

For Immediate Release

January 24, 2012

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Hundreds of Volunteers Turn Out for San Mateo County's Homeless Census

Belmont, Calif. - In the early morning hours of January 24, over 200 volunteers set out on foot and in cars to count the number of homeless individuals and families in San Mateo County. Working out of 12 deployment sites, the volunteers covered every county census tract in four hours.

The data from the census will be used to leverage federal funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for homeless shelters and prevention services in San Mateo County. The findings are also used to design strategies to reduce homelessness through the San Mateo County HOPE (Housing Our People Effectively) Committee. The two co-chairs of the HOPE Committee, Board President Don Horsley and Supervisor Warren Slocum, along with their staff and staff from the offices of Assemblymember Rich Gordon and Supervisors Dave Pine, Carole Groom and Adrienne J. Tissier, participated in the data-gathering effort.

"Homelessness is a complex issue that requires broad understanding and recognition. It was great to see such tremendous community support to end homelessness and to provide all members of our community, a better quality of life," said Horsley, who counted a tract in San Carlos.

"As a new supervisor and chair of the HOPE Committee, the census gave me the opportunity to see just how difficult life is for a homeless individual. Even as our economy recovers, there are still too many who do not have the resources to afford housing," said Slocum.

Working in trained teams, the volunteers counted all the homeless individuals, families and encampments they could see from the street. Additional data about the homeless population will be contributed by shelter providers, medical facilities and park rangers. A full report, including qualitative survey data, will be released by the Human Services Agency's Center on Homelessness in May 2013.

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County of San Mateo, Human Services Agency

The County of San Mateo, Human Services Agency assists individuals and families to achieve economic self-sufficiency, promotes community and family strength, and works to ensure child safety and well-being.