

**Report from the Community Outreach and Public Awareness Committee (COPA) of the  
Palm Beach County Homeless Advisory Board (HAB)**

**to the HAB and Residents of Palm Beach County**

**in Advance of National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week  
November 15-21, 2009**

As Chairperson of the COPA Committee, I have had the pleasure of working with a terrific group of talented volunteers who are dedicated to this cause. From our deliberations, we decided to utilize the platform of National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week (<http://www.nationalhomeless.org/projects/awareness/awareness.html>), which was declared an official week in Palm Beach County today (November 3) by the County Commission, as an opportunity to both educate the public and what the HAB has done to address the issue. After receiving approval from the HAB to proceed, we have reached out to the provider community to see what programs they have planned for that week as well as established and now are implementing several of our own initiatives. **The participation of the community in these initiatives is an essential ingredient to their success.**

From November 15-21, we are involved in the following activities:

- Sunday, November 15 at 11 AM, please tune into WXEL (90.7 FM) for “Florida Forum” whose topic will be housing assistance. It will be re-broadcast on November 16 at 7 PM.
- Monday, November 16 at 1 PM, the HAB will hold a news conference in the Rose Garden outside the Palm Beach County Governmental Center. The purpose will be to outline the progress that has been made in establishing the ten year plan and what has been accomplished that has been guided by this plan. In addition, we will “officially” launch an enhancement to our Board’s website that will allow additional citizens to find out what we are doing and how they can get involved.
- Tuesday, November 17 at 5 PM, the School Board will issue a Proclamation declaring the week Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week.
- Thursday, November 19 at 2 PM, the Delray Beach Library will show the video “With Honor”, which is a depiction of the struggles of homeless veterans in our country.
- Friday, November 20 from 9AM to Noon, the Palm Beach County Homeless Coalition will hold Project Connect. Project Connect taps into the resources within the community to find creative solutions to help the homeless. Services being provided to the homeless include identification cards, haircuts, phone station for the homeless to make phone calls, and food. Health screenings will be offered. Donations of clothing, small household items and hygiene kits will be available to all the homeless attending this event.
- Food Drives, held in close cooperation with the Community Food Alliance, will feature 50,000 collection bags with the HAB logo and information on them, will be held by churches, synagogues and mosques throughout Palm Beach County and the religious leaders will be asked to discuss hunger and homelessness in their weekly messages.
- With tremendous support by Palm Beach Atlantic University, several video vignettes will be posted on our website, made available for showing in a variety of venues and,

hopefully, utilized by local media outlets providing homeless people a voice regarding this community challenge and possible solutions.

- Launching our new improved internet “landing page” (TheHomelessPlan.org) which will show the video vignettes, offer a chance to learn more about our Ten Year Plan, and provide linkage between people who want to help and the organizations in Palm Beach County who are helping homeless individuals and families today.
- Launching the “Ten2End” campaign logo which we hope will become a branding opportunity for all of the efforts of the HAB as we work together to accomplish the mission of the ten year plan.
- Speakers will be available throughout the week to talk to community organizations (i.e., Kiwanis, Rotary, Elks, homeowners associations, book clubs and any other groups that might be interested) about homelessness and the work of the HAB.
- The School Board and many individual schools will hold events throughout the week to make sure that the students are aware of the challenges presented by hunger and homelessness in our community.

## SO WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Our goal is to enhance the awareness of the HAB’s efforts in Palm Beach County or, as better put by committee member Leo Abdella, “that every household in Palm Beach County have at least one conversation about homelessness during the week.” You can support that goal by making your constituencies aware of the week and the associated activities. You can encourage your friends, neighbors, affiliated organizations, co-workers and vendors to participate in some way whether it is inviting a speaker, holding a food drive, encouraging people to go to the website or in another way that will get more people involved in our efforts.

National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week will be on the agenda of the November 18 meeting of the HAB. This will be an opportunity for members of the HAB and the public to report how they have worked together to make our first participation in National Hunger and Homelessness Week a success.

If you have any questions on how to proceed or would like to tell us how you are joining this effort, please contact Krysten Bennett at [kbennett@langtonconsulting.com](mailto:kbennett@langtonconsulting.com)

In advance of your support in this way,

Thank you,

Ezra M. Krieg  
Chairperson  
COPA Committee