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Media Advisory:

Census results show 20% increase in local homelessness

The number of people without housing in Alachua County has jumped for the second year in a row, according to census results released Tuesday by the Alachua County Coalition for the Homeless and Hungry. Advocates, agency staff, and volunteers – homeless and housed alike – counted 1,631 men, women and children without housing in a 24-hour period spanning January 27 and 28, 2009. Of these, 546 are children under the age of 18.

The total count for 2009 represents an increase of 20% from the 2008 count of 1,365, and a 71% increase from the 952 individuals and family members found during the same period in 2006.

Since its 2003 inception, the annual survey has helped bring over 200 shelter beds and \$8 million in state and federal funds to the local homeless assistance network.

Coalition Director Jon DeCarmine stressed the need for affordable housing to remain at the forefront of local policy discussions. The county has more than 14,000 vacant housing units, he said, though most of those units remain out of reach for people who live and work in the community.¹

“There is no housing shortage,” said DeCarmine. “We’ve got nearly 10 empty places to live for every homeless man, woman and child. But the housing that is available is not affordable to the people who live and work in our community.”

The Coalition will release a detailed report on survey findings in May. The report from last year’s survey is online at <http://www.endhomelessnessinalachuacounty.org/pit/>.

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| | | 2009 | 2008 | 2007 | 2006 |
|-------------------------|--|--------------|-------|------|-------|
| | Local Homeless Housing Programs | 342 | 352 | 278 | 302 |
| Street (Unsheltered) | Streets, Encampments, Vehicles | 628 | 465 | 325 | 446 |
| | Incarcerated, Alachua County Jail | 80 | 115 | 51 | 50 |
| | Hospitals, Detox, CSU (Incomplete) | 35 | 36 | 19 | 44 |
| | Street Count SUBTOTAL: | 743 | 616 | 395 | 540 |
| | Homeless Schoolchildren, as reported by the School Board of Alachua County | 546 | 413 | 279 | 321 |
| | TOTAL HOMELESS POPULATION: | 1,631 | 1,365 | 952 | 1,163 |

¹ 2007 American Community Survey, Alachua County, FL. http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/ADPTable?_bm=y&-geo_id=05000US12001&-qr_name=ACS_2007_1YR_G00_DP4&-context=adp&-ds_name=&-tree_id=307&-lang=en&-redoLog=false&-format=; accessed 2/3/09.