

THE WHITE HOUSE
OFFICE OF FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

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**WHITE HOUSE SUMMIT EXPANDS PARTNERSHIPS WITH TEXAS
FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS**

Members of President's Cabinet highlight critical role of frontline nonprofits in addressing need

Dallas, Texas – The White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (FBCI), in partnership with the OneStar Foundation in Dallas, today hosted the Initiative's 40th and final regional conference of the Bush Administration, delivering training and resources to hundreds of Texas nonprofits. Joined by Secretary of Health and Human Services Mike Leavitt and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Steve Preston, today's *Partnership Summit to Advance Innovation and Community Impact* highlighted effective Federal partnerships with Texas faith-based and community organizations to address needs ranging from addiction and prisoner reentry to HIV/AIDS and homeless.

Today's Summit offered training and resources to help faith-based and community organizations expand their capacity and effectiveness in the communities they serve. By building the capabilities of nonprofits and extending their work through government resources, the FBCI empowers locally built solutions to community challenges.

“What began as a simple vision here in Texas eight years ago is delivering life-changing aid to millions around the world today,” said Jedd Medefind. “Frontline community and faith-based nonprofits are now at the center of our National response to need – and will remain our vital allies for decades to come.”

During today's Summit, Secretary Leavitt discussed the FBCI at work within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) since the Initiative's inception in 2001 through efforts to engage faith-based and other community nonprofits to deliver critical social services. The Secretary noted the FBCI vision in action through innovative and successful programs launched by President Bush at HHS like Access to Recovery, a voucher-based model that allow Americans to receive addiction recovery services from the organization of their choice. Mentoring Children of Prisoners partners with community groups that provide caring mentors as role models for children of incarcerated parents. Additionally, the Compassion Capital Fund provides funding and technical assistance to help grow the capacity of small nonprofits to better serve their communities.

“Faith-based and community organizations are a vital part of our nation's social fabric,” Secretary Leavitt said. “They involve citizens on a local level, providing hands-on assistance to those in need and improving the lives of Americans community by community.”

Secretary Preston also discussed the impact of public-private partnerships with the nonprofit sector to address needs like chronic homelessness, highlighting recent news from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) indicating that the rate of chronic homelessness in Dallas

has been cut nearly 43 percent in just two years. Nationally, these figures helped drive a 15 percent average yearly reduction in the number of chronically homeless Americans, helping approximately 50,000 individuals who consistently slept on the streets in 2005 into safe, stable homes by 2007. The number of shorter-term homeless Americans dropped, as well.

“Faith-based efforts are a major part of our efforts to address homelessness,” said Secretary Preston. “And, over time, with the faith-based communities' assistance, we have constructed a social infrastructure and safety net for homeless people in virtually every city and country.”

Federal funds and resources are expanding the good work of both faith-based and community organizations across America. Last year alone, the Federal Government provided more than 19,000 direct, competitive awards to nonprofit organizations to aid the homeless, at-risk youth, recovering addicts, returning offenders, people infected or affected by HIV/AIDS, and others. These grants totaled more than \$15.3 billion – and more than \$726 million was awarded to Texas faith-based and community organizations alone. Faith-based organizations were welcomed as a central part of this work, winning more than 3,200 grants in 2007 totaling over \$2.2 billion.

During today's event, Dallas-area resident George Moses was recognized for his exemplary service to his community through the President's Volunteer Service Award. Mr. Moses has volunteered with the American Red Cross of Smith County for eight years and works to coordinate their efforts with those of other nonprofits like the East Texas Food Bank, particularly in the wake of disasters like Hurricanes Gustav and Ike. Moses is a member of the local American Red Cross's Disaster Action Team and coordinates the work of volunteers who deliver supplies to shelters in times of need, often working 12-hour days to help serve the needs of his community.

Also today, Secretary Preston and Mr. Medefind visited Central Dallas Ministries and participated in a roundtable discussion with beneficiaries of a successful partnership under HUD's Continuum of Care program to provide permanent supportive housing for formerly homeless individuals with disabilities. Reflecting President Bush's vision for the FBCI, Continuum of Care partners with grassroots faith-based and community organizations like Central Dallas Ministries across the Nation to help chronically homeless individuals off the streets and into safe, stable homes.

President Bush's vision for the FBCI, first implemented when he served as governor of Texas and expanded on a National scale in 2001, was launched to wage “a determined attack on need.” Over the past eight years, the Initiative has fundamentally altered the way government works to solve pressing social ills through partnerships with frontline faith-based and community organizations – those who share the same sidewalks and street corners as the individuals they serve. This new approach to addressing community needs is yielding remarkable impact in countless lives across our Nation and around the world.

For more information about President Bush's Faith-Based and Community Initiative, visit www.fbc.gov.

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