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**City of Miami Mayor Manny Diaz Announces
a 50% Reduction of Homeless Individuals in Six Months**
-The City is Recognized by the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness-



Caption: (L-R):David Raymond, Executive Director of the Miami-Dade Homeless Trust, Phillip Mangano, Executive Director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, Miami Mayor Manny Diaz; Wayne Davis, formerly lived on the street and is now a home owner and a City of Miami employee. Photo: Jorge R. Perez/City of Miami.



Caption: Armando Fana, Field Director for U.S. Department of HUD; Phillip Mangano, Executive Director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness; Miami Mayor Manny Diaz; Wayne Davis, former homeless now working for the City of Miami; Dr. Paul Ahr, President, Camillus House; David Raymond, Executive Director of the Miami-Dade Homeless Trust and Michael German, Regional Coordinator, U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness celebrate the partnership's efforts to end homelessness/Photo: Jorge R. Perez/City of Miami.

(Miami, Florida) – City of Miami Mayor Manny Diaz, joined by Phillip Mangano, Executive Director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness; Dr. Paul Ahr, President, Camillus House; David Raymond, Executive Director of the Miami-Dade Homeless Trust; and formerly homeless residents of the community joined for an announcement about the successful reduction of homeless individuals during a press conference held today at Somerville Residences. The most recent homeless count conducted by the City’s Homeless Assistance Program has indicated an unprecedented drop in the number of homeless persons in the City of Miami, from 841 in July of 2006 to 417 in January of 2007. **This represents a 50% decrease in the number of homeless persons in less than a year.**

In addition to the overall drop in homelessness, the count also resulted in a **27% drop in chronic homelessness**, a population of mostly severely mentally ill or chronic substance abusers that has generally been on the streets for a very long time and is likely to have a previous history of institutionalization.

“Chronic homelessness in our community is a difficult issue to deal with but we can take comfort from the fact that we have made great strides in the last few years to reduce homelessness,” said **Miami Mayor Manny Diaz**. “There is a common denominator in all of our partners and that is the tremendous sense of passion that I have seen from helping the most vulnerable citizen in the community and for giving them the opportunity to become members of our society to live in a dignified life and have a shot at self sufficiency.”

During the press conference, Mayor Diaz and Mr. Mangano highlighted the importance of public/private partnerships such as that of Bank of America who just one week ago donated \$1 million towards the creation of Camillus House new center in the Miami Health District.

“I am proud to announce an increase in funding from \$16 million to close to \$25 million with the one goal, one objective, one mission to end the social and moral wrong of homelessness in this city, in this county, and in this nation,” **Phillip Mangano, Executive Director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness** said. “The City of Miami is at the forefront putting an end to homelessness by welcoming your homeless neighbors. It is about time we affirm that we want to be tolerant of homeless people but intolerant of homelessness in our community.”

The City of Miami Homeless Assistance Program (MHAP) was created 1992 to provide outreach, assessment, placement, information, referral and transportation services to homeless individuals and families in a caring and professional manner. The program employs 30 mostly formerly homeless men and women. Among services provided by MHAP are: emergency shelter placement, indoor feeding program (*165,410 individuals fed in 2006*), specialized hospital discharge planning, drug and alcohol abuse treatment referrals, and mental health assessments and treatment referrals.

In addition to MHAP, there are several organizations that work together to successfully transition homeless individuals into permanent housing while providing them with the necessary tools to become healthy and productive members of the community. Those organizations include: Camillus House, Partnership for the Homeless, Miami-Dade Homeless Trust. Services provided through these agencies include overnight shelter, indoor feeding program, drug and alcohol abuse treatment referrals, and mental assessments and treatments.

“We look forward at the continued partnerships and efforts of helping our homeless become part of our society,” said **Dr. Paul Ahr, President, Camillus House**. “We welcome all those individuals want to help others or need help in transitioning from homelessness to the workforce.

Somerville Residence, where the press conference took place, began its operations in April of 2001, offering permanent, affordable housing for 47 families, offering one-two, and three-bedroom units. The program is designed to provide support during a transition period from homelessness to the workforce.

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