



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FEEDING A FAMILY OF 21

Arlington Shelter Fights Economic Pinch to Feed Local Families

Arlington, Va. – Rising food and fuel costs are affecting many families and businesses across the country. According to the United States Census Bureau, the average American family is three people but in Arlington, Virginia the Freddie Mac Foundation Family Home is a family of 21.

Doorways for Women and Families, a local nonprofit organization, provides shelter and services to abused, homeless or at-risk women and their families. Their newly built home, the Freddie Mac Foundation Family Home, dedicated in November 2007, provides safe shelter and accommodations for 21 homeless women and families. Providing food and all items necessary for running a safe and clean home for the families (21 individuals) three times a day and it can be very difficult, especially when costs are rising.

“The Freddie Mac Foundation Family Home costs \$650,000 a year to operate — this includes the 24-hour staffing of a variety of skills and education levels, household supplies, utilities and maintenance, and client assistance,” says Linda Dunphy, Executive Director for Doorways for Women and Families. “We depend on the community for 60 percent, or \$390,000 of our budget, to support these essential costs. “

Each week, volunteers do the grocery shopping based on the needs of the clients from the Freddie Mac Foundation Family Home and Doorways’ staff recommendations. Ideally, volunteers are only purchasing the perishable items consumed each week such as eggs, milk, meat, etc. , Examples of the weekly, perishable grocery costs for 21 people and the Family Home include:

- Average cost of groceries - \$250/week
- Lowest week - \$131.15
- Highest week - \$451.49
- Median cost - \$350/week

In addition to the costs of perishable food, the Freddie Mac Foundation Family Home also covers all utility and transportation costs for their clients. The monthly costs at the home, include:

- Water and Sewer: \$490 average/month
- Electric: \$750 average/month
- Transportation: \$700 average/month

The above costs vary and are offset by the generosity of the Arlington and Northern VA community which supplies the residential program with many of the non-perishable items that would otherwise be purchased weekly. Without successful community outreach and collection drives, Doorways would have to purchase all of the personal care items, cleaning products and non-perishable food items consumed each week, and the above cost would increase by approximately \$400 per week.

The Freddie Mac Family Home consumes approximately the following each week:

- 5-8 gallons of milk
- 2-3 dozen eggs
- 5-7 boxes of cereal and loaves of bread
- 10-15 lbs of ground beef
- 2-3 tins of baby formula
- 1-2 boxes of trash bags
- 8 Full size Shampoo and Conditioner
- 5-6 Jars of Pasta Sauce
- 10 rolls of paper towels



www.doorwaysVA.org

“We rely on our donors and supporters to help support our families in order to end homelessness and rebuild their lives, especially during a downturn in our economy,” continues Dunphy. Doorways holds monthly collection drives for non-perishable items which help to offset the costs for groceries. They also collect grocery and metro gift cards. For more information about how to donate, visit www.doorwaysVA.org or call (703) 522-8858.

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About Doorways for Women and Families

For almost 30 years, Doorways for Women and Families, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that empowers women and families who are abused, homeless or at-risk to live safe, secure and self-sufficient lives, has provided shelter and services and educated the larger community about violence and homelessness. In 2008, Doorways was awarded the coveted 4-star “exceptional” rating for sound fiscal management by Charity Navigator, America’s leading charity evaluator. Doorways is the 2006 recipient of the Arlington Chamber of Commerce Best Business Award (ABBIE) in the nonprofit category. Doorways is also the 2006 recipient of the James B. Hunter Community Hero Award and the 2005 James B. Hunter Human Rights Award. Doorways is the winner of the 2006 Arlington County’s Community Hero Award for Volunteers, and was selected as a featured charity in the 2005 issue of The Catalogue of Philanthropy. Doorways is the 2006-2009 nonprofit pro-bono client for Washington Women in PR (WWPR). Doorways for Women and Families can be found on the Web at www.doorwaysVA.org.