

#### **HUD-VASH**

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
& Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Supportive Housing Program



### Building Community Partnerships to Effectively Serve Chronically Homeless Veterans

September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012



### Instructions and FYIs



- Webinar has been produced in conjunction with the HUD SNAPs office's "Ready SET Go! Series"
- Webinar will last approximately 1 ½ hours.
- We are being recorded! Within a few weeks, the recording will be posted to HUD's webpage for HUD-VASH:

http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/hcv/vash/

 A feedback survey will be e-mailed following this webinar.



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### Instructions and FYIs



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  - Questions will be answered during the <u>designated times</u> in our webinar agenda.
  - However, you can write your questions in the Questions box and submit them at any time.
- If you have a question that is not answered during the webinar, you may ask your local HUD field office or VA Network Homeless Coordinator.



### Webinar Agenda



- 1. Overview: The importance of community partnerships for ending Veteran homelessness and serving chronically homeless Speaker: Nancy Campbell, VA National Director of HUD-VASH
- 2. HUD-VASH and Chronic Homelessness Speaker: Ann Oliva, HUD Deputy Assistant Secretary of Special Needs Programs
- 3. What are CoCs and why are they important to HUD-VASH? Speaker: Linda Charest, HUD Office of Special Needs Programs
- 4. Questions
- Success StoriesSpeakers: Atlanta, Houston, and New Orleans Teams
- 6. Questions



### Building Community Partnerships for HUD-VASH



# Overview The Importance of Community Partnerships for HUD-VASH

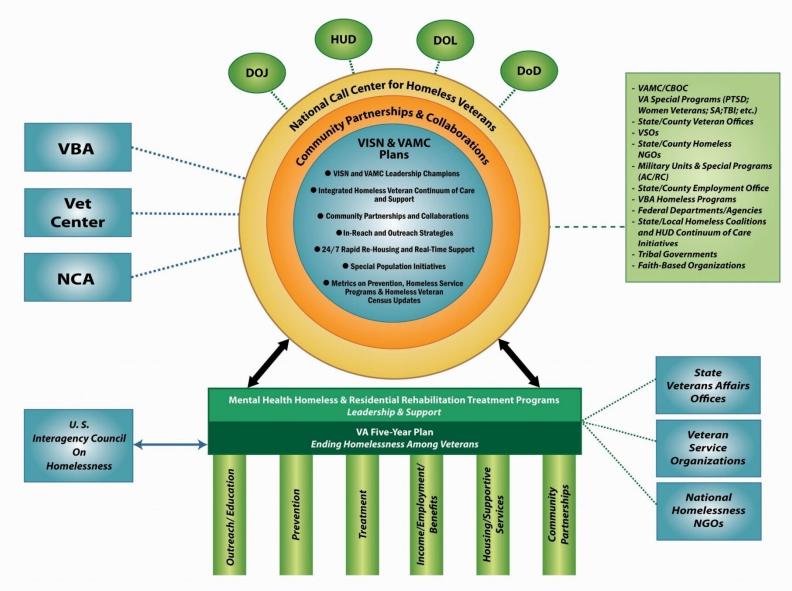
Nancy Campbell MSW, LISW National Director, HUD-VASH Program Department of Veterans Affairs



#### VISN & VAMC Ending Homelessness Among Veterans

### Leaning Forward to Reach Zero Planning Platform







### Overview



#### **Housing and Supportive Services**

- VA is moving from a transitional housing service model to a permanent housing services model.
- This strategy includes:
  - the expansion of vouchers and beds,
  - efforts to create new housing resources in the community,
  - efforts to connect with community agencies to provide supportive services.
- VA provides transitional and permanent housing solutions for Veterans through the Grant and Per Diem Program, the Health Care for Homeless Veterans Contract Residential Care program and the HUD-VASH program.
- Supportive Services help Veterans and families secure housing and provide the supports necessary to ensure that they are able to stabilize and sustain their housing placement. For Veterans that have been chronically homeless, such supports need to be ongoing, readily accessible, and attached to housing.
- Collaboration and integration with community providers is <u>vital</u> to our Veterans' success.



