

PASADENA STAR-NEWS

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Pasadena, seminary carry out annual homeless count

Tally helps cities get HUD relief funds

By Brian Day Staff Writer

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PASADENA - The 100 or so men and women who came out of the cold to the city's bad weather shelter at Pasadena Covenant Church gave only their initials, state and year of birth, gender and ethnicity.

But the "identifiers" assigned to each to avoid double-counts could add up to millions for Pasadena from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, which gave it \$3 million last year for homeless services, said Anne Lansing, a Housing Department project planner.

The amount was based on last year's homeless count of 1,144 people, a 16 percent increase from 2008, she said.

This year, about 450 agencies nationwide are competing for the funds. "If you don't complete a homeless count, you won't be competitive," said Joe Colletti, director of the Institute for Urban Initiatives at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, which has partnered with the city for the annual count since 2003.

About 100 volunteers, including city employees, seminary students, members of local nonprofit groups, police officers and others spent three days last week tallying the city's homeless population. A final count should be released by mid-month, Colletti said.

Cops patrolling parks and officers in the department's Homeless Outreach Psychiatric Evaluation Team, or HOPE Team, are a big help, Lansing said, as the goal is to count every homeless person in the city.

"That includes both people who are homeless on the streets and (those in) emergency shelters," Colletti said.



Bobby Salimi, left, with Paul Pace, center, and Adam Kalma of Fuller Theological Seminary count the homeless last week. The city of Pasadena and the Institute for Urban Initiatives at Fuller Theological Seminary are partnering for the count.