



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Tanya Ellis, Communications and Community Engagement Lead, tanya.ellis@sfgov.org

San Francisco Joins Effort to End National Youth Homelessness Crisis

A Way Home America Selects San Francisco as an Awardee of the Grand Challenge to Tackle Homelessness Among LGBTQ+ Youth and Youth of Color

SAN FRANCISCO— On September 4, A Way Home America (AWHA) announced San Francisco as a selected community of its Grand Challenge to end youth homelessness at the [True Colors United Impact Summit](#) in Washington, D.C.

The Grand Challenge aims to end homelessness for LGBTQ+ youth and youth of color to pave the way to eventually ending housing insecurity and homelessness for all young people. Over the next two years, AWA will support San Francisco and nine other chosen communities in developing targeted strategies to address the problem in their areas. The other awarded communities are:

Cohort 1: October, 2019 launch

- *Greater Richmond, Virginia*
- *Hennepin County, Minnesota*
- *Miami-Dade County, Florida*
- *Sacramento, California*

Cohort 2: Early 2020 launch

- *Palm Beach, Florida*
- *Tucson-Pima, Arizona*
- *Washington, DC*
- *Chicago, Illinois*
- *Anchorage, Alaska*

Mayor London Breed

“We know that homelessness disproportionately effects young people of color and LGBTQ youth. It’s an inequitable reality that we’re committed to addressing in San Francisco, and the Grand Challenge is a good step toward achieving that goal”. Through a number of initiatives, including the Rising Up Campaign to end homelessness for 900 young people through Rapid Rehousing and Problem Solving, we are creating pathways to ensure that we not only help young people quickly exit homeless, but prevent them from experiencing homelessness in the first place.”

On any given night in the United States, approximately [41,000 unaccompanied young people](#) between the ages of 13 and 25 experience homelessness. And over the course of a year, [one in 10 young adults](#) between the ages of 18 and 25 and at least one in 30 teenagers between the ages of 13 and 17 experience some form of housing instability, whether it be homelessness or couch surfing. In total, approximately 3.5 million young adults and 700,000 youth are affected by homelessness each year.





The Grand Challenge is concentrating on the needs of LGBTQ+ youth and youth of color, who are disproportionately impacted by homelessness. LGBTQ+ youth are [120% more likely](#) to experience homelessness than their peers, and youth of color make up [89% of young people](#) experiencing homelessness between ages 18 and 24.

Jeff Kositsky, Director, Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing

“LGBTQ+ youth and youth of color are dramatically overrepresented among San Francisco’s population of youth experiencing homelessness. Six percent of the general Bay Area population identifies as LGBTQ+, while 46% of youth experiencing homelessness do. Forty-seven percent of the City’s population are people of color, while 77% of youth experiencing homelessness identify as such. San Francisco’s vision is to transform our work to end youth homelessness from “model programs” to a “model system”, and we believe that equity is fundamental to that transformation.”

The method of AWA’s Grand Challenge is based on the theory of “[Targeted Universalism](#),” meaning that if communities focus on meeting the needs of populations most impacted by youth homelessness – LGBTQ+ youth and youth of color – they can build a system that meets the needs of all young people who experience homelessness

San Francisco Youth Program Providers

“We believe we have no other option than to center equity in the work that we do and are excited and inspired by the journey the Grand Challenge will lead us on.”

The San Francisco Cohort is comprised of HSH, youth leaders, Larkin Street Youth Services, 3rd Street Youth Center and Clinic, The LGBT Center, LYRIC Center for LGBTQ Youth, and Huckleberry Youth Programs.

For more information about AWA’s Grand Challenge, please visit <https://awayhomeamerica.org/grand-challenge/>.

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About the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing

HSH strives to make homelessness in San Francisco rare, brief, and one time through the provision of coordinated, compassionate, and high-quality services. www.hsh.sfgov.org

About A Way Home America

AWHA is a national initiative to build the movement to prevent and end homelessness among young people. AWA is made up of local and state public sector organizations, advocates, researchers, young people, homeless youth providers and philanthropists united behind the goal of ending youth homelessness. www.awayhomeamerica.org

