A bag for a bag
A sustainable self-sufficiency cycle for the homeless population in Kensington suffering from food insecurity and beyond

Problem space

“We bring 1,000 sandwiches every weekend to a homeless shelter in Kensington. People lining up all around the block have hypodermic needles stuck in their arms. We run out of them within three days. They’re not fighting for a sandwich, they’re fighting for their lives. I also have to risk my life every time I make the delivery trying to stay away from any possible attacks.”

Design space

A sustainable cycle

The problem of food insecurity of the homeless will be improved, while increasing level of the public hygiene, sense of community, and self-sufficiency extent of the homeless beyond basic survival needs.

Target

1. Users: The homeless in Kensington
2. Clients:
   - Street maintenance institutions
   - Retail stores in Philadelphia
   - Individual Donors in the city

Partners

1. Ready, Willingness and Able (RWA):
   - Recruit the homeless as street cleaners
2. St. Francis Inn:
   - Make and provide sandwiches and supplies to the poor and the homeless in Kensington

Objectives

“A Bag for A Bag” promotes a sustainable self-sufficiency cycle to improve the lives of homeless population in Kensington by providing them with an instant benefit, a simple initiative effectively encouraging them to clean their own streets and be rewarded accordingly.

Solution

With the help of partner organizations and donors within the cycle, “A Bag for a Bag” program will provide our target with brown bags to collect street garbage, be rewarded with a goodie bag, which can be utilized as another brown bag for garbage, creating a small, but instantly beneficial and sustainable cycle.

In the long-term, this will also contribute to a leap in public hygiene of Kensington, create a healthier community network by bringing in more locals, volunteers, organizations into the cycle.