

## Pasadena volunteers fan out to count city's homeless

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PASADENA - As part of a countywide count of homeless people - a critical census that determines federal allocations to cities and counties - dozens of volunteers fanned out Wednesday in Pasadena to complete the three-day tabulation.

Los Angeles County's homeless count, which began Monday, is billed as the nation's largest count of the homeless. It is conducted every two years and is headed by the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority.

Volunteers count the homeless on streets and at hospitals, jails and foster care and mental health facilities, along with places not intended for people to live, such as cars, parks, sidewalks and abandoned buildings, said Michael Arnold, executive director of the Los Angeles Homeless Service.

In Pasadena, however, the count is conducted once a year by the Office for Urban Initiatives.

The count serves as a baseline for when city officials and local nonprofits apply for homeless services funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, as well as for private grants.

"HUD allocates money for homeless jurisdictions based on poverty stats," said Joe Colletti, executive director of the Office for Urban Initiatives at Fuller Seminary in Pasadena. "But HUD is also very concerned with continually funding jurisdictions if their homeless population is decreasing."

Cities that log a decrease in homeless people receive the same level of HUD funding as in previous years, although HUD also factors in local economic conditions when making allocation decisions, he said.



Roland Jaochico 57, has been homeless for 20 years, talking to Marcus Logan and Shelby Knight doing homeless survey in early morning Wednesday, January 26, 2011. Pasadena. Teams from Fuller Seminary walked various areas of Pasadena looking for homeless people for a survey, "Homeless Count" for the Office of Urban Initiatives, located at Fuller Seminary.(SGVN/Staff Photo by Walt Mancini/SXCity)



Diane Corson 58, who has been homeless for two years speaking to Shelby Knight and Marcus Logan. who surveyed homeless in the early morning hours in Pasadena Wednesday, January 26, 2011. Teams from Fuller Seminary walked various areas of Pasadena looking for homeless people for a survey, "Homeless Count" for the Office of Urban Initiatives, located at Fuller Seminary.(SGVN/Staff Photo by Walt Mancini/SXCity)

## Pasadena volunteers fan out to count city's homeless (Continued)

Last year, the count showed 1,137 homeless people in Pasadena, a 13-percent increase from 2009, resulting in the city receiving about \$3 million from HUD, said Anne Lansing, a project planner with the city.

Final numbers for this year's count will be released at the end of February, Colletti said.

About 50 volunteers participated in the Pasadena count, most of them from Fuller Seminary, organizers said.

Jeff Burman arrived from Illinois with his guitar and big dreams but now sleeps at Union Station Homeless Services' shelter. He told the counters he has been homeless for the past four years.

"I had every opportunity to work in music, but drugs and alcohol took me away from it," he said. "I'm doing good now. I sobered up and will hopefully transition to some kind of housing."

It was the first time Pasadena residents Jill Shook, 57, and Shelby Knight, 29, took part in the count. Along with fellow volunteer Marcus Logan, 32, they headed down Los Robles Boulevard toward Colorado Boulevard.

"You don't want to find homeless people, but at the same time, if they are there you want to find them," Knight said.

The group stopped and spoke with Diane Corson, 58, originally from San Diego, as she sat near a corner with a briefcase next to her.

"I've been homeless for about two years," Corson said. "It's quite hard for me. You just kind of have to depend on good friends sometimes."

The trio peered into alleys and corners. In Old Pasadena, they interviewed 57-year-old Rowland Jaochico, who was sleeping on cardboard boxes near some stairs behind a music store. A pair of crutches lay next to him.

"I've been homeless for 20 years," he said.

Some people who appeared to be homeless refused to speak with the volunteers - some out of fear, others out of shame.



Jill Shook and Marcus Logan interviewed Marcus Mickell, (CQ), center, who has been homeless, but slept last night in a shelter. Teams from Fuller Seminary walked various areas of Pasadena looking for homeless people for a survey, "Homeless Count" for the Office of Urban Initiatives, located at Fuller Seminary Wednesday, January 26, 2010. (SGVN/Staff Photo by Walt Mancini/SXCity)



Shelby Knight, left, and Marcus Logan surveying Dorothy Edwards who slept in her van and is homeless for homeless survey in Pasadena in the early morning of Wednesday, January 26, 2011. Teams from Fuller Seminary walked various areas of Pasadena looking for homeless people for a survey, "Homeless Count" for the Office of Urban Initiatives, located at Fuller Seminary. (SGVN/Staff Photo by Walt Mancini/SXCity)

## Pasadena volunteers fan out to count city's homeless (Continued)

All volunteers are trained to respectfully approach people, said Andrew Wright, program and research coordinator with the Office for Urban Initiatives.

The count-takers ask people for their initials, state and year of birth, gender, number of dependents and ethnicity, Wright said.

One homeless woman claimed she had a home but couldn't live in it because of "witchcraft."

Colletti said Pasadena's "persistent" homeless population includes many people with mental illnesses.

"Generally, chronically homeless mentally ill people don't do well in shelter programs," he said, adding that individual housing appears to work best for that segment of the homeless population.

The two-hour walk around Pasadena left a strong impression on Shook.

"They no longer have any social structure. I can't imagine anything sadder," said Shook.



Jill Shook and Marcus Logan interviewed Marcus Mickell, (CQ), center, who has been homeless, but slept last night in a shelter. Teams from Fuller Seminary walked various areas of Pasadena looking for homeless people for a survey, "Homeless Count" for the Office of Urban Initiatives, located at Fuller Seminary Wednesday, January 26, 2010. (SGVN/Staff Photo by Walt Mancini/SXCity)



Shelby Knight, left, and Jill Shook interview Frank P. (no last name given) for homeless survey in Pasadena in the early morning of Wednesday, January 26, 2011. Teams from Fuller Seminary walked various areas of Pasadena looking for homeless people for a survey, "Homeless Count" for the Office of Urban Initiatives, located at Fuller Seminary. (SGVN/Staff Photo by Walt Mancini/SXCity)



A homeless man sitting on the curb on Raymond Avenue in the early morning hours of Wednesday, January 26, 2011. Teams from Fuller Seminary walked various areas of Pasadena looking for homeless people for a survey, "Homeless Count" for the Office of Urban Initiatives, located at Fuller Seminary. (SGVN/Staff Photo by Walt Mancini/SXCity)



Jill Shook surveying homeless man on Raymond Avenue in Pasadena. Teams from Fuller Seminary walked various areas of Pasadena looking for homeless people for a survey, "Homeless Count" for the Office of Urban Initiatives, located at Fuller Seminary Wednesday, January 26, 2010. (SGVN/Staff Photo by Walt Mancini/SXCity)