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**“Homeless Census,” the Point-in-Time Count to be Conducted
Across Arlington, Wednesday, January 25th, 2012**

Wednesday, January 25th, from 4 a.m. to midnight, A-SPAN (Arlington Street People’s Assistance Network) will be leading teams of staff and volunteers in the 2012 Point-in-Time Count, an annual census of homeless persons in Arlington County. This local count is part of a nation-wide count that occurs during the last ten days in January in order to collect accurate data, understand trends, justify requests for federal funding, and measure community progress towards preventing and ending homelessness.

The 2011 count was interrupted due to inclement weather that caused government offices to close early and trap vehicles on GW Parkway for hours. As a result, the number of homeless single adults was much lower than expected. Though homelessness had risen by 30% in Arlington from 2008 to 2010, the 2011 count showed a 22% decrease in homeless single adults and a 13% decrease overall. The number of homeless families and persons in families rose approximately 5% from 2010 to 2011. The number of homeless persons counted in the Greater DC area rose 2% from 2010 to 2011.

“It is very important to us to have as accurate a count as possible, as it provides meaningful data outlining homelessness in the nation, region, and Arlington and allows us to assess how we are doing on Arlington’s 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness” shared Kathleen Sibert, A-SPAN’s Executive Director. “We are very pleased to be utilizing so many community volunteers this year to help make this survey successful.”

Teams will visit areas frequented by homeless individuals including metro stations, parks, malls, and meal serving sites throughout the day and evening. Indoor meeting places for the count will be held during the day at SEEC (Shirlington Employment & Education Center), Central United Methodist Church (CUMC), Arlington Temple United Methodist Church, St. George’s Episcopal Church, A-SPAN’s Opportunity Place, and at the Arlington County Emergency Winter Shelter (EWS). Meals will be served at the indoor locations in order to encourage participation, including a meal from Santa Fe Café at CUMC. A-SPAN’s Opportunity Place location will open early to accommodate this count.

A-SPAN provides life-sustaining services for Arlington’s homeless, which include daily street outreach, drop-in services such as showers, laundry, and food, and a bagged meal program serving up to 80 individuals 365 days a year. In addition, from November 1- March 31, A-SPAN operates the Arlington County Emergency Winter Shelter. The current economic and unemployment crisis has driven client numbers from 940 to 1800 in the past three years. A-SPAN offers a wide variety of housing opportunities with case management services through the Permanent Supportive Housing Program and the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program.

Please call or email Jan-Michael Sacharko, Development Director, with any questions.

For more details on A-SPAN visit: <http://www.a-span.org>

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