



MEDIA ADVISORY – November 30, 2009

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Project Homeless Connect to provide “one-stop” access to services for the homeless of Manchester

MANCHESTER (November 30, 2009) – The Manchester Continuum of Care, Heritage United Way, the City of Manchester, NH Housing and Finance Authority and St. Joseph Cathedral will be hosting Project Homeless Connect on **9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** on **Thursday, December 3, 2009, at St. Joseph Cathedral; 145 Lowell St.; Manchester.** The event will begin with an opening rally. Those who are homeless or at risk of being homeless are encouraged to attend.

The Manchester Continuum of Care, a network of providers in Manchester dedicated to offering quality services to homeless individuals and families, brings this annual day of one-stop access, Project Homeless Connect, to the City. Services will include medical/healthcare screenings and referrals, substance abuse services, employment services and opportunities, shelter and housing resources, domestic violence counseling, mental health services, a hot lunch and warm clothing.

The success of last year’s event and a great need for a productive place for homeless people in Manchester to go during the day has inspired the Manchester Continuum of Care, Heritage United Way, Helping Hands Outreach and the City of Manchester to collaborate and create a permanent Homeless Services Center. This is based on the model of service that Project Homeless Connect provides. The site will be at 142 Central Street and is supported by all members of the Manchester Continuum of Care who will all provide services on a rotating basis each day of the week. The site is slated to open in late January.

Mayor Frank Guinta, who will attend Project Homeless Connect, said that putting resources like this together is crucial in reducing the number of homeless in the city of Manchester. “Project Homeless Connect is the model for other communities, but also the template for a permanent solution to the issues of homelessness,” Guinta said. “The Homeless Service Center is a major facet to reducing the number of homeless, by providing compassion, resources and a means to independence.”

Major funders to date include Citizens Bank, the City of Manchester, Heritage United Way, the Norwin S. and Elizabeth N. Bean Foundation, the Bishop’s Charitable Assistance Fund, Samuel P. Hunt Foundation and the Arthur L. Getz Charitable Trust.

Patrick Tufts, President and CEO of Heritage United Way added that more than \$200,000 has been pledged so far. “We are happy with the way that the provider organizations, donors, and the City of Manchester have joined forces to create this collaborative opportunity,” Tufts said.

If you or your company would like to make a donation, there are many items needed, such as **coats, larger-sized hats and gloves, socks, boots, backpacks, blankets, pens, datebooks, disposable razors, city bus passes, snack foods, flashlights and long underwear.** Volunteers are also needed.

Please call Susan Howland at (603) 625-6939, extension 17, for more information, to volunteer with Project Homeless Connect, or to get involved in other ways.