### Overview



### **HUD-VASH: Permanent Supportive Housing**

- Permanent Supportive Housing = independent housing + supportive services
- Two broad types of PSH
  - Treatment First (high demand)
  - Housing First (low demand) Approach now embraced by VA
- PSH is a proven response to chronic homelessness (Culhane & Byrne, 2010)
  - Chronic homeless population
    - is finite and aging
    - can achieve housing stability in PSH
  - Decreases use of more expensive and intensive services while engaged in Permanent Supportive Housing
- Among the nationally implemented VA Homeless Programs, HUD-VASH enrolls the largest number and percentage of chronically homeless.



### Overview

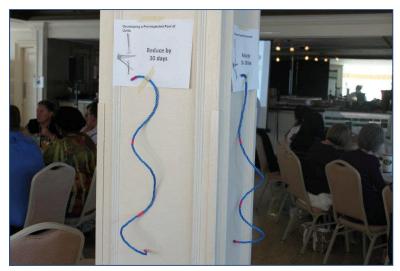


#### **Actions Taken to Better Target the Chronically Homeless**

- VA has set target goal of 65% in HUD VASH being chronically homeless. New VA Homeless Registry data cube will allow better self monitoring by sites.
- Widespread utilization of Vulnerability Index in the HUD-VASH screening process.
- Ongoing review of those being currently served. In addition to serving the CH, HUD-VASH also serves the highly vulnerable and special target populations such as females, OEF/OIF, those with dependents and the disabled.
- Expansion of other options for families i.e. Supportive Services for Veterans Families (SSVF).
- 14 site Housing First Pilot Project.
- Closer cooperation with CoCs on defining, locating and engaging the chronically homeless; better education on VA eligibility criteria.
- Better integration of VA Outreach staff and Community Solutions 100K Campaign.
- Rapid Results Housing Boot Camps that have successfully engaged 17 high profile communities to focus on targeting the CH.

HUD and VA partnered with the 100K Homes Campaign and Rapid Results Institute to hold "boot camps" for 13 VASH communities. The events brought together PHA, VA, CoC, and HUD staff as community-centered groups to map their processes and come up with ways to improve them in creative and collaborative ways







Attendees at the San Diego boot camp think of new ways to approach their goals



### Building Community Partnerships for HUD-VASH



# HUD-VASH and Chronic Homelessness

Ann Oliva

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Special Needs Programs Community Planning and Development, HUD



# HUD-VASH and Chronic Homelessness



### **Definition of Chronic Homelessness**

- (1) An individual who is homeless and
  - (i) lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter; **and**
  - (ii) has been homeless for at least 1 year or on at least 4 separate occasions in the last 3 years; and
  - (iii) Has substance abuse disorder, serious mental illness, developmental disability, PTSD, TBI, or chronic physical illness or disability



# HUD-VASH and Chronic Homelessness



#### **Definition of Chronic Homelessness**

(2) An individual who has been residing in an institutional care facility, including a jail, substance abuse or mental health facility or other similar facility for fewer than 90 days **and** was chronically homeless before entering that facility; or



### HUD-VASH and Chronic Homelessness



#### **Definition of Chronic Homelessness**

(3) A family with an adult head of household (or if there is no adult in the family, a minor head of household) who is chronically homeless, including a family whose composition has fluctuated while the head of household has been homeless.



### HUD-VASH and Chronic Homelessness



# Serving the most vulnerable Veterans is very challenging.

But it's worth it. Why?



### HUD-VASH and Chronic Homelessness



#### Saving lives.

 The mortality rate for those experiencing chronic homelessness is four to nine times higher than for the general population.

