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**For Immediate Release**

**Arizona Coalition to End Homelessness encourages public to be part of the solution during National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week Nov. 15<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>**

Each year, one week before Thanksgiving, the National Coalition for the Homeless and the National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness co-sponsor National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week. This week serves as a time for us all to start to think about what we are thankful for, and a perfect time to share our compassion with our neighbors who are experiencing homelessness.

The Arizona Coalition to End Homelessness ([www.azceh.org](http://www.azceh.org)) has been leading statewide efforts this week to bring greater awareness in our community and promote the efforts to end homelessness and hunger. Community members and organizations have taken to social media, taking pictures of them holding cardboard signs that read “Will Work to End Homelessness” and sharing statistics about the different issues surrounding homelessness. Every day of the week, Coalition members have received emails outlining the state of homelessness in Arizona for rural communities, veterans, families and unaccompanied youth. Coalition staff participated in Valley of the Sun United Way’s Project Connect event Tuesday at First Southern Baptist Church in Buckeye, and is presenting at Crossroads Mission’s annual Hunger and Homelessness Conference in Yuma on Wednesday.

Thursday, November 20<sup>th</sup>, AZCEH staff and the City of Phoenix's Faith Advisory Committee will lead a discussion on the faith communities’ response to ending homelessness at Open Door Fellowship Church, located at 8301 North 19th Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85021 from 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM. All are welcome to participate.

AZCEH is using this week of awareness to encourage the public to participate in ending homelessness beyond the week’s end and has provided several opportunities to become a part of the solution. The Coalition is currently seeking volunteers for the Arizona Veterans StandDown Maricopa in mid-February and the annual Point-In-Time (PIT) Count for January.

StandDown is a one to three-day outreach event for homeless and at-risk veterans to receive necessary services and resources to help end their homelessness. The Arizona Coalition to End Homelessness is the statewide convening entity working with communities throughout the state to run these outreach events. Please visit [www.arizonastanddown.org](http://www.arizonastanddown.org) to see upcoming events and to volunteer your time.

The PIT Count is a one-night street count to determine the number of people experiencing homelessness in Arizona during a given point-in-time. The count includes a brief survey to identify some characteristics of people experiencing homelessness in the community and is used when determining the disbursement of federal funds to local communities. The statewide count is broken up into three geographic areas: Maricopa County, Pima County, and the Balance of State. To find out more information about this "boots on the ground" volunteer experience contact us at [coalition@azceh.org](mailto:coalition@azceh.org).

The Coalition also challenges people who are short on time to consider brown bagging their lunch or skip the Starbucks - commit to bringing your lunch or make coffee at home and donate the funds that you would have spent to your local shelter or homeless provider. Several organizations, including AZCEH, qualify for the working poor dollar-for dollar charitable Tax Credit, a full list of qualified non-profits are listed on the Arizona Department of Revenues website, [azdor.gov](http://azdor.gov). Visit [www.azceh.org](http://www.azceh.org) for more information about all of the Coalition’s activities during National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week and throughout the year.

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