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## **Courtyard Publishing Announces Partnership with the National Coalition for the Homeless for the “I AM A VAGABOND” Book and Exhibition Project**

Courtyard Publishing is excited to announce its partnership with the National Coalition for the Homeless for the “I AM A VAGABOND” project. The National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH), founded in 1982, is a national network of people who are currently experiencing or who have experienced homelessness, activists and advocates, community-based and faith-based service providers, and others committed to a single mission. That mission is to end homelessness. They are committed to creating the systemic and attitudinal changes necessary to prevent and end homelessness. At the same time, they work to meet the immediate needs of people who are currently experiencing homelessness or who are at risk for being homeless. They adhere to the principle that people who are currently experiencing homelessness or have formerly experienced homelessness must be actively involved in all of their work.

The “I AM A VAGABOND” project is a work of art consisting of a collection of pictures taken by homeless individuals all across the country. This project is designed to show that all people, no matter their circumstance, are capable of producing great works of creativity and purpose. The goal is to use this creative artwork as a bridge that will bring about a greater understanding and awareness of the homeless.

“This project is a collection of my stories, a collection of their stories and most importantly a collection of their pictures,” writes William Edwards, author and creative force behind this project. “These are theirs. I did not take any of these pictures. All I know is what city they were taken in and maybe a few names from those that I met personally. This is what they see every day. This is their lives documented.”

The NCH has formally endorsed the project and will actively publicize the book and exhibit, as well as work with homeless advocates and providers across the country. The NCH plans to use its national grass roots organization of homeless shelters and state organizations to spread the word about this project and promote the exhibition within local communities.

Courtyard Publishing is producing a 300 page, large format, photographic book which will chronicle, in detail, the pictures taken by homeless individuals around the country. In addition, three different sized exhibitions will tour the country appearing in museums, universities, and other relevant settings. These exhibitions will weave wonderfully rich images which move beyond mere documentation, reflecting a more lyrical sense of place and purpose. These photographs are always deeply human and expressive, showcasing a stark and terrifying beauty that one almost never sees. The exhibition will include a photo gallery of images, video terminals documenting the process, realistic sets representing where homeless individuals live, and interactive activities and displays. The exhibition allows the viewer to experience the creative expression and wonderment of these photographs on their own. These pictures are not static; they demand the viewer’s attention. These evocative pictures engage the viewer as they try to understand why certain pictures were taken and the meaning behind them.