



Ending Homelessness in Downtown San Diego Progress Update

Issue #3

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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

Dear Downtown San Diego Registry Week Participants, Partners and Supporters:

As 2010 draws to a close, we are very excited to report that yet another veteran identified through Registry Week has been housed! See [Tracking Our Progress](#) below for details.

We are also pleased to report that State Assemblymember Toni Atkins, who has been a member of the Ending Homelessness Campaign Leadership Team since its inception and who also participated as a survey volunteer in Downtown San Diego Registry Week, has received important Assembly appointments that will help give voice to San Diego's fight to end homelessness. Assemblymember Atkins has been appointed Majority Whip and also Vice Chair of the Housing and Community Development Committee. She will also serve on the Veterans, Health, Judiciary and Government Organization Committees.

In other news, The New York Times published an article December 20 titled "[A Plan to Make Homelessness History](#)," which profiles the 100,000 Homes Campaign and individual communities that have participated.

Additionally, National Public Radio reporter Pam Fessler attended our December Ending Homelessness Campaign Leadership Team meeting and a multi-part series on the 100,000 Homes Campaign is anticipated to begin in January. We will keep you updated on this series and provide links to the audio files once they are released.

Many of you have asked how you can stay involved in the effort to end homelessness in downtown San Diego and we present you with four important opportunities in the [Getting Connected and Staying Involved](#) section below. Please take a few moments to explore these opportunities, which range from simple monetary and supplies donations to one-day and multiple-day volunteer opportunities.



We look forward to continued progress in 2011. Happy holidays!

Sincerely,



Robin Munro
Chair, Ending Homelessness
Campaign Leadership Team



Jennifer LeSar
LeSar Development Consultants
Ending Homelessness
Campaign Coordinator

Tracking Our Progress

Home for the Holidays: As we approach the end of 2010, we're grateful for the dedication and hard work of the staff from the VA San Diego Healthcare System and staff from the Community Research Foundation (supported by funding from the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency), who together have already been in contact with more than 40 of the people identified during Registry Week. Many of these people are now off the street and getting linked to permanent housing. We think the success story below captures the meaning of what all of us worked so hard to achieve this year.

A 54-year-old veteran who didn't want to participate in the surveying on the first day of Registry Week - he thought it was a waste of time and that nothing would come of it - agreed to let the surveyors come back the following morning and said he'd consider taking the survey. Still thinking it wouldn't matter, he reluctantly agreed to take the survey the next morning. Based on the answers he gave and on the extent of his serious medical issues, he was deemed a priority for the VA staff to find and help, which they did.

The VA staff located him and his girlfriend and enrolled him into their services. Since then, everything has changed for him. He's now able to take his medications regularly, and both he and his doctor report his medical conditions have improved dramatically. He and his girlfriend have moved into an apartment with his HUD-VASH voucher, which is his first stable home since 1987, and he has reconnected with family he'd lost all contact with, including speaking with grandchildren he's never been able to meet. He said he's especially proud that if his family comes to visit, he'll be able to open his home to them and that he no longer feels hopeless but wants to share his story, hoping he can make a difference in others' lives.

Staying Informed

Connections Housing Project Moving Forward: Connections Housing is the proposed integrated housing and service center planned for the World Trade Center building, located at Sixth Avenue and A Street in downtown San Diego. Connections Housing will provide the "one-stop shop" sought by the San Diego City Council and in October 2010, the City Council unanimously approved the Centre City Development Corporation to enter into exclusive negotiations with the planned development team. The project is expected to return to City Council for its final approval by March 2011; if approved, the project will then be able to move forward in its development, and is expected to be completed and open by the end of 2012.

Based on the housing first model, Connections Housing will feature 73 units of permanent supportive housing, 150 transitional "room-ettes," a comprehensive primary healthcare clinic, and an array of services

designed to address the root causes of homelessness, and the project will be an important element of the efforts to end homelessness for the most vulnerable homeless persons in the downtown area.

Connections Housing will be developed and managed by a team of three highly regarded organizations: PATH (People Assisting the Homeless), Southern California's leader in innovative approaches to ending homelessness; Affirmed Housing Group, an award-winning San Diego developer and operator of affordable housing facilities; and Family Health Centers of San Diego, the nation's second largest federally qualified health center system with 29 locations in San Diego County.

Look for more updates regarding this important project in 2011!

Staying Connected and Getting Involved

There are multiple opportunities to donate and volunteer your time in the continued fight against homelessness in our downtown area and in our region. Please help us continue the impressive momentum we all began in September during Registry Week and lend a hand to one or more of the efforts listed below!

Help Support the Winter Shelter and the Veterans Winter Shelter: The Winter Shelter and the Veterans Winter Shelter are now open and sheltering as many homeless individuals as space allows during the winter months. This year both shelters will serve as vital resources for vulnerable persons surveyed during Registry Week, a critical chance for them to come in off the streets and get connected to other programs and services. Although the primary focus of both programs is to shelter participants from the elements during the coldest and wettest period of the year, the programs also offer comprehensive blends of services to assist participants to establish their own self-sufficiency. These programs work with multiple partner organizations to deliver basic services such as meals and personal hygiene supplies as well as long-term assistance including employment and housing opportunities.

Both programs need donations of basic supplies such as toiletries and monetary donations. Volunteer opportunities are also available. For more information about how to get involved and support the Winter Shelter through donations or by volunteering, visit www.alphaproject.org or contact Janice Izor, Director of Marketing and Resource Development, at janice@alphaproject.org. For more information about donating to and/or volunteering for the Veterans Winter Shelter, visit www.vvvd.net/shelter.htm.

Project Homeless Connect 2011: On January 5, 2011, Project Homeless Connect will join together volunteers, community leaders and business organizations with nonprofits, faith-based groups and social service providers to connect local homeless residents to much-needed services. The goal of the day is not only to provide basic needs and services but to make it easier for homeless people to get the help and the answers they need, moving them closer to getting off the streets. This one-stop venue will be located at Golden Hall, located at the corner of Third and B Streets and will welcome participants from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Doors open at 9 a.m. but volunteers can arrive beginning at 8 a.m. To get involved in this day of service, please visit www.sdhc.org or contact Marc D'Hondt at 619-578-7583.

Register for the Annual Point-in-Time Count January 28, 2011! The Regional Task Force on the Homeless needs approximately 600 volunteers each year to help conduct the Point-in-Time Count, a county-wide, comprehensive homeless count that takes place on January 28, 2011. The Point-in-Time Count also includes a survey component to

understand the needs and demographics of homeless persons in our region. The survey opportunities will take place in early February.

The data from the Point-in-Time Count leads to millions of dollars in federal funding that is distributed and utilized by local service providers. These organizations provide services for the estimated 10,000-plus individuals and families who experience homelessness annually in our region. [Register here for the 2011 Point-in-Time Count](#)