



# Ending Homelessness in Downtown San Diego Campaign Progress Update

Issue #5

March 2011



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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 Campaign Supporters and Partners:

This week, National Public Radio aired a three-part series focusing on the national 100,000 Homes Campaign and on our Ending Homelessness in Downtown San Diego Campaign. The series vividly describes both the challenges and the progress - and highlights some success stories. To read or listen to the stories by NPR correspondent Pam Fessler, please follow these links:

[Campaign Aims To Open Doors For The Homeless](#) - this story focuses on our San Diego Campaign, our progress so far, and the interview with Phillip Doud and Cathy Espong.

[For San Diego's Homeless, One Man Offers Hope](#) - this story profiles David Ross, better known as Waterman Dave, and his efforts to help homeless people downtown.

[Ending Homelessness: A Model That Just Might Work](#) - this story focuses on the national organization Common Ground, their work in New York City, and the inspiration for the 100,000 Homes Campaign.

In other news of progress, we wish to offer our congratulations to the City Council for unanimously voting to support the Connections Housing Project at the World Trade Center, which will add an additional 73 permanent supportive housing units and 150 transitional housing beds in downtown San Diego. We encourage you to contact Councilmember's Offices and thank them for supporting this important project.

In addition, we are thrilled to report a significant milestone for the Campaign's activities - as of now, more than 50 people surveyed during Registry Week are off the streets and working with



services providers to end their homelessness forever - including 13 people who have moved into their new, permanent homes. See [Tracking Our Progress](#) below for more information and to learn more about one veteran's story.

At the same time, we are concerned about potential cuts to other important programs for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. See [Staying Connected and Getting Involved](#) below for more information.

In this edition, you will also find stories regarding Home Again's recent photo exhibit on homelessness, the preliminary results of the annual Point-in-Time Count from the Regional Task Force on the Homeless, information regarding the proposed federal budget and homelessness programs, and a new national report regarding homelessness among veterans.

Thank you all for your continued support of these efforts to end homelessness!

Sincerely,



Robin Madaffer, Co-Chair  
Ending Homelessness  
Campaign Leadership Team



Jennifer LeSar,  
Ending Homelessness  
Campaign Coordinator

## City Council Approves Funding for World Trade Center Project

On March 1, 2011, the San Diego City Council approved \$16 million in redevelopment funds and \$2 million in other local housing funds for the Connections Housing Project, to be located in the former World Trade Center site downtown. The facility will serve as a one-stop shop to help and house many of the city's most vulnerable people and will include 73 units of permanent



supportive housing, 150 transitional housing beds, a comprehensive primary healthcare clinic, and an array of services designed to address the root causes of homelessness. The other half of the project's \$32.3 million in costs are expected to come from federal tax credits, and the project is scheduled to begin construction in November 2011 and open in December 2012. Click on the article links below for more information.

[San Diego Union-Tribune article: "Permanent Downtown Homeless Center Approved"](#)

[San Diego Union-Tribune editorial: "A Big Step in Helping People off the Streets"](#)

## United Way's "Home Again" Photo Exhibit

United Way's eye-opening "Home Again" photo installation, which ran from February 10-18 at the NBC Plaza Downtown, helped educate and raise public awareness of local efforts to end homelessness. The exhibit showcased images and stories of formerly homeless San Diegans who have successfully moved into permanent homes and are receiving supportive services. Commemorating United Way of San Diego County's 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, the exhibit was part of a three-part series showing the impact the organization has made in the community. Home Again is United Way's public engagement campaign to involve and educate the broader community in ending chronic homelessness in San Diego County. The United Way is in the process of securing a new location for the photo exhibit, which is to be determined.



For more information on the exhibit and it's new home, please visit United Way's website by clicking [here](#). (Photo courtesy of United Way)

## Tracking Our Progress

**One Veteran's Homecoming Story:** Timothy Jenkins, who was homeless off and on for almost nine years, was one of the 177 veterans-out of 737 people total-interviewed during Registry Week. With the assistance of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the San Diego Housing Commission, Jenkins received a HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) rental assistance voucher, which made it possible for him to move into his new, permanent home on February 1, a one-bedroom, one-bathroom apartment in Serra Mesa. [Mr. Jenkins](#) wanted others to hear his story, so please read the [Union-Tribune article](#) or watch the [San Diego Fox 5 story](#).

**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 members have been making great strides in helping people move from the streets and into new homes. As of now:

- More than 50 people are off the streets and working with staff from the VA, Community Research Foundation, or Mental Health Systems to end their homelessness forever.
- 13 people - including 9 veterans - are now "home" - living in permanent supportive housing and continuing to work with the services providers to address their challenges, achieve stability, and make progress on their goals.
- 12 newly-housed people have received assistance through the "Welcome Home" Move-In Kit funds raised during Registry Week. One veteran declined that assistance, preferring it be saved for someone else who needed it more.

