

Media Announcement  
For Immediate Release

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Contact: Mitchell Gibbs 512-305-4156

## Front Steps Announces New Leadership Housing Provider Growth Reflects Community Need

Austin, TX – Front Steps, the non-profit manager of the Austin Resource Center for the Homeless (ARCH) and permanent supportive housing provider, announced today the appointment of a new Executive Director, James L. Ormand. The announcement concludes a four-month leadership search which began with the resignation of the organization's leader of twelve years, Helen Varty. Varty left the organization to become the Administrator of the Rebekah Baines Johnson apartments for low-income seniors. Front Steps has been under the interim leadership of Michael Abkowitz, former Front Steps Board President.

Also joining the Front Steps are three new members of the Board of Directors: Bethany Goldberg, Reverend Joseph Moore and Kelly McDonald who bring their finance and accounting, social service and legal expertise skill sets to the Front Steps Board.

New Executive Director Jim Ormand will relocate to Austin from Medford, Oregon and will assume his new role effective May 2, 2011. Mr. Ormand brings over twenty-five years of leadership experience as Executive Director/CEO managing nonprofit disability and community service organizations in Oregon, California, Florida, Texas, and North Dakota. Mr. Ormand's family roots are from Atascosa County and his father is a third generation Texan. Jim looks forward to returning to Texas and working with this population who are so often overlooked and undervalued. "Our homeless neighbors have such human potential, and as a community we can do more to help them tap into those abilities...once we get a roof over their heads."

Front Steps Board President, Sabelyn Pussman, says Ormand's vision for Front Steps as a supportive housing leader and service provider working to eliminate homelessness was a deciding factor in his selection. "Jim has the skills of a transformational leader. He has a passion for our mission and a vision to take this organization to a greater potential. As a team we will set a new standard for the way Austin addresses homelessness."

Ormand joins Front Steps amid the implementation of two new federal housing grants, which will create 26 permanent supportive housing units for homeless men and women. Since program funding began in March, eight formerly homeless individuals are making new homes for themselves with the program's housing subsidies and case management and will soon be paired with volunteer mentors who assist with re-integration into the community. Additional housing placements will be staggered over the next two months as all 26 units are occupied.

As the organization works toward moving more individuals out of shelter and into permanent supportive housing, Front Steps is seeking additional funds. "Supporting our homeless neighbors requires a full spectrum of care, beginning with low-demand shelter, which Front Steps and the City provide. But beyond basic shelter, we need more resources to give hope for a future beyond homelessness. Additional case managers, stronger job support, and more permanent housing opportunities are all essential steps in the process," says Pussman. Donations to support additional housing opportunities may be made at the organization's website, [www.frontsteps.org](http://www.frontsteps.org).

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