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May 29, 2008

Heading Home & Boston Health Care Expand Homeless Services

May 29, 2008 — Two providers of shelters for the homeless—Heading Home of Cambridge and Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program—are expanding their ability to provide services.

Heading Home (formerly Shelter, Inc.) announced the June 2 opening of a new supported housing program for the homeless on Concord Ave., Cambridge, called Duley House. The program, named after long time Executive Director Susan Duley, will provide permanent housing for 14 individuals who have been homeless on the streets and shelters of Cambridge for significant periods of time.

Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program (BHCHP), which provides high quality health care to more than 10,000 homeless men, women, and children around the city, this week dedicated its new building, Jean Yawkey Place at the corner of Massachusetts Avenue and Albany Street in Boston's South End.

The new building house a 104-bed inpatient clinic, a comprehensive primary care clinic, dental clinic, outpatient mental health services, family services and a pharmacy, according to the Boston Business Journal.

BHCHP will move its research and administrative services to the building, including a new data center, the paper reported. Hopkinton's EMC Corp. said it donated some \$250,000 worth of storage hardware, software and services for the facility.

Last fall, BHCHP has received a \$2 million challenge grant from the Kresge Foundation to help fund the renovation of its new home, one of the largest grants the foundation gave out at the time. To receive the funds, BHCHP needs to raise the final \$6 million of its \$42 million capital campaign goal by December.

“Boston Health Care for the Homeless illustrates Kresge’s commitment to

supporting organizations that work on the front lines, often against great odds, to pursue new and better forms of service,” said Kresge Foundation President Rip Rapson in announcing the grant.

Heading Home Partnership

While Heading Home will own and operate the program, its development represents a partnership of several public agencies, including Mass Housing, the Cambridge Department of Community Development, the Cambridge Historical Commission, the Cambridge Housing Authority and the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development, all which committed significant financial and technical support for the project.

There was significant private support as well. The property was initially identified by a member of the Heading Home Advisory Council, who also made a significant financial contribution. The staff of Margulies and Associates, (who provided architectural services for the project) landscaped the property to celebrate the company’s twentieth anniversary year.

“This kind of program represents a permanent solution to ending homelessness in our communities” said Tom Lorello, Heading Home’s executive director. “We have consistently found that when provided with housing in conjunction with intensive support services, people get housed, they stay housed, and their lives begin to improve in ways that would not have been possible when they were on the street and preoccupied with day to day survival. “

The program is considered permanent supported housing for the homeless, which means that occupants can remain as long as they are working with staff on a service plan that includes goals related to education and employment and, when relevant, medical and behavioral health care.

Since 1974, Heading Home has been providing residential programs, supportive services and permanent housing opportunities for homeless families and individuals in Greater Boston. Heading Home’s mission is to reintegrate the homeless into the community and link them to the services they need to assure their future success in the hopes that they will never be homeless again.