

The GLHRN Releases 2007 Profile of Homeless Persons as Project Homeless Connect Comes to the Lansing Area

Ingham County – The Greater Lansing Homeless Resolution Network released to the community the 2007 Profile of Homeless persons in the Lansing area. This information, compiled from the Lansing regional Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), is an annual profile of the state of homeless individuals. These data are collected and allow local service providers to more effectively address homelessness in the Lansing area. The Greater Lansing Homeless Resolution Network is a consortium of over 25 homeless service providers in the Lansing area dedicated to finding and fighting the causes of homelessness.

The 2007 HMIS Data profile indicates that the general homeless population has increased modestly from 3220 in 2006 to 3237 in 2007. Although the data shows a decrease of 20.9% in the number of individuals in families who were assisted in the past year, they are still a substantial component of the overall homeless population at 39.4%. The data also shows that 15.3% of working-age homeless people were employed at the point of program intake. “[This] contradicts the “vagrant male” stereotype that many hold regarding homeless persons,” said Joan Jackson Johnson of the City of Lansing. She explained further, “Service delivery approaches are changing in concert to address the needs of the ‘new homeless,’ while remaining responsive to the more traditional homeless population.”

In order to deliver services to the homeless population and involve the community in homeless reduction, the GLHRN in conjunction with the City of Lansing are hosting the area’s first Project Homeless Connect. The Lansing Project Homeless Connect will be held Thursday, June 26, 2007 from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. at the Don Johnson Fieldhouse. Homeless families and individuals are encouraged to attend to receive an array of services from medical testing and vision exams, a hot meal, and obtaining a state-issued ID to name a few. Project Homeless Connect (PHC) is a nationwide movement that fuses political and civic will in a one-day, one-stop array of resources in order to better serve the homeless. PHC began in San Francisco in 2004, and has since expanded to include more than 130 communities nationwide and serves thousands of homeless people each year. Mayor Gavin Newsom of the City of San Francisco asserts that, “Project Homeless Connect is breaking the myth that people do not seek assistance and services and would rather be on the street. The data prove that when people are approached in a respectful and kind manner, and with available resources, they are eager to accept help toward self-sufficiency.”

For further information or to volunteer for Project Homeless Connect, please contact the City of Lansing Human Relations/Community Services Department at (517) 483-4477.

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