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Conference Brings Together Homeless Experts and the Community

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ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (April 5, 2011) – A one-day conference at USF St. Petersburg will bring together national and local homelessness experts with community members to determine solutions for ending homelessness in St. Petersburg and surrounding communities. The conference is sponsored by Celebrate Outreach!, a partnership among local faith-based organizations concerned with homelessness.

Concrete Solutions to End Homelessness
Saturday, April 16
8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Student Life Center (corner of 2nd St S and 6th Ave S)

All are welcome, but please register by April 8 to reserve a complimentary lunch. Limited metered street parking is available near the Student Life Center or guests can park in the university parking garage, 250 5th Ave S, for a small fee.

The conference is free and open to the public. There will be speakers, panel discussions and breakout groups. Participants will reconvene at the end of the conference to share solutions and create an action plan to end homelessness.

“This conference seeks to change the discussion from controlling homelessness to ending homelessness,” said Jill McCracken, assistant professor of English and co-director of USFSP’s Civic Engagement Center.

The conference’s keynote speaker, Maria Foscarinis, directs the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, a nonprofit organization based in Washington, D.C. Foscarinis is a litigation and legislative advocate dedicated to protecting and extending rights of homeless people, including ensuring education rights of homeless children, housing rights of domestic violence victims and constitutional rights of people living in public places due to lack of alternatives.

Conference speakers include:

Steven Burke, Ithaca Hours- Ithaca, New York
Kirsten Clanton, Southern Legal Council’s Homeless Advocacy Program- Gainesville, Florida
Nick Hess, Mad Housers- Atlanta, Georgia
Linda Kaufman, 100,000 Homes- New York, New York

Max Rameau, Take Back the Land- Miami, Florida
Michael Stoops, National Coalition for the Homeless-Washington DC

Local presenters include:

Grace-Anne Alfiero, Creative Clay
Jamie Bennett, former St. Petersburg City Council member
Kip Curtis
Darrell Hefte and Cecilia Yokum, Alternatives to Violence Program
Raine Johns, Public Defender's Office
Jill McCracken, USF St. Petersburg
Doug McMahan, Eckerd Chaplain
Kathy Mize, Ready for Life
Felisa Glover-Calhoun, CASA
Donna Rasmussen, Guardian Ad Litem
Allan Parks and Rob Robinson, Advocates for current and formerly homeless individuals
Cynthia Sinclair, Resurrection House
Sarah Snyder, Pinellas County Coalition for the Homeless
Tom Snapp, Trinity Lutheran Church
Steve Stearns, Family Promise

For more information about the conference, e-mail concretesolutions@stpete.usf.edu or call (727) 873-4740.

-USF St. Petersburg-