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Spokane is Coming Together to Party for a Purpose, Supporting Women Experiencing Homelessness

Spokane, WA- From Super Bowl Parties to doctor's offices and even board rooms, compassionate people and organizations across the Inland Empire are coming together to support women experiencing homelessness. Called "Mardi Bras Parties", over 40 events are occurring across the city with the intent of collecting items that help increase the dignity of women. The list of needed items: **new bras and underwear, tampons & pads, bus passes and cash donations.**

Hope House, a program of Volunteers of America, and Women's Hearth, a program of Transitions, are the recipients of the donations. The Mardi Bras season culminates in a community-wide celebration tomorrow on Fat Tuesday, February 13th, at The Observatory on Howard street downtown at 15 S Howard St. From 5-8pm there will be Cajun food, live music, and staff from Volunteers of America and Transitions accepting donations and sharing information about the impact these donations make in our community.

"It's incredible to see how the community is coming together to support and surround women experiencing homelessness," Said Fawn Schott, President and CEO of Volunteers of America. "We're partying for a purpose and increasing the dignity of these women at the same time."

So far, nearly \$2,000 in cash donations, over 9,000 tampons, and 250 bras have been donated, with the bulk of donations still to come. To find out more about Mardi Bras, the Fat Tuesday event, or how to host your own party please visit mardibras.org.

About Hope House:

Thirty-six shelter beds are available each night to any woman regardless of her mental health status or chemical dependency issues. Each woman receives personal care including: nutritious food, a hot shower, clean & dry clothing, hygiene items, a warm bed, onsite case management, resources & information, and referrals to community resources. Last year Hope House served 258 women, with 115 of them transitioning out of homelessness.

About the Women's Hearth:

The Women's Hearth creates a safe space for women who have experienced trauma and homelessness by offering a "hearth" of welcome, respect and community. Participants do not need to "qualify" for our services, which are provided with a focus on building community and connecting women to mainstream resources. We offer access to showers, phones, hygiene items, and a weekly food bank. Staff meet each woman where she is at on her path to stability by providing crisis intervention and access to legal services, housing, health care and mental health services. Last year the Hearth served 1,523 women who completed 16,596 visits with us, building trusting, life-changing relationships. 50 of these women moved on to permanent housing.

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