



## Downtown DC/Pathways Outreach Team FY 2010 Annual Report

Pathways to Housing DC is pleased to present to the Downtown DC Business Improvement District (BID) a report on the accomplishments of the Downtown Homeless Outreach Team for FY 2010. The team is a multi-disciplinary team of outreach workers who interact with homeless persons on the streets of Downtown DC in an effort to improve their situation, including placing them into housing.

The outreach team is directed by a licensed clinical social worker, Jonathan Ward, and includes social workers, a certified addiction counselor, a housing specialist and an outreach specialist, along with a number of graduate-level interns. The contract is managed by Chet Grey, director of Homeless Services, the Downtown BID, and Linda Kaufman, chief operating officer, Pathways DC.

This program is fully funded by Downtown property owners through a contract between the Downtown BID and Pathways DC, and managed by Pathways DC, the nonprofit housing and services organization for chronically homeless single adults. The program is mutually beneficial, providing an outreach arm to Pathways DC, and street stabilization for the Downtown BID.

Highlights of the outreach team's achievements in FY 2010, the period from October 1, 2009, to September 30, 2010:

- Engaged 320 individual Downtown homeless persons with meaningful assistance; many were engaged several times—indeed, an average of 10 engagements per homeless person.
- Placed 36 Downtown homeless persons into housing through the DC Department of Human Services' "Housing First" program. Pathways DC estimates that housing costs approximately \$25,000 per client annually, as compared to \$225,000 for a bed at St. Elizabeth's Hospital—an estimated savings of \$7 million per year.
- Provided 276 instances of medical or mental health services to Downtown homeless persons.
- Decreased the number of homeless on the streets of Downtown DC at night from 93 in 2009 to 73 in 2010, according to the Downtown BID's annual mid-winter homeless enumeration; the number has been cut almost in half since the outreach team's first year in 2008.
- Developed a partnership with the DC Public Library to provide homeless outreach services within the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library, where homeless persons often seek refuge in the Downtown BID area, as well as to train library staff.
- Earned "officer of the court" status for Jonathan Ward, outreach director, allowing him to more effectively intercede in difficult homeless cases.

The philosophy of the outreach team—and its implementers, the Downtown BID and Pathways DC—is that homeless persons are part of the city's fabric, and as with all other citizens—Downtown workers, residents and visitors—they need to be served. At the same time, the program is not about maintaining homelessness or enabling the homeless; it is about finding solutions to people living on the streets.

The outreach team works in concert with the Downtown BID's Homeless Outreach Service Team (HOST). HOST members are part of the Downtown BID's Safety/Hospitality and Maintenance (SAM) corps, which includes approximately 90 Downtown SAMs, who work to ensure that Downtown DC is clean, safe and friendly. The team of 12 specially trained SAMs recognizes situations with Downtown's homeless persons and refers cases to the outreach team.

The success of the outreach team is possible only because of partnerships that the team has built with a number of agencies and organizations. Primary providers include: DC Department of Human Services, the DC Department of Mental Health, the Metropolitan Police Department and two dozen other agencies. "We commend Pathways and the Downtown BID for seeking innovative approaches for ending homelessness in DC," says Nan Roman, president and CEO of the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

The outreach team's areas of assistance and total interactions:

### 1. Engagements—1,086 total

Engagements are encounters conducted on the streets and in Downtown buildings by outreach workers. An engagement is entered into our database predicated on obtaining personal information, demographics, and/or reason for being homeless, should the homeless person wish to share that information. Most encounters occur during the day. However, the outreach team and its partners conducted 27 nighttime engagements, allowing them to connect with individuals not visible during the daytime. The outreach team also receives calls from property managers requesting assistance; the outreach team's standard is to respond within one hour. In FY2010, the outreach team began administering a Vulnerability Survey, which identifies and prioritizes the street homeless population to quality for housing.

- Daytime engagements on the street or in buildings: 1015
- Nighttime engagements: 27
- Business calls: 13
- Administration of Vulnerability Survey: 31

### 2. Basic services—1,674 total

Basic services are usually the first services offered by the outreach team to homeless persons. By offering these services, the outreach team accomplishes at least two objectives: assuring survival by meeting emergency needs and developing a relationship to build toward self-sufficiency.

- Meals and food assistance: 1,292
- Showers: 170
- Clothing: 135
- Laundry: 14
- Transportation: 42
- Relocation: 21

### 3. Medical and mental health services—276 total

The outreach team, in partnership with health care and mental health providers, delivers medical and mental health services to Downtown homeless persons. Individuals with severe mental illness who are living on the streets have a life expectancy of 55—25 years less than the US average. Immediate, intensive and on-going medical and mental health services are essential to saving the lives of people on the street:

- Street medical and psychiatric evaluations: 39
- Medication assistance: 62
- Detoxification: 6
- Comprehensive psychiatric emergency program: 10
- Hospital visits: 17
- Referrals to core service agencies: 133
- Court testimony: 9

### 4. Benefit services—99 total

After providing basic and medical/mental health services, the next step toward stability for homeless persons is regular income. Linking homeless persons with the benefit to which they are entitled is tied to individual circumstances and is labor-intensive to provide, but can result in a major step toward self-sufficiency:

- Veterans benefits assistance: 10
- Social Security and Medicaid/Medicare: 71
- Money management counseling: 18

### 5. Housing services—58 total

The most effective therapeutic intervention the outreach team can offer to a chronically homeless individual is a place to live. Finding a home is almost always the first request when we encounter people on the street, and the most satisfying. Housing cures homelessness. By offering housing, the outreach team, in partnership with the DC Department of Human Services, has been able to cut the number of individuals living on the streets of Downtown DC nearly in half since 2008. Once a formerly homeless person is housed, the outreach team offers services to ensure successful housing continues.

- Housing placements: 36
- Housing stability assistance: 22

### 6. Administrative—80 total

The outreach team meets with the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) on a regular basis to address Downtown homeless persons' cases. The outreach team trained 320 police (MPD, Federal Bureau of Investigation Police, Secret Service Police and DC Public Library police) and private security on "how to handle the homeless." The outreach team and MPD—especially the two officers specifically assigned to homeless persons—partner on "quality of life" police calls to avoid incarceration. We have shown decreased recidivism after our intervention. The chief operating officer of Pathways DC regularly speaks around the country about the outreach team and Housing First model.

- Law enforcement consultations: 73
- Presentations: 7

*Please direct any questions or comments to Chet Grey, the Downtown BID's homeless services director; Linda Kaufman, Pathway to Housing DC's chief operating officer; and Jonathan Ward, Pathway DC's clinical director, at [outreach@downtowndc.org](mailto:outreach@downtowndc.org). They also may be reached at 202.661-7575 and 202-529-2972, respectively.*

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*Vibrant, inviting and smart, Downtown DC is Washington's premiere destination for exploring, creating and sharing ideas and experiences. The Downtown DC Business Improvement District (BID) is a private non-profit organization that provides capital improvements, resources and research to help diversify the economy and enhance the Downtown experience for all. This special district, where property owners have agreed to tax themselves to fund services, encompasses a 138-block area of approximately 825 properties from Massachusetts Avenue on the north to Constitution Avenue on the south, and from Louisiana Avenue on the east to 16th Street on the west. As a catalyst, facilitator and thought leader, the Downtown BID promotes public/private partnerships to create a remarkable urban environment. For more information, visit [www.downtowndc.org](http://www.downtowndc.org)*