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Leading The Way

Portland Housing Bureau awarded funds for homeless living with HIV/AIDS, plus AIDS Walk Portland recap

BY RYAN J. PRADO

Just days before more than 10,000 people converged upon downtown's Pioneer Courthouse Square for the 25th Annual AIDS Walk Portland, the office of Portland Housing Commissioner Nick Fish announced that \$1.37 million in new funding had been awarded to the Portland Housing Bureau to support homeless people living with HIV/AIDS. The funds come from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and are expected to be available in early 2012.

Along with Los Angeles, Dallas and Boston, Portland is among only eight communities in the nation to receive funds through HUD's Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) program, part of the Obama administration's National HIV/AIDS Strategy and the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness.

A total of 46 projects were considered during the competitive funding process.

So what's the secret to Portland's success? "This award signals HUD's recognition that Portland is a national leader in working with people living with HIV/AIDS who are experiencing homelessness," Fish says. "Portland has strong partnerships with community organizations like Cascade AIDS

Project, who deliver great results for people living with HIV/AIDS. And, the Portland Housing Bureau has a strong team writing these grant applications."

Specifically, the new funding will support a collaborative project forged by CAP and WorkSource Portland Metro—which is funded by Worksystems, Inc.—in an initiative called Springboard to Stability, Self-Sufficiency and Health (S4H). The initiative provides rent assistance, case management and employment services, including employment training. In addition, the grant will help CAP's housing program for people living with HIV/AIDS in Oregon and Southwest Washington to develop housing plans and find homes for up to 60 more people per year.

"It is a national disgrace that people living with HIV/AIDS experience high levels

of unemployment and homelessness," Fish says. "This new funding will help us quickly stabilize people's housing with flexible rent assistance and then connect them to 'mainstream' employment and benefits services to help them access the income they need to be self-sufficient."

Commissioner Fish's office reports that more than 600 people living with HIV/AIDS



"Portland is a national leader in working with people living with HIV/AIDS who are experiencing homelessness."

-NICK FISH, PORTLAND HOUSING COMMISSIONER

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