#### Financially, it makes sense.

- The average chronically homeless person costs taxpayers over \$40,000 per year.
- Permanent supportive housing is cheaper than the costs of jail, mental institutions, emergency rooms, and shelters.

As demonstrated by Project 50 in Los Angeles: <a href="http://articles.latimes.com/2012/jun/08/local/la-me-0608-homeless-savings-20120608">http://articles.latimes.com/2012/jun/08/local/la-me-0608-homeless-savings-20120608</a>



# HUD-VASH and Chronic Homelessness



- Other options are available for Veterans that are not experiencing chronic homelessness:
  - Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)
  - Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG)
- In order to reach our goal of ending Veteran homelessness by 2015, we have to use our resources wisely.



### Building Community Partnerships for HUD-VASH



# What are CoCs and why are they important to HUD-VASH?

Linda Charest,
Office of Special Needs Programs
Community Planning and Development, HUD





#### **Two Goals**

- What is a CoC?
- Why should HUD-VASH partners participate in and collaborate with CoCs?





### **Background on CoCs**

- HUD's homeless assistance programs are authorized by the
   McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987
- In 1995, HUD began requiring that communities submit a single application for McKinney-Vento funding to:
  - streamline the application process
  - encourage coordination of housing and service providers on a local level, and
  - promote the development of Continuums of Care.
- Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (HEARTH Act) amended McKinney-Vento and codified into law the Continuum of Care process





### What is a Continuum of Care (CoC)?

- A regional or local planning body that coordinates the funding of housing and services provided to homeless families and individuals
- HUD's CoC grant program is designed to:
  - promote community-wide planning and strategic use of resources
  - improve coordination and integration with mainstream resources
  - improve HMIS data collection and performance measurement;
  - allow each community to tailor its program to the particular strengths and challenges within that community.





### Who participates in a CoC?

- nonprofit homeless providers
- social service providers
- local governments
- victim service providers
- faith-based organizations
- advocates
- Veterans Affairs medical centers
- public housing agencies
- businesses
- school districts

- mental health agencies
- hospitals
- universities
- affordable housing developers
- law enforcement
- other agencies/organizations serving homeless and and formerly homeless Veterans, and
- other agencies/organizations serving homeless and formerly homeless persons





### Why should HUD-VASH partners participate in and collaborate with the CoC?

- To coordinate services and housing provided for homeless Veterans, including those ineligible for HUD-VASH
- To receive help addressing challenges faced when housing chronically homeless Veterans under HUD-VASH
- CoCs are responsible for the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and Point-in-Time (PIT) counts
  - HUD and VA primarily use PIT counts to measure communities' relative need and determine where VASH vouchers should be awarded
- To work together to end Veteran homelessness in your communities by 2015



### **Building Community Partnerships for HUD-VASH**



### Questions



### Building Community Partnerships for HUD-VASH



### **Stories of Success**



### **Stories of Success**



### Building Collaboration to End Chronic Veterans' Homelessness in Atlanta

**HUD-VASH Program 2008-2012** 

#### **Presenters:**

Iola Green, Atlanta HUD-VASH Program Supervisor
Jenifer Turner-Reid, Deputy Network Homeless Coordinator, Southeast Region
Janice Stewart, DeKalb Housing Authority
Waquele Holley, DeKalb Housing Authority
Margaret Schuelke, Project Community Connections, Inc.
Emily Lieb, Office of Mayor Kasim Reed





#### **HUD-VASH & Homeless Veterans**

#### By the numbers...

- Jan. 2011 Point-in-Time Count (Tri-J CoC: Atlanta, Fulton Co., DeKalb Co.):
  - ~4900 individuals unsheltered and in emergency housing
  - ~1200 of these were veterans, including ~400 chronically homeless veterans plus ~450 individuals & families who are highly vulnerable but do not meet the definition of "chronic"
  - Only ~38% of street homeless veterans access VA services (Clark-Atlanta Univ. Survey, 2012)

