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Homelessness targeted with 1 percent donations

Poverty » Foundation urges Utahns to pitch in to build permanent housing for the homeless.

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The Salt Lake Tribune

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Updated:06/13/2010 10:23:38 PM MDT

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It's an ambitious goal -- to end chronic homelessness in Utah by the year 2014.

For that to happen, Utahns will need to pitch in. That's why Jack Gallivan, former publisher of *The Salt Lake Tribune* and founder of the Crusade for the Homeless Foundation, has launched the 1 percent campaign.

If all state residents were to pledge 1 percent of one year's income, just once, that would generate a \$100 million endowment, enough money to solve chronic homelessness in Utah by building and maintaining permanent supportive housing.

When he learned that Utah collected more than \$48 billion in private taxes and another \$4 billion from businesses in 2009, that's when Gallivan hatched the 1 percent campaign. "One percent of that is \$520 million," he said. "If we get just 20 percent participation, we've got our \$100 million."

The foundation has set up a website that allows donors to calculate 1 percent of their annual income, with options for monthly payments. "We don't want anybody whose contribution would present a hardship to be involved," Gallivan said.

The 1 percent campaign is a re-boot of Housing First, a 2004 national plan to end chronic homelessness. Since then, using private and public funding, Utah has built 500 units of housing.

Chronic homelessness is defined as people without a home for more than a year, or those who haven't been able to keep housing over the last five years. They are considered to make up about 10 percent of the state's homeless population, but use more than half of all resources.

Under the Housing First effort, the aim is for families and singles to live in apartment complexes with 24-hour on-site management, as well as case workers and physical and mental healthcare facilities. Residents pay 30 percent of their incomes in rent.

The foundation, which Gallivan founded in 2000 with his wife Grace Mary, helped raise seed money and matching funds to build Sunrise Metro, Grace Mary Manor and Palmer Court in Salt Lake County, and additional units in West Valley City and Price.

An additional 2,500 units are needed throughout the state. "We've only finished one-sixth of the job," Gallivan said. "We figured a chronically homeless person is just as homeless in Logan as he or she is in Salt Lake, so we have to do the whole state."

Local Housing First efforts have saved the state \$3.3 million in emergency expenses for the homeless, according to a 2009 study. "Permanent supportive housing is a solution that ends homelessness," said Michelle Flynn, associate executive director for the Road Home, which operates Palmer Court. "We need the emergency shelter, the crisis emergency help. But if you are looking to support something that is a permanent solution, this is clearly something that successful."

One example is Ned Chavez, 42, who moved to Palmer Court after the low-income Regis Hotel closed last year. Chavez cited his lengthy list of medical expenses and his disabilities, which is what makes the complex so convenient for him and others trying to make ends meet. "I wish a lot more people could be more independently wealthy and not have to worry where their next dollar is coming from," he said.

Homeless advocates say Utah's chronically homeless population has shrunk by about 42 percent in the last year, according to the latest figures released by the state Division of Housing and Community Development.

That decrease supports the ambitious aim of the 1 percent campaign. After all, if any state has the opportunity to end

homelessness, it would be Utah, said Janice Kimball, director of housing and services for Salt Lake County. "Our numbers are what I would consider something you can get your arms around," she said. "It's doable. If we continue to have private and public partnerships, it's something we could very well see the end of."

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Ending homelessness in Utah

For information or to join the effort, visit www.CrusadeForTheHomeless.org

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