



Responding to the Needs of the Community

NEWS RELEASE

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Homeless Coalition to Embark on Public Awareness Effort *The Taylor Company selected to create campaign*

TAMPA, Fla. – (Friday, June 29, 2007) – An older, weathered man, tattered clothes, a ‘work for food’ sign in one hand, his beverage of choice in the other; someone who’s been living on the streets for years who came to Tampa because of the weather. This may be the image many people have of homelessness. Yet the recent homeless census, conducted by the Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County, shows that the homeless population in Hillsborough County is a mirror of the diversity of the overall community.

“Perhaps the biggest challenge we face in expanding the community’s capacity to help homeless men, women and children is the stereotype associated with homelessness,” said Rayme L. Nuckles, CEO of the Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County. “The reality is that women and children account for more than 50 percent of homeless people living in Hillsborough County and 91 percent became homeless in Florida.”

The Homeless Coalition is embarking on a new public education effort to dispel stereotypes and raise awareness about homelessness in Hillsborough County, as well as encourage a deeper community response to the issue. As part of this effort, the Coalition has chosen a local public relations firm, the Taylor Company, to design a public awareness campaign to be launched in late July of this year.

Coalition Selects Taylor Company for Public Awareness Effort

The Taylor Company, owned by Florida native Scott Taylor, settled in its Tampa office in spring of 2003 and specializes in cause and issues-based public relations campaigns, primarily for non-profit organizations. The firm has worked, or currently works, with Southeastern Guide Dogs, Community Tampa Bay (f/k/a National Conference for Community and Justice), Tampa Museum of Art, Clearwater Regional Chamber of Commerce, the Tampa Bay Group Sierra Club among other Tampa Bay for-profit and not-for-profit organizations.

Late last year, the Coalition issued a request for proposal (RFP) for the project. The Taylor Company was selected based on the concepts and ideas presented in its proposal.

“We are excited about working with The Taylor Company and the direction we are taking with this effort,” said Nuckles. “Homelessness affects everyone and is a community-wide concern. Only through the community’s support and efforts will the more than 9,500 homeless women, children and men find the compassion and services they need to obtain and maintain permanent housing.”

The Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County is a 501 (C) 3 organization responsible for establishing and maintaining concentrated strategic efforts to develop long-term constructive solutions that address the underlying causes of homelessness and meet the immediate needs of homeless people. Governed by coalition members, the Coalition promotes collaboration and coordination among social service providers, businesses, funding institutions, housing providers, state and federal agencies, faith-based communities and other supportive organizations and individuals to organize and deliver, without duplication, support services, emergency shelters, transitional housing and affordable housing to meet the specific needs of all homeless people. The Coalition also operates the UNITY Information Network that “virtually” links service providers in Hillsborough County. UNITY offers integrated referrals, creates a base of data to better understand homelessness to plan effective intervention, and shows “real-time” availability of services – all essential to securing funding to meet the level of need within the community. For more information visit www.homelessofhc.org.

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