#### HUD-VASH Stats

- Atlanta HUD/VASH Program has a total of 1,140 vouchers (includes PHAs outside of the Tri-J)
- As of 9/11/12, 906 veterans are leased up, including 148 chronically homeless who leased up between May 15-Sept. 1
- For May 15-Sept. 1, 2012 lease-ups, increased targeting to chronic and shortened process:
  - Reduced process day (from intake to lease-up) from 166 to 113 for chronic individuals
  - 93% were chronic, compared to 26% of those leasing up prior to May 15, 2012 (includes 2008 on)





### 2008-2011: HUD-VASH Program

#### Things that were going well...

- HUD-VASH program received referrals from the CoC, within the VA, outside community agencies and other Vas
- VA Triage serves as Single Point-of-Entry for all homeless veterans' programs
- Close coordination with transitional housing and per diem program (282 treatment beds in ATL)
- Oct. 2011: New VA Performance Measure adopted to prioritize allocating vouchers to the most vulnerable, chronically homeless
- Housing Fair to connect veterans with landlords
- VA relationships with a few housing advocates and placement specialists with a network of landlords
- Stand-Down & CHALENG Forum are annual efforts to engage community partners in supporting
  efforts to end veteran homelessness





### 2008-2011: HUD-VASH Program

#### Challenges

- Challenges finding the most vulnerable clients, particularly those sleeping in unsheltered locations
- Lack of landlords willing to accept individuals with criminal backgrounds
- Lack of resources for chronically homeless clients during **housing search** (e.g. transportation and assistance in visiting housing)
- Case manager case-loads still high, despite shift to "chronic," challenges training case managers to assist veterans in navigating the PHA process
- Confusion about application requirements due to the fact that five different PHAs administer HUD-VASH in Atlanta (Example: Delay in communication to PHAs about new reg's to accept DD214 as ID)
- Lack of housing options in neighborhoods with access to transit, basic needs, services, employment
- Lack of funding support for move-in costs (utility and security deposits)
- Lack of consistent data at the VA, HUD, and PHAs about number of vouchers available





### 2008-2011: Challenges PHAs face in serving chronically homeless through HUD-VASH

- 5 PHAs administer VASH in Atlanta, creating additional challenges for coordination:
  - Vouchers are ported throughout the city
  - Summary data about the status of vouchers is inconsistent across PHAs, HUD, VA
- The chronically homeless population poses particular challenges:
  - Difficulty contacting clients
  - Difficulty verifying income/income needs, disabilities
- Landlords can also be challenging for PHAs to deal with:
  - Challenges getting landlords to provide information and forms in a timely fashion
  - Many landlords do not have apartments inspection-ready





#### 2012: Expanding Partnership & Improving Coordination

- Coordinating meetings: VA, PHAs, HUD, United Way, Project Community Connections, Inc.
  - Facilitated by Mayor's Office with a plan to build working relationships and institutionalize process changes that will be sustained despite staff turnover
  - Expanding to include SSVF providers and others who support veteran employment programs
  - Focus areas: Outreach (Registry), Expanding Housing Stock Devoted to Veterans (LL outreach, project-based vouchers), Housing Retention (benefits, employment, peer support), Data Sharing
- Strategy Session w/PHAs to map VASH process and ID challenges, share best practices, clarify requirements, and implement solutions
- Created a HUD-VASH Directory with points of contact for each coordinating agency (VA, HUD, PHAs)
- Secured funding for move-in assistance from United Way and City of Atlanta
- Engaged a third-party provider (PCCI) to provide assistance w/housing search and to administer move-in funds (security & utility deposits)
- Pursuing data-sharing agreement between PHAs, HUD, VA





# 2012: PHAs are Partnering with the VA and Community Partners to improve the ability of the program to serve chronically homeless.

