



NEWS

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“Your Way Home Montgomery County” Annual Summit Brings Together Nearly 200 Government, Philanthropy, Nonprofit, and Community Partners

Initiative Helped End Homelessness for 410 Residents in 2015; Summit Theme is “The Power of Partnership to End and Prevent Homelessness”

Blue Bell, PA (June 22, 2016) – Montgomery County elected and public officials joined local philanthropic, nonprofit, business, and community partners today at the 4th Annual “Your Way Home Montgomery County” Summit at Montgomery County Community College. Your Way Home is Montgomery County’s coordinated housing crisis response system to end and prevent homelessness. The Your Way Home public-private partnership aligns leadership, resources, and funding across sectors to achieve a shared vision of making homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring. The summit commemorated the progress in ending and preventing homelessness in Montgomery County over the past year, as well as an exploration of the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Your Way Home proudly celebrated being the recent recipient of a prestigious U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary’s Award for Public-Private Partnerships, presented in partnership with the Council on Foundations.

Carolyn Mayinja, Interim Director of Montgomery County Housing and Community Development, and Russell Johnson, President and CEO of HealthSpark Foundation, kicked off the summit providing the welcome and opening remarks. Montgomery County Board of Commissioners Vice Chair Dr. Val Arkoosh described Your Way Home as a powerful example of the county’s commitment to consumer-driven, effective, and responsive human services. Arkoosh commented that because of Your Way Home, more families, children, seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities, are getting Housing First, then services.

“We are focused on preventing homelessness before it starts by addressing the problem “upstream” where homelessness begins – by connecting more people to education, employment, and health opportunities,” said Arkoosh.

“What makes Your Way Home so powerful is how it has leveraged the private sector to support our public goal of ending homelessness,” said Montgomery County Commissioner Joe Gale.

“Through our collaborative efforts with our community partners, including our service providers, our foundation grant makers, our landlords, and our volunteers, we improved the lives of 1,741 of our citizens and neighbors experiencing homelessness and connected them to the services they needed,” said Montgomery County Commissioners Chair Josh Shapiro.

The Summit’s keynote speaker, Steve Berg, Vice President for Programs and Policy at the National Alliance to End Homelessness, provided a national perspective on ending homelessness.

Following “Table Talk” breakout learning sessions with Your Way Home system leaders, endnote speaker Fred Karnas of the Kresge Foundation discussed philanthropy’s role in ending homelessness.

Three key members of the Your Way Home partnership received “Champion for Change” awards at the Summit, including landlord, Bob Larkin, street outreach provider, Zach Costello of Resources for Human Development, and funder, Meredith Huffman, Executive Director of the Genuardi Family Foundation.

The summit concluded with a Call to Action from Jason Alexander, Your Way Home Senior Policy Advisor, and Barbara O’Malley, Director of the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services.

About Your Way Home Montgomery County

Your Way Home is a public-private partnership that helps working and low-income individuals and families end or prevent their homelessness. For more information, please visit: www.yourwayhome.org.

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