



COUNTY OF ONEIDA
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
ONEIDA COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
800 PARK AVENUE
UTICA, NEW YORK 13501
(315) 798-5800
FAX (315) 798-2390
www.ocgov.net

ANTHONY J. PICENTE, JR.
County Executive
ce@ocgov.net

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
Tuesday, March 10, 2009

For Information Contact:
David Mathis, 798-5908

Picente: Training Program for Homeless Individuals Receives New Funding to Provide Jobs and Hope

Oneida County Executive Anthony J. Picente, Jr., today announced that Oneida County's Office of Workforce Development has received a grant from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to continue its Jobs and Hope Program to provide vocational services to homeless individuals. Picente noted that the project now operates out of the Veterans Outreach Center on Washington Street in Downtown Utica.

"Oneida County is committed to working in partnership with our community agencies to provide opportunities for individuals who are homeless to rebuild their lives," Picente said. "Job training and employment services are a critical component to help homeless individuals transform their lives, achieve self-sufficiency and climb career ladders to bright futures. With the numbers of homeless individuals on the rise nationwide, having this program in place in Oneida County will help our residents who face hard times. Because we know that veterans are among the populations who need services, the Veterans Outreach Center is an outstanding place for us to be located to help the veterans in need of help receive all the support we can provide."

Picente said the program is part of Oneida County's commitment to reduce homelessness.

"Homelessness is a very real and serious problem that requires long-term partnerships to develop solutions that can help men and women who, for whatever circumstances, are left homeless in our communities," Picente said. "We need to look at homelessness as part of a broader spectrum of issues that include substance abuse, mental health issues, education, employment and issues."

Oneida County Workforce Development Director David Mathis said, "This project will help our *Working Solutions* System reach out into the community's areas of need, and work with the community agencies and faith-based organizations that are already feeding and sheltering homeless people. Through this project, we can help young adults who have left school and have no permanent residence; residents of emergency shelters (including those seeking refuge from domestic violence); individuals in transition from homelessness who are not self-sufficient; and homeless and food-insecure individuals using local food pantries."

Referencing the report, “Homelessness in Oneida County, NY: Understanding and Addressing a Hidden Social Problem,” written by Social Sciences Associates in support of the Mohawk Valley Housing and Homeless Assistance Coalition and funded by The Oneida County Department of Mental Health, Picente said that data makes it clear there is a problem with chronic homelessness, and that the problem of homelessness is intertwined with other social ills, including substance abuse and chemical dependency, status as an ex-offender, and the increasing number of family breakups caused by economic stress, domestic violence and even transitioning back to the community from military service.”