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Second Annual Mayor's Ball will Help the Homeless

New Palm Beach County Mayor Shelley Vana says she has always had a heart for the homeless. Since being elected to the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners in 2008, Mayor Vana has participated in homeless counts and visited homeless camps, seeing the need first hand. "Nobody should be living on the street or in the woods; we are not a third world country," said Vana.

Commissioner Vana is putting her new mayoral power behind her passion, by making the homeless a priority during her term. Her first step was choosing the Homeless Coalition of Palm Beach County as the beneficiary of the second annual Mayor's Ball. "The first Mayor's Ball was for the Homeless Coalition. To me it seemed like it always should be."

"The Homeless Coalition is honored to be presenting the 2nd Mayors Ball with the strong support of Mayor Vana," said Pamela Goodman, Homeless Coalition Board President and co-chair of the host committee. "This event brings together business, government, faith based organizations and community leaders all working together to fund the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness." Mayors from 16 municipalities across the county have already joined the host committee for the ball.

Commissioner Priscilla Taylor initiated the idea of a Mayor's Ball in 2014, which also benefitted the Homeless Coalition. More than 500 people attended the inaugural event generating more than \$225 thousand dollars for homeless services. "Many organizations that work on this complex issue in our county benefitted last year from the resources raised at the event. We expect this year to be even more successful so we can be more aggressive in our mission," said Goodman.

Mayor Vana says she is looking forward to how the gala can make a difference. "I hope we continue to raise money so we can get housing. I'm looking at chronically homeless, but I know where we have made the biggest strides has been with families." Proceeds from the 2014 ball helped move 46 families into permanent housing and to employ a specialist to identify affordable housing across the county.

Goodman adds, "housing continues to be our top priority for the thousands of single men, women and families who do not have a place to call home. The issue is complex, but in the final answer, ending homelessness begins with finding a home."

The Mayor's Ball 2015, entitled "Be Enchanted" will take place on Saturday, February 28 at the Palm Beach County Convention Center. The black tie gala will include a cocktail reception at 6PM followed by dinner and dancing at 7PM. Tickets are available through the Homeless Coalition website for \$250
www.homelesscoalitionpbc.org

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The Homeless Coalition

For over 25 years, the Homeless Coalition's purpose has been to generate awareness through advocacy, education and community outreach and to motivate a community-wide response to raise funding, resources, partners and involved citizens to end homelessness in Palm Beach County.