We look forward to continuing to update you on the Campaign's progress - and share more stories - in future editions of this newsletter.

## Staying Informed

Preliminary Results from Point-in-Time Count Released: On February 11, the Regional Task Force on the Homeless (RTFH) released preliminary results from the Point-in-Time Count, a county-wide count of the homeless population in the region that the RTFH conducts once a year. Data from the PITC leads to millions of dollars in federal funding annually. This year's Point-in-Time Count took place on January 28, 2011 with approximately 550 volunteers. According to the report, San Diego's homeless count has gone up 3.3% since last year, to 8,802 individuals. Of those counted, 4,758 are unsheltered and living on the street, an increase of 3.5% since last year, whereas 3,912 are currently sheltered. In addition, this year's Point-in-Time Count featured a survey based upon the Vulnerability Index survey used during Registry Week, and the RTFH reports that roughly 750 surveys were performed, over twice as many as last year! Distribution of restaurant gift cards to those surveyed helped increase participation this year, and funds for these gift cards were raised during one of the Campaign Leadership Team meetings. A Community Update and Volunteer Appreciation event is scheduled for March 11 at 5pm, when RTFH will provide the final counts and a preliminary analysis on data gathered.

For further information on the preliminary results from the Point-in-Time count, visit [www.rtfhsd.org](http://www.rtfhsd.org) or read RTFH's Press Release, [San Diego County 2011 Count - Up 3.3%](#).

For additional information on the March 11 event, read RTFH's Press Release, [County Homeless Count--Update Scheduled](#).

Proposed FY 2012 Federal Budget and Homelessness: Although funding levels for federal homelessness programs for Fiscal Year 2011 are still being debated in Congress, the Obama Administration's Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Proposal, released on February 14, includes significant funding commitments toward efforts to prevent and end homelessness. The proposed budget calls for investments in support of [Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness](#), which sets forth the goal of ending chronic and veteran homelessness in five years, and ending family homelessness in 10. The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) reported that the FY 2012 Budget Proposal includes "\$4.8 billion for targeted homeless assistance funding, a 23.4% increase over the previously enacted FY 2010 Budget, and a 13.3% increase over the President's Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Proposal."

For additional information on the proposed budget, read [USICH's Fiscal Year 2012 Federal Government Homelessness Budget Fact Sheet](#).

New Report on Veteran Homelessness: In January 2011, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs jointly issued the report [Veteran Homelessness: A Supplemental Report to the 2009 Annual Homeless Assessment Report \(AHAR\) to Congress](#), the first ever collaborative report on the state of homelessness among America's veterans. The report documents that 75,609 homeless veterans were counted in the U.S. on a single night in January of 2009, 43% of whom were unsheltered. Nearly half of these homeless veterans were located in California, Texas, New York and Florida. Further, the report's analysis finds that veterans are 50% more likely to become homeless compared to all Americans, with the increased risk even greater among veterans living in poverty and among low-income minority veterans. Approximately 25% of unsheltered persons in downtown San Diego are veterans.

For more information, read [HUD's Press Release Regarding Veteran Homelessness Report](#).

22nd Annual Women's Resource Fair: On Saturday, March 5, the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Women's Resource Fair took place at Golden Hall at the Civic Center in downtown San Diego. With more than 850 women and 300 children and teens in attendance, the fair provided medical and mental health services, shelter referrals, job skills and counseling, and legal and financial assistance to low-income, homeless, recovering and abused women. For further information on this year's fair, and to find out how you can help next year, visit [www.wrfsandiego.org](http://www.wrfsandiego.org).

## Staying Connected and Getting Involved

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funding: At 9:00 am on Thursday, March 10, a special meeting of the City Council's Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee will be held to discuss recommended CDBG funding awards, including potential cuts to several homeless services and shelter programs - for example, as of right now, no funding is recommended for the Neil Good Day Center, which has been a vital resource for linking vulnerable people surveyed during Registry Week to housing and services. For more information about the hearing, see [http://docs.sandiego.gov/ccagenda\\_psns/p110310\\_Joint.pdf](http://docs.sandiego.gov/ccagenda_psns/p110310_Joint.pdf). If you want to express your opinion regarding these funding recommendations, please attend the meeting or contact your Councilmember. You can find their contact information at [www.sandiego.gov/citycouncil](http://www.sandiego.gov/citycouncil) (and you can thank them for their support of the Connections Housing Project at the same time!)

Help Support the Winter Shelter and the Veterans Winter Shelter:

The Winter Shelter and the Veterans Winter Shelter will continue to operate until early April, sheltering as many homeless individuals as space allows during these winter months. Monetary and supply donations, such as toiletries and clothing, are still needed, and volunteers are always welcome.

For more information about how to get involved at the Winter Shelter, visit [www.alphaproject.org](http://www.alphaproject.org). For more information about donating and/or volunteering for the Veterans Winter Shelter, visit [www.vvsd.net/shelter.htm](http://www.vvsd.net/shelter.htm)