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HOUSTON RECEIVES OVER \$1 MILLION FROM US DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT TO HOUSE HOMELESS VETERANS

HOUSTON— The Houston Housing Authority and Harris County Housing Authority received \$1,140,265 from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to house 183 veterans—the largest amount awarded to a city in Texas. The rental assistance is provided through the HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) Program, which combines rental assistance from HUD with case management and clinical services provided by VA. HUD announced on October 1st that it was awarding \$62 million to help more than 9,000 homeless veterans nationwide obtain permanent supportive housing as part of the Administration’s goal of ending homelessness among veterans.

Houston has housed more than 2,800 homeless veterans since January 2012. Houston Housing Authority has provided rental assistance to 25 percent of that population.

“The numbers clearly show that what we are doing works,” said Houston Housing Authority President & CEO Tory Gunsolley. “By working together we are able to get men and women who served our country off the streets and into a home that they are proud to live in. Combine a stable home with supportive services and our veterans have the tools necessary to remain housed and live a higher quality of life.”

The significant progress towards ending veteran homelessness in Houston is attributed to the collaborative efforts of the City’s homeless service providers. In 2012, Houston Housing Authority, Harris County Housing Authority, City of Houston, Coalition for the Homeless of Houston/Harris County, SEARCH, and other local agencies joined together for Housing Houston’s Heroes, an initiative to house and provide supportive services to homeless veterans. Housing Houston’s Heroes successfully housed and provided supportive services to 148 homeless veterans in 100 days, and in one year, had housed 557 homeless individuals and families including over 488 homeless veterans.

“With today’s announcement, the collaborative effort to end homelessness in Harris County now has the resources to house every homeless veteran ready to accept housing,” said Harris

County Housing Authority CEO Tom McCasland. “Ending veterans’ homelessness within the next 15 months is not only the right thing to do for our veterans, it is also saving significant taxpayer dollars that would otherwise be spent on law enforcement, ER visits, and other emergency services.”

The unprecedented collaboration among Houston’s homeless service providers continues with the new initiative The Way Home. Launched on July 2nd, the goal of The Way Home is to end chronic and veteran homelessness by 2015, to end family and youth homelessness by 2020, and to build a system in which no one has to be without housing for more than 30 days. Any veteran that is still experiencing homelessness can report to the VA Drop In-Center located at 1418 Preston Avenue to be assessed for housing.

ABOUT HHA:

The Houston Housing Authority provides affordable homes and services to more than 58,000 low-income Houstonians, including over 17,000 families housed through the Housing Choice Voucher Program and another 5,700 living in 25 public housing and tax credit developments around the city. HHA also administers one of the nation’s largest voucher program exclusively serving homeless veterans. More information about the Houston Housing Authority can be found at www.housingforhouston.com.

ABOUT HCHA:

Harris County Housing Authority (HCHA) provides quality affordable housing and assists residents in achieving economic independence. HCHA serves more than 3900 families through the federally-funded Housing Choice Voucher Program and serves more than 1000 families and seniors living in mixed-income housing developments. HCHA also houses homeless schoolchildren and their families and administers funding for nearly 500 units for homeless veterans. For more information about HCHA, please visit www.hchatexas.org.

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