Dexter Company, Tide and Miami Trucks Center to configure an engineered concept of the Mobile Laundry Unit.

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