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Non-Profit Housing Organizations Host San Jose Candidate Forum

Forum will be located in a shelter and homeless advocates will be given time to ask candidates questions

SAN JOSE, Calif. – April 18, 2016 – Today Destination: Home, HomeFirst, The Health Trust, LifeMoves and Abode Services announce they will host a candidate forum on April 18th at the Boccardo Reception Center on Little Orchard Street. Katherine Harasz, Executive Director of the Housing Authority of the County of Santa Clara will serve as forum moderator.

As homelessness and lack of affordable housing are persistently among the highest concerns in San Jose, organizers felt a forum would be the best way for the public to learn the candidates' views on these critical matters. While the forum will not be limited to topics on housing, the event will be an opportunity for the community to understand how candidates would approach challenging policy issues if elected to office.

According to Jennifer Loving, Executive Director of Destination: Home, "This forum will serve as an educational resource to San Jose residents who are concerned about housing, poverty, homelessness and other pressing local issues are affecting our community. We look forward to hearing the candidates' views on crucial issues facing the City."

Currently, San Jose has a homeless population of over 4,000, including 3,660 unsheltered persons, many of whom are families, unaccompanied youth and veterans. Nationwide, San

Jose ranks as the 10th largest homeless population. As massive as these numbers are, there has been a 6.5% decline in homelessness in the last couple of years. Progress is attributed to an increased focus by the County of Santa Clara and City of San Jose on solutions related to ending homelessness.

The location for the event is Santa Clara County's largest nightly homeless shelter with 250 beds, on site medical clinic, case managers, employment and housing specialists, veterans' center, kitchen and dining areas. The forum will take place in the courtyard.

Andrea Urton, Executive Director of HomeFirst, who oversees the Boccardo Reception Center in which the forum will be held, says "hosting the forum at a shelter and giving homeless advocates an opportunity to ask questions will provide candidates and the public a first-hand understanding of the issues facing homeless men and women."

There are five Council Districts up for election in 2016, including districts 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10. All candidates who have filed to run in these seats have been invited to participate. The event is non-partisan by definition and no endorsements will be made. The format will be panel style, where all candidates will have equal opportunity to be asked the same questions with equal time to answer. A voter registration table will be also present to assist non-voters in becoming registered.

Space is limited at this event. 15 candidates are participating and over 100 people have confirmed attendance. To RSVP for the forum or contact the event organizations, members of the public may email Destination: Home at info@destinationhomesc.org or call 408-513-8720.

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About Destination: Home

Destination: Home, a program of The Health Trust, is a public-private partnership implementing collective impact strategies to end homelessness in Santa Clara County. Destination: Home drives and aligns resources to create permanent housing and sustainable support systems built for the long term. In this role, Destination: Home's Board also serves as the HUD Continuum of Care Board for the San Jose /Santa Clara City and County Metropolitan. Their website is <http://destinationhomesc.org/>

About HomeFirst

Formerly EHC LifeBuilders, HomeFirst has been helping the homeless in Santa Clara County since 1980. Last year, they served more than 4,000 individuals, veterans, families with children, and youth at sites across the County. They believe that everyone has the potential to get housed and stay house. Using successful "Housing First" strategies, they place into their own

homes as quickly as possible with support services, so they can stay housed permanently. Their website is <http://www.homefirstscc.org/>.

About The Health Trust

The Health Trust's programs include direct services, grant making and policy advocacy. The Health Trust is organized under three initiatives: Healthy Eating, Healthy Aging and Healthy Living. Their work also includes Destination Home, a public-private partnership galvanizing our community to end homelessness in Santa Clara County. Their website is healthtrust.org/

About LifeMoves

LifeMoves is dedicated to providing interim housing and supportive services that create opportunities for homeless families, individuals and veterans to rapidly return to stable housing and long-term self-sufficiency. LifeMoves programs combat by teaching comprehensive life skills that help their clients achieve long-term self-sufficiency, and effectively break the cycle of homelessness. Their website is <http://lifemoves.org/>

About Abode Services

Abode Services develops and implements innovative programs to end homelessness. Their agency is built on the principles of Housing First, a proven approach that has demonstrated results far superior to the traditional approaches to homelessness. Their website is <http://www.abodeservices.org/>.