



The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness e-newsletter 05.12.08

IN THE CITIES: LOWELL, MASSACHUSETTS UNVEILS NEW 10 YEAR PLAN AND STUDENTS COMPETE TO END HOMELESSNESS



LOWELL, MASSACHUSETTS. City Hall was the site of last week's unveiling of *Partnership for Change: Action Plan to End Homelessness in 10 Years* for Massachusetts' "Mill City." Mayor Edward "Bud" Caulfield and City Manager Bernard F. Lynch welcomed United States Interagency Council on Homelessness Executive Director Philip Mangano for the event.

Pictured here is City Manager Lynch speaking at the press event in City Hall, with Mayor Caulfield and Director Mangano at left.

"With this blueprint for change, you are adding creative thinking to your community's response, linked to your State Plan," indicated Director Mangano. "Thinking that is informed by data, and research, and field tested innovations proven elsewhere. Innovative initiatives that are cost effective, results oriented, and consumer preferred."

In his introduction to the Plan, Mayor Caulfield stated: "The *Partnership for Change: Action Plan to End Homelessness* is an ambitious undertaking that presents our community with an opportunity to move away from the current, high cost ineffective system of homeless shelters to the new - more cost effective - Housing First models of permanent supportive housing. It recommends new strategies to consider for preventing homelessness and getting those hardest to employ back to work. "



Committee members were also each presented with a compass to indicate they were moving in the right direction and that they needed to stay on course. Prior to the press event, Director Mangano met with the Implementation Plan Executive Committee, local government, educational and community leaders. The Executive Committee is charged with developing the implementation plan. Director Mangano is pictured here with Mayor Caulfield at left and City Manager Lynch at right during the compass presentation.

The Lowell Plan focused on several key strategies: prevent homelessness; end individual and street homelessness; rapidly re-house families who become homeless and minimize the impact of homeless on children; identify at-risk youth and end youth homelessness; ensure that seniors can age in the community in peace and safety; move beyond shelter to housing; develop employment and educational assets; and administer and oversee the Action Plan, measure progress and evaluate success

In addition, the Plan embraces Housing First/Rapid Re-housing, calls for local cost-benefit analysis study, prioritizes prevention and intervention, has specific strategies to prevent and end homelessness among veterans, adopts the Four Tier Model for reducing homelessness identified in the [Massachusetts Homeless Commission Report](#) for both individuals and families, and commits to an annual Project Homeless Connect event.



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LOWELL SCHOOL ESSAY CONTEST HIGHLIGHTS "HOME."

Following the press event, Director Mangano joined the Mayor and City Manager, as well as E. N. Rogers Middle School Principal Timothy McGillicuddy, for the Partnership for Change Essay Contest Awards Ceremony. The Essay Contest is one of the first initiatives of the Action Plan. The goal is to engage students in the discussion of the main principle of the plan, the importance of "home", why a home is so important, and what it would be like not to have a home - to be homeless. Pictured here are the students who competed.

Essays were judged on how they expressed the principle theme of the 10 Year Plan, that is, that there is nothing more important than having a home - the importance of each student's home to them. Contest prizes included a Certificate of Participation for each student who submitted an essay, signed by Lowell City Manager Bernard F. Lynch; a \$10.00 Barnes & Noble Gift Certificate for one essay from each class; four Grand Prizes of a \$100 Savings Bond for one student from each grade citywide who was also given the honor of reading their winning essay at a future Lowell City Council or School Committee Meeting.

Essay contest judges were from City of Lowell, Lowell Public Schools, Lowell School Committee, Northern Middlesex Council of Governments, Enterprise Bank, Community Teamwork, Inc., Barnes & Noble, Washington Savings Bank, Coalition for a Better Acre, Cisco Systems, The Wish Project, St. Anne's Episcopal Church/LTLC, House of Hope, Inc., Lowell Transitional Living Center, Bridgewell/Pathfinder Safe- Haven, Merrimack Valley Food Bank, Dynamics Research Corporation, and Merrimack Valley Housing Partnership. Council Regional Coordinator John O'Brien took part in the visit and events