



## *'Glendale Works' Creates Jobs to Reduce Homelessness*

Phoenix Rescue Mission and city of Glendale partner to  
combat unsheltered and chronically homeless

PHOENIX (Jan. 22, 2019) – Phoenix Rescue Mission and the city of Glendale have partnered for a new pilot program, titled “Glendale Works,” an integrated workforce development program aimed at reducing homelessness in Glendale by providing homeless individuals day work cleaning city property.

The public-private collaboration addresses the recent rise in certain segments of the homeless population. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s point-in-time count data, the number of unsheltered or chronically homeless people has increased significantly from 2014 to 2017 – growing 149 percent in Maricopa County from 2014 to 2018 and increasing 290 percent from 2011 to 2018 in Glendale.

The uptick caused a surge of homeless camps and panhandlers, putting the city at risk of increased homeless-related issues, including property damage, trash buildup and health and safety concerns.

“Glendale Works is an opportunity for someone who wants to turn their life around to take that first step,” said Glendale Mayor Jerry P. Weiers. “They get paid to work, which helps restore dignity back to them, while saving money that our city would otherwise already be spending on beautification. We needed to come up with a workforce-based solution to get people off the streets, but we didn’t want to reinvent the wheel.”

Glendale Mayor Jerry P. Weiers traveled to Albuquerque, NM, in February to meet with city officials and nonprofit leaders who implemented a day worker program to address homelessness. Upon his return, he proposed the concept at the February 27 City Council Workshop session, and the city’s Community Services Dept. began researching the process for implementation in Glendale.

The budget for Glendale Works is \$201,906 for one year and has been funded with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Community Development Block Grant Program (\$41,158), general fund dollars (\$58,842) and private funds from Phoenix Rescue Mission (\$110,906). The program is designed to locate homeless

individuals, pick them up from a set location and give them the opportunity to earn real wages and connect with services. The participants work with Phoenix Rescue Mission and the city's Parks Division to conduct beautification projects – removing trash and performing landscaping duties in city parks, trails and washes.

“Since we first took this program to the streets in November, we’ve touched the lives of so many individuals by taking them off the streets and offering them real work and access to necessary resources to end their cycle of homelessness,” said Phoenix Rescue Mission CEO Jay Cory. “As a result, we fully expect to see an improvement in the lives of the entire community, from the residents and business owners to those who are struggling to survive on the streets. This program is a win-win for everyone.”

Phoenix Rescue Mission contracted with the city of Glendale for the service projects and is responsible for engaging potential participants to perform the work, which includes five-hour work shifts for a daily cash rate of \$55. After their shift, program participants receive a meal and transportation. Subsequently, participants who are interested in changing their life situation can connect with a Phoenix Rescue Mission case manager who will work with them to receive behavioral health services, job preparedness training, healthcare, housing opportunities and other potential resources.

Homelessness in Glendale has been a concern for the city in recent years, and “Glendale Works” is the latest example of the growing community’s progressive strategy to offer a hand up – not a hand out – to those impacted by homelessness. By design, this program also addresses the safety issues of panhandling, specifically reducing the hazards for both the panhandlers and drivers in high traffic areas.

“Our goal is to connect individuals struggling with homelessness to the resources and services that will support them in their decision to end their homelessness,” said Stephanie Small, Glendale’s Director of Community Services. “This is an important tool in our toolbox of resources that can assist them on their path to permanent, stable housing.”

Since the program kicked off in November, additional support for Glendale Works has come from the local business community. Sands Chevrolet donated a 12-passenger van to the Phoenix Rescue Mission. To outfit the van, B & M Bumpers & Hitches donated a tow package, Arizona Governor’s Office of Highway Safety granted a vehicle wrap which also promotes public safety messages and Striventa donated the design work for the wrap. The donated van is expected to be operational by the end of January.

“It takes everyone working together, and I’m very thankful that our City Council supported this program, our local businesses recognize its importance and that our various city departments are cooperating on getting it off the ground with Phoenix Rescue Mission,” said Mayor Weiers. “Glendale Works is making a positive difference in people’s lives and that’s what it’s all about.”

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**Phoenix Rescue Mission:**

Phoenix Rescue Mission provides Christ-centered, life-transforming solutions to persons facing hunger and homelessness. The nonprofit Mission, which has been operating since 1952, is asking the public for support of its many programs designed to transform lives, including Hope for Hunger Food Bank, Hope Coach Street Outreach, Temporary Shelter Programs, Men's Addiction Recovery Program and the Changing Lives Center for Women and Children.

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