

Coordinating Resources and Developing Strategies to Address the Needs of Homeless Veterans

February 2002



U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Community Planning and Development Office

Acknowledgements

This guidebook was prepared by Abt Associates Inc. under Contract G-OPC-21198, Task Order 9 for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Community Planning and Development. The primary authors of this report are Jennifer Turnham, Caryn Nagler, and Sarah Churchill. Mary Joel Holin served as the Technical Reviewer. Jennifer Berrien, Ty Hardaway, and Claudia Solari provided the background research. Jeff Smith managed the guidebook production.

The authors acknowledge the thoughtful guidance and support provided by HUD staff Michael Roanhouse, the Government Technical Monitor and Mary Kay Bransford, the Government Technical Representative. Mark Johnston and John Garrity of the same office provided useful technical review. The authors also thank William Pittman, Director of HUD's Veteran Resource Center, for his contributions.

The authors wish to thank other Federal agency staff who provided us with contacts and information on funding resources available to homeless assistance providers serving veterans. Peter Dougherty at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and Stanley Seidel at the Department of Labor were particularly helpful in identifying promising projects for us to consult. At the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, we consulted with Fran Randolph (Center for Mental Health Services) and Jean Hochron (Healthcare for the Homeless) and their staff. In addition, we thank Richard Schneider of the Non-Commissioned Officers Association and Sharon Hodge of Vietnam Veterans of America for sharing their insights with us.

We especially acknowledge the support provided by our subcontractor, the Maryland Center for Veterans Education and Training, and Executive Director Colonel Charles Williams, USA (Retired), who assisted in all stages of guidebook development, from its earliest conception to the final review.

The authors of this report are deeply grateful to the project administrators we consulted about "promising practices" at 26 projects located around the nation. This guidebook would not have been possible without their detailed descriptions of lessons learned on strategies for resource coordination. We thank them for generously sharing their time, experiences, and wisdom with us.





Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	1
WHY FOCUS ON HOMELESS VETERANS?.....	1
WHO ARE HOMELESS VETERANS?	1
WHO SERVES HOMELESS VETERANS?	2
HOW ARE HOMELESS VETERANS BEST SERVED?	2
WHO FUNDS THESE PROJECTS?	2
HOW IS THIS GUIDEBOOK ORGANIZED?	3
CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT SITES	5
PROJECT LOCATION.....	5
PROJECT SIZE	6
TARGET POPULATION.....	7
TYPE OF HOUSING PROVIDED.....	7
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES	8
PROJECT RESOURCES	9
PROJECT STAFFING.....	10
OUTCOME MEASURES.....	11
CHAPTER 2: STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE RESOURCE COORDINATION	13
PARTNERING WITH THE VA	15
PARTNERING WITH VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS.....	16
PARTNERING WITH COMMUNITY AND/OR FAITH-BASED HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS.....	18
PARTNERING WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT AND LEGAL ASSISTANCE ORGANIZATIONS....	20
PARTNERING WITH EMPLOYERS, EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS.....	22
PARTNERING WITH LOCAL SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES.....	23
CHAPTER 3: PROMISING PRACTICES AMONG PROJECTS SERVING HOMELESS VETERANS	25
MODELS OF SERVICE DELIVERY	25
EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING INITIATIVES.....	27
ADDRESSING CLIENTS' LONG-TERM NEEDS	29
MAKING THE MOST OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.....	31
SERVING HOMELESS VETERANS IN RURAL AREAS.....	32
SERVING FEMALE VETERANS.....	34
APPENDIX I: SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR PROJECTS SERVING HOMELESS VETERANS	37
APPENDIX II: OTHER RESOURCES AND CONTACTS.....	47





Introduction

This guidebook highlights projects around the country that are effectively coordinating HUD funding with other resources in order to address the special needs of homeless veterans. The purpose of the guidebook is to help inform those who are currently operating homeless assistance projects about “promising practices” in serving veteran clients as well as to provide useful models for those who are interested in developing a project to serve homeless veterans in their community.



Why focus on homeless veterans?

Veterans make up a significant portion of the adult homeless population in the United States. Recent studies estimate that veterans comprise about 23 percent of all homeless adults, and 33 percent of homeless men.¹ Although few large-scale studies exist of homeless female veterans, they are believed to make up approximately two percent of the population of homeless veterans.

Who are homeless veterans?

Most homeless veterans (98 percent) are single men. Roughly consistent with the general population of homeless men, about 40 percent of homeless veterans suffer from mental illness, and 80 percent have alcohol or other drug abuse problems (with considerable overlap in these populations). Yet unlike the general population, homeless male veterans are more likely to be White non-Hispanic, older (45+ years), and more educated than their non-veteran counterparts. They are also more likely to have longer episodes of homelessness.

Compared to homeless male veterans, homeless female veterans tend to be younger, more likely to be married, and less likely to be employed. They are also more likely to suffer from serious psychiatric illness, but less likely to have a substance abuse disorder. With respect to substance abuse and mental illness, homeless female veterans do not appear to be significantly different from other homeless women.²



Who serves homeless veterans?

There are hundreds of non-profit, community-based, and faith-based organizations serving homeless veterans around the country today. It should be noted that of the 26 organizations that were interviewed for this guidebook, almost three-quarters serve only veterans or target veterans specifically, while the remaining organizations serve a broader mix of homeless individuals and families. While there is an emphasis on the veteran-specific projects in this guidebook, many of the strategies discussed here can be adapted by projects that serve veterans as part of the broader community of homeless individuals. As such, this guidebook is intended to be useful to all different types of homeless assistance projects that serve veterans.

How are homeless veterans best served?

A range of opinions and practices exists among homeless assistance providers regarding the types of strategies and services best suited to homeless veterans. Largely because of their military experience – and perhaps because the majority are likely to be older or to have had longer episodes of homelessness – it is reasonable to expect that homeless veterans will require different services or approaches to move toward greater stability and independence. Many organizations believe that homeless veterans respond more positively to programs that draw on the fellowship, discipline, and mutual commitment developed in the military, and have structured their services accordingly. Others do not employ a military structure per se, but believe that providing housing and services in an all-veteran environment is most effective. Still other organizations have chosen to serve homeless veterans among the broader population of homeless individuals and families, emphasizing the shared characteristics of mental illness, substance abuse, and the need for employment as being more important than their experiences as veterans.

Who funds these projects?

A variety of Federal, state, and local entities currently fund the provision of housing and supportive services to homeless veterans. These include the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL); the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS); the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); a variety of Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs); and numerous private foundations.



How is this guidebook organized?

Chapter 1 describes the 26 projects consulted for the development of this guidebook. It discusses patterns found among these projects with respect to project location, project size, target population, housing and services provided, project resources, staffing, and outcome measures. Chapter 2 introduces strategies for effective resource coordination and profiles particular project examples. Chapter 3 reviews promising practices identified among the projects, including those related to models of service delivery, employment and training initiatives, addressing clients' long-term needs, making the most of the Board of Directors, serving homeless veterans in rural areas, and serving female veterans. Appendices I and II provide information about funding sources, other useful resources, and contact information for the projects that participated in the development of this guidebook.





Chapter 1: Overview of the Project Sites

This section introduces the project sites consulted for the development of this guidebook. A total of 26 project sites were interviewed by telephone. The map on the following page shows the locations of these projects across the country.



The projects were identified through various channels, including consultations with staff from Federal agencies and veterans' service organizations.

Participation in a telephone conference call of VA's Grant and Per Diem funding recipients also yielded some recommendations. The guidebook does not attempt to capture the universe of "promising practices" with respect to serving homeless veterans, and assumes that there are many additional project examples not included here. The absence of any particular project does not signify a commentary on the quality of the services it provides.

Basic background information on each project was collected through the telephone interviews. The characteristics presented here include project location, size, target population, type of housing provided, supportive services, project resources, project staffing, and outcome measures.

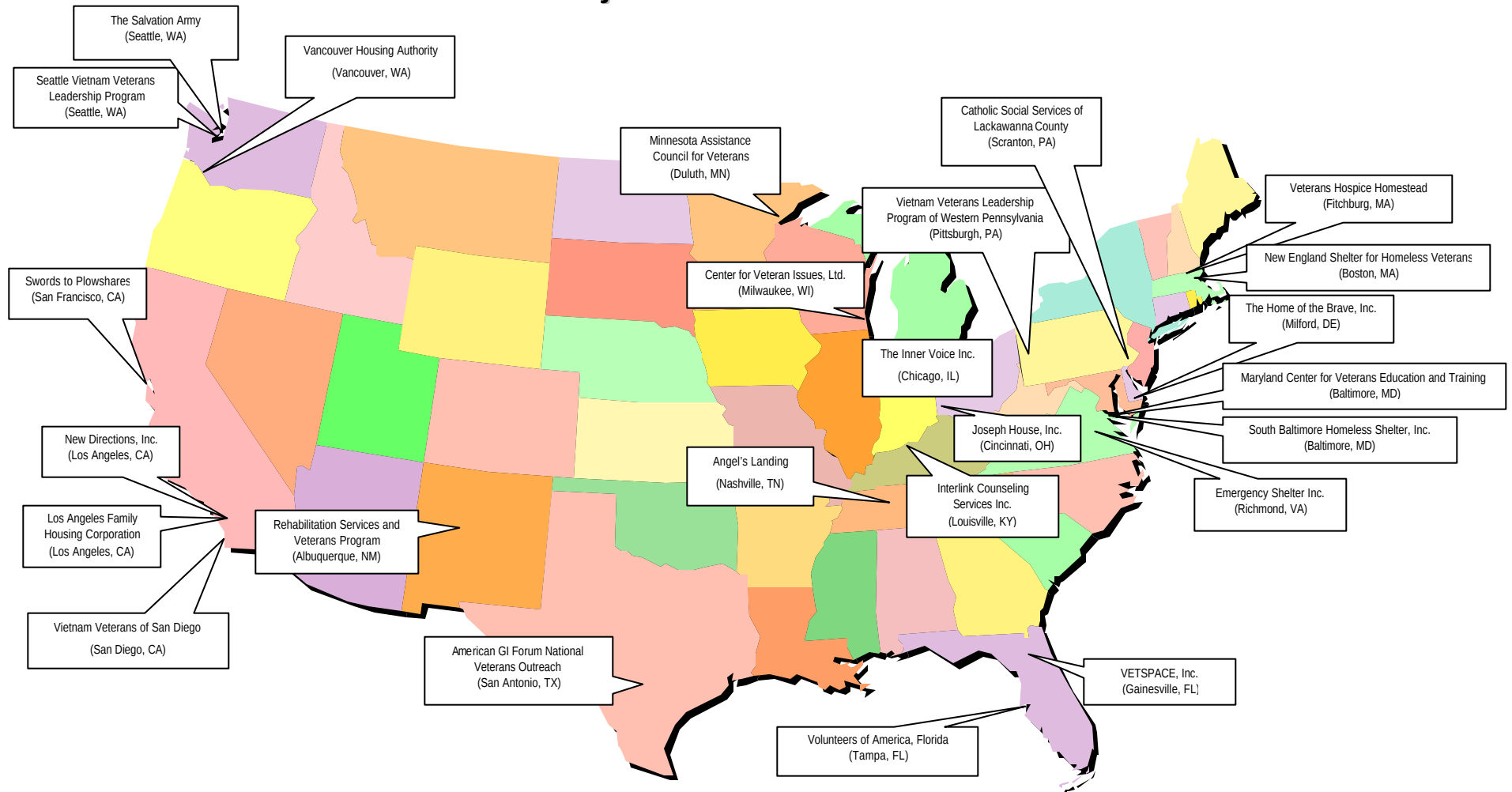
Project Location

The project sites are distributed across the country, with nine (35 percent) located in the West, nine (35 percent) in the South, four (15 percent) in the Northeast, and four (15 percent) in the Midwest. California has the largest number of projects located in a single state, making up five (or 19 percent) of the projects interviewed. This is followed by the state of Washington with three sites.

