

Charity Hands Over Program to Another Group

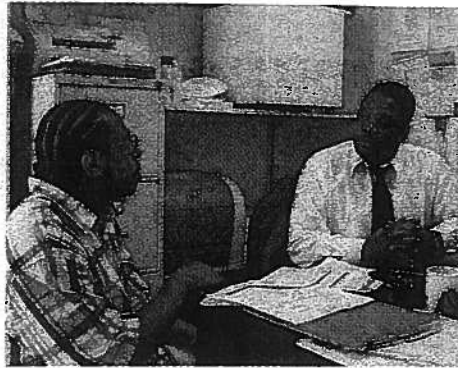
"Focus on your mission" has become one mantra for surviving the recession. At Pine Street Inn, a homelessness group in Boston, that has meant transferring a program that prepares people to seek and hold a job to a nearby charity, a move that has allowed Pine Street to save about \$170,000.

Informally dubbed the "one-block initiative" because the two charities inhabit the same downtown block, the transfer is part of a longer-term push by Pine Street to focus on housing for the chronically homeless. Project Place, a much smaller charity that provides job training to poor people, last month took over job readiness and placement for people who stay in Pine Street's facilities.

"Are we the only ones who can provide this service? That's the first question we ask," says Lyndia Downie, Pine Street's executive director. "If the answer is no, and if there is someone who could provide it as well or better, then we shouldn't be doing it. And the second piece is, Is this essential to getting people out of homelessness?"

Pine Street and Project Place worked together a few years ago to take over a third charity's services. So when Pine Street was looking to trim its programs, "the trust was already established," says Suzanne Kenney, executive director of Project Place.

For her group, which has a \$2-mil-



PINE STREET INN

Pine Street Inn recently transferred its job-readiness program to Project Place.

lion budget, taking over the job program made sense. But Ms. Kenney first had to persuade her board members, some of whom were worried that a program focused on chronically homeless people might dampen the group's high success rate.

Positive reaction from donors helped. One longtime foundation supporter gave \$60,000. The two charities will work together to raise the additional \$60,000 it will cost to run the job-readiness program for a year.

While the steps Pine Street has taken have helped preserve services, says Ms. Downie, the group still faces tough challenges. Last month, the governor announced emergency budget cuts that could affect both charities. Pine Street will probably be forced to cut another \$1.7-million from its \$34-million budget.

"This recession is longer, harder, deeper," says Ms. Downie. "There's no question that some people will go without."

—CAROLINE PRESTON