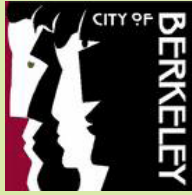


# NEWS BRIEFS

## Reserve a Shelter Bed in Berkeley

This year, Berkeley Food and Housing Project (BFHP) launched a new City of Berkeley Centralized Bed Reservation System pilot project. Funded by Berkeley's



"Public Commons for Everyone Initiative" (PCEI), the program is designed to ensure that every shelter bed in Berkeley is given out each and every night, that the Berkeley Police and Mobile Crisis teams have accurate daily information about emergency bed availability, that homeless prevention services be offered if feasible, and that everyone have a single point of contact for daily shelter bed space, seven days per week.

During 2008, BFHP worked in close collaboration with Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency (BOSS), the City of Berkeley Housing Department, county Homeless Management and Information Systems (HMIS) team to create the new

online bed reservation system using the Shelter Point system.

The main highlights of the project are as follows:

- Reservations for all three Berkeley shelters are now handled by BFHP
- There are now two daily (Monday through Friday) reservation periods for homeless folks to receive a bed – at Noon and at 7:00PM. The second reservation period allows bed openings caused by "no-shows" to be filled. (prior to this system, beds were filled either once a day or weekly with no beds filled on weekends or holidays)
- Weekend shelter bed reservations open at 10 AM Saturday and Sundays.
- There is now a single point of contact for after-hours emergency bed requests by Berkeley Police, Mobile Crisis, hospitals, jails, and others

The new system is also set up to integrate the beds at the Winter Shelter, which BFHP also coordinates for Berkeley. For further information on the system, contact Sharon Alford at (510) 649-4976. To refer someone to a Berkeley shelter, please use the new toll free number (866) 960-2132.

## President Obama signs the HEARTH Act into Law

On May 19, both houses passed S. 896, the Helping Families Save Their Homes Act, which included the HEARTH Act as an amendment. President Obama signed the legislation into law on May 20, funding homeless assistance programs at \$2.2 billion annually.

The HEARTH Act is the first significant reauthorization of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance programs in nearly 20 years and allocates millions more to homelessness prevention, rapidly re-housing homeless families, and providing permanent supportive housing for homeless people with disabilities. It also modernizes and streamlines housing and services to more efficiently meet the needs of people seeking assistance.

Visit our website for the National Alliance to End Homelessness' summary of the bill.

EveryOne Home wants to thank our congressional representatives and the president for finally taking this long overdue action. Visit our website to get your congress person's address and download a sample thank you letter. Let us know at [everyonehome@acgov.org](mailto:everyonehome@acgov.org) if you send something.



**EveryOneHome**  
Ending Homelessness  
in Alameda County

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**EveryOne Home would like to thank the following contributors for making this issue possible:**

Page Brockwell, Laura Escobar, and Geoff Green. If you would like to contribute in a future newsletter, please contact EveryOne Home at [everyonehome@acgov.org](mailto:everyonehome@acgov.org).

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Design: Dandy Co. [www.dandy-design.com](http://www.dandy-design.com)

## New Federal Resources for Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing: EveryOne Home Leads Planning Effort

The Economic Stimulus Package includes new funds to prevent people from losing their housing or from spending long periods of time in shelters if they do become homeless. The Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program (HPRP) will provide Alameda County a minimum of \$7.5 million over three years.

This is more than double current spending on homeless prevention. The money will come from the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to five cities and the County. Four cities who did not get direct allocations will apply to the state. The challenge is to use these funds effectively to prevent and end homelessness. EveryOne Home is facilitating a planning process to ensure success.



*EveryOne Home Executive Director Elaine deColigny answers questions on Alameda County's collaborative efforts to create the biggest impact with HPRP funds.*

A study of current prevention services in Alameda County commissioned by EveryOne Home in 2008 showed a maze of programs that are complicated to access for individuals and families. Those most at risk of homelessness often don't qualify for the assistance. Those who do qualify have only a 1 in 10 chance of getting financial help. There is no ability to track whether the people helped maintain their housing in



*Groups work together to design effective, user-friendly systems for homeless prevention and rapid rehousing.*

the long run. Given the results of the study, there was wide agreement to use HPRP funds to do things differently.

EveryOne Home has held two community-wide meetings, March 18th and May 11th, attended by over 165 people to help craft an expanded and improved approach to homeless prevention and rapid rehousing. That input has contributed to the plan being developed by the cities and the County with EveryOne Home facilitating. **The focus has been on making the services more accessible and flexible for those individuals and families facing a housing crisis. Our goal is that people make one call, go to one place, and get the assistance they need.** For more details on the emerging program design visit our website.

### NEWS YOU CAN USE

#### Funding Update

The National Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) was created by Congress in 1983 as a unique public-private partnership between the federal government and the United Way of America.

The Alameda County EFSP Local Board has received \$529,702 in supplemental funding under the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA). These supplemental funds are awarded for use in the current Phase 27 program year and must be expended by December 31, 2009.

Examples of funded activities include: **emergency congregate meal sites (soup kitchens), mass shelters, emergency food box programs, shelter vouchers, rental assistance and utility assistance.** Programs must serve homeless or low-income people.

If you have any questions about the Emergency Food and Shelter Program, please call Laura Escobar, Project Director, at (415) 808-4380 or e-mail [lescobar@uwba.org](mailto:lescobar@uwba.org).



United Way of the Bay Area

# Our Volunteers Know Everyone Counts

This is a very special thank you to the 169 volunteers who donated their time in both training and conducting over 1,200 interviews for the Homeless Count. Volunteering for the Homeless Count requires not only time in the field, but attending a training session on how to conduct quality interviews. The Homeless Count provides vital information on trends and needs in Alameda County and is mandated to receive federal homeless assistance funds. Interviews were held at 27 randomly chosen sites throughout Alameda County on January 27, 2009.