The vast majority (88 percent) of project sites consulted are located in urban settings. Only three projects interviewed served rural areas of the country, but given their unique settings, these projects were among the more innovative models of service delivery.



Project Sites Interviewed



Sources of Federal Funding for Project Sites

- **23 of the 26 project sites receive funding from HUD programs**, including *Supportive Housing Program*, *Emergency Shelter Grants Program*, and *Shelter Plus Care Program*.
- **24 of the 26 project sites receive funding from VA programs**, the majority through the *Grant and Per Diem Program*.
- Project sites also receive funding from the Department of Labor, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Project Size

The size of local projects varied greatly in terms of the project capacity (as measured by the number of beds available at any given point in time), the annual budget, and the number of staff employed. The smallest project interviewed has the capacity to serve two homeless veterans (with plans for expansion) and the largest project can serve up to 400 homeless veterans at any given time.

In terms of budget size, the smallest annual budget reported is \$90,000 (for a non-residential project) and the largest is \$10 million (for a large agency that devotes approximately 75 percent of that amount to its veteran projects). While about 40 percent of projects are working with an annual budget over \$1 million, 30 percent operate with less than \$250,000.

Staff size also varied greatly. One of the largest projects employs a staff of 132, with 40 employed part-time. The smallest project has one part-time project manager who is assisted by a graduate student intern and an active pool of volunteer staff. On average, the project sites have a staff of 22 people and typically a quarter to a half of those are hired on a part-time basis.

Target Population

Some projects target homeless veterans with particular needs. While all of the projects deal with substance abuse and mental illness issues among residents, some only allow participants to enter upon completion of a substance abuse treatment program or a certain period of sobriety. There are also projects that have opted not to accept veterans directly discharged from prison or with dishonorable discharges.

Other target populations include veterans with chronic mental illnesses or dual diagnosis, one project serving terminally ill veterans, one project serving only female veterans, and one project that targets elderly homeless veterans.

Type of Housing Provided

Virtually all of the projects interviewed provide some form of transitional housing to homeless veteran clients and almost half of the projects offer permanent housing, such as that supported by HUD's Shelter Plus Care or Section 8 SRO programs. One large project reserves a portion of its allotment of Section 8 vouchers for use by veterans ready to exit their project.

Most sites depend on a network of referrals and community partnerships to ensure the veteran client will transition successfully from homelessness to



permanent housing. Five of the projects consulted, however, offer the complete continuum of care that includes emergency shelter, transitional housing, and permanent housing.

Supportive Services

The provision of supportive services is an essential component to an effective homeless assistance project. All of the projects interviewed do whatever they can to link clients to the supportive services they need to make a meaningful transition from homelessness to a stable and productive life. Some of the projects are equipped with the staff and resources to meet these needs through direct provision of services on site. Other projects have established partnerships within their communities and depend upon these relationships for referring their clients to providers of supportive services elsewhere. Typically, projects offer a combination of both these models.

There was little variance among projects in terms of the supportive services that they provide (either through referrals or direct service provision). These include: food and clothing; case management; housing assistance; life skills training; adult education; employment and training services; legal assistance; veterans' benefits assistance; transportation; general health care; health care and support groups for substance abuse, mental health, and HIV/AIDS; discharge planning; and follow-up counseling.

Some patterns in the delivery of services are worth noting. Almost all of the projects interviewed reported that they rely heavily on the VA for health services, including treatment for substance abuse, mental health, and HIV/AIDS. This explains why assisting clients to register with the VA and, if necessary, to obtain a discharge upgrade is a critical step for most projects wishing to take advantage of the VA services offered to veterans with honorable discharges. In addition to referring clients to the VA for treatment, many projects offer on site support groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous. Only three projects have medical clinics on site and two projects are co-located with a VA medical center. In cases where clients do not qualify for VA services, projects generally refer veterans to other medical care within their community.

While the vast majority of projects offer some form of life skills and employment training to clients on site, most projects refer clients to other providers for GED or other structured education classes. For legal assistance and services related to accessing veteran benefits, there seems to be an even split between those projects that depend on a system of referrals and those that have created the capacity for delivering these services on site.



Discharge planning, or establishing an exit plan for each client, helps to ensure access to adequate follow-up services and greatly reduces the chance a client will relapse into drug or alcohol abuse upon leaving the project. There was disparity among the project sites in terms of the type and level of discharge planning provided. At some sites, project case managers are responsible for developing simple exit plans for clients. Other projects place a great deal of emphasis on this service, require that clients participate in the process, and employ a professional “discharge planner” or utilize a team approach to developing a detailed exit plan for each client. For more information on discharge planning, see examples provided in the section “Addressing Clients’ Long-Term Needs” in Chapter 3.

There is also a range in the extent to which projects follow up with former clients. Typically, projects try to track former clients at intervals of 30, 60, and 90 days and again after one year. Some projects attempt to follow up with graduates for up to five years. One project even charges a \$25 fee to those who fail to cooperate with project follow-up in the first year. A few projects have organized alumni support groups or relapse prevention groups to assist with client follow-up. Most projects recognize the need to provide follow-up services to their former clients (typically for 6 months to a year) given the frequency of relapse, and many espouse a “once a client, always a client” philosophy.

Project Resources

Since the goal of this guidebook is to present “promising practices” in the area of resource coordination, it is no surprise that the projects included were particularly well versed in the area of fundraising. The projects interviewed were very successful at securing financial support from a variety of funding sources.

In terms of Federal grants, by far the most common funding sources for the projects are HUD’s Supportive Housing Program (SHP) and VA’s Grant and Per Diem Program (GPD). Twenty-three of the 26 project sites reported receiving some form of HUD funding, while 24 sites reported receiving funding from the VA. Twenty-two of the sites (86 percent) reported receiving funds from both these sources. Fewer projects (7) receive monies from the DOL grant programs. Other Federal agencies funding projects in the sample are Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), but only a few projects had received funds from these.

Well over half of the projects reported funding from state, city, or local funding sources. These include state departments of veteran services, labor, homeless services, or vocational rehabilitation. Community development block grants that are channeled through local jurisdictions are also supporting some of the project sites.



Nearly all (21) of the project sites receive funds from private sources, including foundations or individual contributions. Of these, many depend upon financial and in-kind donations from the broad array of Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs), including the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Disabled American Veterans.

Project Staffing

Clearly, a project's staff is the vehicle by which the organization accomplishes its mission. All of the projects interviewed recognized the importance of a skilled and committed staff. For the most part, the project sites have similar staffing patterns. While the number of staff differ across sites according to the overall project size, all of the projects interviewed combine full-time positions with part-time positions.

The majority of sites (66 percent) noted the importance of employing veterans on staff. The presence of veterans within the project structure not only gives the project credibility and recognition within the veteran community, it also establishes a comfort level for veteran clients. Among projects employing a "military model" for service delivery, many believe a veteran staff is critical to the overall project design. However, as organizations grow they tend also to place value on recruiting staff with relevant professional qualifications such as a counseling degree or license.

Indeed, many projects emphasize the need for advanced education and training qualifications among their staff. One third of the projects interviewed specifically hire licensed or certified social workers and alcohol/drug counselors to serve their client needs. Other projects seem to value social workers who may or may not be licensed, but who are veterans or have associations with the military. Still other projects prefer to secure staff with varied life experiences, who may have struggled in the past with homelessness or substance abuse.

Many employ project alumni as outreach workers, counselors, and property managers. These projects value highly the contributions made by formerly homeless veterans who serve as living testaments to successful project participation. Some projects even hire current residents who are ready to take on a job. Typically, current residents are paid for jobs in custodial work, kitchen help, or security.

In some form or another, more than half of the projects interviewed utilize volunteer staff to assist with a variety of project needs. Many of the volunteers are associated with the VSOs in the project's service area, local churches, or national service organizations such as AmeriCorps and VISTA. Other volunteers are interns or graduate students who provide support in the areas of case



management, legal assistance, and primary health care. They typically provide these services for free (or for a very low stipend) in return for the professional experiences they gain from such project exposure.

Yet another staff resource often comes from an organization's Board of Directors. Many projects interviewed purposely recruited Board members who could complement project staff responsibilities in the area of financial management, real estate development, architecture, legal administration, and fundraising. Most tried to ensure that their Board had adequate representation from the veterans' community, particularly from VSOs.

Outcome Measures

The projects monitor their progress by a variety of means and to varying degrees of complexity. However, most projects reported very similar outcome measures, including: total number of clients served; percent completing treatment; percent enrolled in education/training programs; percent placed in jobs; percent placed in permanent housing; change in income levels; and job retention rates.

Several projects receiving HUD grant funds mentioned the use of HUD's Annual Progress Report (APR) reporting requirements as the basis of their monitoring system. As established by HUD, the APR requires that a project report outcome measures in three major categories: 1) residential stability; 2) increased skills and/or income; and 3) progress toward self-determination. The measures include many of the same indicators that are listed above and enable organizations to formalize an annual review of project progress through the aggregation of client-level data.

A few projects have more elaborate ways of tracking progress at specific intervals of a client's advancement within a program of recovery and stabilization. For example, one project has set up benchmarks for client progress at intervals of 30, 60, and 90 days, and then again at one and two years after they have enrolled in the project.





Chapter 2: Strategies for Effective Resource Coordination

There is considerable variance in the structure of housing and supportive services provided by projects that serve homeless veterans. While some of these projects may provide only one type of housing to clients (for example, transitional housing), others offer the full continuum of housing options within their operations – from emergency shelter to transitional housing to permanent housing. Furthermore, the provision of supportive services may range from more limited on-site offerings augmented by referrals to local service providers, to a comprehensive on-site service component.



