



DOWNTOWN **WOMEN'S** CENTER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 3, 2023

Contact: Brook Hefner

bhefer@actumllc.com

310-902-6452

Downtown Women's Center sponsors sixth annual domestic violence homeless coalition services community connections summit

Speakers included Supervisors Hilda Solis and Kathryn Barger and Councilwoman Katy Yaroslavsky

LOS ANGELES, Calif. – On Thursday, The Downtown Women's Center (DWC), co-founder of the Domestic Violence Homeless Services Coalition (DVHSC), sponsored the sixth annual Community Connections Summit: "Then, Now, and When: Celebrating our Roots and Growing our Future."

The summit featured speakers Supervisors Hilda Solis and Kathryn Barger, Councilwoman Katy Yaroslavsky and honored Sheila Kuehl, former Los Angeles County Supervisor, with a lifetime achievement award.

"DWC co-founded DVHSC with Rainbow Services in 2016, and since then, the Coalition has served as a lifeline to unhoused women and their families," said Amy Turk, CEO of DWC. "Over the past six years, it has become the country's largest coalition of its kind, with over 800 members and 244 member organizations across California coming together to create a client-centered system. DVHSC will continue efforts to increase access to safe housing and supportive services for survivors of domestic violence and their families."

The summit provided opportunities for participants to learn how to expand the Domestic Violence Homeless Services Coalition model in communities beyond Los Angeles, informing the Coalition's next Strategic Plan, and supporting the Domestic Violence Regional Coordination across Los Angeles. Other topics discussed at the summit included: innovative practices to increase housing opportunities and support enhanced coordination of services between victim services and homeless services sectors.

"Domestic violence is a public health crisis," said Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, First District. "The intersection of domestic violence with other issues – particularly homelessness, immigration, and child welfare – has become abundantly clear. I thank the Domestic Violence Homeless Services Coalition for elevating the voices of survivors and partnering with my office to create a safety-net system that effectively provides for those affected by domestic violence."

"Today's summit is about addressing an important but often overlooked factor that drives many people into homelessness, said Los Angeles County Supervisor Kathryn Barger. We need to harness the power of practitioners, academics, thought leaders, and those with lived experience to develop policy and program solutions and I am proud to be part of today's effort to accomplish that. As the new co-chair of the National Association of Counties' Commission on Mental Health and Well Being and as Fifth District

Supervisor, I am committed to continuing to work on evolving the systems that can prevent domestic and intimate partner violence survivors' descent into homelessness and heal their trauma."

"It is an honor to join the Domestic Violence Homeless Services Coalition's Community Connections Summit. This work couldn't be more critical. Survivors of domestic violence and their families deserve trauma-informed care, and they deserve a safe place to go to when they leave violent situations. Unfortunately, that is not the case for the thousands of DV survivors who sleep on our streets every night. Through the work of partnerships like the Domestic Violence Homeless Services Coalition, we have an opportunity to change that," said Councilwoman Katy Yaroslavsky.

This year's guests included Dr. Ferrer, Department of Public Health, Former Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, Debbie Chang, President and CEO at Blue Shield of California Foundation, Emma Cohen, Cedars-Sinai Community Benefit, Audrey Salzburg, Executive Director of Van Nuys Charities, Abigail Marquez, General Manager of Los Angeles' Community Investment for Families Department, Lisa Rogers, Program Officer at the Carrie Estelle Doheny Foundation, and Domestic Violence and Homeless Services Executive Directors.

About The Downtown Women's Center

The Downtown Women's Center (DWC) is the only organization in Los Angeles focused exclusively on serving and empowering women experiencing homelessness and formerly homeless women. DWC envisions a Los Angeles with every woman housed and on a path to personal stability. Our mission is to end homelessness for women in greater Los Angeles through housing, wellness, employment, and advocacy. For more information, visit www.DowntownWomensCenter.org.

###