Our top recruiters also deserve special acknowledgement; Brett Keteles of the Alameda Sheriff's department and Susan Muranishi, Alameda County administrator. Thanks to Brett and Susan, the call for our volunteer needs was answered

by many of the very generous people in their organizations.

As the sites we interview at are randomly chosen, we depend on the generosity and collaboration of many groups that provide services to homeless and very low income persons to host our teams. These agencies, organizations, and congregations open their spaces to EveryOne Home volunteers so that we may conduct the count. Thank you to the 27 sites who hosted us this year!

Our research partners Speigman Norris Associates and UC Berkeley Survey Research Center continue to work diligently on the data collected by our volunteers. Results from the Homeless Count are expected by this summer. EveryOne Home will be hosting events in the release of these results so be sure to join our mailing list.



## Survey says...

Results from our volunteer evaluations and survey found that:

- 100% of site coordinators would volunteer again
- 98.5 % of volunteers would volunteer again
- 90% of volunteers would encourage their friends and families to sign-up for the next Homeless Count



*Sarah moving in.*

On any given night in Alameda County there are about 1,000 homeless individuals that are diagnosed with a mental illness. Surveys show that of those thousand, 30% are dually diagnosed with a substance use disorder. (*Alameda Countywide Shelter and Services Survey, May 2004 Report*)

The Bonita House Inc Homeless Outreach and Stabilization Team (HOST) is a full service partnership (FSP) that opened its doors in March 2007 to address the needs of some

## Sarah's Story: Finally a Place to Call Home

of the county's un-served chronically homeless individuals who also have mental illness. HOST provides a resource rich program with 24/7 staffing and flexible funding to meet various client needs. This allows the team to do "whatever it takes" to assist clients on their road to housing and recovery.

Sarah felt she was on the verge of a "nervous breakdown" when Robert, a Personal Service Coordinator from HOST, met her at a local liquor store. Sarah was about to lose her housing yet again, this time a room at an Oakland hotel. Despite multiple efforts at employment Sarah had spent most of the last 15 years on the streets due to her "inability to manage her emotions" and "her anxiety around building relationships with others." Robert told Sarah about the services that HOST could provide. Sarah did not believe that this program could be real. She had been told too many times in the past that she could receive help and had been let down. Sarah didn't have any hope that HOST would be different but she was willing to take Robert's card. A week later she called HOST and set up an assessment meeting. Shortly after this meeting Sarah was enrolled in the HOST program. She was given temporary housing in an Oakland hotel and began receiving three meals a day,



*Sarah's home.*

something she had not had in years. Six weeks later Sarah signed a lease and moved into her own apartment, a goal that she had set for herself at the age of 17. Sarah cried throughout the move, expressing disbelief and gratitude that HOST had helped her make her dream come true. Sarah has now been housed for over a year. She reports that her life has been changed. She finally has the stability she had been longing for and has been able to begin to focus on some of her other life goals.

The HOST program has included EveryOne Home's strategy of providing permanent housing and wrap-around services to those who are chronically homeless and have a persistent mental illness. For Sarah that means she has renewed hope in her future and finally a place to call home.



*EH board member, Andrea Youngdahl; Exec Dir. US Interagency Council on Homelessness, Phil Mangano; Champion, Supervisor Alice Lai-Bitker; Mayor Dellums; EH board chair, Linda Gardner; Exec. Dir. EH, Elaine deColigny.*

EveryOne Home is proud to have eleven individuals championing the work of our community to end homelessness in Alameda County. On March 20th 2009, a press event was held to launch our inaugural slate of champions who include individuals from both the public and private sector. Oakland Mayor and EveryOne Home Champion, Ronald Dellums, hosted the event at Oakland City Hall. Phil Mangano, then Executive Director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, was a special guest, speaking on both the launch of the EveryOne Home Champions and the federal stimulus funds for Alameda County homeless prevention.

Our Champions will support the core strategies EveryOne Home has outlined in our plan to end homelessness by the year 2020. This team will elevate our efforts by using their resources to garner government/public support, press coverage, business partnerships, and other collaborations.



*EveryOne Home Champions luncheon: Attended by Champions and Leadership Board members.*

## EveryOne Home Champions

**Greg Ahern**, Sheriff, Alameda County

**Gordon Baranco**, Judge, Alameda County Superior Court

**Tom Bates**, Mayor, City of Berkeley

**Keith Carson**, Supervisor, Alameda County

**Mary Jo Cook**, Vice President of Innovation, Clorox Company

**Ronald V. Dellums**, Mayor, City of Oakland

**Scott Haggerty**, Supervisor, Alameda County

**Alice Lai-Bitker**, President, Alameda County Board of Supervisors

**Susan Muranishi**, Administrator, Alameda County

**Nancy Nadel**, Councilmember, City of Oakland

**Bob Uyeki**, Executive Director, Y&H Soda Foundation

## EveryOne Home Leadership Board Elects New Co-Chairs

The EveryOne Home Leadership board has elected new co-chairs. Susan R. Shelton and Daniel Sawislak have been welcomed into these new roles as of April 2009.

Susan, manager of the Department of Human Services-Community Housing Services Division in Oakland, has been involved in developing and

implementing the EveryOne Home plan since its inception and a key organizer in Oakland's Project Homeless Connect.

Dan is the Executive Director at Resources for Community Development, a non-profit developer and service provider. Dan has a long history as an affordable housing developer and community organizer.

Our new co-chairs will serve a one year term. Special thanks to out going chair Linda M. Gardner, Housing Director for the Alameda County Housing and Community Development agency, who served in this capacity during the planning and first year of the Leadership Board.