

## #NJCounts 2018 Quotes

### *Code Blue Legislation May Impact Sheltered #NJCounts 2018 Homeless Numbers #NJCounts 2018 Reaches out to Homeless Families, Youth and Veterans*

#### **Statewide**

“It’s important to remember that having access to a safe and affordable home is foundation of everything else,” says Diane Riley, Supportive Housing Association of New Jersey. “Health, education, and economic security are all limited by this one factor. The shortage and lack of access affects those currently homeless and so many more that are one step away. The point-in-time count provides a critical baseline that allows us to measure those affected - our homeless neighbors - most acutely. This is a critical step in helping us get the resources we need in our communities to solve this very solvable problem. Imagine if everyone had the opportunity to live their best life?”

#### **Atlantic and Cape May Counties**

“The NJ Counts 2018 event is critical for our understanding of the homeless conditions individuals and families are experiencing in our state,” says Laura Rodgers, Chief Program Officer, Jewish Family Services of Cape May & Atlantic Counties. “This is a day spent listening to stories of poverty and struggle while counting those who do not have a home. This annual event combined with the daily outreach and services provided at coordinated entry centers for the homeless gives us our charge in targeting advocacy efforts to end homelessness.

#### **Essex and Morris Counties**

“Every American Citizen deserves a seat at the table, and a roof over their head. As long as even one among is homeless, we are all partially diminished,” says Robert N. Davison, MA, LPC, Chief Executive Officer, Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris, Inc. “The first step in helping someone is acknowledging that we see them and that they are there and that they count. Literally, they count and we will count them. We will stand with them, they will not stand alone,”

#### **Mercer County**

“Many of those who arrive at the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen for a meal have fallen on hard times and are homeless,” says Joyce Campbell, Executive Director, Trenton Area Soup Kitchen. “The high cost of housing in NJ and the lack of a safety net when a crisis occurs contribute to this. TASK will continue to advocate for housing that all can afford, as everyone deserves a place to call home.”

“Our experience with those we have assisted with chronic mental disorders and substance abuse is that a safe and affordable place to call home is the first step toward healing,” says Marlene Lao-



Collins, Executive Director, Catholic Charities, Diocese of Trenton. “When you don’t have to worry about where you are going sleep each night and about being protected from the weather conditions and safe from being victimization, you can move towards healing and stabilizing your life.”

### **Middlesex County**

“NJ’s 2018 annual point in time (PIT) count is crucial to collect the data necessary to assess the status of homelessness across the State,’ says Leslie Stivale, Executive Director, Triple C Housing. “The data collected is utilized at the local, state, and congressional level to understand the extent of homelessness in New Jersey and its local communities. The wider the net of support to gather data, the more comprehensive our assessments will be to better inform our new leadership in the Governor’s office, as well as at the federal level. “

### **Morris County**

“NJCounts generates invaluable information for Homeless Solutions and our other Morris County partners,” says Dan McGuire, President/CEO, Homeless Solutions, Inc. “It helps us measure our progress in reducing overall homelessness and in responding to certain priority populations such as unsheltered or chronically homeless households. Data generated from this effort also yields important insights that can help us tweak existing programs, roll out a new initiative, or forge a strategic partnership that addresses a need or fills a gap. “

“Last year’s NJ Counts showed that we achieved a 9 percent reduction in Morris County homeless households. We’re upbeat that the 2018 NJ Counts data will show continued progress, reflective of the hard work we’ve engaged in throughout the past year. Clearly, one of the most important tools that we employ is housing vouchers that can help move individuals and families out of our shelter and into permanent housing. It is essential that our state and federal elected officials maintain—even grow—this proven resource for changing lives and ending homelessness,”

### **Passaic County**

“Survey data collected during the annual Point in Time Count is critically important, both for community development practitioners and for clients experiencing homelessness,” says said Boris Zaydel, Director of Compliance and Property Management, New Jersey Community Development Corporation. “Identifying the unsheltered places where homeless individuals and families live allows us to engage these clients ‘where they are,’ rather than where they ‘should be.’ Not only does this help our clients access the services they need, but it also informs the strategy and focus of our collective efforts to end homelessness,”

### **Union County**

“The annual NJ Counts in January gives us a snapshot of homelessness in NJ. As a provider of services to homeless families,” say Geleen Donovan, Executive Director, Family Promise Union County Program. “Family Promise works with homeless NJ residents every single day. This 2018 NJ Counts helps us to determine who is homeless and how many New Jerseyans are homeless due to the existing housing crisis.”