



The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness e-newsletter 02.12.09

IN THE CITIES: SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS MAYOR SARNO ANNOUNCES SECOND ANNUAL REDUCTION IN STREET HOMELESSNESS AND NAMES NEW COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS TO LEAD 10 YEAR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION



SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS. Mayor Domenic Sarno, who just one year ago announced a 39% reduction in street homelessness and a 9% reduction in overall homelessness, today announced the second straight year of decrease in his city, with a 35% reduction in street homelessness and another 9% overall decrease in the number of individuals homeless in the city. Mayor Sarno called the decrease surprising good news in the midst of the economic downturn and commended the "point guard" of his city team, Gerry McCafferty, Deputy Director of Homeless and Special Needs Housing in the City of Springfield Office of Housing. Mayor Sarno is pictured here at the press event.

Mayor Sarno greeted the members of the implementation team and local providers, recalling his history on the issue as a City Council member before becoming Mayor. Mayor Sarno welcomed United States Interagency Council on Homelessness Executive Director Philip Mangano for the announcement, calling him "a true friend and partner" to the city.

Director Mangano (pictured here), who joined Mayor Sarno for last year's announcement and was present when former Mayor Charles Ryan unveiled the 10 Year Plan in January 2007 and named Community Champion Robert Schwarz to lead implementation, congratulated the Springfield partners on their latest results at a City Hall press event.

"Mayor Sarno's consistent leadership on this issue together with the extraordinary team he has created here is a model for mayors and communities across our country," indicated Director Mangano. "Now today we learn once again why Springfield is in the forefront of small cities in creating change and securing results. Once again the numbers are down on Springfield's streets. And fewer of your most vulnerable and disabled neighbors are homeless. These multi-year reductions are not by chance or coincidence. Nor are they the results of relying on outmoded responses that relied more on nostalgia for their existence, than results." Director Mangano further urged the partners to recalibrate the 10 Year Plan in light of their successes and new strategies, and to continue the proven strategy of concentrating - not dissipating - new resources as they address family homelessness. Director Mangano specifically encouraged the city's adoption of the proven one-stop technology to coordinate new federal resources from the economic stimulus.





Mayor Sarno announced that Peter Straley, CEO of Health New England and Mary Walachy of the Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation will become the new Community Champions of *Homes Within Reach*, with the retirement of Community Champion Robert Schwarz, Vice President of Peter Pan Bus Lines and Implementation Chair. Mr. Straley, acknowledging the Mayor's remarks, expressed his view of the road ahead, noting "success will breed success." Pictured here are (left to right): Mayor Sarno, Mr. Straley, Ms. Walachy, and Mr. Schwarz at rear.



Mr. Schwarz, honored by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness with the "Home for Every American" Community Champion award in 2008, was presented an official recognition by the Mayor.

"What a team you have here - point person Gerry McCafferty has set a new standard of performance in getting the job done. Bob Schwarz has done the same for Community Champions. Reverend Dyson has evolved the faith response in Project Connect and with the Samaritans," noted Director Mangano. "Add to them the expansive and inclusive members of the *Homes within Reach* Implementation Committee, and the new implementation leadership of Mary Walachy of the Davis Foundation and Peter Straley of Health New England." Ms. McCafferty provided details of the decrease from the city's count, noting that the lessons learned will provide a sharper focus now on family homelessness. Pictured here are (left to right): Director Mangano, Ms. McCafferty, and Mayor Sarno.

Regional partners were also present for the press event. Jack Downing and Steve Como of Solider On in Western Massachusetts, who are partners to the implementation of both HUD-VASH and the Pioneer Valley Regional 10 Year Plan, attended and took part.

Members of the Implementation Committee, in addition to Mr. Schwarz, have been: Michael Ashe, Hampden County Sheriff's Department; Paul Bailey, Springfield Partners for Community Action; Michaelann Bewsee, ARISE for Social Justice; Helen Caulton, Director, Health and Human Services, City of Springfield; Russ Denver, Affiliated Chambers of Commerce of Greater Springfield, Inc.; Rev. Gregory Dyson, Lion's Den; Doreen Fadus, Health Care for the Homeless; Kent Faerber, Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts; Peter Gagliardi, HAP, Inc.; Marion Hohn, Western Massachusetts Legal Services; William H. Abrashkin, Springfield Housing Authority; Bill Miller, Friends of the Homeless; David Modzelewski, Department of Mental Health; Kevin Noonan, Open Pantry; Jerry Ray, Mental Health Association; Vickie Riddle, Catholic Charities; Ira Rubenzahl, Springfield Technical Community College; Ron Sadowsky, Williams Distributing Corp.; Bill Ward, Regional Employment Board; Joel Weiss, United Way of Pioneer Valley; and Bud Williams, Springfield City Council.

Homes Within Reach calls for development of a Homeless Resource Center, which will form a campus with the existing Friends of the Homeless facility in Springfield. The Resource Center will be a 24-hour-a-day facility where individuals who are homeless can access employment services, health care, and social services, all focused on moving them out of homelessness. Friends of the Homeless expects to break ground on the new facility in Spring 2009.

A new \$1 million award to the region through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts initiative for Regional Networks will enable Springfield to use a Housing First model to serve 38 individuals, and to provide prevention and rapid rehousing grants to 310 families, starting March 1.