- Regular meetings with the VA to ensure close coordination on the status of voucher applicants
- PHAs working with VA and community partners to map HUD-VASH process, identify barriers and work-arounds
- PHA Best Practices:
  - PHAs now accept Form DD214 and VA ID
  - PHAs invite landlords to voucher briefings
  - PHAs come to VA to educate case managers on PHA process and requirements
  - One PHA sends weekly voucher status updates to the VA





### Since 2008, PCCI has helped "bridge some of the gaps" in service delivery by providing the following resources:

- Forging relationships with property management companies and private owners of rental properties to familiarize them with the VASH program and HUD's Housing Choice Program for Veterans
- Maintaining on-going contact with VA and HA case managers from intake to placement to ensure timely transitions
- Completing comprehensive housing assessments with each consumer, including a thorough review of each client's barriers to housing stability
- Working with consumers to assist them in finding appropriate permanent housing that meets both their individual needs and VASH program requirements
- Making active referrals on behalf of consumers to mainstream public benefits
- Providing "gap funding" in the form of utility payments in arrears and rent and utility deposits, and identifying and securing private and public funding to support program costs
- Contacting consumers post-placement and providing additional supportive services needed to maintain housing stability



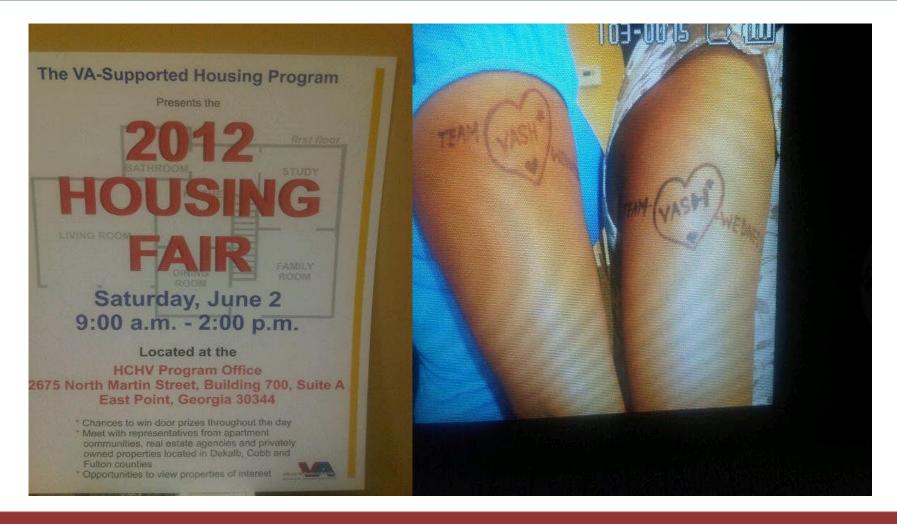


### Recommended practices

- Partner with outreach workers to connect vets to temporary beds once they have been referred, and to assist in contacting them for VASH appointments; in ATL, United Way has stepped up to serve this need.
- Engage 3<sup>rd</sup> party providers to help bridge the gaps during the housing search process by connecting veterans to landlords, providing transportation to visit housing, and administering move-in assistance funding.
- Have regular meetings with PHAs and VA liaisons to ensure close collaboration and clarity about requirements.
- **Hold a Housing Fair** to connect veterans searching for housing with property owners & landlords (VA, PHAs).
- **Hold a Case Manager Competition** to motivate case managers and facilitate the culture shift to focusing on the chronic population.















## **Housing Houston's Heroes**

**The First 100 Days** 





#### Overview of program

- 1,045 VASH vouchers allocated to Houston/Harris County (795 at HHA, 250 at HCHA); 35 VA case managers.
- Harris County Point in Time (PIT) count indicated that 22% of 7,356 homeless individuals identified on 1/31/12 were veterans (1,618).
- Harris County homeless population decreased 13.8% from 2011 to 2012.







The Houston demonstration's goal was to house 100 chronically homeless Houstonians, at least 60 of whom are veterans, in 100 days.

We called it "100 in 100."