Regardless of their housing and service structure, projects serving homeless veterans all recognize the need to collaborate with a variety of Federal, state, and local organizations. The projects interviewed emphasized the benefits of developing a diverse set of funding partners, as well as internal sources of revenue – such as rental income or income from on-site employment initiatives – where possible. Having several different sources of funding helps to ensure the project’s long-term financial stability. In addition, because each funding source tends to have a different set of restrictions, developing a broad range of sources may be the only way to enable a project to serve its target population. As an example, VA funding is not available to serve homeless veterans with a less than honorable discharge. For projects that wish to serve all homeless veterans, regardless of discharge status, developing an alternative source of funding that does not share these restrictions is essential.

The principal sources of Federal funding for projects serving homeless veterans are presented on the next page. In addition, Appendix I to this guidebook provides detailed information on how to access funds from a range of funding sources, including Federal, state, and local government, Veterans Service Organizations, and private foundations.



Major Sources of Federal Funding for Projects Serving Homeless Veterans

- **Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD):** Through its Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs, HUD funds four programs that serve veteran and non-veteran homeless persons. These are: *Supportive Housing Program (SHP)*; *Shelter Plus Care (S+C)*; *Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Program*; and *Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG) Program*. These programs support a wide range of activities, including emergency, transitional, and permanent housing, the provision of supportive services, and project operating costs. For more information please visit <http://www.hud.gov/cpd/homeless.html>
- **Department of Veterans Affairs (VA):** The VA offers several programs and initiatives to assist homeless veterans, including *Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program*; *Homeless Chronically Mentally Ill (HCMI) Veterans Program*; and *Compensated Work Therapy/Transitional Residence (CWT/TR) Program*. For more information please visit <http://www.va.gov/homeless/>
- **Department of Labor (DOL):** DOL funding in support of homeless veterans consists primarily of employment and training services. The *Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project (HVRP)*, administered by DOL's Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS), was the first nationwide Federal program that focused on placing homeless veterans into jobs. HVRP provides grants to community-based organizations that employ flexible and innovative approaches to assist homeless veterans re-enter the workforce. For more information please visit <http://www.dol.gov/dol/vets/>
- **Department of Health and Human Services (HHS):** HHS' *Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) Program* is a formula grant program that funds the 50 states, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and four U.S. Territories to support service delivery to individuals with serious mental illnesses, as well as individuals with co-occurring substance use disorders, who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. For more information on PATH, please visit <http://www.prainc.com/nrc/path/index.shtml>. *Healthcare for the Homeless*, another HHS program, provides grants to community-based organizations in urban and rural areas to deliver health care to homeless persons. Emphasis is placed on coordinating efforts with other community health providers and social service agencies. For more information, please visit <http://bphc.hrsa.gov/>.
- **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA):** FEMA's *Emergency Food and Shelter Program* helps meet the needs of hungry and homeless people throughout the United States and its territories by allocating funds for the provision of food and shelter. These funds are disbursed to non-profit and local government agencies to supplement the assistance they are already providing. Please visit <http://www.efsp.unitedway.org/index.cfm>.



The remainder of this section provides examples of how organizations are using a variety of financial and programmatic resources to assist homeless veterans in obtaining the full range of needed services and benefits.

Partnering with the VA

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers a range of programs and initiatives to help homeless veterans live as self-sufficiently and independently as possible. These programs strive to offer a continuum of services that includes: outreach; clinical assessment and referral for physical, psychiatric, and substance abuse issues; long-term sheltered transitional assistance and case management; employment assistance; and supported permanent housing. Because it provides such a large, integrated network of homeless treatment and assistance, the VA is considered to be an essential partner for any organization serving homeless veterans.

Ways to Partner with the VA

- Lease unused VA land or facilities
- Refer clients to VA medical facilities for a full range of health care services
- Work with VA staff for referrals and guidance
- Contact VA for training and technical assistance in benefits counseling

The examples below illustrate some of the ways that organizations serving homeless veterans have benefited from partnering with the VA:



Emergency Shelter Inc., a nonprofit organization in Richmond, Virginia, began twenty years ago with several cots in a firehouse and has grown to provide a range of programs and services to homeless individuals and families. In 2000, Emergency Shelter partnered with the local VA hospital (the McGwire Center) to form the Homeless Veterans Transitional Housing Program (HVTHP). The McGwire Center provided a building free of cost on the hospital grounds to house the 26-bed program. Additionally, the McGwire Center supplies ongoing mental health and substance abuse counseling for the program's clients. Because program staff believe there are benefits to providing counseling in the residence itself, half of the counseling sessions take place there, with the balance taking place at the adjacent hospital. Emergency Shelter Inc. also joined the VA in a creative fundraising activity – a retired dietician from the McGwire Center published a cookbook, all the proceeds of which went to HVTHP.



Over the past six years, the Boston-based New England Shelter for Homeless Veterans has developed a very productive partnership with the VA. The Shelter has recently been working with the VA to transform unused buildings on VA medical campuses into single room occupancy (SRO) residences for homeless veterans. Two projects are currently under construction in the Boston area: a 60-unit project in Bedford and a 32-unit project in Brockton.





The Director of The Inner Voice Inc., a nonprofit housing and social service agency serving homeless individuals and families in the Chicago area, described his agency's partnership with the VA as essential to the success of its work with homeless veterans. Although Inner Voice serves veterans in all of its homeless assistance programs, only Vet House, a 15-bed transitional housing facility, is dedicated exclusively to serving veterans. Vet House was started by two VA staff, and current project staff communicate daily with the VA on substance abuse and other issues pertaining to their client population. They also rely heavily on VA staff for referrals and guidance. Inner Voice's Director believes that homeless veterans are more effectively served in veteran-specific facilities and that partnering with the VA allows general homeless assistance organizations to develop veterans' initiatives in a cost effective manner.



Baltimore's Maryland Center for Veterans Education and Training (MCVET) partners with the VA to train its staff in benefits counseling. The VA allows MCVET to send staff to its Federal offices where training programs take place. In return, MCVET invites representatives from the VA to its facility to observe its operations. MCVET's Director notes that having an experienced benefits counselor on staff can be extremely useful, because many homeless veterans are reluctant to use social services and are not aware of the services for which they are eligible. Larger organizations serving homeless veterans may arrange for representatives from the VA to be on site either full-time or for several days a week to inform clients about VA benefits. Other Federal agencies, such as the Social Security Administration, may be willing to make similar arrangements.

Partnering with Veterans Service Organizations

Approximately one-third of the nation's Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) are chartered by Congress and/or recognized by the VA for claim representation. Many of these are membership organizations with affiliate chapters throughout the country, enabling them to provide services and assistance to veterans on a local level. This community presence makes VSOs an ideal partner for organizations and agencies serving homeless veterans.

Among the project sites interviewed, the most commonly cited VSO partners were the American Legion, AMVETS, Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Military Order of the Purple Heart. VSOs often provide direct financial awards to organizations serving homeless veterans to assist with administrative, operations, or supportive service costs. In addition, the women's auxiliaries of VSOs are a good resource for soliciting financial and in-kind donations. VSOs may also provide programmatic expertise, or serve as a community resource for the identification of prospective staff or Board members. For projects that rely on community partners to provide clients with supportive



services, VSOs can be an important asset. Local chapters often have advocates to assist veterans with obtaining benefits from the VA or other Federal agencies and, in some cases, with petitioning for a discharge upgrade.

The examples below illustrate some of the ways in which projects serving homeless veterans benefit from partnering with VSOs.

Ways that VSOs Can Assist Projects Serving Homeless Veterans

- Financial and In-kind Donations
- Fundraising
- Programmatic Expertise and Guidance
- Benefits Counseling
- Participation on Board of Directors
- Staff Recruitment



The VA's Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) program in Seattle, Washington, has negotiated a collaborative relationship with a local American Legion Post and a nonprofit banking service to form a foundation to assist homeless veterans. The American Legion post created the foundation by selling its building, while retaining lifetime access to the building for meetings. HCHV's agreement with the American Legion makes three to five thousand dollars per month of foundation funds available to assist homeless veterans with short-term needs.



Joseph House Inc., a nonprofit residential treatment and transitional housing facility for homeless veterans in Cincinnati, Ohio, receives about one third of its funding from charitable foundations and VSOs. The VSOs that support Joseph House include, among others, the American Legion, AMVETS, Disabled American Veterans, and Veterans of Foreign Wars. Joseph House has been very successful in accessing VSO resources – 40 of 60 local posts and chapters support the organization through financial contributions and in-kind donations. Some of these organizations also provide assistance with benefits counseling and discharge upgrades. Joseph House's Board of Directors, which is mainly comprised of leaders in the veterans' community, has been instrumental in helping to secure the support of local VSOs.



Baltimore's MCVET draws upon VSO resources to assist in its staff recruitment efforts. MCVET tries to identify potential staff with a high level of interest in veterans' issues and a propensity for the type of work required. The organization has been successful in recruiting staff by networking with local VSO and military personnel and advertising through The Retired Officers Association.



Partnering with Community and/or Faith-Based Health and Social Service Organizations

In most parts of the country, the biggest challenge to delivering housing and services to homeless veterans is not the lack of resources (although in many places resources are scarce), but the lack of coordination among local providers. City, county, and state homeless coalitions, where they exist, serve as lightning rods for coordination among local service providers. Participating in local homeless coalitions – such as those created through the VA’s CHALENG initiative and HUD’s comprehensive homeless planning process – or creating a local coalition around a particular project site, allows organizations to interact with each other and build upon each other’s strengths. Participation in such coalitions also may be a prerequisite for receiving Federal funds. For example, participation in HUD’s comprehensive homeless planning process makes communities (and individual organizations) highly competitive for receipt of McKinney Homeless Assistance funding through the Homeless SuperNOFA process.

Participating in annual Stand Down events is also a good way for individual organizations to make initial contact with local partners and resources in the homeless veterans’ services community. The peacetime Stand Down was started by Vietnam Veterans of San Diego in 1988 to give homeless veterans one to three days of safety and security where they could obtain food, shelter, clothing, and a range of other types of assistance. Today, the Stand Down is typically a three-day event in which multiple agencies and nonprofit organizations collaborate to provide comprehensive access to services for hundreds of homeless veterans and their families – including shelter, clothing, legal and medical assistance, social services, substance abuse and mental health counseling, and referral to jobs and transitional housing. Stand Down events currently take place annually in about 200 cities throughout the U.S.

While the Stand Down provides a unique opportunity for organizations to identify local partners, in order to build effective partnerships, organizations must continue to invest in mutual assistance and collaborative ventures over the long term. The Los Angeles Family Housing Corporation (LAFHC), the only homeless shelter in California’s San Fernando Valley, has been particularly successful in attracting community- and faith-based organizations to provide services on site. LAFHC staff pointed out that even longstanding partnerships need continued attention and “nurturing.” As an example, when a partner organization asks LAFHC to help an individual who is not already an LAFHC client, LAFHC tries to do its best to respond to the request. The case manager for the VA’s Healthcare for Homeless Veterans program in Seattle offered similar advice to organizations seeking out potential partners – “be helpful to potential partners before expecting something in return.”



