

LIVE UNITED

United Way
of Central Alabama, Inc.



March 28, 2008

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AREA AGENCIES COLLABORATE TO SERVE HOMELESS POPULATION

One year after the release of the 2007 Birmingham Plan to End Chronic Homelessness over 60 government, business, health and human service and faith-based organizations will jump-start the effort with Project Homeless Connect. On Saturday, April 5 from 7:30 am to 3:00 pm in the Boutwell Auditorium, this one day, one stop event will provide direct medical, dental mental health ,housing and other services to homeless men women and children in Central Alabama.

“This is going to be an unprecedented collaboration of organizations to provide services that are often inaccessible to the homeless population,” said Drew Langloh, President & CEO of United Way of Central Alabama. “The homeless guests will be able to access services that would otherwise take several months for them to receive.”

“This is a first step”, said Jim Finstermaker, City of Birmingham. “The 2007 Birmingham Plan to End Chronic Homelessness calls for the whole community to solve the problem. When we all step up and work together, we can find real solutions that will make a difference in the lives of chronically homeless people”.

The chronically homeless are individuals who have been on the streets for a year or more, and struggle with mental health and substance abuse issues or another disability. While the chronically homeless are only 20% of the homeless population they consume more than half of the community resources available to the homeless.

In addition to the organizations participations Project Homeless Connect is relying on hundreds of volunteers. “The volunteers will greet the homeless as they arrive, help them complete applications, serve as translators and serve food”, said Candi Williams, Executive Director of Hands on Birmingham.

“We hope Project Homeless Connect is a first step to self-sufficiency for many of the participants. Until you solve some of their basic needs, such as addressing mental and physical health, they will continue to struggle to improve their overall condition”, said Dr. Michael Fleenor, Jefferson County Department of Health.

Project Homeless Connect is an innovative nationwide movement aimed at engaging communities to find solutions for the homeless. United Way of Central Alabama works to improve lives and community conditions by building and mobilizing resources. United Way of Central Alabama partnered with Metropolitan Birmingham Services for the Homeless, Hands On Birmingham, the City of Birmingham, Jefferson County, and the Jefferson County Department of Health to bring this best practice to our region. For more information about Project Homeless Connect, visit www.uwca.org. To find or give help dial 2.1.1.

EVENT AT A GLANCE

What: Hundreds of volunteers, government and social service agencies will provide Central Alabama’s homeless with much needed services including:

- Medical Care
- Legal Assistance
- Dental Care
- Mental Health Counseling
- Benefit and Housing counseling
- Childcare assistance
- Haircuts and massages
- A warm lunch

When: Saturday, April 5, 2008 Boutwell Auditorium

6:30 am Volunteer Rally

7:30 am Doors Open for Homeless Consumers

10:00 am Media Tour (please meet in the lobby of Boutwell Auditorium)

10:30 am Individual Interview Availability

3:00 pm Last homeless consumer is welcomed

Why: On any given night, there are over 2,500 homeless individuals in Central Alabama. Project Homeless Connect is the first step in a campaign to reduce homelessness in our community, tapping into the same spirit of compassion and giving exemplified by local citizens when hundreds of Hurricane Katrina evacuees came to Birmingham. The City of Birmingham, Jefferson County and Shelby County are working together with local non-profit and faith based organizations serving as a model for the type of innovative collaboration necessary to implement *Birmingham’s 10 Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness*. No one agency will single handily reduce chronic homelessness in our region. Project Homeless Connect utilized the energy and commitment of ordinary individuals with creative solutions.

Who:

Dozens of sponsors to provide in-kind and voluntary services, including:

American Civil Liberties Union
AIDS Alabama
State of Alabama
Aletheia House
Aware Cosmetics
Beginning Bridge
Birmingham AIDS Outreach
Birmingham Baptist Association
Birmingham City Court System
Birmingham Fire and Rescue
Birmingham Health Care
Birmingham Police Department
Bridge Ministries
Cahaba Valley Health Care
Childcare Resources
Church of Brookhills
Church of the Reconciler
City Action Partnership (CAP)
City of Birmingham
Cooper Green Hospital
Dawson Memorial Baptist
Downtown Business Association
Family Connection
First Baptist of Birmingham
First Light
Hands On Birmingham
Highlands United Methodist Church
JBS Mental Health Authority
Jefferson County
Jefferson County Court System
Jefferson County Commission
Jefferson County Department of Health
Jefferson County Department of Human Resources
Jones Sportswear, Inc.
Lawson State School of Cosmetology/Barbering
Legal Services of Alabama
The Literacy Council
Metropolitan Birmingham Services for the Homeless
M-Power Ministries
North Park Baptist
Oasis Women's Counseling Center

One Zion United AME
Pathways
Prisoners of Love Band
Publix
Red Mountain Institute School of Massage
Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
Restoration Ministries
Riley Avenue Baptist
SafeHouse of Shelby County
St. Vincent's Wellness Services
Salvation Army of Birmingham
Shades Mountain Baptist
Shelby County Commission
Social Security Administration
St. Mary's on the Highland Episcopal Church
The Old Firehouse Shelter
Trinity Baptist
UAB School of Public Health
United Way Community Foodbank
United Way of Central Alabama
Vestavia Hills United Methodist Church
Veterans Affairs
Weed and Seed
YWCA