



NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Senator Mel Martinez Joins the Central Florida Commission on Homelessness

ORLANDO, FL (December 22, 2010) – While continuing to make an impact in the Central Florida community, U.S. Senator Mel Martinez has joined the Central Florida Commission on Homelessness, a public/private partnership of community leaders dedicated to systematically addressing homelessness in Central Florida.

"I am very interested in Central Florida's homelessness issue, and look forward to contributing to the organization's goal of ending homelessness," said Senator Martinez. "I bring a national perspective and resources to the organization, and look forward to working together to end homelessness in Orlando."

Currently, Martinez is Chairman of Florida, Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean for JPMorgan Chase & Co. He serves on JPMorgan Chase's Executive Committee and is the senior executive in Florida and the region, representing the firm at the most senior levels to clients ranging from businesses and large corporations to nonprofits and government entities.

He joined JPMorgan Chase in July 2010, after representing Florida as a U.S. Senator, serving as the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and working as a private sector attorney for 25 years.

"Senator Martinez is a tried and true leader in our community and has been for a long time," said Ed Timberlake, managing chair of the Commission and chairman of the Central Florida Board for Seaside National Bank & Trust. "His extensive experience around public policy and

(more)

CFCH Media Announcements

Tuesday, December 28, 2010 – Orlando Business Journal: daily email update included article with photo of Senator Martinez

Tuesday, December 28, 2010 – bizjournals.com: article with photo of Senator Martinez

Saturday, December 25, 2010 – El Sentinel: article about Senator Mel Martinez joining the Commission

Thursday, December 23, 2010 – Orlando Sentinel: Scott Maxwell column gave kudos to Senator Mel Martinez for joining the Commission

Thursday, December 23, 2010 – OrlandoSentinel.com: Scott Maxwell blog gave kudos to Senator Mel Martinez for joining the Commission

Upcoming: WKMG 6 – Flashpoint interview with Senator Martinez, Ray Larsen and Robert H. "Bob" Brown



The Initiative To End Homelessness

Commission Current Projects

Building the capacity of the community:

Case Manager Academy

CFCH is collaborating with United Way and the University of Central Florida to establish Case Manager Academy. The academy will be a certificate program to encourage quality case management and knowledge for accessing mainstream benefits as strategies for preventing and ending homelessness.

Request for Proposals

CFCH, in collaboration with UW, will distribute its first RFP in the first quarter of 2011. The RFP will seek best programs to demonstrate or pilots strategies to increase access to mainstream benefits to prevent or end homelessness identified in TEN2END.

Reaching out to the homeless:

Reunification Fund

CFCH is working with 211 to create a fund that provides assistance to individuals and families experiencing or at risk of homelessness who wish to reconnect with family or supporting agencies. The fund will be assessed by agencies responsible for qualifying clients who meet program criteria. The reunification fund will be a resource to established service providers. 211 will track demand and outcomes to make the case for sustaining this pilot project.

Orlando Homeless Outreach

CFCH will deploy in January 2011 two outreach workers in the downtown core of the City of Orlando. These workers will engage the unsheltered homeless and overcome real and perceived barriers to accessing services and moving off the street. Workers will also serve as a resource to downtown residents, businesses, and law enforcement.



The Initiative To End Homelessness

Grove Park Housing

CFCH is facilitating a collaboration between the Coalition for the Homeless and Grand Avenue Properties to operate two duplexes and a single family home to house unsheltered homeless families.

Bringing the experts together:

Homeless Provider Meeting

CFCH is hosting a meeting of the region's homeless service providers. Through a survey and facilitated discussion, the meeting will be used to identify and validate potential pilot or demonstration projects for the Commission. The meeting will also provide the opportunity to update providers on the Homeless Court Projects, Case Manager Academy or other projects.

Permanent Housing TaskForce

Building on the conclusion drawn from the Regional Funding Analysis, the Taskforce will be charged with making recommendations to the Commission for increasing the capacity of our region to develop and sustain more permanent housing.



The Initiative To End Homelessness

Commission Accomplishments

Building the capacity of the community:

Homeless Judicial Alternative

The CFCH developed the case for, convened the key decision makers, and facilitated the meetings for the establishment of an alternative sentencing process for the homeless. Reaching out into the community and working within the jail, the homeless judicial alternative will provide an alternative process for homeless persons to meet their legal obligations and receive the help they need to break the cycle of arrest and re-arrest and end their homelessness. CFCH is providing funding for a case manager for the court which is anticipated to divert thousands from jail, impact hundreds of warrants, and saving millions of dollars.

Permanent Housing

CFCH brought together the Coalition for the Homeless, United Way, Homeless Services Network, the City of Orlando and Orange County to bring \$1.3 million new dollars to Central Florida. This HUD Rapid Re-housing National Demonstration Grant will make it possible for nearly 150 families with Children to move into a home start a new life.

Transitional Housing

The CFCH is partnering with the Orlando Housing Authority to develop 50 transitional housing units for the homeless. We have facilitated program design and have convened key service providers for identifying clients and providing case management.

Reaching out to the homeless:

Seminole Hope Team

With its first grant, CFCH joined a collaboration to deploy a HOPE Team to the Sanford area of Seminole County. The HOPE Team reaches out to the unsheltered homeless connecting them to services and working to move them off the streets and out of the camps. Comprised of mental health and health outreach workers, the HOPE Team has linked over a 100 homeless to mainstream benefits and has prepared them for entry into detox programs, treatment facilities, housing, or to reunite them with their families.



The Initiative To End Homelessness

IDignity

CFCH has made two grants, totaling \$17,000, to IDignity supporting work to help the homeless and very poor obtain identification. Obtaining identification is a crucial first step for receiving benefits and services, finding housing, and obtaining a job.

Osceola Project Homeless Connect

CFCH partnered with Osceola County for a project Homeless Connect at which over 380 people received services including health screens, benefit applications, and basic supplies. Osceola County Commissioners participated in the event.

Street Information Guides

CFCH partnered with the City of Orlando and Osceola County Government to develop and distribute thousands of Street Information Cards containing crucial information for homeless persons in need of help and services. Currently, a guide for Seminole County is being developed.

Bringing the experts together:

Homeless Regional Consortia

CFCH has hosted two regional consortia to tackle system wide barriers to serving the homeless. Service providers, corrections departments, law enforcement, shelter providers, mental health and health agencies and formerly homeless persons worked together on issues including; mental health needs and capacity, jail discharge and housing for homeless women and families.

Analysis of Funding of Homeless Program in Central Florida

CFCH collaborated with Walt Disney World and the University of Central Florida on a study of the sources of homeless programs funding (government, private, etc) and uses (housing, medical, etc) for the region. The analysis included a comparison of HUD funding awards for the top 5 most populous states and of the top 5 COC recipients in Florida. The analysis concludes with recommendations for increasing funding to the region and a greater focus on permanent housing.