



Ending Homelessness in Downtown San Diego Campaign Progress Update

Issue #6

April 2011



During last month's Campaign Leadership Team meeting, Assistant Chief Boyd Long and Sergeant Rick Schnell of the San Diego Police Department honored several downtown agencies and church organizations with certificates of appreciation for opening their doors on an emergency basis to help provide extra shelter for homeless persons during a weekend of inclement weather in early March. Among those recognized were Alpha Project, East Village Community Church, Isaiah Project, Salvation Army, and Horizon Church. Thanks to the help of these community leaders, hundreds of people were able to come inside and out of the rain.

Dear Campaign Supporters and Partners:

This month, we must start by acknowledging the extraordinary service and contributions of Father Joe Carroll, who recently announced his retirement from his position as CEO of Father Joe's Villages and its partner agencies, effective today, April 12, 2011, his 70th birthday. After 30 years of dedicated service and creating innovative and comprehensive programs, Father Joe will assume the role of President Emeritus to focus more time on fundraising for the organization. To read more about Father Joe's announcement and his accomplishments, read the Father Joe's Villages press release, [Father Joe Carroll Retires as CEO of Father Joe's Villages](#), visit www.neighbor.org, or read this article in the San Diego Union-Tribune, [Father Joe Celebrates A Birthday - And His Retirement](#).

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About Us

The Downtown San Diego Ending Homelessness Leadership Team is comprised of:

- Downtown Business
- Leaders
- Elected Government
- Representatives
- The County of San Diego
- City of San Diego
- The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- The San Diego Police Department
- 10-Year Plan Leaders
- Hospitals and Health Clinics
- Medical Services Providers
- Affordable Housing and Supportive Services Experts
- Homelessness Experts
- Veterans Advocates
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In news of progress for the Ending Homelessness in Downtown San Diego Campaign, we are pleased to report a significant milestone: at least 63 people are now off the streets and actively working with service providers on a path toward permanent housing - fully 50% of the Campaign's initial goal of helping end homelessness for 125 people! See [Tracking Our Progress](#) below for more detailed information.

In this edition, you'll also find stories regarding the federal budget, the California legislature's Select Committee on Homelessness, results from the annual Point-in-Time Count from the Regional Task Force on the Homeless, a recent panel on the Cost of Homelessness, a new report on foster youth and homelessness, and the closing of the Winter Shelter and Veterans Winter Shelter.

We look forward to continuing to update you on the Campaign's progress - and share more success stories - in future editions of this newsletter. Thank you all for your continued support of these efforts to end homelessness in Downtown San Diego!

Sincerely,



Robin Madaffer, Co-Chair
Ending Homelessness
Campaign Leadership Team



Jennifer LeSar
Ending Homelessness
Campaign Coordinator

Tracking Our Progress

Moving Forward and Moving People "Home": All of the partners involved in the Campaign's efforts to provide housing and services solutions for at least 125 of our most vulnerable community member reached a terrific milestone in mid-March. As of that time:

- 63 people - 50% of the initial goal of 125 people - were off the streets and working with staff from the VA, Community Research Foundation, or Mental Health Systems to end their homelessness forever.
- 15 people - including 10 veterans - were all the way "home" - living in permanent supportive housing and continuing to work with their services providers to address their challenges, achieve stability, and make progress on their goals.

Other information of note regarding these 63 people:

- 50% are veterans of the U.S. military
- 73% are men and 27% are women
- 75% have a mental illness, for which they now have access to comprehensive care

For an overview of the Campaign, and more information regarding the progress, please see our [Overview and Progress Report](#).

Staying Informed

Good News for the HUD-VASH Program: The HUD-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program is a critical resource for the Campaign and will be providing housing and services for at least 75 veterans. Whether

additional funding would be provided for HUD-VASH in the federal budget for FY 2011 (which began on October 1, 2010) has been the subject of much debate and the focus of national advocacy efforts. The final continuing resolution for the federal budget, [H.R. 1473](#), expected to be passed this week and signed by President Obama, does include an additional allocation of \$50 million dollars for the HUD-VASH program nationally. In a time when many programs are facing budget cuts, we are thrilled that Campaign partners, the San Diego Housing Commission and the VA San Diego Healthcare System, should have access to additional resources to help veterans move from homelessness to permanent housing!

Final Results from Point-in-Time Count Released: The Regional Task Force on the Homeless (RTFH) has now released the final results of this year's annual Point-in-Time Count (PITC), a one-day count of all the homeless persons in the County. According to Peter Callstrom, RTFH's Executive Director, this year's count was the most comprehensive since the inception of the PITC in 2005, and the results document that:

- A total of 9,020 sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons were identified during the early morning hours of January 28, 2011, an increase of 5.9% since last year's count.
- There were 4,981 unsheltered persons counted, a considerable increase of 8.3% since the 2010 PITC.

The PITC helps provide agencies across the County with important information to help end homelessness, and also enables San Diego to leverage millions of dollars in federal funding. For further information on the final results of the Point-in-Time Count, visit www.rtfhsd.org or read RTFH's Press Release, [San Diego 2011 Homeless Count Final Results: County-Wide Increase of 5.9%](#).