The examples below highlight some of the ways that projects serving homeless veterans have used local partnerships to enhance the range of services they are able to provide to clients:



Volunteers of America Florida (VOA-FLA) provides housing and supportive services to low income and homeless individuals and families statewide. VOA-FLA launched the Veterans Mobile Service Center to address the needs of homeless veterans living in rural encampments. The Service Center is a 40-foot van equipped with two exam rooms and dental facilities that performs outreach and intervention to veterans and other homeless individuals statewide. In addition to providing basic health and counseling services, the Service Center plays an important role in service coordination in the areas it visits. Where possible, Service Center staff work to connect homeless veterans with local agencies and community-based organizations in order to increase their potential for housing stability. During the first year of its operations, the Service Center planned its route to coincide with local Stand Downs, where it was able to reach out to large number of veterans and establish relationships with local service organizations. Currently, the Service Center plans to travel to more remote areas where there are fewer resources and the service coordination challenges are greater. The fact that the Service Center serves non-veteran homeless individuals as well as homeless veterans helps it to gain the cooperation of the full spectrum of homeless assistance providers. This is particularly important in areas where resources are scarce.

Funding Note...

The Veterans Mobile Service Center receives funding from the **VA's Per Diem Program** to support the services that it provides to homeless veterans. The funding for services not connected with housing is \$1.10 for each half-hour during which services are provided, up to \$17.60 a day per veteran.



The Home of the Brave, Inc., located in the rural community of Milford, Delaware, operates an emergency shelter and transitional housing facility for homeless male and female veterans. In addition, through subletting agreements that it has developed with local churches and charitable organizations, the agency is able to offer fully subsidized apartments to clients. Home of the Brave's director believes that it is crucial to provide fully subsidized housing and supportive services to clients while they build up their income and savings. The partnerships that Home of the Brave has developed with local community and faith-based organizations have been instrumental in allowing the agency to offer a full range of supportive services on a limited budget.



The New England Shelter for Homeless Veterans uses community partnerships to expand the range of health services offered on site. The Shelter has a partnership with the New England School of Optometry through which optometry students provide free eye examinations and glasses at a nominal fee to clients. The Shelter has also established an on-site dental clinic in



partnership with Harvard Vanguard Dental Group. Volunteer dentists, hygienists and dental assistants provide screenings, cleanings, and extractions to residents at weekly clinics. State of the art dental equipment was donated and supplies are provided on an ongoing basis by a private dental supply company. Finally, medical professionals from local hospitals and health care centers volunteer their services at the Shelter. This program enables Shelter clients to receive on-site health assessments and treatment of acute medical problems, screening for infectious disease, and referrals to local pharmaceutical dispensaries. This is especially important for Shelter clients who are not eligible for VA health services.



At Vancouver Housing Authority's Central Park Place, a 124-unit SRO facility for homeless men and women in Vancouver, Washington, a coalition of the VA and five local service providers provides residents with a full range of supportive services. Members of the coalition refer clients to Central Park Place, and then continue to provide case management to the clients. Because residents bring their service plan and case management with them from the referring agency, they enjoy a continuity of care. Each resident's case plan also becomes a part of their lease agreement. Property management and service coordination staff on site meet with residents' case managers on an as-needed basis, to ensure that residents are receiving the support and services that they need to live successfully in the facility. This collaborative arrangement allows Vancouver Housing Authority, the project sponsor, to leverage the expertise of local service providers and minimize the number of on-site staff. The consultant involved in developing Central Park Place believes that the decision to serve both veterans and non-veterans gave the project access to a broader range of funding sources and partnership opportunities than would otherwise have been available.

Partnering with Law Enforcement and Legal Assistance Organizations

Organizations serving homeless veterans recognize the need to address the wide range of issues facing their clients – including legal issues. The most common of these is non-payment of child support, but clients may also have unresolved legal issues related to drug charges, DUI, etc. While some organizations provide clients with access to on-site legal counsel, others address this need through referrals to community resources such as Legal Aid offices or private attorneys willing to handle pro bono cases. In some instances, an organization may collaborate with the local district attorney and public defender to assist clients in negotiating a resolution to their legal issues.

The examples below illustrate some of the ways in which projects serving homeless veterans seek to address their clients' legal needs through local partnerships.





Vietnam Veterans of San Diego (VVSD) is a nonprofit organization serving homeless veterans and their families in San Diego County, California. VVSD manages about 200 beds of transitional housing across the county and runs several employment and training programs. VVSD has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the San Diego District Attorney to collaborate on non-payment of child support. Through this partnership, VVSD staff are able to help clients negotiate feasible payment plans and other solutions to their child support issues.

Funding Note...

HUD's Supportive Housing Program (SHP) helps to fund the day-to-day operations and staff at VVSD's Veteran's Rehabilitation Center. SHP funds may be used to support a range of activities involved in providing housing and services to homeless veterans.



Residents of Inner Voice's Vet House transitional housing facility for homeless veterans are encouraged to participate in the organization's "rapid motivation group," a series of two-hour life skills classes held weekly at Inner Voice's Learning Center. At least once a quarter, the group hosts speakers from the local law center who address the most common legal issues confronting homeless individuals and explain the range of services available through Legal Aid. In addition, two members of Inner Voice's Board of Directors are lawyers, one of whom volunteers his services to residents with non-felony cases. These lawyers periodically also conduct seminars on getting records expunged.



The Los Angeles Family Housing Corporation (LAFHC), which runs two transitional housing programs for homeless veterans, has developed a number of community partnerships designed to bring supportive services on site to meet clients' various needs. One of these partnerships is with Bet Tzedek Legal Services, which comes on site every other week to provide legal advice and services to LAFHC clients. Residents can also access legal services off-site through Public Counsel, a large pro bono law firm in Los Angeles.



New Directions, Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to serving the long-term needs of homeless male and female veterans in Los Angeles, California, participates in a local "Homeless Court" system. The Homeless Court travels monthly to homeless shelters and transitional housing facilities to mete out judgments for minor infractions and help clear warrants. The judgments often contain an agreement whereby offenders can count the time that they have spent in a program such as New Directions toward community service requirements.

Los Angeles's **Homeless Court** system helps homeless individuals resolve minor legal issues efficiently by bringing the judge and courtroom directly to the project site.



Partnering with Employers, Employment Agencies, and Workforce Development Organizations

Employment and training services are often key components of projects serving homeless veterans. As such, it is important that the organization or project staff develop relationships with local employers, employment agencies, and workforce development organizations to maximize the resources and benefits available to their clients. These partnerships can help provide clients with more comprehensive skills assessment and job development, as well as vocational guidance and access to off-site vocational training programs.

The examples below highlight some of the employment and training partnerships undertaken by projects serving homeless veterans.



MCVET offers job readiness services and placement assistance to all residents. These services are designed to get residents into well-paid jobs with benefits, rather than the minimum wage jobs that will not be sufficient to support them once they leave the program. MCVET's employment services are supported by two on-site staff funded by the state: a Maryland job services officer funded by the State Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation; and a vocational counselor funded by the State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. MCVET's Director stresses the value of having representatives from the state employment agencies on site because of the large number of educational and job training programs funded at the state level. It is usually possible for programs serving 250 or so homeless veterans per year to arrange to have state employment representatives on site.



The Salvation Army's William Booth Center, which provides housing and supportive services to homeless male veterans in Seattle, Washington, has developed a strong working relationship with area unions. The unions place a high value on the skills and work ethic of the veterans in the Booth Center's program, and thus are willing to serve as the primary partner for placing veterans in both skilled positions and apprenticeships. Similarly, Vietnam Veterans of San Diego has recently signed a contract with the AFL-CIO to place residents of its Veterans Rehabilitation Center in apprenticeships.



South Baltimore Shelter Inc. (SBS) has been successful in developing partnerships with local employers to expand the opportunities available to residents of its South Baltimore Station, a 40-bed transitional housing program for men who are homeless by reason of chronic substance abuse. (SBS is not a veteran-specific organization, but typically about 35 percent of the residents in the South Baltimore Station project are veterans.) SBS has an arrangement with the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore whereby project graduates are placed in



employment in outdoor maintenance and clean up in the city and are provided with subsidized housing. This program is intended to last six months to one year, at which point participants are expected move on to more permanent employment and housing. SBS also has partners in the business community, such as the large real estate development company Struever Bros. Eccles & Rouse, who use their influence with their subcontractors and affiliates to promote employment for South Baltimore Station residents.

Partnering with Local Schools and Colleges

Partnerships with local schools, colleges, and universities can yield many benefits for projects serving homeless veterans. These partnerships may serve to augment the education and training services provided by project staff. For example, professional educators may conduct educational assessments and provide on-site remedial education or vocational training to project clients. In addition, project staff may refer clients to local colleges and universities to pursue a degree or certification. It is essential, however, that the course of study be something that will assist the client in fulfilling his/her employment goals. Furthermore, it is important to ensure a good match between the client and the educational institution, so that the client has every opportunity to succeed.

Ways that Schools and Colleges Support Homeless Assistance Projects

- Conducting educational testing
- Offering remedial education and job training classes on site
- Providing financial aid for vocational courses
- Providing interns to work as part-time staff

For smaller projects, partnering with a local college or university can significantly enhance staffing and service capabilities. Through internship programs with schools of social work, counseling, and nursing, a project can gain the assistance of qualified staff and at the same time provide students with valuable, supervised work experience. Typically, however, the project must have at least one licensed social worker to legitimize it as an internship site for Master of Social Work (MSW) students.

The following examples illustrate some of the many benefits derived from partnering with local schools and colleges.



Interlink Counseling Services (ICS) is a nonprofit organization in Louisville, Kentucky, serving homeless individuals with drug and alcohol addictions that runs a residential treatment facility that targets homeless veterans. Although the agency provides extensive treatment and counseling services on-site, it relies heavily on partnerships with local schools and universities to address clients' educational and job training needs. In particular,



ICS has developed a partnership with Jefferson County Public Schools to provide adult basic education and GED classes. ICS clients are also able to attend college-level classes through partnerships with the University of Kentucky at Louisville and Jefferson Community College.



Swords to Plowshares, a community-based nonprofit organization serving homeless veterans, recently opened the Veterans Academy of the Presidio, a 100-unit residential education and job training facility located in San Francisco's Presidio park complex. The Veterans Academy relies on partnerships with local universities to provide on-site academic instruction and vocational training. Participation in education and training activities is mandatory for Academy residents, and the partnerships allow the program to offer a range of courses from computers to culinary arts to park management. Faculty from the local university and city college teach most of the courses on a volunteer basis. On a given day, the Veterans Academy may have as many as six or seven volunteers on site. Program staff hope in the near future to develop a partnership with the University of San Francisco (USF) School of Nursing, whereby USF nursing students can spend their internship working at the Academy. The organization already has in place a similar arrangement for its other programs.



