

# VOA and Transition Projects working for the community

by Jeff Kemp  
Co-Editor-In-Chief

The Volunteers of America's Adopt A Family Program are now accepting applications for people who may be interested in helping families in need for the holidays.

The Adopt A Family program matches families in need with individuals, families, groups or businesses which provide food, clothing, gifts and toys for the holiday season.

"What's really special about this holiday program is the personal involvement. You find out exactly what a family needs, and you get to see the excitement on the children's faces at the delivery," said Zelda Langdale, Adopt A Family coordinator. "It's a very meaningful

seniors over 60.

Those interested in adopting a family can call 23-ADOPT. Those who cannot adopt but who would like to help can support the program through a cash donation sent to Volunteers of America, 537 SE Alder St., Portland, OR 97214.

The Adopt A Family program has been made possible by the support of the following companies: Neil Kelly Designers/Remodelers, Stevedoring Services of America, OECO Corporation, Santiam, Flav-R-Pac, Norpac Foods, Inc. and Volunteers of America of Oregon, Inc.

Volunteers of America is a nationwide social service organization with branches in more than 200 communities. They serve the com-

by Jason Eck  
Staff Writer

With wintry, cold weather already hitting the Pacific Northwest, homeless people are looking for shelter, as well as meals, things that most of us take for granted, this holiday season.

There are services available to help these people, though. One such agency, Transition Projects, Inc., formerly Burnside Projects, Inc., is a multi-service, non-profit agency which has provided solution-oriented assistance to the homeless since 1971. The agency consists of multiple interrelated programs meeting life-sustaining needs for shelter, food and clothing. In addition, services are provided to assist more than 7,000 clients annually to rebuild confidence and self-esteem, and develop the skills that can help them achieve permanent housing and self-sufficiency.

The mission of Transition Projects is to assist homeless individuals and families who are unable to meet their basic needs for shelter, food, clothing, physical and emotional health.

"Our goal is to make sure people get inside and get two to three meals per day," said Jean DeMaster, executive director.

This holiday season, Transition Projects have several dinners planned for the homeless. On Thanksgiving Day, a dinner was provided for shelter residents and the homeless community, a total of 200 people according to DeMaster. Also on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day there will be meals provided.

They will also provide clothing, up to 10 tons. So far this season, only three tons have been donated, making the need for clothing a major concern. The public can make their donations by dropping off hats, gloves, blankets and other warm clothing to Transition Projects, located at 435 NW Glisan St., Portland.

Another major service that Transition Projects provides is shelter. Due to lack of space, the agency cannot take in all the homeless it would like, but it does try to provide alternatives for people in need.

"We offer shelter, but try to coordinate services and let people know that there is enough (shelter) for everybody," DeMaster explained.

Also during this season of sharing, Transition Projects is asking for small, practical gifts that will be given to the homeless on Christmas. These presents can be anything from new hats and gloves to food (make sure it is in containers). Other

possible gifts include inexpensive watches, radios, playing cards and other games. "Homeless people are desperate for things to do," DeMaster said.

Most homeless people come from a background of drug and/or alcohol abuse, especially single adults, according to DeMaster. "We also offer alcohol and drug treatment to people."

Transition Projects provide such services as: day/night shelter; women's programs; Hispanic services; outpatient alcohol and drug treatment; corrections counseling; case management for the mentally ill; alcohol- and drug-free transitional and permanent housing; employment counseling and job-placement assistance; crisis intervention services; and veterans outreach services.

Transition Projects receive funding from city, county, state and federal government. They also receive a major portion of funding from individuals, churches, corporations and foundations.

They work in cooperation with several agencies, including: Mental Health Services West, Oregon State Employment Division, The Veterans Administration, American Red Cross and Wallace Medical Concern.

## What's really special about this holiday program is the personal involvement ...

-Zelda Langdale, Adopt A Family coordinator

way to celebrate the holidays."

The Volunteers of America are reaching families most in need by receiving referrals through schools, head-start programs and other agencies which work with children in poverty. An adoption entails helping a family in poverty with children under 18, or low-income

munity through child care, child abuse prevention, a shelter for homeless women and children, a senior center, senior health clinic, adult day-care program, residential alcohol and drug treatment facilities, a shelter for homeless adolescent girls and a Christmas Assistance Program.

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Photo by Khanh Pham

Community vendors, including churches, banks, the Navy and the Army Reserve, provided information to students about their services at the Community Fair held on campus Jan. 5.

## NO SCHOOL MONDAY

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