



PRESS RELEASE

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Downtown San Diego Partnership Launches Annual “Make Change Count” Fundraising Drive

Effort to raise funds and awareness on ending homelessness in Downtown

DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO – The Downtown San Diego Partnership today announced the launch of the second annual “Make Change Count” holiday fundraising drive initiative to raise money and increase awareness about how best to end homelessness.

The “Make Change Count” campaign, which is sponsored by Cox Communications, is focused on the Downtown San Diego Partnership’s donation station program. The donation stations, which look like red parking meters, can be found in a variety of locations in Downtown and accept coins and credit card payments. The meters discourage panhandling while providing the public an opportunity to donate to programs and services designed to help end homelessness in Downtown.

In addition to giving at these donation stations, the public can also contribute online through the Partnership’s website.

Kris Michell, president and CEO of the Downtown San Diego Partnership, said the donation stations and annual holiday drive is about raising funds and awareness on how best to help homeless individuals.

“If we are going to end homelessness in Downtown, we have to work together to fund the programs that we know can help people get off the streets and into housing,” Michell said. “Our homeless outreach team is out there every day working to connect people with the help they need. This annual fundraising effort helps harness people’s good intentions and ensure that we can make their change count.”

All the funds collected will go to the Downtown Partnership's Clean & Safe homeless outreach efforts, including the "Work Your Way Home" program, which reunites homeless individuals with family, as well as short-term housing to help those struggling with addiction and a security deposit assistance program.

Mayor Kevin Faulconer praised the Downtown San Diego Partnership for its efforts on homelessness and asked everyone to give to the "Make Change Count" fundraising drive so it could continue its work to end homelessness in Downtown.

"Every San Diego family deserves a roof over their head and the opportunity to live a good life, and when we work together through programs like 'Make Change Count,' we can make that happen," said Mayor Faulconer. "I've been changing the way city government helps the homeless by funding programs that help get people off the street and into housing. These donation stations perfectly compliment that effort by giving individual San Diegans a tangible way to be part of the solution."

Council President Todd Gloria agreed, saying the work being done by the Downtown Partnership's Clean & Safe homeless outreach team is critical in the city's overall strategy to end homelessness because they are on the front lines connecting people with the housing and services they need.

"We have made significant strides in addressing homelessness, all because of collaboration between public agencies, nonprofits, the business community and neighbors," Gloria said. "The donation stations and this annual fundraising drive provide a great opportunity for every San Diegan to contribute in any level and help our neighbors get off the streets."

The "Make Change Count" holiday drive is also a team effort with local companies stepping up to provide assistance to raise funds. For the second year in a row, Cox Communications has invested in helping publicize and expand the donation station program. IPS Corp., a local company that makes the donation stations, provides the red meters at no cost. Classy, a Downtown tech startup that helps non-profits raise funds online, provided its services for free as well.

"What I love about this annual fundraising drive is that it is a real hometown effort," said Michell. "All of these local companies are providing their expertise to help us raise funds so we can continue our work to end homelessness in Downtown."

Cox Communications provided funds to expand and promote the "Make Change Count" initiative because it saw it as a positive way to improve the San Diego community.

"Cox has a long-standing commitment to improving the quality of life in San Diego and helping those in need. We hope our support of 'Make Change Count' will go a long way in helping get more people and families off the streets downtown and into permanent

housing so that they can have a fresh start, and a chance at a better life” said Dave Bialis, senior vice president and region manager of Cox Communications.

Chad Randall, chief operating officer of IPS Group, a San Diego technology company that designs and manufactures the meters, said his firm gave the Downtown San Diego Partnership the donation stations because it knows how effective the meters can be in reducing panhandling and raising needed funds. IPS also supports a similar program in the City of Denver, which was able to reduce panhandling by more than 80 percent along a key corridor in Downtown Denver.

“As a San Diego-based company, we are honored to be a part of this vital program and we continue to support the ‘Make Change Count’ program through the donation of IPS meters,” Randall said. “The meters provide a convenient way for the public to donate to the important initiatives of the Downtown San Diego Partnership, and we are committed to the continued success of the program.”

Going forward, the Downtown San Diego Partnership hopes that local companies and organizations will sponsor additional stations so it can raise awareness and additional funds for much-needed programs and services.

For more information about how to donate to the “Make Change Count” initiative and the Downtown San Diego Partnership’s efforts to end homelessness in Downtown, visit <http://www.downtownsandiego.org/clean-safe/ending-homelessness/> or <https://www.classy.org/events/make-change-count/e40117>.

The Downtown San Diego Partnership is a non-profit, member-based organization that serves as the leading advocate for the revitalization and economic health of Downtown. To learn more about the Downtown Partnership, visit www.downtownsandiego.org.

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