Chapter 3: Promising Practices Among Projects Serving Homeless Veterans

This section provides examples of promising practices identified among the project sites interviewed for this guidebook. The interviews highlighted several areas of program implementation where there were promising practices thought to be useful to new projects or those considering adding homeless veterans to their client base. These were:



- Models of service delivery;
- Employment and training initiatives;
- Addressing clients' long-term needs;
- Making the most of the Board of Directors;
- Serving veterans in rural areas; and
- Serving female veterans.

Models of Service Delivery

There is a wide range of models that projects have found effective in delivering services to homeless veterans. At one end of the spectrum are those who believe that homeless veterans have distinct needs that are best served through a specialized service approach. For example, some veteran-focused projects structure their entire operations around a “military model,” designed to remind clients of what for many was a very productive phase in their lives.

Conversely, other homeless assistance providers discount the notion of a distinct service strategy for veterans, and instead believe that veterans and non-veterans can thrive in a communal living environment and find common ground in their shared challenges – such as, drug and alcohol addiction, mental illness, unemployment, and homelessness. There are, of course, many other projects whose philosophy and approach lies somewhere in the middle. For example, some projects serving a broader population of homeless individuals and families may set aside a part of their facility for veterans, or may structure a subset of services – such as benefits counseling – around issues of interest to veterans.



The examples below illustrate the range of service delivery models employed to address the needs of homeless veterans.



MCVET's structured "military model" emphasizes individual accountability, self-discipline, organization, and teamwork. Residents of MCVET's emergency shelter and transitional housing facilities are organized into platoons and squadrons and are held accountable to each other and the designated platoon leaders. They are also assigned regular chores to promote involvement in facility operations. All residents are encouraged to attain platoon leader positions and platoon leaders are encouraged to mentor new arrivals. This military approach is designed to provide order and structure to people whose lives have become unmanageable and unstructured. Peer pressure is also used to promote individual accountability and responsibility. Residents are expected to meet certain standards of appearance and to use the program to reorder their lives and return to the community as productive citizens. MCVET's permanent housing program, an 80-unit Single Room Occupancy facility, does not impose the same type of military structure, but continues to require high standards of resident behavior. Although it is not a prerequisite, many of the staff and Board of Directors at MCVET – and all program staff – are themselves veterans.



Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program of Western PA (VVLP-PA), which provides housing and supportive services to homeless veterans and their families in the Pittsburgh area, has not adopted a military model but recognizes that veterans face a different set of issues from the general homeless population and tries to meet those needs. VVLP-PA's social service coordinator believes that the key to serving clients successfully is to develop a trusting relationship with them. There are several components to developing this relationship with homeless veterans. The first is to engage with the mindset that veterans may bring to service agencies – a sense that they are owed assistance. VVLP-PA makes it clear to its clients that it does not subscribe to this philosophy, but nevertheless will do anything in its power to help them address their problems and regain control of their lives. Second, program staff must be broadly representative of the clients that they serve. Of the organization's 13 full-time staff, 12 are veterans and several have been homeless and are recovering addicts. The staff is also 50 percent minority, reflecting the racial composition of the agency's clients. The third key to fostering trusting relationships is to have in place strong confidentiality and conflict of interest policies for staff to follow.

VVLP is the only organization targeting homeless veterans in the **United Way** of Allegheny County and receives significant funding through this channel.



Central Park Place, located on the Veterans Affairs campus in Vancouver, Washington, serves single homeless men and women, with a 50/50 mix of veterans and non-veterans. Central Park Place does not structure its housing or services differently for its veteran versus non-veteran residents; however, residents who are veterans develop distinct case management plans and



have a different set of resources available to them from non-veterans, most importantly the use of the VA campus and medical facilities. Central Park Place does not adhere to a “military model” of service delivery. In their experience, the majority of the homeless veterans that they work with do not view their time in the military as a high point in their lives; rather, they want to put that time behind them. As a result, project staff try to honor the veterans, but also emphasize that all residents facing similar problems should be treated equally.

Employment and Training Initiatives

Many of the project staff interviewed made the point that homeless veterans tend to come from a background of achievement and discipline, and as a result are often better equipped to work toward employment and self-sufficiency than the general population of homeless individuals. Almost all of the projects interviewed place a great deal of emphasis on employment and job training initiatives to build upon the considerable skills of this population to encourage long-term employment and housing stability. Some of the projects manage small business enterprises in which program participants gained valuable experience in a real work setting. It should be noted that programs with a strong substance abuse treatment component normally have employment initiatives as a second phase in their clients’ recovery. The first phase, following detoxification, is often spent in meditation and group therapy sessions designed to address the physical, psychiatric, and spiritual issues behind the addiction.

Employment and Training Initiatives offered to Homeless Veterans

- Specialized education
- Career planning and counseling
- Job training programs
- On-site small business enterprises

The examples below provide illustrations of some of the more innovative employment and training initiatives that projects have undertaken to help their clients build the skills and experience needed to secure well-paid and stable employment over the long term.



The American GI Forum National Veterans Outreach Program (NVOP) in San Antonio, Texas, received funding from the U.S. Department of Commerce to build and operate Veterans Enterprises of Texas (VET), a 25,000 square foot corrugated box manufacturing plant targeting homeless and handicapped veterans for training and employment. Now in its fourth year of operation, VET employs 40 workers and has annual sales in excess of \$4 million, primarily through a large contract with the U.S. Postal Service. NVOP clients generally work part time in the VET plant while taking a class to upgrade their skills. This employment gives them an opportunity to work on their job skills while generating some income. Most clients will go on to other employment after a short period of time working at the VET plant, but some stay on full time. The plant generates modest profits that



NVOP channels back into its service budget. It also gives the NVOP an opportunity to “put its money where its mouth is,” showing other local employers that it has confidence in the skills and work ethic of its clients.



Rehabilitation Services and Veterans Program (RS&VP) has been serving homeless veterans in the Albuquerque area since 1996. The organization recently purchased a dilapidated motel that, when renovated, will become the state’s first transitional housing and training facility for homeless veterans. RS&VP clients and volunteers have been working to rehabilitate the facility for initial occupancy; once open, residents will have the opportunity to learn marketable construction skills through the remaining renovation work. In addition, RS&VP will offer several on-the-job training programs connected to the ongoing operations and maintenance of the facility, which will be managed as a “hotel for the homeless.” Current plans include training in restaurant work, landscaping and custodial maintenance, pool maintenance, and hotel management. Once renovation is complete, the facility will provide transitional housing for 96 homeless male and female veterans. RS&VP has received funding for this project from HUD, DOL, VA, the State of New Mexico, Bernalillo County, and the City of Albuquerque.



Although it regularly offers specialized job training and educational programs in conjunction with particular grants or funding sources, Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program of Western PA (VVLP-PA) also operates an ongoing career counseling and job placement program designed to assist its target population of underemployed or unemployed homeless veterans. The program consists of six components:

- *career counseling and needs assessment* (whether pursuing continued employment in the same field or seeking a career change, clients work one-on-one with a career advisor to develop an action plan that best utilizes their potential and experience);
- a weekly *Job Club* for sharing job leads and job search strategies;
- *Vet Net*, which offers job search assistance through outside speakers who address employment related topics as well as networking opportunities;
- a *Job Book* with up-dated job listings from employers who are interested in hiring veterans;
- *workshops* on resume writing, interview techniques, job search and networking tactics, and job retention; and
- post placement *follow-up* by career advisors.

Funding Note...

VVLP-PA receives funding from the **Department of Labor’s HVRP Program** to support its employment initiatives. HVRP provides grants to community-based organizations that employ flexible and innovative approaches to assist homeless veterans re-enter the workforce.



Addressing Clients' Long-Term Needs

Studies have shown that the longer a homeless individual is able to receive supportive services, the less likely he or she is to fall back into homelessness. Alcoholism and drug addiction are lifetime diseases, from which recovery is a daily struggle. In addition to alcohol and substance abuse issues, many homeless veterans suffer from mental illnesses that may require long-term treatment. For these reasons, it is essential that all projects serving homeless veterans make provisions for their long-term needs, even if the project itself has a one or two year time limit.

Two key components of addressing clients' long-term needs are **discharge planning** and **follow up**. Discharge planning is the process by which projects can ensure that graduating or exiting clients have the income, housing, support networks, and services that they require to avoid returning to homelessness. Ideally, the discharge planner will begin working with a client six months before they plan to leave the project to develop a structured exit plan. This plan may involve the client reuniting with family members, moving to another supportive housing facility, or securing permanent housing. Discharge planners often assist clients in applying for housing through Federally-subsidized programs such as Section 8. If the discharge planner has developed a working relationship with the local housing authority, the application can often be processed more quickly. The housing authority may even agree to reserve a portion of its Section 8 vouchers for use by homeless veterans.

Discharge Planning and Follow-up Services

- Housing search
- Job placement
- Budget management
- 12-Step aftercare
- Alumni groups
- Follow-up case management

A further step that projects should take to help ensure that homeless veterans' long-term needs are met is to follow up with former clients on a regular basis. Typically, organizations try to track former clients at intervals of 30, 60, and 90 days, and again after one year. Although this can be challenging, conducting follow-up meetings or telephone calls is the only way to ensure that former clients are continuing to receive the services and support that they may need to avoid a return to homelessness.

The following examples illustrate some of the ways in which projects are working to ensure that they meet their clients' needs over the long term.





Rehabilitation Services and Veterans Program (RS&VP) in Albuquerque, New Mexico, plans to offer comprehensive follow-up services to graduates of its new transitional housing and training program for homeless veterans. In addition to providing housing search and placement services to project graduates at the end of their two-year term, RS&VP staff will offer 12-step aftercare, job placement services, budget management training and representative payee service, VA disability upgrade assistance, and social security disability reviews on an ongoing basis. In addition, the organization will provide transportation assistance – mostly in the form of bus tokens – on an as-needed basis for up to six months. Finally, recent project graduates will be offered mentorship opportunities with project staff, community members, or other successful project graduates who have been living self-sufficiently and drug and alcohol free.



At Inner Voice's Vet House, an active alumni group plays an important role in following up with project graduates and counseling current participants on the road ahead. The alumni group was started by the first group of project graduates and continues to meet monthly at Vet House. The alumni group also participates in annual events such as the Stand Down. Inner Voice's Director considers the alumni group to be the project's greatest asset for long-term client follow-up.



