



November 11, 2016

Mayor's Challenge to End Veterans Homelessness – Eugene, Oregon

Key Accomplishments

- Creation of Operation 365, which made the challenge tangible by setting the goal of housing one veteran every day for one year.
- 404 veterans housed, plus over 50 additional veterans who were assisted with services or one-time funding that prevented imminent homelessness.
- New collaboration between several entities leveraged a \$3 million Supportive Services for Veterans grant from the VA which is helping with financial assistance and case management.
- Creation of a single registry of homeless veterans in the community, with information shared across agencies.
- Creation of a Single Room Occupancy conversion program, Eugene's unique response to creating a path for converting single family homes into locations for homeless veterans.
- Funding to assist Housing Our Veterans creation of several SRO conversions, now housing over 60 veterans.
- Creation of a 12 month position at the City of Eugene focused solely on Operation 365 to convene providers, identify and fill gaps and provide direct assistance to veterans.
- Convene weekly collaboration meetings between providers to target service gaps or the needs of individual veterans.
- Created tools and incentives for property owners and managers to assist them with housing veterans. Mayor Piercy and Commissioner Farr reached out to over 1,000 property managers via letter.
- Creation of the Operation 365 Fund, an opportunity for community members to contribute funds that could be used to assist veterans at risk of imminent homelessness with one-time expenses such as first and last monthly deposits and bus passes.
- Convening of a community summit attended by nearly 100 people to help create new connections between entities and jump start new initiatives.
- Funding of tuitions for veterans for the local Second Chance program (SVDP), which helps people learn about becoming successful and responsible tenants once they are ready to move into housing.
- Creation of a Veterans Safe Spot with Conestoga huts as a temporary housing option (at the Eugene Mission).
- Creation of a Veterans Services contact sheet that listed all local services in one place for the first time.

Key Partners

- Lane County
- City of Eugene
- St. Vincent de Paul
- Housing and Community Services Agency of Lane County (HACSA)
- Community Supported Shelters
- Eugene Mission
- Housing Our Veterans
- Veterans Affairs Behavioral Health Reintegration and Recovery Services (BHRRS)

Success Stories

- S. did not meet the SSVF threshold for Homeless Prevention financial assistance. He received an eviction notice and with case management provided by the SSVF housing specialist, was approved almost immediately for another apartment, but could not afford the deposit. Although he worked full time, he was only making minimum wage. With \$715 in Operation 365 funds, he moved into a Vet-LIFT subsidized apartment, near his place of employment, where he continues to bike to work daily.
- R. stayed in the Vet Safe Spot while he awaited a disability hearing. It took 5 months to get the hearing. Staying at the mission wasn't a possibility because he could not go up and down stairs. After being in the camp for six months, R. got his disability income and was able to move out on his own.
- D., new to Lane County after escaping domestic violence in Portland with her eight year old son, did not qualify for assistance from Womenspace because she had been able to stay with family for a while. She did not qualify for SSVF because she was "couch surfing." She started a full time job and was approved for an apartment, but did not have the full deposit saved. With \$879 in Operation 365 funds, she was able to move into her own place in February.
- R. and his wife are both disabled. He has had two hip replacements and she suffered a skull fracture three years ago, causing her to lose her job. They were assisted by the SSVF in 2013, and moved into a second story apartment. They returned to us in March of this year, because a ground floor apartment had opened up and they were really struggling with the stairs in their current unit (they use a walker and a cane, respectively). One of the parameters of the program states that the SSVF cannot pay a deposit twice for any one client. Operation 365 funds of \$300 to move downstairs and there is no longer any safety risk to either of them.