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BREAKING NEWS

Freddie Mac Foundation Awards \$150,000 to Help End Homelessness

Thanks to a generous grant from the Freddie Mac Foundation — secured by the Fairfax County Office to Prevent and End Homelessness (OPEH) — the housing location services in our community will get a significant boost. Good Shepherd Housing and Family Services, which coordinates the Housing locator Network, will be utilizing this grant to hire two new housing locators this month. These housing locators will work with seven emergency and transitional housing programs that currently do not have access to housing location services. It is estimated that over the next year, their knowledge, skills and experience will expedite the move of more than 135 families and individuals who are homeless back into permanent housing.

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Bringing HOST Alive! – Great Participation at Homelessness Forum

A record turnout marked the Community Forum on Homelessness on Feb. 16 at the Jubilee Christian Center in Fairfax, with at least 180 people in attendance. In her opening remarks, Sharon Bulova, chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, reaffirmed the Board's commitment to the goal of ending homelessness in our community.

Since the 10-Year Plan was adopted in March 2008, **significant progress has been made**, not only in reducing the number of people who are homeless, but in transforming the system of services to be more effective in preventing people from becoming homeless or to rapidly re-house people who do lose their housing. **Earlier this month, the first annual [Community Snapshot](#) was released to provide a comprehensive view** of our collective efforts including new unduplicated data, 10-Year Plan goal highlights and a baseline for measuring future progress. At the forum, updates were provided on:

- **Progress in implementing the 10-Year Plan and the HOST model** (OPEH Director Dean Klein and Program Manager Toya Codjoe).
- **Trends in basic needs in the Fairfax-Falls Church community** (Dot Groce, process manager, Fairfax County Coordinated Services Planning).
- **Initiation of a process for all participants to identify services provided by their organizations** in seven broad categories throughout the four human services regions in our community (Jody Tompros, director of Transitional Housing and Residential Services, Reston Interfaith). More information on this process will be available in the coming weeks at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless>.
- **"Homeless Connect"**, a concept in which a wide range of providers and volunteers come together for a day to provide service directly to people who are homeless.

This event was very effective thanks to the collaborative efforts of county staff and nonprofit agencies across the community. We proudly recognize committee members, speakers and facilitators including Chairman Sharon Bulova; Dean Klein, Toya Codjoe, Bill Macmillan, Mike Finkle, VeeVee

Coleman and Soone Salih, all with OPEH; Tom Barnett, Good Shepherd Housing and Family Services; Stephanie Berkowitz and Carolyn Fowler, Northern Virginia Family Service; Greg White and Jody Tompros, Reston Interfaith; Victoria Neeley, Northern Virginia Coalition; Kevin Mondloch, New Hope Housing; Margaret Mellnik, Fairfax County Department of Family Services; Dot Groce, Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services. The planning committee continues to demonstrate great commitment and innovative ways to make the forums on homelessness a success, thank you again! Stay tuned for forum remarks and a photo gallery in one of the upcoming editions of *Partner Update*.

1,108 REAL PEOPLE ~ REAL RESULTS in 303 Days

As of Feb. 11, the Housing Opportunities Support Teams (HOST) have served 1,108 people – 424 unique households. **This quarter, which began Jan. 1, 51 households totaling 138 individuals, received assistance from the HOST system.** Here are just a few of their stories....

Couple Helped by Diminishing Funds

A couple who has been homeless for more than two years continued to receive case management from FACETS after staying in the Hypothermia Prevention Program and thus was able to obtain an apartment with the assistance of HPRP funds. Since obtaining housing the head of household was able to dispute credit inaccuracies, develop a resume and apply for jobs while his significant other was able to apply for a birth certificate.

A Solution to Chronic Homelessness

Diagnosed with alcohol abuse, a chronically homeless 56 year old county resident has not taken a drink in seven years! During his shelter stay, he worked diligently at acquiring and maintaining employment, regularly attending Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, and also saved \$2,300. **With the help of the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board (CSB), the Community Treatment Team North and a Tenant-Based Rental Assistance voucher, this client has successfully resided in a condo** close to his employment, city bus service and shopping. Often employed in seasonal work, he maintains contact with CSB for job application assistance.

PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

Verdia L. Haywood Joins the Governing Board

Verdia L. Haywood, former deputy Fairfax County executive has agreed to serve on the Governing Board of the Fairfax-Falls Church Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness, effective this month. Haywood retired as deputy county executive in January 2010. As a deputy county executive, Haywood oversaw and directed all health and human services agencies within the Fairfax County government for close to 30 years. Haywood has provided leadership over a comprehensive set of services that include housing, child care, health, mental health services, long-term care, public benefits, self-sufficiency services and system of care to children and families. **Haywood also led the development and implementation of the 10-Year Plan and Community Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness.** We welcome him as he begins his journey to engage the board and the community.

