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*For Immediate Release*

## **Mayor Annise Parker honored for advocacy by Coalition for the Homeless**

### **Sold out event “Solving the Puzzle of Homelessness” featured national experts on housing, jobs, health care and food deserts**

October 13, 2015 (Houston, Texas) - The Coalition for the Homeless of Houston/Harris County hosted a luncheon and panel discussion event, **“Solving the Puzzle of Homelessness,”** at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in downtown Houston, on Thursday, October 8. The event was co-emceed by Coalition CEO Marilyn Brown and Board President Andy Teas (VP of Public Affairs for the Houston Apartment Association). Guest panelists included: Charles “Chuck” Davidson, Chairman of the Board, Houston Food Bank; **Matthew Doherty, Executive Director, United States Interagency Council on Homelessness;** Elena Marks, President and Chief Executive Officer, Episcopal Health Foundation; and Carolyn Watson, Vice President, Relationship Manager, Global Philanthropy, JPMorgan Chase & Co. Topics discussed included permanent housing, job skills, health care and food access for those in need.

The Coalition recognized the **Honorable Annise Parker, Mayor of the City of Houston,** for her extraordinary role in championing the issue of homelessness. Since 2012, the partners of The Way Home – the collaborative model to prevent and end homelessness in Houston, Harris County and Fort Bend County - have reduced overall homelessness by nearly 50%. Earlier this year, the community announced that Houston had effectively ended homelessness for veterans, creating a steady state platform to handle emerging cases for the nation’s 3<sup>rd</sup> largest veteran population. Coalition CEO Marilyn Brown applauded Mayor Parker’s active engagement in inspiring an unprecedented collaboration among more than 70 partner groups. The Mayor was presented with a commemorative art piece sculpted in the shape of Houston’s remarkable skyline. Mayor Parker, in turn, presented Ms. Brown and Coalition Board Chair Andy Teas with a colorfully wrapped baton, signaling the passing of the leadership as she wraps up her term as Mayor.

Guests in the packed house included everything from politicians and community leaders to “in the trenches” homeless services staff from The Way Home partner orgs: **Senator John Whitmire; DeBaKey VA head Adam Walmus;** Patti Abshire; Wendy Adair; Anna Babin; Terry Bell; Lee Bischoff; Jack Christie; **Doug Foshee;** Lance Gilliam; **Mac Haik;** Andy Icken; Ken Janda; Harriett Latimer; Wanda LeBlanc; Daphne Lemelle; Pamela Lovett; Jana Mullins; Charlie O’Connell; Amber Rabo; Johnette Rosenbalm; Clarissa Stevens; Brian Stoker; Kim Sterling; Jim Tosh; and **Alan Watkins** – as well as numerous Mayoral candidates and City of Houston leadership. Chase led as Presenting Sponsor, along with others including Crystal and Company, Houston Apartment Association, KROGER, The Marek Family, TWC - The Valve Company, and Wells Fargo.

For more information on the Coalition for the Homeless or The Way Home, visit [www.homelesshouston.org](http://www.homelesshouston.org) or [www.thewayhomehouston.org](http://www.thewayhomehouston.org).

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*The Coalition for the Homeless of Houston/Harris County is a non-profit, 501(c)3 whose mission is to provide leadership in the development, advocacy and coordination of community strategies to prevent and end homelessness. Learn more at [www.homelesshouston.org](http://www.homelesshouston.org).*

Additional image gallery available upon request.