



SAN DIEGO
HOUSING
COMMISSION

News Release

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

**660 HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES
PARTICIPATE IN 5th ANNUAL
“PROJECT HOMELESS CONNECT”**

***ONE-DAY EFFORT BRINGS TOGETHER 250 VOLUNTEERS AND
60 SERVICE PROVIDERS***

San Diego, CA— With a line beginning to form at 6:00 a.m., hundreds of homeless individuals and families waited patiently for the doors of Golden Hall to open at 10:00 a.m. By the end of the day, 660 persons, living in both shelters or on the streets received assistance ranging from clothing, blankets, haircuts, and toiletries, to on-site medical care, housing referrals, legal aid, spiritual counseling and assistance with substance abuse.

In addition, more than 250 volunteers supported by over 60 non-profit service providers, businesses, and local government agencies came together today to take part in Project Homeless Connect, a resource fair that provides services to homeless individuals and families in San Diego.

“The outpouring of volunteers and donors taking part in Project Homeless Connect was inspiring and shows what a big heart San Diegans have,” said San Diego Housing Commission President and CEO Richard C. Gentry. “It was truly impressive—since it followed so closely after the holiday season.”

This year, the San Diego Housing Commission was the lead agency to organize the one-day event. Major partners assisting the Housing Commission included St. Vincent de Paul Village, the Interfaith Shelter Network, and Family Health Centers of San Diego.

Close to 125 dental exams were provided by the San Diego County Dental Society and Family Health Centers of San Diego. Providing dental evaluations for the fourth straight year was Dr. John E. Geis, the immediate past president of the San Diego County Dental Society. “After last year’s event, I cried all the way home because I encountered so many families who had lost homes and were living in their cars,” remarked Geis, who also runs a dental clinic for the underprivileged in Pauma Valley.

Administering over 108 flu shots and taking blood pressures were the jobs of a team of 14 nurses from the University of San Diego’s (USD) nursing program and 10 from Pt. Loma Nazarene College. It was USD’s fourth year participating and Pt. Loma Nazarene’s first.

(MORE)

“Family Health Centers conducted over 40 comprehensive medical evaluations today,” said Tom Stubberud, spokesperson for Family Health Centers of San Diego. “Included were flu shots, dental evaluations, screening for HIV, and any necessary triage,” he added.

St. Vincent de Paul provided meals while hair cuts for over 250 individuals were provided by local hairstylists and the San Diego Rescue Mission.

“There are almost 8,000 homeless people in the San Diego region, and there are beds for less than half of them,” explained Rosemary Johnston, Program Director of the Interfaith Shelter Network. By making these services available, we hope to reach people who may feel uncomfortable utilizing traditional shelter programs,” Johnston added.

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 not only to provide basic needs and services to those in need but to also help people get off the streets and into a more stable living environment.

Service Providers				
2-1-1 San Diego	EDD - Local Veterans Employment	NAMI San Diego	Serial Inebriate Program (SIP)	University of San Diego (Student RNs)
Alpha Project	EDD - Vets & CA Operation Welcome Home	Neighborhood House Association	San Diego Access & Crisis Line	VA Healthcare for Homeless
Children’s Advocacy Institute	Episcopal Community Services	New Horizons - SDCCD	San Diego County Dental Society	Veterans Village of San Diego
Co-Dependents Anonymous	FACE Your Future San Diego	North County Serenity House	San Diego County Office of Education	VOA - Luhman
Community Research Foundation	Heritage Clinic	Point Loma Nazarene University (RNs)	San Diego Rescue Mission	YMCA
County Mental Health	Housing Opportunities Collaborative	PATH	San Diego Youth Services	YWCA

County of San Diego, Health Human Services Agency	Legal Aid Society of San Diego	Providence Community Services	Second Chance	
Crossroads Foundation	Mental Health Systems	Recovery Innovations of CA	TACHS	
East County Transitional Living Center	Metro Region Career Centers	Regional Task Force on Homeless	UCSD Bridge to Recovery	
EDD - South County Career Center	MiraCosta College	Rock Church	UCSD Co-Occurring Disorders	

Homelessness in San Diego

According to the most recent homeless profile compiled by the Regional Task Force on the Homeless, there were an estimated 4,597 homeless persons living in the City of San Diego last winter.

A comprehensive survey during Registry Week last September of 737 homeless individuals living on the streets of downtown San Diego, showed 22% (163) were female, 25% (182) are military veterans, 34% (248) were over age 55, and 38% (279) had health conditions associated with a high mortality risk for homeless persons.

The San Diego Housing Commission is a public agency working to expand affordable housing opportunities in the City of San Diego. Each year, the agency helps 76,000 low-income individuals with affordable housing through award-winning programs that benefit the city's economy and revitalize neighborhoods.

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