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For immediate release

Mission Opens New Homeless Work Training Enterprise and E-Bay Auctions

4th Street Emporium offers mix of re-furbished appliances and trains homeless program students

Homeless men taking part in the Rescue Mission's long-term addiction recovery program may have the chance to learn valuable job skills at the new store, "4th Street Emporium," located on the corner of 4th Street and Oak Avenue in downtown Panama City. At the same time they'll be earning their stay at the Mission through this new work therapy opportunity.

The skills learned on E-bay auctions will help students like Randy learn Internet marketing skills, much-needed in today's high-tech work environment. "I'm so excited about the challenges I'm faced with, and that I'm able to serve God in ways I never knew I could."

Other students can keep their mechanical repair skills up-to-date by repairing household appliances.

"But what we really accomplish goes much further," said Rev. Billy Fox, Executive Director. "The work training provides a ground for these men to correct what mistakes may have brought them to the Mission in the first place."

Mission officials say that job supervisor's fill out performance appraisals for each student weekly. That information is then given to the students' counselors and case-mangers, providing feedback on how well they're doing. "Counselors can (in a loving manner) help address these issues, giving the students chances to change their behavior said Fox."

"I was never told why I got fired from jobs I had before," said one previous student. "My boss would just come in and let me go, but here, I can see exactly what I need to work on *before* I get back into the 'real-world'."

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Mission describes how the enterprise program works

“We receive donations of non-working appliances and teach the men in the Pathways Recovery program how to repair them and get them ready for re-sale,” Director of Administration Rev. Michael Martin said.

“If new parts are needed, we purchase them. Then the appliances are placed on sale *with a warranty*,” said Martin. “Not a bad deal when you take a look at our prices.”

The Mission will hold a grand opening for the 4th Street Emporium November 1-3. They are offering 10% off all purchases when you mention this article or the ad in Thursday’s Entertainer Section of the News Herald.

In the newly begun 2007-2008 fiscal year, Mission officials project the new venture will generate thousands of dollars in operating funds for the Mission’s recovery program. The Mission says they are in need of donations of gently used items to sell in the store and for more collectible items to sell on E-Bay. To donate, you can drop off items at 1801 E 11th Street or for larger items you can call 769-5777 for pick-up.

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