Average Processing Timeframes				
RFTA (received) to Leased	RFTA to Passed	Passed to Leased	Voucher Issuance to Leased	Goal = Veteran Success (National goal = sub 90 days)
20	8	12	44	
Total Chronic Universe by Status				
VASH Chronic	Total	%		Goal = 100
Searching	50	31%		
RFTA Received	9	6%		
Leased	101	63%		
Total	160			
Total VASH Issued				
VASH Issued Chronic	VASH Issued Total	%		Goal = 65%
130	203	64%		
Total VASH Leased	WACILLA I T	0/		Cool CES
VASH Leased Chronic	VASH Leased Total			Goal = 65%
101	148	68%		





#### **Progress on HUD-VASH: Before**

- Agencies were working independently;
- Statistics weren't consistently tracked;
- Lots of systemic barriers;
- "Homelessness" definition difficult to operationalize; and
- Timely voucher utilization a challenge.





#### **Progress on HUD-VASH: After**

- One stop shop mass briefings;
- Close coordination between non-profits and VASH program including CoC;
- Chronic homeless assessments provided by non-profits;
- Deposit assistance with SSVF funds;
- VASH information entered into HMIS (except by VA); and
- VA case managers placed on-site at veteran property with plans for more.





#### **Progress on HUD-VASH: After**

- HHA's Administrative Plan amended for chronically homeless;
- MOUs created to provide housing search assistance, transitional assistance and compliance-related supportive services;
- HHA committed to lease 1,000 homeless individuals/families over 4-years;
- HHA has requested several waivers of HUD regulations;
- New HHA position created for Homeless & Housing Initiatives;
- New Coalition for the Homeless position created for faith-based resources; and
- New VA Assistant Director position created.





#### **Community Partnerships Case Study**

- Rapid Rehousing;
- HCCSD and VA collaboration; and
- Ongoing case management.





#### Agency collaboration instrumental to success.

- Identify social service agencies to partner with PHA;
- Coordinate case management across agencies from voucher issuance to lease-up; and
- Utilize other funding streams such as SSVF and Rapid Rehousing.









































One Stop Shop Briefings















## One Stop Shop Briefings













#### Recommended practices

- One stop shop briefings with vendor participation;
- Active community collaboration critical;
- Simplify paperwork;
- Lower case manager to client ratios; and
- Data sharing and data reconciliation.







Houston Mayor
Annise Parker
welcomes four
formerly homeless
veterans to their new
homes.

Pictured from left: veteran Willie Johnson, Charles Brown of Goodwill Industries, veteran Robert Harris, a representative from the City of Houston, Houston Housing Authority Chairman of the Board Lance Gilliam, Houston Housing Authority President & CEO Tory Gunsolley, Mayor Annise Parker, two representatives from the Veterans of Foreign Wars Ladies Auxiliary, veteran Alvin Gill and veteran Elvin Black.

















Houston Mayor Annise Parker visited housed veterans at Villas on Winkler Senior Living community 9/14/2012.





#### **Team Houston**

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# Greater New Orleans Making A Difference Together



#### **Turning Lives Around**



**Together We Stand** VA, HUD, KENNER Housing Authority, Housing Authority of New Orleans, VOA, UNITY and City of New Orleans





#### Where We Are Today

As of June 2012, there are **515 VASH vouchers** in the Greater New Orleans area administered by 2 PHAs:

- Kenner Housing Authority -365 administering since 2008
- ➤ Housing Authority of New Orleans-**150** vouchers administering since 2010

VAMC-SE LA Veterans Affairs services both PHAs with **8** HUD-VASH Case Managers; Caseload ratio 30:1.

