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Leading Skid Row Agency Announces New Executive Director: Lamp Community welcomes Donna Gallup

LOS ANGELES, Jul. 21, 2010 – Lamp Community's Board of Directors are pleased to welcome Donna Gallup as the organization's new Executive Director. After an extensive national search, Ms. Gallup was selected by the board to head the 25-year-old nonprofit organization, which in the last five years has doubled in size to a \$5.8 million budget.

Beginning in September, Ms. Gallup will oversee the nearly 100 employees of the Skid Row-based agency, which serves more than 1,200 homeless and formerly homeless men and women living with severe mental illness and other co-occurring disorders.

"Donna brings a wealth of experience in housing and community development, fundraising and social services, and she exhibits a comprehensive understanding of the issues affecting the homeless population in Los Angeles and around the country," said Fred Simmons, Lamp's Board Chair. "As Lamp enters its second 25 years, I can think of no one better suited to help the agency expand its services and continue its leadership role in the regional and national struggle to end homelessness.

"The Lamp Board of Directors would also like to thank the agency's Deputy Director, Shannon Murray, who has provided exceptional leadership and has seen us through this transition over the past six months," Mr. Simmons said.

Prior to coming to Lamp, Ms. Gallup served as the Executive Director of Start Easy Eagle Development, Corp. in New Jersey. Over the last three years, she secured over \$21 million for property acquisition and rehabilitation, operations, and services to develop over 60 units of supportive housing for homeless and adults with mental illness. With a focus on collaboration, Ms. Gallup forged partnerships with dozens of social service agencies, governmental representatives, and for-profit entities to ensure the delivery of unduplicated, seamless support services and high quality, affordable housing. She has a Master's Degree in Social Work from New York University and over a decade of service and commitment to special needs populations including homeless, adults with mental illness, survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, vulnerable families, and persons living with the challenges of addiction.

"I'm very excited to take on this role with Lamp Community," Ms. Gallup said. "It is an organization whose work and commitment I admire, because it uniquely targets chronically homeless individuals with severe disabilities in Los Angeles. I look forward to building on its remarkable history of service to the community."

Current statistics indicate that there are more than 48,000 homeless people in Los Angeles, and the city's Skid Row neighborhood has the highest concentration of homelessness in the country. More than one-fourth of the city's homeless population – 16,000 people – suffers from untreated schizophrenia, depression, or other serious forms of mental illness. This part of the homeless population has for decades been shut out of most existing services, which often require sobriety, medication compliance or participation in specific clinical services as a precondition for housing.

Lamp provides this vulnerable population with permanent, immediate housing linked to clinical and support services that help them address the underlying causes of their homelessness. The key measure of the agency's success is the ability of its clients to stay in housing over the long-term. Year after year, 85% of adults participating in Lamp's housing and service programs remained in housing and engaged in services.

ABOUT LAMP COMMUNITY

Founded in 1985, Lamp Community is a Los Angeles-based nonprofit organization that permanently ends homelessness, improves health, and builds self-sufficiency among men and women living with severe mental illness. Each year, the organization serves more than 1,200 homeless and formerly homeless individuals in nine residential and service facilities and in scattered site housing throughout Los Angeles County. For more information, please visit www.lampcommunity.org.

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