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NEWS RELEASE

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL OF BALTIMORE AWARDED \$1.2 MILLION HUD GRANT TO EXPAND PERMANENT HOUSING PROGRAM FOR CHRONICALLY HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS

(BALTIMORE, MD) – St. Vincent de Paul of Baltimore has been awarded \$1.2 million from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to expand its Home Connections program that provides permanent housing to chronically homeless individuals in Baltimore City.

This award comes just one year after St. Vincent de Paul launched its Home Connections program in October 2006. Presently, 28 chronically homeless individuals receive permanent housing, intensive case management, and other supportive services. The new grant will increase the number of housing units from 28 to 60.

“We are excited to be able to expand this permanent housing initiative that provides vital services to some of our most vulnerable fellow citizens,” stated John Schiavone, Executive Director of St. Vincent de Paul of Baltimore. “With the alarming rise in the number of homeless individuals in Baltimore City, coupled with the reduction in available shelter beds this past year, I am very pleased that we can continue to be at the forefront of providing long-term solutions to the problem of homelessness.”

Home Connections uses a “Housing First” approach to working with individuals defined as chronically homeless, providing immediate access to permanent housing and supportive services. According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), a chronically homeless person is someone with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more, or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years. The Housing First model is based on the premise that by providing housing first, followed by supportive services, individuals receive the immediate stability they need so that they are prepared to engage in services that address the reasons for their homelessness.

Nationally, the Housing First model has had a very high success rate. A national study, conducted by the Institute for Research, Training and Technical Assistance at Beyond Shelter, found that 89.5% of 200 previously homeless families achieved and continuously maintained residential

stability after the families received services from the Housing First Program. Because the chronically homeless cycle in and out of homeless services programs, a Housing First approach saves money when compared to the cost of shelter, healthcare, criminal justice, and mental health services regularly given to this population. According to the *Impact of Supportive Housing on Service Use for Homeless Persons with Mental Illness in New York City*, in New York City, each unit of permanent supportive housing saved \$16,282 per year.

“We are very excited that St. Vincent de Paul of Baltimore received this grant from HUD, which will enable them to expand their successful Housing First project. Housing First is a key strategy in Baltimore’s Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness,” says Diane Glauber, President of Baltimore Homeless Services.

Home Connections residents are housed in one bedroom apartments located at various sites throughout Baltimore City. Residents are expected to maintain their units in a clean and orderly manner, be good neighbors, and pay a portion of the rent based on the HUD formula. The program staff sees clients at a minimum of once per week in their home to ensure that they are managing well, while also assisting them in getting the treatment they need. 100% of clients housed have remained housed since the program’s inception, which is remarkable given that the program works exclusively with individuals who are chronically homeless.

“Home Connections enables us to be flexible with our services, meeting clients where they are, and helping them move at their own pace,” said Kathleen Spain, Director of Home Connections. “The Housing First approach has demonstrated very positive results across the country, and is the best way to end homelessness for this population.”

Clark Crane is a client of the Home Connections program. Homeless ever since he moved to Baltimore in 2000, Clark was a regular client at Beans and Bread. His life was all about survival, moving from shelter to shelter just to have a roof over his head. Since moving into an apartment of Home Connections, Clark has worked with his case manager to treat his substance abuse problem. He also receives physical rehabilitation and mental health treatment and returns to Beans & Bread to volunteer every week. Bolstered by the stability of his new housing, Clark soon hopes to reunite with his young daughter, and return to full-time employment. “I am surprised by what I have been able to do with a roof over my head,” Clark says.

St. Vincent de Paul of Baltimore helps people who are suffering from the effects of poverty meet their basic human needs and achieve a better future for themselves and their families. We are proud to be a United Way Impact Partner and to be recognized by Maryland Nonprofits with the Seal of Excellence for maintaining the highest standards of ethics and accountability in nonprofit governance, management, and operations.

