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Local Veterans Invited to Attend Game 4 of Stanley Cup Finals

Local veterans affiliated with the “All the Way Home” veteran homelessness campaign to view Game 4 from the City of San Jose’s box suite

SAN JOSE, Calif. – June 6, 2016 – Approximately two dozen local veterans will have their service honored today by receiving the unique opportunity to attend Game 4 of the Stanley Cup Finals at the SAP Center.

The attending veterans are all affiliated with “All the Way Home”, a campaign led by San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo, Santa Clara County Supervisor Dave Cortese and Destination: Home to end veteran homelessness in the region by the 100th anniversary of Veterans Day in 2018.

The veterans will be watching the game from the City of San Jose’s box, which is used to honor and recognize local residents involved in programs and projects that benefit the community. The request to invite veterans affiliated with the All the Way Home campaign was made by Mayor Liccardo and the San Jose Arena Authority, the organization tasked with oversight of SAP Center operations and use of the City’s box at the arena.

Jennifer Loving, Executive Director of Destination: Home says, "We are honored by the Mayor's commitment to ending veteran homelessness and recognizing those who have sacrificed so much in service to our nation."

"This is a nice opportunity to say 'thank you' to the men and women of our armed forces, particularly those who faced and overcame challenges after returning home from their service," says Mayor Sam Liccardo. "However, there's still much more work to do. We have a moral obligation to ensure that everyone who faithfully served our country has a roof over their heads."

All the Way Home was launched by co-chairs Mayor Liccardo and Supervisor Cortese in response to First Lady Michelle Obama's Challenge to U.S Mayors and elected officials. Both the Mayor and Supervisor took the federal pledge to end veteran homelessness and have fought for local resources to meet the goal of housing over 700 homeless veterans countywide. Since having launched on Veteran's Day 2015, faith based organizations, landlords, and corporations have stepped up to join the cause to house those who served our country. Many veterans who were living on the streets now have a home and a new beginning.

The invited veterans include homeless and formerly homeless veterans involved with All The Way Home as well as veterans working in our All The Way Home partner organizations. They were selected by organizations collaborating on the All the Way Home campaign, including: Goodwill Silicon Valley; HomeFirst; Sunnyvale Community Services; Veterans Resource Centers and the U.S Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Veterans attending tonight's game include an Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) Army veteran who tried 26 times before finding success in using his Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing voucher approved by the VA, a recent combat veteran who found himself homeless and now works at HomeFirst helping others is also in attendance, along with a former homeless veteran who served in the Middle East and is currently an active Outreach specialist at Goodwill Silicon Valley. We also have two veterans here tonight who were just housed, including a veteran who was housed last week by HomeFirst and another housed on Saturday who is a client of Sunnyvale Community Services.

Since November, there have been 131 Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program lease ups and we now have 206 veterans searching for VASH housing, down from 260. From January 1st to March 1st, 130 veterans have been housed through rapid rehousing and 22 faith-based organizations have signed onto the campaign to end veteran homelessness.

“We will continue fighting for the plight of homeless veterans in our community and the All the Way Home campaign until all homeless veterans in our community are finally home,” added Jennifer Loving. “We still have over 200 veterans voucher holders that need a landlord tonight and the community can help us by renting to a veteran today.”

The All the Way Home campaign is in search of additional faith based organizations and landlords willing to house homeless veteran vouchers holders and can provide incentives. Corporations may provide support and sponsorship. Those interested in learning more about what you can do to join the All the Way Home Campaign to house homeless veterans please go to www.AllTheWayHomeCampaign.org or contact maya@destinationhomesc.org.

Press Availability: Veterans mentioned in this release and attending the game will be available for press interviews starting at 4pm tonight at SAP Center and outside in the parking lot for those who don't have credentials inside the stadium. Please contact All the Way Home Director, Maya Esparza at 408-781-3669 for onsite interviews.

About Destination: Home

Destination: Home, a program of The Health Trust, is a public-private partnership that uses collective impact strategies to accomplish its mission, ending homelessness in Santa Clara County. Destination: Home is the lead organization coordinating the **All the Way Home Campaign** to end veteran Homelessness. The website is <http://destinationhomesc.org/>.

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