



# COUNTY OF YOLO

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## **Public Defender's Office Raises Money for Local Homeless Shelter**

(Woodland, CA) – The used clothing drive, sponsored by the Yolo County Public Defender's Office, has officially come to a close. Everything collected was sold by the pound to California Clothing Recyclers and 100% of the proceeds went directly to Fourth & Hope, Woodland's only cold weather homeless shelter whose mission is to change lives by providing a continuum of care for hungry and homeless individuals and families.

So much was collected in the first few weeks of the clothing drive that the Public Defender's Office quickly ran out of room to store everything. The Yolo County Sheriff's Department stepped in, graciously offering space in the adjacent holding facility to be used for storage.

"The support local partners threw behind this project along the way was overwhelming," said Yolo County Public Defender Tracie Olson. "Additionally, when the project ended, it was the Sheriff's deputies who literally formed a line to move the clothing items from the holding cell to the truck that took the clothes away."

The Woodland and Davis police departments each spread the word about the fundraiser and also donated clothing by the truck-full. Yolo County and Yolo Superior Court employees, along with local residents donated bag upon bag of clothing and other items as well.

"I knew we were going to raise money for a worthy cause, but what I didn't anticipate was how many people would benefit from this project," said Olson. "For instance, when Davis's Short Term Emergency Aid Committee (STEAC) decided to close its clothing pantry, Board President Cass Sylvia was instrumental in making the connection between STEAC and the fundraiser. We were not only able to help STEAC, but we were also able to ensure STEAC's clothing was used as intended, to help people."

While most of the used items were held for the fundraiser, any brand new children's items were diverted to CommuniCare Health Centers for distribution to mothers in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program. Also, work boots were diverted to the Yolo County Day Reporting Center for distribution to probationers and re-entry offenders who are receiving vocational training to secure full-time construction jobs.

"The money we raised isn't going to solve the homelessness problem in Yolo County, but hopefully it will bring some comfort to those in our community who are struggling the most," said Olson. "As James Baldwin once wrote: *'Anyone who has struggled with poverty knows how extremely expensive it is to be poor.'*"

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