First Two Hearings Planned for Select Committee on Homelessness: In January, California State Assembly Speaker John A. Pérez announced the creation of the Select Committee on Homelessness and named Assemblymember Toni Atkins from San Diego as its Chair. The Committee's goals include promoting collaborative leadership at all levels of government and incorporating model programs as part of California's strategy to end homelessness. The Committee's first two meetings are currently being planned. The first meeting is scheduled for April 28 in Sacramento, and will focus on informing Committee members, legislators, and the public on the Committee's long term goals, Federal and State plans for ending homelessness, and best practices for policies and programs. Presenters will include the Lieutenant Governor's Office, the Corporation for Supportive Housing, Housing California, California Veterans Affairs, and the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. The Committee's second meeting is being planned for San Diego on July 20, and will focus on strategies for ending homelessness among Veterans and among people experiencing chronic homelessness. We'll continue to share details on the Select Committee's activities and outcomes in future editions of this newsletter. For more information in the meantime, please contact Lindsey Masukawa in Assemblymember Atkins's office at Lindsey.Masukawa@asm.ca.gov.

Cost of Homelessness Breakfast: On April 5, the San Diego County Taxpayer's Association (SDCTA) hosted a forum on "The Cost of Homelessness", which included a discussion of 2010 Downtown Registry Week and the Ending Homelessness in Downtown San Diego Campaign, Project 25, and other innovative services and programs that can help reduce costs to public agencies - and to taxpayers - by providing lasting solutions to homelessness. Moderated by Richard Bradway, Senior Vice President of Mental Health Systems, Inc., the event, featured 5 panelists, 4 of whom are active members of Campaign Leadership Team, including co-chair Robin Madaffer of the Downtown San Diego Partnership, Dr.

James Dunford, Medical Director for the City of San Diego, Brian Maienschein, Commissioner of the San Diego Plan to End Chronic Homelessness, United Way, and Dr. Jennifer Schaffer, Director of Behavioral Health Services for the County of San Diego Health and Human Services. Also presenting was Rufus Hannah, author of "A Bum Deal", a formerly homeless person who is now an advocate for homeless rights and who has worked with police organizations in California to develop standards for working with homeless people. The panel addressed questions such as how chronic homelessness impacts San Diego's taxpayers and businesses, and explored more effective and efficient ways to address homelessness in San Diego.

For more information about this event, see this San Diego News Room article [Taxpayer Group Highlights Cost of Homelessness in San Diego](#). For additional information on the San Diego County Taxpayer's Association and future "Breakfast Club" forums on regional and state issues, visit www.sdcta.org.

Winter Shelter and Veterans Shelter Close: Both San Diego's Winter Shelter and Veterans Winter Shelter, which help shelter and feed hundreds of San Diegans during the coldest and wettest months of the year, officially closed last week. The Winter Shelter, operated by Alpha Project, closed on April 4 and housed nearly 700 residents this season. According to the San Diego Housing Commission, 102 of these residents were approved for permanent housing and 71 have now moved into permanent homes through the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP), funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In addition, the Veterans Winter Shelter, which has been operated by the Veterans Village of San Diego (VVSD) for the past 14 years, closed for the season on April 7, having provided services to approximately 330 former military personnel. Both of these shelters have been a vital resource for people on the Vulnerability Index list, and were instrumental in helping staff from the VA, Community Research Foundation, and Mental Health Systems find and make contact with the city's most vulnerable homeless persons. All of these partners thank Alpha Project and VVSD for their efforts and spirit of collaboration.

To learn more about the closing of the winter shelters, read the KPBS story [Shelter Residents Approved for Permanent Housing](#).

New Report on Foster Youth and Homelessness: Better meeting the needs of youth aging out of foster care is critical for preventing future homelessness. Far too many of the people currently homeless in downtown San Diego spent time in the foster care system while they were growing up - more than 16% of the people surveyed during 2010 Downtown Registry Week reported they had spent time in foster care. On March 16, the University of San Diego Law School's Children's Advocacy Institute (CAI) and First Star issued a new report on former foster youth and homelessness. The report, titled "The Fleecing of Foster Children", documents that nearly 40 percent of all foster children become homeless after being released from the State's care at age 18, and analyzes the causes of their homelessness. According to a recent story on KPBS that described the findings of the report, local agencies such as the San Diego County Department of Child Welfare Services offer services to help prevent foster youth homelessness, offering transitional planning and employment assistance, and subsidized housing is available for former foster youth until age 21. However, former foster youth have now surpassed veterans as the largest population housed in homeless shelters in the state of California. Locally, as many as 300 San Diego youths age out of the foster care system each year.

For additional information on the report, read CAI's press release, [Report: States Confiscate Benefits of Foster Children; Many Left Destitute as They "Age Out" of Care](#), or the KPBS article [Many Penniless Former Foster Kids Call the Streets Home](#).

Staying Connected and Getting Involved

VVSD Planning Annual Stand Down for July: Veterans Village of San Diego (VVSD) is planning for its annual Stand Down event in mid-July, a three-day program designed to help homeless veterans "combat life on the streets". First organized by VVSD in 1988, Stand Down has since been replicated in more than 200 cities nationwide, and provides a range of services to participants, including meals, clothing, showers, medical and dental services, counseling, 12-step meetings, employment counseling, homeless court, and recovery services. Last year, 947 total participants attended, the most ever. To learn more about 2010's Stand Down, see <http://www.vvsd.net/sdstats.htm>. To find ways that you can help support this year's event, visit www.vvsd.net/standdown.htm.

Help Support Homelessness Efforts in San Diego: Looking for more volunteer opportunities? Then check out Volunteer San Diego at www.volunteersandiego.org and search for keyword "homelessness" to find additional volunteer opportunities to support efforts to end homelessness in San Diego.