PARTNER PROFILE: Safe Haven

Bill LaLiberte grew up during the great depression and watched his mother take in homeless people during the frigid New England winters. About 10 years ago he heard of a man who froze to death near his church, First Christian Church of Falls Church (FCCFC), and convinced the pastor to open the church doors, provide a warm cup of stew and allow people to come in from the cold. Under the dedication of LaLiberte, Safe Haven Day Program was established. Today, Safe Haven has a full commercial kitchen, a part-time director and assistant plus dedicated volunteers who on average provide meals for 250 people per week on Tuesdays and Thursdays during hypothermia season, and on Thursdays year-

round. Breakfast is served at 9 a.m.; a “heart-healthy” lunch prepared by various faith-based and community organizations in the Falls Church area is served at noon. Clients may remain in the Fellowship Hall until 3 p.m., where they can have meetings with case workers, get help with a resume, learn a new craft, get a free hair cut or simply play a game of checkers.

Records show that about one-third of Safe Haven clients are what the Fairfax County considers homeless; that is, living in a homeless shelter, in a car or on the street. The rest of the clients are living in a group environment, with friends or in permanent subsidized housing. There have also been visitors with homes but are faced with situations such as foreclosure or eviction. Through a long list of contacts, staff at Safe Haven has been able to help some people find alternatives to homelessness.

Yesterday, The Washington Post (on-line version) featured an article on Safe Haven and captured the common ground that a former mortgage broker who is now homeless has with Safe Haven part-time shelter Director Robert Paxton. For more information about the Safe Haven Day Program, contact Robert Paxton at SafeHaven52@gmail.com.

HOST HIGHLIGHTS

Regional Updates

As the human services regions across the county continue to move us forward with the 10-Year Plan, here are some highlights to showcase their efforts working with clients, partner organizations and the HOST system.

- **Northern Region** – Last week **Hunter Mill District Supervisor Catherine Hudgins and other public officials paid a visit to the “homeless campsite” located in Region 3** to check on the handful of people who still prefer living outside to the hypothermia shelter. Outreach workers try to make connections with those living in the campsites hoping that in the extreme weather these people will choose the hypothermia shelter.

Foreclosure prevention services are still available through Reston Interfaith. Anyone who is at risk of losing their home can make an appointment for free foreclosure prevention counseling. Additionally, Reston Interfaith is offering first time homebuyers classes to interested parties. If you know of a first time homebuyer or it has been a few years since you have owned a home, this six-hour program may be of interest to your clients. There will be different expert speakers providing the seminars in both English and Spanish. For more information, contact Laura Gutierrez-Cabrera at laura.gutierrez-cabrera@restoninterfaith.org.

- **Central Region** – Region 2 continues to provide hypothermia services to unsheltered individuals needing refuge from severe temperatures. **On average, the Hypothermia Program at Bailey's Crossroads Community Shelter (BCCS) continues to serve 55-60 men and women per night.** As in the past, we rely on the generosity of local houses of worship that graciously open their doors to those in need. Many thanks continue to go to not only to these faith-based communities, but the number of volunteers and volunteer organizations who along with BCCS battle homelessness. In addition, staff continues to work with both transitional guests as well as hypothermia guests to help with procurement of needed documents such as birth certificates, social security cards, etc., as they become aware of their individual needs. **Also, a housing locator has placed five individuals in permanent housing over a period of less than one month.**
- **Southern Region** – **Identifying and partnering with service/solution providers and working collaboratively will be the focus in Region 1.** The service providers are developing their 2011 goals with the leadership of Lloyd Tucker and Ramona Carroll from Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services, and staff from New Hope Housing. Our focus is developing the processes to bring HOST alive for the service providers as well as the solution

providers. Also, the service and solution providers are being introduced to additional resources and contacts through Ingrid Parris-Hicklin from Fairfax County Office of Public Private Partnership.

SIDEBAR

The Consumer Advisory Council Update

During the latter part of 2010, the Consumer Advisory Council (CAC) planning team met and finalized the guidance for beginning the CAC this year. This council will ensure that persons who are currently and formerly homeless will have a voice in our efforts to end homelessness in our community. The planning team is made up of representation from the faith-based, nonprofit, government and consumer communities. This team took the guidance provided in the 10-Year Plan and worked through the specific details that would be needed to make the CAC reality. **One of the main concepts agreed upon by the planning team was that the guidance provided by the planning team would have to be accepted, declined, updated or finalized by the CAC after a start-up period.** At this time the work is being done to implement the guidance of the planning team. Some of the details that need to confirm include:

- Funding (or other means) for providing transportation to and from meetings.
- Food during meetings for members.
- Administrative staff support.
- Technology such as web-conferencing for members who need to attend virtually.

If you have resources or ideas about how to bring these requirements to fruition, or if you would like more information, please contact toya.codjoe@fairfaxcounty.gov.

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