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EDITOR'S NOTE: MAYOR LICCARDO & DESTINATION: HOME WILL BE OFFICIALLY KICKING-OFF THE HOUSING ONE HERO INITIATIVE THIS MORNING. MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND:

8:30 AM – 9:30 AM

GateWay City Church

5883 Eden Park Plaza, San Jose, CA 95138

City, Non-Profit & Faith Leaders Launch “Housing One Hero” Initiative

Collaborative effort seeks to enlist local faith-based organizations in the campaign to end veteran homelessness in Santa Clara County

San Jose, Calif. – Mayor Sam Liccardo joined local non-profit and faith leaders this morning to kick-off Housing One Hero: an initiative to engage local faith-based organizations in the campaign to end veteran homelessness in Santa Clara County.

“We have a moral obligation to ensure that nobody who faithfully served our country has to live without a roof over their heads,” said Mayor Liccardo. “By leveraging the passion and inspiration of our local faith organizations, we can make great strides in our drive to end veteran homelessness in our community.”

The Housing One Hero initiative is based on a simple premise: enlisting each of the 250+ local faith-based organizations in Santa Clara County to commit to securing housing for one homeless veteran in our community. Faith-based organizations can achieve this goal in a number of ways, such as:

- Convincing a local landlord to accept a federal housing voucher that helps a veteran cover the monthly rent for an apartment.
- Designating church-owned property or housing to support homeless veterans.
- Identifying congregation members with unoccupied rooms or units that could be used to house a homeless veteran.
- Renting an apartment and then subleasing the unit to a homeless veteran.

Already, 15 faith-based organizations have committed to secure housing for at least one homeless veteran, including: GateWay City Church, Evergreen Valley Church, Cathedral of Faith, Hope101.org and Jubilee.

“Churches and faith-based organizations can play a crucial part in ending veteran homelessness,” said David Cannistraci, Lead Pastor of Gateway City Church. “There are 260 homeless vets right here in our community who already have a federally-subsidized housing voucher but can’t find a landlord willing to rent to them. If the faith-based community steps up, we can house each and every one of them.”

While the primary goal is to identify housing options, the Housing One Hero initiative is also seeking assistance from faith organizations to fulfill other needs, such as helping furnish apartments identified for veteran housing, conducting outreach to connect homeless veterans with resources and services, and inviting homeless veterans to participate in a faith organization's community.

The Housing One Hero initiative is one component of the All the Way Home campaign being co-led by Destination: Home, Mayor Liccardo and Santa Clara County Supervisor Dave Cortese, with a goal of housing all 700+ homeless veterans in Santa Clara County by the 100th anniversary of Veterans Day in 2018.

"The faith community is critical to our community's work in ending veteran homelessness," said Jennifer Loving, Executive Director of Destination: Home "They not only can help house a veteran, but can provide the community and emotional support. A house is four walls and a roof, but a home is so much more, and our faith partners can help us make sure all veterans have a home."

There are more than 700 homeless veterans in Santa Clara County, close to half of whom are considered chronically homeless. Approximately 260 of these veterans have federal housing vouchers that can help subsidize the cost of housing; however, with vacancy rates at an all-time low, it is increasingly difficult for veterans to find a unit to rent.

For more information on the Housing One Hero initiative, and the broader All the Way Home campaign, please visit: <http://destinationhomesc.org/allthewayhome>.

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