Catholic Social Services (CSS) of Lackawanna County, located in Scranton, Pennsylvania, provides a continuum of housing for homeless veterans, ranging from emergency shelter facilities to Supportive Housing and SRO programs, in one location, in two adjacent buildings. CSS staff believe that this structure is very valuable in serving clients over the long term, because it allows individuals to move through the different programs while avoiding the stress of adjusting to a new environment, new staff, and new case managers. CSS encourages clients who encounter difficulties to return to their former program or to enter a different program that is most appropriate for their current situation. Staff describe this as a consumer oriented approach, because it benefits all clients in allowing them to transition smoothly to whichever level of programming best addresses their needs at a particular time. Clients are encouraged to move toward greater levels of independence, but if a particular situation does not work out, the ease with which clients can return to a more supervised and supportive living arrangement reduces their risk of falling back into homelessness.



Making the Most of the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors should serve as the “steering wheel” of the organization. Diverse representation on the Board is important, especially if an organization is trying to garner support from a variety of partner organizations and agencies. In addition, many newer organizations choose to have an all-veteran Board of Directors to increase support within the veteran community and particularly with local VSOs. As an organization grows and develops, however, these needs may change; it may become important to have Board members with expertise in business and finance. A number of the projects sites interviewed discussed the need to become more skilled in private-sector fundraising. Including a development specialist on the Board of Directors is a good way to do so.

How to Build a Strong Board of Directors

- Choose members with diverse backgrounds – legal, business, finance, service delivery, etc.
- Include representatives from the veteran community, VSOs, etc.
- Utilize the expertise of the Board for fundraising, staff development and strategic planning

In addition to a full Board of Directors, organizations may have other governance or advisory structures in place. For example, they may have Executive Committees or Advisory Groups that consult on program matters or work with staff on issues before they are taken to the Board.

It is very important for nonprofit organizations to stay within their mission and to be specific about their programs, services, and outcomes. They must have the services and structures in place to assist clients toward greater self-sufficiency and housing stability. A good Board of Directors can help an organization stay on track by monitoring progress, as well as looking ahead to determine what is needed to achieve its goals.

The examples below highlight various ways in which organizations have tried to leverage the skills and experiences represented on the Board of Directors.



Veterans Outreach North (VON) is one of four branches of the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV). While MACV has a Board of Directors for the entire organization based in Minneapolis, VON also has its own volunteer advisory committee drawn from local partner agencies. Committee members include a licensed psychologist, a representative of the Department of Rehabilitation Services, a retired colonel who runs the employment office at the VA clinic, and two representatives from the Salvation Army. Each member of the advisory committee brings specific skills and valuable knowledge to the table and therefore can provide guidance in identifying the community needs on which VON should focus.





The Board of Directors for MCVET consists of 17 people, including the head of the Baltimore VA health system; a supportive housing developer; a lawyer; a political figure; a state-level homeless services advocate; a financial advisor; and past commanders of the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Jewish War Veterans. As required in MCVET's by-laws, the Board also includes two project graduates. There is also an executive committee, which alternates monthly meetings with the full Board, and sub-committees for key functional areas, such as development and finance. MCVET views its Board of Directors as an important resource for generating fundraising contacts in the community.



San Francisco's Swords to Plowshares has a nine-member Board of Directors, with backgrounds in finance, fundraising, administration, legal, job development, program management, and business. The Board is quite active on some projects, including the Veterans Academy. In addition, the Veterans Academy benefits from being part of the organizational structure of the Presidio park complex in which it is located. Two Veterans Academy residents serve as "mayoral" representatives to the larger Presidio community (comprised of other businesses and organizations). There are monthly meetings, and the Presidio helps to recruit volunteers for the various organizations residing within, including the Veterans Academy.



With the addition of a 45-bed facility for dually-diagnosed homeless individuals opening later this year, Los Angeles's New Directions is at a critical juncture in its history, moving from a medium-sized to a large organization. In response to this growth, the organization has decided that it needs to re-evaluate its Board structure, to ensure that the Board can continue to be effective with the new demands placed on the agency. New Directions may also retain a Retired Executives Group to assist with the transition and the development of a new strategic plan and fundraising initiatives.

Serving Homeless Veterans in Rural Areas

The majority of examples of promising practices discussed thus far come from projects located in urban areas. Serving homeless veterans in rural areas presents a unique set of challenges as well as a great opportunity to address the needs of a vastly under-served population. Among the three projects interviewed that are located in rural areas, each faces particular challenges associated with:

- coordinating scarce resources across significant distances;
- reaching out to potential clients in remote areas;
- providing the transportation needed for clients to access services; and



- addressing the health issues that attend upon a population without ready access to VA or other medical centers.

Homeless veterans who have been living in isolated areas for long periods of time may require more intensive additional health and counseling services before transitional housing programs can be effective. Moreover, in some regions, health, housing, substance abuse, and employment services may be few and far between, and organizations often need to engage in creative partnerships in order to provide their clients access to the full range of services.

Ways to Reach out to Homeless Veterans in Rural Areas

- Mobile health care units
- Crisis intervention
- Coordinating scarce resources
- Transportation services

Serving homeless veterans in rural areas is an area of great opportunity that warrants further attention at the national and local level. The following examples illustrate some of the ways in which existing projects are working to address these issues:



Volunteers of America Florida developed its Veterans Mobile Service Center in response to a documented need for health services and housing among an aging population of homeless veterans living in remote and rural parts of the state. The Service Center provides immediate crisis intervention, health assessments, and basic medical and dental treatment on-site, but also recognizes the need to connect clients to available services on a longer-term basis. Service Center staff thus work very closely with local organizations and, in some cases, family members, to make appropriate referrals for their clients. The Service Center has also received a Federal grant that allows the staff to place clients in rooming houses and small hotels for 30 to 60 days while they try to locate appropriate transitional or permanent housing. One of the ongoing challenges that the Service Center faces is balancing the tremendous demand for its services with the need to return to the same areas with some consistency. Currently, Service Center staff depend on local partner agencies to develop long-term relationships with the clients referred to them through the Service Center.



Located in downtown Duluth, Minnesota, Veterans Outreach North (VON) provides outreach to homeless veterans in urban, suburban, and rural areas. Although VON manages a ten unit transitional housing facility and offers Alcoholics Anonymous, life skills, and case management services on site, the program functions primarily as a clearinghouse, matching homeless veterans with appropriate services and residential programs. VON receives referrals from a wide variety of locations – local police departments, County Veterans Services Offices, the street, bars, etc. VON then conducts intake for each referred client and identifies whether the services provided on-site or linkages with partner



service organizations would be most appropriate to meet their individual needs. In order to expand the services available to homeless veterans living in rural areas, VON plans to hire an additional staff person to spend the majority of his or her time on the road conducting outreach in more remote parts of the state.



Veterans' Hospice Homestead, which provides transitional housing in two suburban communities in Massachusetts, also runs a Mobile Medical Unit that serves homeless veterans who do not have transportation to the VA Medical Center. The 40-foot van offers general health services such as primary care and EKGs. If clients have more specialized needs, they are referred and transported to other facilities. The clerk and two medical personnel that staff the Mobile Medical Unit are funded by the VA; HUD funds the full-time driver.

Serving Female Veterans

Many of the project sites interviewed for this guidebook expressed an interest in serving female veterans. Several project expressed regret that they had not been able to recruit as many female veterans as they had hoped. Others were unsure as to how to best address the distinct challenges facing homeless female veterans.

Recent survey data suggest that women make up a low percentage of the population of homeless veterans, somewhere in the range of two to three percent. Like homeless male veterans, homeless female tend to possess a higher level of skills than their non-veteran counterparts. However, homeless female veterans often lack specific or transferable job skills that homeless male veterans have acquired. They also are more likely to have children, making it difficult for them to access housing and services. Many shelters are not designed for families, or can accommodate only single men.

In addition, a 1998 Report of the Department of Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee on Women Veterans cited survey data suggesting that about 20 percent of all female veterans accessing VA care have reported instances of sexual assault, trauma, and harassment during their military service.³ Because many organizations serving homeless veterans are co-educational (and serve mostly men), homeless female veterans accessing these services may continue to find themselves in situations where they feel threatened or uncomfortable.

Strategies for Serving Female Veterans

- Establish separate or specialized services, with female staff
- Include services to address mental health issues, PTSD, sexual trauma, etc.
- Develop sponsor/mentor programs
- Tailor skills training and job development

To address the unique issues facing homeless female veterans, some service providers advocate segregated housing as well as supportive services. Because



this may not be possible for all projects serving homeless female veterans, another option is to provide some separate or specialized services, such as female intake, counseling, and case management staff, and gender-specific group sessions. Homeless female veterans may also benefit from a more individualized approach to skills training and job development. In short, projects serving this population have found that women simply do better with other women at this critical time in their lives. The increased level of comfort afforded them in an atmosphere that is safe and supportive can go a long way toward improving their chances for success.

The following examples provide an illustration of how two of the projects interviewed have tried to provide effective housing and supportive services to homeless female veterans.



Angel's Landing is the first transitional housing facility for homeless female veterans in Tennessee. Angel's Landing was developed in 1999 by several members of an outreach and education group called the Women Veterans Network (WVN) that had formed two years earlier at the Nashville Campus of the VA Tennessee Valley Healthcare System. This grassroots effort was in large part a response to the unsafe conditions that homeless female veterans were facing in male-dominated shelters. In partnership with Operation Stand Down, a local nonprofit agency, WVN operates this three-bed facility. In roughly two and a half years of operation, Angel's Landing has served over 20 women. The Women Veterans Program Manager at the VA Tennessee Valley Healthcare System oversees the project and provides individual case management to residents on a weekly basis. A resident manager, who originally came to Angel's Landing as a client and still resides there, orients new residents to the facility. In addition, each resident is assigned a "sister sponsor" from the Women's Veterans Network who works closely with the resident to assess needs and progress, as well as to involve her in the larger support network.

Through her experience as a clinical specialist in psychiatric mental health at the VA, the Program Manager for Angel's Landing acknowledges that many homeless female veterans have suffered sexual trauma and abusive relationships and may make unhealthy choices about future relationships. As a result, in order to ensure a safe and therapeutic transitional living environment, visitors are prohibited at Angel's Landing and residents must agree not to share their address with people with whom they might visit outside the residence. Furthermore, although residents may receive their mail at Angel's Landing, the address is not made public.





Prior to creating its 10-bed Shelter for Homeless Female Veterans, the New England Shelter for Homeless Veterans often ended up transferring female clients to another women's shelter within Boston. These women were able to use the support services offered at the New England Shelter during the day, but were prevented from taking full advantage of the organization's veteran-specific resources because they had to be transported to the other shelters each evening. In order to address the needs of female veterans successfully, staff of the New England Shelter needed to create a private shelter that would feel safe and secure for women coming out of battered relationships and other traumatic backgrounds. The result is the current 10-bed facility, which is kept separate from the main men's shelter. Currently, the New England Shelter cannot accommodate women with children, but this is an issue that the organization anticipates having to address in the near future. Should the organization decide to serve children, steps will again be taken to ensure that they could be housed in a safe and private environment.



