



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**CELEBRITY SPORTS AGENT & PHILANTROPIST GLENN TOBY AND THE
BOOK BANK FOUNDATION TO JOIN OVER 2,000 VOLUNTEERS FOR DHS'
FIFTH ANNUAL HOMELESS STREET COUNT JANUARY 29, 2007**

The fifth annual Homeless Outreach Population Estimate (HOPE 2007), a survey of all individuals living on city streets, will be held on the night of Monday, January 29, 2007. More than 2,000 volunteers will spread out across the city to count the number of individuals living unsheltered on the streets, in parks and in other public spaces. Glenn Toby, founder of the Book Bank Foundation who was formerly homeless and now heads up a thriving sports and entertainment firm, will join DHS Commissioner Robert V. Hess for a press conference at 10:00 p.m. and to count with a team after midnight that night in Manhattan.

“No one should have to live on the streets,” said DHS Commissioner Robert V. Hess. “Before you can solve a problem, you have to understand it. The HOPE survey allows us to gauge whether outreach strategies are working and to adjust those strategies as needed.”

“Homeless does not mean helpless,” said Glenn Toby, founder of the Book Bank Foundation, who traveled from his home in Atlanta to take part in HOPE 2007. “Given a fair opportunity a person in need can turn his or her world around. The human spirit to triumph over tragedy is greater than the circumstances that cause our fall. I am participating in HOPE 2007 because my family was homeless when I was a child in Queens. I was able to turn my life around and want to help others do the same.”

In 1998, Mr. Toby founded the *Book Bank Foundation* in an effort to boost literacy among the nation’s youth - with a specific emphasis on inner city children. Providing tutoring, alternative education, career development and special projects such as celebrity readings, the *Book Bank Foundation* aims to improve the quality of education and life. In addition, the foundation, under Mr. Toby’s leadership, works relentlessly to collect and distribute clothing, food and toys for the homeless, and has partnered with the DHS Office of Special Events to help homeless New York City children in the past.

A news conference at the Manhattan media site, PS 116, located at 213 East 33rd Street, will kick off the event at 10:00 p.m. on January 29. Mr. Toby will share his personal story. Volunteers will meet at 10:30 p.m. at media and training sites located throughout the five boroughs. After a brief orientation and training, teams will disperse to count homeless individuals in assigned geographic areas from midnight until 4 a.m. Volunteers will walk a total of 8,101 miles and survey more than 1,000 subway cars.

*(Please contact us if you are interested in attending.)

In addition, “decoys” posing as homeless individuals, will be planted as a quality assurance measure. This “count within a count” is a shadow count that helps to gauge the accuracy of the total estimate and allows us to adjust our final count estimate accordingly. The shadow count methodology was developed by Dr. Kim Hopper, a research scientist with the Nathan Kline Institute. This will be the third year HOPE has included a shadow count.

The City’s methodology for estimating the size of the street homeless population has been acknowledged by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as the “HUD standard” for statistically valid methodologies. Volunteer teams will canvass all areas identified to likely have at least one street homeless individual. In addition, a random sample of those areas not identified as likely to have street homeless individuals will also be canvassed. The event goes on rain, snow or shine and is only cancelled for severe winter weather.

HOPE 2007 is part of Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg’s five-year action plan to end chronic homelessness. By measuring the number of people living on city streets each year, the City and its nonprofit outreach partners can tell if street homelessness is up or down.

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Contact:

Book Bank Foundation Press Contacts:

DHS Press Contacts: Tanya Valle-Batista/Linda Bazerjian, DHS Press Office, (212) 361-7973. Interviews with Mr. Toby can be arranged by phone prior to January 29 or at the event.