

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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### Group Plans Spotlight On South LA's Homeless Youth In November

#### *An evening dedicated to conversations on youth homelessness*

Sanctuary of Hope, a local nonprofit youth development and human service organization for Transitional Age Youth, will kick off National Homeless Youth Awareness Month with a community event "*Intimate Conversations on Youth Homelessness*" on **November 7, from 6 – 8:30 pm at Mt Tabor Missionary Baptist Church, located at 6614 Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90047.**

Intimate Conversations on Youth Homelessness will spotlight youth homelessness in South Los Angeles to bring awareness and offer strategic opportunities for local community members to be change agents in combating the problem. The intimate and "real" talk conversations on education, housing, foster care, faith, and employment consists of two panels of dignitaries, thought leaders, and activists: Sydney Kamlager-Dove, President of the Los Angeles Community College District Board of Trustees; Alex Johnson, President of the Los Angeles County Board of Education School Board; Christopher Sweeten, Dean of Student Services at Los Angeles Trade Tech College, Mandla Kayise, Director of New World Education; Kirkpatrick Tyler, South Los Angeles Field Deputy for the Office of Public Engagement Mayor Garcetti; Grace Weltman-Cainoy, Principal and Lead Consultant of Communities in Motion; Franco Vega, Executive Director of the RightWay Foundation, Ben "Taco" Owens, Executive Director of Detours Mentoring Group Inc., and three local youth.

Youth homelessness in South Los Angeles is different than other parts of the City of Los Angeles like Hollywood and West Los Angeles. Youth homelessness has a predominantly Black and Brown face; and the youth tend to be an invisible, underserved, and undercounted population.

With a housing affordability crisis and limited housing options, there is not enough housing or service resources to meet the growing demand.

The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority's 2017 Homeless Youth Point-In-Time Count revealed that almost 6,000 youth experience at least one night of homelessness in Los Angeles County – a 64% increase from prior year. Of the 6,000, 559 are in South Los Angeles.

"*Intimate Conversations on Youth Homeless* will be an evening of movement building to prevent and end youth homelessness in South Los Angeles," explains Janet Denise Kelly, Executive Director of Sanctuary of Hope. "We've got to be candid about what's happening locally and intentional about garnering the resources we need to effectively invest in the potential of our youth. Our community is in a crisis of epic opportunity because of new Measure H resources and focused attention on youth homelessness. The time is now to tell a cultural narrative that the public does not see."

Sanctuary of Hope (SOH) provides housing and education stabilization services to vulnerable youth and young adult populations between the ages of 16-25, who are homeless, foster care, or at-risk in South Los Angeles. The agency has served over 900 youth since 2010 through their basic needs, housing, and education support programs.

“We thank Reverend Ticey Brown, the Pastor of Mt. Tabor Missionary Baptist Church, and the congregation for hosting Intimate Conversations on Youth Homelessness. Faith institutions are local assets and important partners in our efforts to expand opportunities for our youth,” Kelly says.

Intimate Conversations on Youth Homelessness is a free community event. Attendees are asked to RSVP online at <https://thesoh.org/events> or by calling 323-786-2413.

Sponsors are the Empowerment Congress Central Area Neighborhood Development Council and Park Mesa Community Council. Interested sponsors should email [info@thesoh.org](mailto:info@thesoh.org) for more details.

**About Sanctuary of Hope**

*Sanctuary of Hope’s mission is to provide a caring and multi-cultural approach to services that will help young adults become self-sufficient and lead prosperous lives. For more information, visit the organization’s website at [www.thesoh.org](http://www.thesoh.org).*