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Lane County Human Services Releases Annual One Night Homeless Count

EUGENE, ORE -- On Wednesday, January 30th, Lane County Human Services, the anti-poverty program for the county, along with non-profit partners, conducted a one-night count of people who are literally homeless in our community. The Annual One Night Homeless Count reached throughout the area to count people sleeping in homeless shelters and transitional housing programs, using food pantries, day and night access centers, churches, and those sleeping outdoors in cars, tents, covered in blankets under bridges and in doorways, in parks and other places not meant to be used for housing.

1,751 people were counted in Lane County during the 2013 One Night Homeless Count on January 30, 2013. Approximately 100 staff and volunteers from 22 organizations counted homeless people this year. Of the 1,751 people counted:

- 1,102 men women and children were without shelter
- 388 men, women and children were indoors in emergency shelter programs
- 261 men, women and children were indoors in transitional housing programs

This snapshot in time only paints part of the picture of homelessness locally,” said Wolfe. “Annual figures show that 10,857 individuals who sought services from local programs were homeless at some point during the year.” During the year,

- 711 unduplicated individuals were served at the Egan Warming Center during 9 nights of extreme weather at six faith-based sites during the 2012-2013 winter season
- 2,262 homeless students attended public school in Lane County during the 2011-12 school year (Oregon Dept. of Education). This number includes those doubled up with relatives or friends.

The one-night count takes place across the nation each January. It provides a snapshot of the problem of homelessness to help policymakers target resources to the areas of the state experiencing the greatest need.

“All those who helped with this year’s count were deeply humbled by the experience. It reminds us close up that everyone deserves to have a safe place to call home. The annual count offers solid data on the extent of homelessness in Lane County. The count allows policy makers and funding sources to develop strategies that can improve the lives of homeless people,” said Pearl Wolfe, Human Services Commission Supervisor. “This one-night snapshot provides us with data we need to understand the number and characteristics of persons who are homeless so we can develop a thoughtful response. This count is critical because it describes the dimensions of the homelessness locally. We are able to track progress toward the goal of ending homelessness. The count helps to inform public opinion, increase public awareness, and attract resources that will lead to reduce and to perhaps someday end homelessness.”

One-night counts are required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and Oregon Housing and Community Services (State of Oregon) which provides funding for housing and services to single adults, families and youth who are homeless in Lane County.