



YOUTH SERVICES

For Immediate Release

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White House Honors Sherilyn Adams as *Champion of Change*

Larkin Street Youth Services Executive Director Honored for Work in Fight Against Youth Homelessness

SAN FRANCISCO—July 11, 2012— On July 12, 2012 the White House, along with the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, will host a *Champions of Change* in the Fight Against Youth Homelessness event. Sherilyn Adams, Executive Director of Larkin Street Youth Services, will be honored for making a significant difference in the fight against homelessness among children and youth. At the event, Ms. Adams, the other honorees and various White House officials will participate in a discussion about the efforts to serve some of our most vulnerable youth in their struggle with homelessness.

Larkin Street Youth Services provides housing, education, employment, health and support services to over 3,100 homeless, runaway and at-risk youth each year. Ms. Adams has been at the helm of Larkin Street for seven years and prior to that she was the Chief of Programs and supervised the agency's licensed residential programs, HIV/AIDS-related services and outreach programs. Under her tutelage, the agency has grown and expanded its programs as well as increased and deepened its services. Through cross-training and staff competency building, new program development, service integration, and collaboration, the agency's impact is clear and measurable. Achievements since 2005 include:

- Doubling the number of transitional living beds for homeless youth in San Francisco, including beds for specialized populations
- Achieving national recognition from such prestigious sources as the Lewis Hine Award
- Nearly doubling the number of youth Larkin Street serves annually in only five years
- Improving outcomes so that 3 out of 4 of Larkin Street's housing program graduates achieve stable housing

Larkin Street offers an innovative and effective model of care for homeless youth that supports three key long-term outcomes: 1) housing stability, 2) sustainable employment, and 3) completion of at least two years of post-secondary education. The model is innovative because of its comprehensiveness— Larkin Street offers homeless youth everything from emergency shelter to permanent housing, from medical care to life skills training, and from crisis intervention to college scholarships. They were the first agency in the nation to offer designated housing programs for HIV+ youth and youth who are LGBTQ, and are at the forefront of developing pioneering education and employment programs—like the Postsecondary Success Initiative—for this vulnerable and hard-to-reach population.

"It is a great honor to be a part of the Champions of Change. My colleagues and I are pioneers in this work because of our commitment to innovation and rigorous strategic planning, our ongoing infrastructure investments to ensure a strong organization, and an exceptional staff and board leadership team committed to the agency's mission," said Sherilyn Adams. "I am lucky to do this difficult work because I see the pay off every single day. I may not work myself out of a job in my lifetime, but I am heartened by the progress at the local, state, and federal levels toward addressing the root causes of youth homelessness. Just as I believe in the potential of every young person who walks through Larkin Street's doors, I believe in the prospect of a future where no young person faces homelessness."

To watch this event live, visit www.whitehouse.gov/live at 1:30 pm ET on July 12th.

As part of the event, Ms. Adams will be featured in a blog on the White house website. The blog and more details about the event can be found at www.whitehouse.gov/champions.

About Larkin Street Youth Services

San Francisco's Larkin Street Youth Services is an internationally recognized leader in providing effective housing, medical, social and educational services to at-risk, homeless and runaway youth. Larkin Street reaches youth ages 12 – 24 through 15 locations and 25 programs. Three out of four youth who complete the organization's comprehensive programs exit street life. For more information, please visit www.larkinstreetyouth.org.