Appendix I

Sources of Funding for Projects Serving Homeless Veterans

This appendix contains a brief list of various public and private funding sources to assist organizations providing services to homeless veterans. For more comprehensive resource information, a good starting point is the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans (NCHV). The NCHV is a coalition of community-based service providers in 43 states and Washington, D.C. that is dedicated to ending homelessness among veterans. The NCHV web site, located at <http://www.nchv.org/>, contains links to numerous Federal agencies, veterans and military organizations, and other nonprofit management resources.



Federal Government

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

The Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs (SNAPS) at the HUD Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD) administers four homeless assistance programs – the Supportive Housing Program (SHP); Shelter Plus Care (S+C); Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Program; and Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG) Program. While the ESG program is formula-funded annually, HUD awards SHP, S+C, and SRO program funds as annual competitive grants. The competition is announced each year in the Continuum of Care Notice of Funding Availability in the Federal Register.

Funding Process – After HUD publishes a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance, applicants submit specific information about a proposed project, along with their Continuum of Care application. Each application must include a certification that the project is consistent with the Consolidated Plan of the jurisdiction where each proposed project is found. The application packet for Continuum of Care programs is available online or by calling Community Connections (1-800-998-9999) for the Homeless Assistance Program Application Package.



As outlined below, SNAPS homeless program funds support a wide range of activities, including operating costs, the provision of supportive services, and emergency, transitional, and permanent housing.

The Supportive Housing Program (SHP)

Supportive Housing Program (SHP) grants may be used to fund one or more of the following activities: acquisition or rehabilitation of a building to be used as supportive housing or to provide supportive services; new construction of a supportive housing facility; leasing a building to be used for supportive housing or services; the provision of new or increased supportive services; costs associated with the day-to-day operation of a new supportive housing project or the expanded portion of an existing project; and administrative costs. Eligible applicants for SHP funds include States, local governments, other government agencies (such as public housing agencies), private nonprofit organizations, and community mental health associations that are public nonprofit organizations.

Shelter Plus Care (S+C) Program

Shelter Plus Care (S+C) program grants may be used for the provision of rental assistance payments that, when combined with social services, provides supportive housing for homeless people with disabilities and their families. Shelter Plus Care provides funds for four types of rental assistance: (1) Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (contracted directly with the low-income tenant); (2) Project-Based Rental Assistance (contracted with a building owner); (3) Sponsor-Based Rental Assistance (contracted with a nonprofit organization); and (4) SRO-based Rental Assistance (Single-room occupancy contracted with a public housing authority). States, local governments, and public housing agencies may apply for Shelter Plus Care grants.

Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Program

The Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Program provides Section 8 rental assistance for moderate rehabilitation of buildings with SRO units—single-room dwellings, designed for the use of an individual, that often do not contain food preparation or sanitary facilities. A public housing authority makes Section 8 rental assistance payments to the landlords on behalf of homeless individuals who rent the rehabilitated units. Rental assistance for SRO units is provided for a period of 10 years, and includes some of the rehabilitation as well as the other costs of owning and maintaining the property. Public housing agencies and private nonprofit organizations may apply for SRO program funds. However, nonprofit organizations must subcontract with public housing agencies to administer the rental assistance.

Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG) Program

The Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG) program may be used to fund one or more of the following activities: the renovation/rehabilitation/conversion of buildings for use as emergency shelters; shelter operating expenses such as rent, repairs, security, fuel, equipment, insurance, utilities, food and furnishings; essential services such as those



concerned with employment, health, and education of program participants; activities designed to prevent the incidence of homelessness; and administrative costs. ESG provides funds to States, territories, and qualified cities and counties. States and territories that receive ESG must distribute the funds to local governments or private nonprofit organizations. Local governments may administer the entire grant themselves or distribute the funds to private nonprofit organizations.

For more information on HUD's homeless programs, contact:
Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs
Community Planning and Development
Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20410
(202) 708-0614

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program

This program is offered annually (as funding permits) by the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) Programs to fund community agencies providing services to homeless veterans. Only programs with supportive housing (up to 24 months) or service centers (offering services such as case management, education, crisis intervention, counseling, etc.) are eligible for these funds. The program has two levels of funding:

Grants: Limit is 65 percent of the costs of constructing, expanding, remodeling, or altering buildings and acquiring facilities for use as service centers, transitional housing or other facilities for homeless vets. Recipients must fund the matching 35 percent share. Grants may not be used for operational costs, including salaries.

Per Diem: Priority in awarding the Per Diem funds goes to the recipients of Grants. Non-Grant programs may qualify if: (1) at least 75 percent of those receiving supportive services are veterans, and (2) they provide supportive housing or a homeless service center. Per Diem funding may be used for operational costs, including salaries.

For more information, contact:
VA Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program
Mental Health Strategic Healthcare Group (116E)
VAHQ
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420
Toll Free: (877) 332-0334
<http://www.va.gov/homeless/page.cfm?pg=3>



Homeless Chronically Mentally Ill (HCMI) Veterans Program

VA's Homeless Chronically Mentally Ill (HCMI) Veterans Program provides extensive outreach, physical and psychiatric health exams, treatment, referrals, and ongoing case management to homeless veterans with mental health problems (including substance abuse). As appropriate, the HCMI Program places homeless veterans needing longer-term treatment into community-based facilities.

Compensated Work Therapy/Transitional Residence (CWT/TR) Program

In VA's Compensated Work Therapy/Transitional Residence (CWT/TR) Program, disadvantaged, at-risk, and homeless veterans live in CWT/TR community-based supervised group homes while working for pay in VA's Compensated Work Therapy Program (also known as Veterans Industries). VA contracts with private industry and the public sector for work done by these veterans, who learn new job skills, relearn successful work habits, and regain a sense of self-worth.

The Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans (DCHV) Program

This program provides biopsychosocial treatment and rehabilitation to approximately 5,000 homeless veterans with health problems each year. The domiciliaries conduct outreach and referral; vocational counseling and rehabilitation; and post-discharge community support.

For information on the HCMI, CWT/TR, and DCHV Programs, please contact:

Department of Veterans Affairs
Homeless Veterans Program Office
810 Vermont Avenue (075D)
Washington, DC 20420
(202) 273-5764
<http://www.va.gov/homeless/>

Assistance to annual Stand Down events

Stand Down events are designed to bring together a variety of Veterans service organizations; city, county, state and community service organizations; homeless coalitions; and VA facilities (VA medical centers, Vet Centers, regional offices) to provide outreach to homeless veterans. Stand Downs provide a gateway to VA and community services that includes assessment and screening, crisis services, counseling, referral and placement. Further information on VA assistance at local Stand Down events can be obtained through local and regional Department of Veterans Affairs offices.



U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)

The DOL agency responsible for assisting veterans (including homeless veterans) and transitioning military personnel with employment and training needs is the Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS). For more information on VETS, visit their web site at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/vets/>.

Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project (HVRP)

HVRP funds are authorized by the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, and administered by the Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) through a competitive process. These funds provide for employment and training services and support services directly or through linkages with other service providers to assist homeless veterans to re-enter the workforce. In April 2000, the U.S. Department of Labor awarded 43 HVRP grants totaling more than \$8.2 million to fund employment and training programs for homeless veterans.

For more information about the competitive grant application for HVRP, please visit <http://www.dol.gov/dol/vets/public/grants/main.htm>.

Disabled Veterans Outreach Program

VETS also provides non-competitive funding to designated State Employment Security Agencies for Disabled Veterans Outreach Program staff. One of the target groups for applicant services is the homeless veteran population. DVOPs provide case management and special employment assistance to veterans with barriers to employment. For more information about this program, please visit the DOL/VETS web site at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/vets/welcome.html>.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) Program

The PATH Program is a formula grant program that funds the 50 states, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and four U.S. Territories to support service delivery to individuals with serious mental illnesses, as well as individuals with co-occurring substance use disorders, who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

In FY 2001, the PATH program distributed nearly \$37 million through formula grants. The formula is based on the urban population in the jurisdiction compared to the total U.S. urban population, with minimum grants of \$300,000 per year to each state. The state grants are distributed among over 350 provider organizations nationally. Typically, individual organizations use PATH funds to fund an outreach worker or other staff position. The PATH program is administered by the Center for Mental Health Services, a component of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), one of eight Public Health Service agencies within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is the only program



for homeless persons with mental illness funded directly by the HHS. For more information, please visit the web site at:

<http://www.prainc.com/nrc/path/index.shtml>.

Healthcare for the Homeless

The Healthcare for the Homeless Program (HCH), first authorized under the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act of 1987, emphasizes a multi-disciplinary approach to delivering care to homeless persons, combining aggressive outreach with integrated systems of primary care, mental health and substance abuse services, case management, and client advocacy. Emphasis is placed on coordinating efforts with other community health providers and social service agencies.

HCH's FY 2001 budget is \$100 million. In 2000, HCH awarded grants to 135 community-based organizations in urban and rural areas, including community and migrant health centers, local health departments, hospitals, and community coalitions. The average grant was approximately \$450,000. HCH grantees work with over 300 subcontractors to expand their service networks. HCH grantees must be able to provide case management, outreach, substance abuse services, and the full range of primary care. They must also provide mental health treatment either on site or through referral.

HCH is administered by Bureau of Primary Health Care, a component of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), one of eight Public Health Service agencies within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

For more information, please visit the web site at <http://bphc.hrsa.gov/>.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Emergency Food and Shelter Program

FEMA's Emergency Food and Shelter Program helps meet the needs of hungry and homeless people throughout the United States and its territories by allocating funds for the provision of food and shelter. These funds are disbursed to non-profit and local government agencies to supplement the assistance they are already providing.

The Emergency Food and Shelter Program is governed by a national board composed of representatives of six nonprofit agencies, and chaired by a representative of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The National Board awards funds to jurisdictions (counties and major cities) based upon a formula; in addition, a small portion of the overall award is allocated by formula to state set-aside committees, who then allocate funds to jurisdictions based upon the criteria they feel is most appropriate.



Once an award is made by either the National Board or a state set-aside committee, local boards institute an application and selection process to determine which agencies are to receive funds. The application process is advertised in local newspapers with wide distribution, and those agencies selected by the local board are paid directly by the National Board.

For a list of local board contacts, please visit the Emergency Food and Shelter Program web site at <http://www.efsp.unitedway.org/index.cfm>.

For more information on this program, please contact:

Carolyn Coleman
Chief, Emergency Food and Shelter Program
Federal Emergency Management Agency
(202) 646-3107
Carolyn.Coleman@FEMA.gov

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), Office of Veterans Business Development

The U.S. Small Business Administration offers a wide variety of services to veterans directly and through resource partners in well over one thousand locations across the United States. Any program providing assistance to veterans or service-disabled veterans can contact their nearest SBA District Office and speak with the Veterans Affairs Officer for assistance.