➤ 3 additional Case Managers by 2<sup>ND</sup> Qtr of FY2013





#### 2008-2011 Before THE MESH

Kenner HA was the sole administer of 365 vouchers-*High Performer* 

- •Excellent relationship with HUD/VA
- •Inaccurate housing/lease-up data between agencies
- •Scattered appointments; bottleneck in documentation
- Limited housing stock; lack of one bedroom units
- Unit Inspections were more than 30days of RFTA
- •Limited Security and Utility Deposit assistance
- Portability Issues
- •VA sponsored Annual CHALENG meetings & monthly communities





#### 2008-2011 Challenges/Barriers Before THE MESH

## Major challenges in servicing the chronically homeless

Locating and tracking the families
Trust issues
Lack of documentation
Financial independence
Sustainability





#### AFTER THE MESH

- •One-day Set Aside for Voucher Issuance
- •Uniform Application in conjunction with VA/PHAs
- •DD214 Accepted in lieu of Birth Certificate/SSN expediting process
- •HANO awarded 100 vouchers; adopted best practices of Kenner
- •Collaborative relationships spun with all stakeholders-HUD, VA, PHAs, CoCs-VOA and UNITY, and City of N.O.
- •Weekly Data Reconciliation between agencies
- Housing Choice Link-web-based search engine for Housing
- •Reduced days to inspection from RFTA to approximately 3 days





#### Making the Difference Together

- •Joined forces with the City of New Orleans Campaign to end homelessness
- •SSVF was married to HUD-VASH
- •VOA commitment to follow-up with SSVF families to sustainment
- •Special Programs Specialist and Inspector to be hired at HANO
- •Partner with Public/Private Agencies for Furnishing Assistance





#### **Making the Difference Together**





**SSVF Assisted Family** 





#### **Commitments to HUD-VASH**

- •VOA commitment to follow-up with SSVF families to sustainment
- •Maintain weekly communication with all partners/stakeholders, VA, HUD, CoCs, etc.
- •Special Programs Specialist and Inspector to be hired at HANO
- •Increase outreach by the VA, CoCs and the City of N.O.
- •Continue to Educate non-VASH PHAs to streamline portability
- •\$10,000 Seed Local financial institution to provide furnishings for HUD-VASH families.
- •Identify Additional Resources to assist with furnishings





#### **Our Work**

Focus has been shifted to the most vulnerable chronically homeless

Biggest Accomplishment -Housed <u>121</u> chronically homeless veterans within 100 day-initial Goal of 105

**Registry Week** (facilitated by UNITY)— All Partners participated in the Greater N.O. 1<sup>st</sup> Registry Week

600+ families were surveyed; 2/3 chronically homeless

57 chronically homeless Veterans surveyed which included:

**HUD-VASH Summit** (2<sup>nd</sup> Year) – to be held Annually

**Weekly CoC sessions -** to place Most Vulnerable Chronically homeless in available housing throughout the Continuum.





#### What's Working in Greater New Orleans

- Developed relationships across cylinders, HUD, VA, PHAs, CoCs, other stakeholders
- Regular Stakeholder Communication via email/phone
- Point of Contact specifically for HUD-VASH at all levels, HUD, VA, PHAs and CoCs
- Collaboration with stakeholders to identify available resources (i.e. SSVF, HPRP, HEARTH, etc)
- Process has been streamlined with the development of a Uniform Application procedures in conjunction with the VA
- Develop plan to expedite inspections within a short period after RFTA issuance
- Collaborative outreach to target vulnerable street homeless veterans
- Target non-traditional community partners for outreach to increase community awareness of veteran homeless





#### **Best Practices & Innovations**

- ✓ One-day set aside for same-day voucher issuance
- ✓ Development and Implementation of Uniform Application utilized by the VA/PHAs
- ✓ Acceptance of DD214
- ✓ Weekly Communication
- ✓ Weekly Data Reconciliation
- ✓ HUD intervention with collaboration efforts, portability and identifying resources
- ✓ SSVF Funds secured by VOA-Utilization
- ✓ Landlord Leasing Fairs
- ✓ HUD-VASH Information Brochure Dissemination



# **Building Community Partnerships for HUD-VASH**



### Questions