



SAN DIEGO
HOUSING
COMMISSION

News Release

January 11, 2012

**Media Contact: Maria Velasquez, Vice President
Community Relations & Communications
619-578-7560 mariav@sdhc.org**

941 HOMELESS SAN DIEGANS RECEIVE DONATIONS AND SERVICES AT 6th ANNUAL PROJECT HOMELESS CONNECT

Record number of homeless San Diegans attend one-day resource fair, bringing together volunteers, businesses and non-profit groups

San Diego, CA — Ranging from winter shelter residents to families living on the streets, 941 homeless San Diegans passed through the doors at the San Diego Concourse's Golden Hall today to receive assistance and donations at the 6th annual Project Homeless Connect.

Attendees were provided with health screenings, housing referrals, legal aid, food, clothing and other supportive services at the one-day resource fair. Last year, 660 homeless San Diegans were served and the numbers were expected to increase this year because of the economy.

More than 300 volunteers supported by over 65 non-profit service providers, businesses and local government agencies came together to take part in the annual event for San Diego's homeless.

“Today, hundreds of homeless San Diegans in need received invaluable ‘life essentials’ such as clothing, haircuts, medical/dental screenings, and substance abuse counseling,” said San Diego Housing Commission President and CEO Richard C. Gentry. “And it’s genuinely heart-warming to realize how many volunteers were willing to help with this worthy cause, including donations from San Diegans and businesses—it was overwhelming.”

The vendor at Qualcomm Stadium, Centerplate Merchandise, donated more than 600 new hats, t-shirts and sweatshirts, while over 100 new pairs of Old Navy jeans were anonymously donated at noon today. In addition, the public helped triple donations this year by cleaning out their closets and conducting clothing drives.

Among the homeless individuals who took advantage of Project Homeless Connect was Rickie, a 58-year-old former school bus driver originally from Indianapolis.

“Getting a job just isn’t as simple as it used to be,” said Rickie, who has lived on the streets since moving from Indiana last year. “I’m fully trained as a school bus driver, heavy equipment operator and machinist, but I haven’t been able to get anything close to a job.”

Rickie came to Project Homeless Connect to pick up much-needed clothing, a medical evaluation and also to get a free haircut from a volunteer stylist, his first such haircut in three months. He was one of 400 haircuts that were provided by more than 30 volunteer hairstylists.

Rachel, who is 34 years old and living on the streets, found out about Project Homeless Connect through flyers distributed by the San Diego Police Department's Homeless Outreach Team. Rachel came to receive dental care, provided again this year by volunteer members of the San Diego County Dental Society.

San Diego City Councilmember Todd Gloria toured the resource fair and thanked volunteer hairstylists who provided free haircuts. Councilmember David Alvarez headed straight to the clothing station to drop off several of his donated shirts and jackets. San Diego Police Chief Bill Lansdowne also visited today's fair, thanking volunteers for their service.

For the second year, the Housing Commission was the lead organizer for Project Homeless Connect, partnering with Family Health Centers of San Diego, St. Vincent de Paul Village, the Interfaith Shelter Network and other community organizations, including media partner U-T San Diego newspaper.

Below is a list of service providers and donors who participated in Project Homeless Connect:

Service Providers

- 2-1-1 San Diego
- Alpha Project
- Amikas
- Bellus Academy, hairstylists
- California Hair Design
- Catholic Charities
- Children's Advocacy Institute
- City of Refuge
- County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency (Benefits Programs)
 - Homeless Services Team
 - County Mental Health
 - County Medical Services
- Community Research Foundation/ Intensive Mobile Psychosocial Assertive Community Treatment (IMPACT)
- Douglas Young Center, Mental Health Services
- Dreams for Change, Safe Parking Lot & Referral Services
- East County Transitional Living Center
- Employment Development Department
 - South County Career Center
 - Local Veterans Employment
 - Vets & CA Operation Welcome Home
- Episcopal Community Services (ECS)
 - Friend to Friend
- Gold Diggers, fundraising
- Heritage Clinic, senior services
- House of Hope
- Housing Opportunities Collaborative
- Kaplan College, nursing student program
- Kaiser Permanente, flu vaccines
- Kindred Hospital, flu vaccines
- Legal Aid Society of San Diego
- McAlister Institute/
HOPE Homeless program
- Mental Health Systems
 - Club Vet
 - Center Star Assertive Community Treatment (ACT)
 - Providence Place
 - Serial Inebriate Program
- Neighborhood House Association
- People Assisting the Homeless (PATH)
- Recovery Innovations of CA

- Salvation Army
- San Diego County Dental Society
- San Diego County Office of Education
- San Diego Rescue Mission, barbers
- San Diego Youth Services Storefront
- Second Chance
- Social Advocates for Youth (SAY)
San Diego, Project COMPASS
- Social Security Administration
- The Association for Community
Housing Solutions (TACHS)
- The Center for Justice and
Social Compassion
 - Homeless Law ID Program
- The Palavra Tree, Inc., Substance Abuse
Recovery
- The Way Back, Inc., Substance Abuse

- Recovery
- Townspeople, housing referrals
- UCSD Bridges to Recovery
- US Department of Veterans Affairs,
San Diego Regional Office
- Veterans Administration Healthcare
for Homeless
- Veterans Community Services/
Community Catalysts of California
- Veterans Village of San Diego
- Vista Hill Bridges Adult Intensive Outpatient
Program
- Volunteers of America –
Carlton G. Luhman Center
- YMCA
- YWCA

Large Donations

Food

- David Ross “The Waterman” - water and snacks
- David DeWitt / City of Refuge – several hundred snacks, drinks and coffee
- Einstein Brothers, San Carlos – 20 dozen bagels and cream cheese
- San Diego Rescue Mission - dessert and beverages
- Souplantation, La Mesa – 300 muffins
- St. Vincent de Paul Village - stew for 700 participants

Toiletries

- Dr. David Brockett DDS - toothbrushes, toothpaste, & mouth wash
- Dr. Kriston Gallipeau DDS - toothbrushes, toothpaste, & mouth wash
- Howard Everett - toiletries
- Jack Elmore - toiletries
- Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) – 300 toiletry kits
- ResMed – 300 toiletry bags
- Taylor Sports - hand/body warmers

Clothing

- Centerplate Merchandise at Qualcomm Stadium – 600 new t-shirts, sweatshirts, hats
- Gold Diggers – 700 pairs of new socks
- Anonymous – 100 new pairs of Old Navy jeans

Donation

- Douglas and Gloria Rumberger Foundation - \$2,000 grant

Other

- Pets Are Wonderful Support (PAWS) – 400 lbs. of dog food

About Project Homeless Connect

Project Homeless Connect, a national best practice model, originated in San Francisco in October 2004 and brings much needed services together in one place, on one day making it easy for homeless people to get the help and answers they need. Utilizing community volunteers, service providers, businesses and government, the goal of Project Homeless Connect is to provide basic needs and services to those in need and to also help people get off the streets and into a more stable living environment.

###