For more information, please contact:

U.S. Small Business Administration
Office of Veterans Business Development
409 3rd Street SW
Washington, DC 20416
(202) 205-6773

State and Local Government

HUD's Veteran Resource Center (HUDVET) publishes a directory that includes a state-by-state listing of relevant Federal and state agencies, veteran service organizations, and advocacy groups, along with their contact information. Examples of state organizations cited in the Directory include state job service agencies, state veterans affairs offices, state veterans homes, state contacts for homeless issues, and state committees on employment of people with disabilities. The HUDVET Directory is available on the following web site: <http://www.hud.gov/hudvet/vetres.html>. Further information may be obtained by calling HUD's Veteran Resource Center at (800) 998-9999.



In addition, many projects interviewed in the course of developing this brochure have had success in developing partnerships with or securing resources from the following state and local government agencies:

- State Department of Labor
- State Veterans Workforce Investment Program (VWIP)
- State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation
- State Department of Housing
- State/Local Department of Health
- State/Local Department of Mental Health
- City/County Veterans Agency
- Department of Corrections
- Local Housing Authority
- Local Homeless Services Department

Veterans Service Organizations

Numerous Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) throughout the United States provide a range of services to veterans and their families, as well as financial support to some of the agencies and organizations serving homeless veterans. These organizations are often listed under “Veterans and Military Organizations” in the local phone book.

The Department of Veterans Affairs maintains an on-line Directory of Veterans Service Organizations. This up-to-date, database driven web site allows users to perform searches and view VSO information in a variety of ways. The database includes a notation marking “chartered organizations” – i.e., those that are chartered by Congress and/or recognized by VA for claim representation. The Directory is located at <http://www.va.gov/vso/>.

Some of the projects interviewed had developed relationships with Veterans Service Organizations and Auxiliary Organizations serving homeless veterans, such as:

- The American Legion (<http://www.legion.org/>)
- American Veterans of WWII, Korea and Vietnam (AMVETS) (<http://www.amvets.org/>)
- Disabled American Veterans (<http://www.dav.org/main.html>)
- Military Order of the Purple Heart (<http://www.purpleheart.org/>)
- Non Commissioned Officers Association (<http://www.ncoausa.org/>)
- Paralyzed Veterans of America (<http://www.pva.org/>)



- Veterans of Foreign Wars (<http://www.vfw.org>)
- Vietnam Veterans of America (<http://www.vva.org/>)
- The Retirement Officer's Association

Private Foundations and Other Sources

Private foundations are also a key source of funding for many organizations serving homeless veterans. Foundation grants may support an organization's administrative, operations, or program costs of serving homeless veterans.

The National Coalition for Homeless Veterans' web site provides several useful links to other web sites and organizations that provide assistance in identifying grant sources and in grant writing. For example, The Grantsmanship Center (<http://www.tgci.com/>) offers grant writing workshops and low cost publications to nonprofit organizations and government agencies. The Grantsmanship Center's web site also allows users to search for grant sources, including Federal, state, and community foundations, by state.

Some of the projects interviewed for this brochure generated private funding through participation in annual United Way and Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) fundraising efforts nationwide. In addition, many organizations rely on a number of local nonprofits and foundations to help carry out their mission. In the interviews, projects cited numerous examples of private funding sources, including:

- Salvation Army International
- Catholic Charities
- Dress for Success
- Jewish Vocational Services
- Jewish Community Foundation
- Weingart Foundation
- State Endowments
- St. Vincent de Paul
- San Diego Foundation
- Levi Strauss Foundation
- YM/YWCA





Appendix II

Other Resources and Contacts

This appendix provides information on other resources and organizations that may be of assistance to homeless and veterans' advocates, as well as a list of the organizations and projects interviewed in the development of this brochure.

HUD Publications

HUDVET Directory. From HUD's Veteran Resource Center, this directory provides contact information for HUD and other Federal resources for veterans, non-Federal national organizations, and a comprehensive state-by-state listing of relevant state agencies, veteran service organizations, and advocacy groups. The HUDVET Directory may be accessed on-line at <http://www.hud.gov/hudvet/vetres.html>. This information may also be obtained from HUD's Veteran Resource Center at (800) 998-9999.

Other Useful Resources

National Coalition for Homeless Veterans
333 ½ Pennsylvania Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20003-1148
Phone: (202) 546-1969
Fax: (202) 546-2063
Toll Free: 800 VET-HELP
<http://www.nchv.org/>

National Alliance to End Homelessness
1518 K Street NW, Suite 206
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: (202) 638-1526
<http://www.naeh.org/>

National Coalition for the Homeless
1012 Fourteenth Street, NW, #600
Washington, DC 20005-3410
Phone: (202) 737-6444
Fax: (202) 737-6445
<http://www.nationalhomeless.org/>



National Health Care for the Homeless Council, Inc.
HCH Clinicians' Network
P.O. Box 60427
Nashville, TN 37206-0427
Phone: (615) 226-2292
Fax: (615) 226-1656
<http://www.nhchc.org/>

Organizations and Projects Contacted

American GI Forum National Veterans Outreach Program

San Antonio, Texas
Contact: Mac Rattan, Vice President
(210) 223-4088
<http://www.va.gov/vso/agif.htm>

Angel's Landing

Women Veterans Network, VA Tennessee Valley Healthcare System
Nashville, Tennessee
Contact: Mary Ann Woodward-Smith, Women Veterans Program Manager
(615) 327-4751

Catholic Social Services of Lackawanna County

Scranton, Pennsylvania
Contact: Steve Nocilla, Executive Director
(570) 207-2287

Center for Veterans Issues, Ltd.

Veterans Opportunity Integration Development
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Contact: Helen King, Grants Manager
(414) 342-4284
<http://www.execpc.com/>

Emergency Shelter Inc.

Homeless Veterans Transitional Housing Program
Richmond, Virginia
Contact: Janice Fatzinger, Executive Director
(804) 358-7747
<http://www.esirichmond.org>

Healthcare for Homeless Veterans

VA Medical Center, Seattle Division (MS116)
Seattle, WA
Contact: Alan F. Castle, MSW, Program Coordinator
(206) 764-2080



The Home of the Brave, Inc.
Emergency Shelter/Transitional Housing
Milford, Delaware
Contact: Rich Pokorney, Director
(302) 424-1681

The Inner Voice Inc.
Vet House
Chicago, Illinois
Brady Harden, Director
(312) 666-8110

Interlink Counseling Services, Inc.
Residential Treatment and Transitional Housing Programs
Louisville, Kentucky
Contact: H. Wayne Creighton, President/CEO
(502) 964-7147
<http://www.interlinkcounselingservices.org>

Joseph House Inc.
Joseph House, Moses House, Landing Zone
Cincinnati, Ohio
Contact: Bill Mallone, Director
(513) 241-2965

Los Angeles Family Housing Corporation
MOVE and VITAL Programs
Los Angeles, California
Contact: Cindy Aranda
(818) 982-4091
<http://www.lafamilyhousing.org>

Maryland Center for Veterans Education and Training, Inc. (MCVET)
Baltimore, Maryland
Contact: Col. Charles Williams (Ret.), Executive Director
(410) 576-9626
<http://mcvet.org/>

Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans
Veterans Outreach North
Duluth, Minnesota
Contact: Durban Keeney, Program Manager
(218) 722-8763
<http://www.citilink.com>



New Directions, Inc.

New Directions Program

Los Angeles, California

Contact: Toni Reinis, Executive Director

(310) 914-4045

<http://www.newdirectionsinc.org/>

New England Shelter for Homeless Veterans

Boston, Massachusetts

Contact: Tom Lions, Executive Director

(617) 248-9400

http://www.geocities.com/Pentagon/Quarters/6186/index_nn.htm

Rehabilitation Services & Veterans Programs (RS&VP)

Transitional Living Center for Veterans

Albuquerque, New Mexico

Contact: Kendra Hobbes, Director of Operations

(505) 255-8440

The Salvation Army

The William Booth Center

Seattle, Washington

Contact: Mjr. David C. Clitheroe, Director

(206) 281-4600

Seattle Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program

VVLP Transitional Housing Program

Seattle, Washington

Contact: Sherwood Dickie, VVLP Board Housing Coordinator

(206) 467-0714

South Baltimore Homeless Shelter, Inc.

South Baltimore Station

Baltimore, Maryland

Tim Williams, Executive Director, SBHS

(410) 752-5917

Swords to Plowshares

Veterans Academy of the Presidio

San Francisco, California

Contact: Carl Skinner, Executive Director, Veterans Academy

(415) 252-4788

<http://www.swords-to-plowshares.org/>

Town House Campus

Transitional Housing, Drop-in Center, Technical/Vocational School

Fresno, California

Contact: Hank Hendricks, Director

(559) 268-4321



U.S. Vets, Los Angeles

Veterans in Progress Program
Inglewood, California
Contact: Nicole Ward, Program Director
(310) 348-7600
<http://www.usvetinc.org>

Vancouver Housing Authority

Central Park Place
Vancouver, Washington
Contact: Sam Galbreath, Consultant
(503) 244-3435

Veterans Hospice Homestead

Veterans Hospice Homestead, The Hero Homestead, and Mobile Medical Unit
Fitchburg, Massachusetts
Contact: Leslie Lightfoot, Director
(978) 342-5714
<http://www.vethospice.com>

VETSPACE, Inc.

Transitional Housing
Gainesville, Florida
Contact: Robert Murphy, Grants Manager/Case Manager
(352) 955-2245
<http://www.VETSPACE.com>

Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program of Western PA

Housing Assistance for Veterans Program
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Contact: Rob Dillard, Social Service Coordinator
(412) 281-8100

Vietnam Veterans of San Diego

Veterans Rehabilitation Center
San Diego, California
Contact: David Siegler, CFO or Al Pavich, CEO
(619) 497-0142
<http://www.vvsvd.net>

Volunteers of America, Florida

Veterans Mobile Service Center
Tampa, Florida
Contact: Ed Quill, Program Coordinator
(813) 282-1525
<http://www.voa-fla.org>





Endnote References

- ¹ Unless otherwise noted, statistics are drawn from “Homelessness: Programs and the People They Serve, Findings of the National Survey of Homeless Assistance Providers and Clients, Technical Report,” Martha R. Burt, et. al., September 1999, Chapter 11. This study, prepared for the Interagency Council on the Homeless, is based on the 1996 National Survey of Homeless Assistance Providers and Clients.
- ² Rosenheck, Robert, et al., “Homeless Veterans,” in *Homelessness in America*, ed. Jim Baumhol, Phoenix, 1996, 105.
- ³ Department of Veterans Affairs, Advisory Committee on Women Veterans, 1998 Report (www.va.gov/womenvet).

