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Bon Jovi and Lopez hit skid row. What about you?

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So, how did I end up hanging with a rock star earlier this week on skid row?

Many, many moons ago I met a Catholic nun in Philadelphia who, to this day, is one of my heroes. Last year, I was honored to testify with Sister Mary Scullion at a congressional hearing on Capitol Hill about the virtues of programs like Lamp Community in Los Angeles and Sister Mary's Project Home, both of which have rebuilt the lives of hundreds of people fighting mental illness.

One of Sister Mary's biggest advocates and financial supporters is Jon Bon Jovi, who's in Southern California on concert tour, and Sister Mary told me he wanted to know if I could set up a tour of Lamp Community.

Bon Jovi, it turns out, is no dilettante. He has studied public policy issues regarding mental health and homelessness in various cities while on tour, calling it a [fact-finding mission for his nonprofit organization](#). The charity supports affordable housing projects, and I've seen the effects of Bon Jovi's generosity in Philadelphia, where once-devastated neighborhoods have been rebuilt by and for Sister Mary's mental health clients, or family members, as she would call them.

"One night I was in Philadelphia outside of the City Hall," Bon Jovi told me, "and I realized, at least in my beautiful, romantic vision of the world, that our forefathers didn't envision" people sleeping on the pavement. "And I thought, I didn't need a scientist, and I didn't need a pill, to fix that."

If you'd like to hear more about Bon Jovi's tour of skid row, tune in this weekend to [John Rabe's Off-Ramp on KPCC-FM \(89.3\)](#) or [listen to a clip here](#).

In the meantime, I was struck by how passionate Bon Jovi is about his mission, and it's clear he has learned there are many rewards, spiritual and otherwise, in giving.

I thought it would be nice to hear from readers who make time in their lives for causes they've become passionate about. Send along a few thoughts about what kind of volunteering you do, why you do it, and how it has changed your life.