



Entertainment Industries Council

–Encouraging the Art of Making a Difference

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Entertainment Industries Council and FOX 32 Teamed to End Homelessness Among Veterans in Chicago

Local media, issue experts, resource providers and Veterans come together to establish the priorities for reporting on homelessness and raising awareness of available support services.

Chicago, IL (June 13, 2013) –Nationwide there were 62,619 homeless Veterans in the U.S., and 520 on Chicago streets on a single night in January 2012, according to the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development. In an effort to end Veteran homelessness in Chicago and enhance the level of awareness about Veteran challenges, the Entertainment Industries Council, Inc., FOX 32 and The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) have teamed to prioritize these imperative issues in local media. Today, a *Picture This: Ending Homelessness Among Veterans in Chicago* forum was held at Pritzker Military Library bringing together news media representatives, local issue experts, formerly homeless veterans, elected leaders and resource providers. The forum was hosted by FOX 32 Medical Contributor Dr. Mona Khanna and “Good Day Chicago” Co-Anchor Anna Davlantes. Featured speakers included Secretary of State Jesse White, FOX 32 General Manager Dennis Welsh, Univision Anchor/Reporter Enrique Rodriguez, *Good Day Chicago* Co-Anchor Corey McPherrin, WBEZ Reporter Chip Mitchell, Chicago Sun-Times Columnist Mark Brown, WBBM Newsradio personality John Cody, and comments from Governor Pat Quinn.

“About 30% of those who are homeless in Illinois are veteran, and we the people who have been defended by our veterans have a duty to them to help them find shelter. And so as Governor of Illinois I work with our housing development authority to advance initiatives to find shelter to our veterans. It’s very very important and I’m going to be committed to that as long as I’m alive,” Governor Quinn proclaimed during a recent interview with FOX 32, setting the stage for action.

“We are honored to partner with EIC to support the men and women of our armed forces. This is an important issue to the FOX 32 family and to our local community. Our nation’s Veterans do so much for us, this is one small way we can use the power and influence of the media to elevate the conversation around homelessness and raise awareness about services and resources that can make a difference,” said Dennis Welsh, General Manager, FOX 32.

“Today’s forum engaged media panelists and issue stakeholders to build upon discussions and media efforts in which veteran homelessness is presented to vast audiences. *Picture This* is the start of a collaboration designed to increase the presence of this issue in news media to raise awareness and spark action, both locally and nationally. We will continue the conversation through regular communications and briefings that will, ultimately, change attitudes and behaviors, encourage help-seeking actions and move Chicago towards ending homelessness among Veterans,” said Brian Dyak, President and CEO of Entertainment Industries Council, Inc.



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“The single best way to help Veterans who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless is to connect them with VA services in the Chicago area. Each VA medical center has a homeless coordinator on staff. The local homeless coordinator can connect the Veteran with a continuum of VA and community services that may provide the support they need to establish or maintain safe, stable housing,” said Lisa Pape, National Director for VHA Homeless Programs, Department of Veterans Affairs.

VA has also established the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans (877-4AID-VET, or [877-424-3838](tel:877-424-3838)), a toll-free hotline available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Trained responders—many of them Veterans themselves—are available to provide support to Veterans and their loved ones who lack safe, secure housing. These services are also available on an online chat at va.gov/homeless.

About Entertainment Industries Council

EIC is a non-profit organization founded in 1983 by leaders within the entertainment industry to bring the power and influence of the industry to bear on communication about health and social issues. The organization is considered to be the chief pioneer of entertainment and journalism outreach and a premiere success story in the field of entertainment education. This mission relies on providing resource information to the creative community and culminates in recognition of the industry through the national television special *PRISM Showcase* which addresses accurate portrayals of substance use issues and mental health concerns. The organization also produces the *S.E.T Awards*, honoring positive and non-stereotypical portrayals of science, engineering and technology.

For a complete list of health and social issues addressed by EIC and local projects please visit First Draft and EIC’s website. EIC’s web site is www.eiconline.org. The *PRISM Awards* web site is www.prismawards.com.

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