



BAGS OF HOPE

Bags of Hope is an on-going initiative which began in 2019 while I was living in Portland, Oregon, for two years. I was personally going through a lot. Living on the West Coast, a place I never imagined I would be living and feeling overwhelmed as this was the year my son (Raheem “RocBarz” Channel | age 37)

transitioned.

I retired and moved to Portland about two weeks before he passed away to be with him throughout the heart transplant he was going to need. It was devastating. I held fast to my son and I being able to spend the last days of his life together.

I knew no one would blame me if I lost my mind, but I could hear Pastor Joyce Meyers in my head, *“when you are going through, don’t focus on yourself, focus on how you can help someone else”*.

Homelessness (houselessness) is extremely high in Portland. In America. Throughout my son’s life, I always encouraged him to give to others and I would always give what I could.

So, to *honor my Son*, I began “Bags of Hope”. A small clear cellophane bag (4x10) with small packs of peanut butter crackers, apple juice, and something sweet. When I have a couple of extra dollars, I put at least two in each bag and in the winter, I have included gloves. I started putting together five bags at a time and I am now up to 15 bags at one time. I put them in my car to give to someone I see who needs help. On the bag it reads: *May God’s light always illuminate a safe space, a kind heart, and a helping hand*. It also states that it is given in honor of my son and my bestie who lost her life to breast cancer in 2015.

I look forward to the bags getting bigger (currently 11x14) or the need getting smaller. If you would like to donate to the Bags of Hope initiative, please email tchannel@piecesofmysoulcreations.com.

Tracy Channel, Artist

piecesofmysoulcreations.com