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**ALPHA PROJECT AND LUCKY DUCK FOUNDATION ANNOUNCE EXPANSION OF
"WHEELS OF CHANGE" HOMELESS EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM**

Program employs Bridge Shelter residents who clean up City streets while also doing homeless outreach

SAN DIEGO (June 10, 2019) – The Alpha Project, Lucky Duck Foundation (LDF) and City of San Diego, along with multiple other funders, announced today a significant expansion of the **Wheels of Change** homeless employment program.

In its first year as a pilot, **Wheels of Change** employed 375 homeless individuals who cleaned up more than 18 tons of trash from downtown San Diego. Funding from LDF, City of San Diego, SDG&E, Danna Foundation, Una Davis, Jan Burrow and an anonymous donor will expand the program from three shifts per week to ten shifts per week and significantly widen the cleaning footprint City-wide. **Wheels of Change** participants are Bridge Shelter residents and earn minimum wage with 20 individuals working per day.

"We are extremely grateful to the Lucky Duck Foundation for leading the funding efforts to make this expansion possible. Wheels of Change empowers shelter residents, builds self-esteem, and provides the dignified feeling of a good day's work," said Bob McElroy, Alpha Project's President. "It is a critical tool for transitioning the homeless from the streets to the bridge shelter and ultimately into permanent housing."

"The Lucky Duck Foundation is proud to have led the collaboration effort to expand this 'best in class' program that meaningfully supports the Alpha Project Bridge Shelter residents and the neighborhoods that will be cleaned. When the City, non-profits, companies like SDG&E and residents come together to do something important, our entire community benefits," said Dan Novak, LDF Board Member. "Supporting those who want to help themselves is highly important to the Lucky Duck Foundation."

One participant, Greg, recently wrote: "My first experience with Alpha Project's **Wheels of Change** was an enlightening one. I watched many others assist less fortunate homeless people for a long time, and to be homeless, and still be able to clean a community, and assist people myself is fulfilling. I hope I can continue to further help Alpha Project impact lives and communities."

"Supporting a program that combines important homeless outreach with employment opportunities that allow homeless individuals to provide a meaningful and impactful service through cleaning up the streets of San Diego, is completely in line with SDG&E's & the Lucky Duck Foundation's priorities and perspective," said Eugene "Mitch" Mitchell, SDG&E's VP-State Government Affairs & External Affairs and LDF Board Member.



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Wheels of Change was initially launched locally by teenager, Kevin Barber, and his mom, Carolyn Barber, MD, in partnership with Alpha Project, in early 2018. “Kevin and I were inspired after visiting a similar program in New Mexico and thought this could work well in San Diego. The fact that the program has been proven here and will now expand is immensely gratifying,” said Barber.

Alpha Project will launch the expansion of **Wheels of Change** by increasing from one to two vans and expanding the crew from 10 to 20 individuals beginning Monday, June 10.

ABOUT ALPHA PROJECT

Alpha Project, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, was founded in 1986 as a simple project offering work opportunities for homeless men and women. Today Alpha Project operates many programs throughout San Diego County serving over 4,000 people daily with shelter, residential drug and alcohol treatment, supportive housing, counselling, homeless outreach, employment, and other support services. The agency has also created over 900 units of affordable rental housing. For more information, please visit <https://www.alphaproject.org/>.

ABOUT THE LUCKY DUCK FOUNDATION

The Lucky Duck Foundation (LDF) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that has actively contributed to the betterment of San Diego County by donating more than \$10 million locally since 2005. LDF raises awareness, raises funds, collaborates with and funds best-in-class programs that immediately improve the San Diego Region’s homeless situation. For more information, please visit www.luckyduckfoundation.org.

For media inquiries, contact Kim Sigelman, ksigelman@yahoo.com, (858) 775-9318.

Lucky Duck Foundation on Social Media:

<https://www.instagram.com/LuckyDuckFoundation>

<https://www.facebook.com/LuckyDuckFoundation>

<https://twitter.com/LuckyDuckFound>

Alpha Project for the Homeless on Social Media:

<https://www.facebook.com/alphaprojectsd/>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=pOdfEW0kcJM