

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Solano's Homeless Services Hurt by Sharp Decrease in Donations

Fairfield, CA – *Tuesday, March 9, 2010* ***The Perfect Storm***. With a combination of bad weather and a bad economy, Mission Solano is seeing a sharp increase in the demand for its services. Yet, monetary donations to Mission Solano have seen a sharp decrease in the initial months of this year.

“We are providing more food and offering more beds than we were one year ago,” said Executive Director Ron Marlette. “But we are doing it with a lot less money.” Mission Solano’s donations in the first two months of this year are tens of thousand dollars below just one year ago.

Some of the decrease in funds is seasonal. “The first quarter of the year is always a low point for individual donations. But this decline is beyond anything that we could anticipate,” according to Marlette.

Donors may be holding back on donations based on an uncertain economic future. But, Marlette thinks donor generosity, not reluctance, may account for some of the decrease in donations. “Our donors are not just moved by suffering in our community, but suffering all over the world. In the last couple of months, a great amount of money has gone to the urgent needs in Haiti. While we are encouraging and applauding every dollar that went to Haiti, and now those funds that will need to go to Chile, as well as Turkey, we want donors to remember local needs as well. We also realize we will have to tighten our belts and find new sources for funding.”

By all appearances, Mission Solano is doing quite well – with the completion in recent months of the first three buildings at its Bridge to Life Center (BTLC) on Beck Avenue in Fairfield. Construction of a men’s shelter, dining hall and caretaker’s house are slated to begin later this year at the BTLC. But Mission Solano is quick to point out that the buildings are being constructed using grants that are designated for construction only, not for operations of the Mission. Each new facility at the BTLC puts greater strain on the already stretched operations budget for the Mission.

“We have made a number of appeals in the last couple of years as the economy sends more people our way and fewer donations,” said Marlette. “We do not want to be accused of crying wolf. But this is currently a sudden and severe decrease in funding, and we need the help of the generous public both today and in coming months as we continue to build sustainable programs essential for the well-being of our community.”

Annually, the mission has provided over 20,000 nights of lodging, with this number expected to increase significantly this year. Many homeless adults who first come to the Mission for a meal or shelter later enroll in rehabilitation programs that help them get off the streets and into self-directed living.

In addition to monetary donations, Marlette said the Mission is particularly in need of personal hygiene items, laundry products, and canned food as the Mission pantries are dangerously low. You can help by sending a gift directly to Mission Solano at P.O. Box 8, Fairfield, CA 94533-0084, or by donating online at www.MissionSolano.org. Donations of food, hygiene items, laundry products and clothing may be dropped off at the Mission at 740 Travis Blvd, Fairfield, CA.

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