



FOR RELEASE
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Seattle Rotarians Choose Family Services Planned Center to Help Homeless Families

Rotarians Step Up Big Time to Boost Family Services Center for Homeless

Seattle — In an unprecedented act of community goodwill, the members of the Rotary Club of Seattle have announced they will spearhead the Family Services capital campaign to help eliminate homelessness in Seattle.

To commemorate its centennial in 2009, the club has committed to raise up to \$4 million from Rotarians in the next 12 months, to support a \$9 million capital campaign by Family Services, to establish the ‘Rotary Support Center for Families’.

Seattle Rotary is the second largest of 31,000 Rotary clubs in the world with 700 members and a long history of support for major community and international projects. Family Services is a non-profit social service agency that has been helping families in King County become self sufficient since 1892.

According to Don Kraft, Seattle Rotary Centennial Chairman, “Rotary’s decision to help end homelessness by investing in children and nurturing healthy families followed an extensive community-wide selection process. Seattle Rotarians were asked to identify critical projects that they could enthusiastically support.”

“The Rotary Support Center for Families, located in the Seattle’s central corridor, combines the proud heritage of Seattle Rotary and our organization to provide a vital resource for local families who are struggling to gain their independence and reach self-sufficiency,” said Ruthann Howell, Family Services CEO/President.

“The new Rotary Support Center for Families will provide a permanent home for several Family Services programs that have been spread throughout the community. Providing a one-stop hub for families who seek a road to self-sufficiency, it puts an exclamation mark on our community’s homeless crisis – especially for families with children,” Howell added.

“Our members brought in 41 worthy proposals for us to consider,” Mr. Kraft said. “It was very difficult to reduce the field to a group of 12 semi-finalists, then four finalists and ultimately the ‘winner’. Family Services and creation of the ‘Rotary Support Center for Families’ is an emphatic statement that Rotarians would like to play a significant role in ending homelessness in our community.”

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Ms. Howell said the Rotary Support Center for Families will include programs that provide child care, parenting classes, eviction prevention, counseling and case management, and transitioning into permanent housing. “By bringing this continuum of Therapeutic programs together in one location,” she said, “clients will be able to access support services without traveling around the city, allowing them to address the barriers to self-sufficiency more quickly and successfully by improving triage and service delivery. Currently no facility like this exists in King County. “

“Families are the fastest growing segment of the homeless population, and the Family Service Center reflects that,” Ms. Howell said. “This partnership with the Seattle Rotary is at once recognition of the key role that Family Services plays in efforts to end homelessness in our region and a great opportunity for two local institutions to work together on this serious community issue.”

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Seattle Rotary

The Rotary Club of Seattle #4 was founded in 1909, making it the fourth oldest Rotary Club internationally (hence the nickname, Seattle #4). Seattle #4 members include many of the region’s prominent business, professional, and civic leaders.

Rotary has given its support to several large Seattle-King County community projects, including helping to build Children’s Hospital in the 20’s; a Boy Scout Camp in the 30’s; built in 1954 and continues to support the Rotary Boys & Girls Club on Capital Hill; Medic ONE in the 70’s, a Youth Job Center in 1978; raised more than \$3 million for a new home for KCTS/9 in 1984; the Rotary Education Center at the Woodland Park Zoo; the Rotary Discovery Lab at the Pacific Science Center; the Rotary Wilderness Center at Camp Arnold; the Rotary Education Center at the YMCA; and now the Rotary Support Center for Families.

Family Services of King County

Family Services of King County has been supporting needy families in the Seattle community since 1892 -- making a difference in people’s lives for 114 years. Family Services provides Family Stabilization, Community Violence Prevention and Mental Health Counseling programs that strengthen both families and the larger community. The mission of Family Services is to build emotionally healthy, self-sufficient families and a non-violent community in which they can thrive.