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*For Immediate Release*

## **Panama City Rescue Mission Receives Rep. Allan Bense Challenge Grant**

*Mission Holds Press Conference Monday, February 2 to Announce Bense Support*

**Panama City, FL** – The Rep. Allan Bense, in cooperation with Allstate Insurance and Corrections Corporation of America, awarded Panama City Rescue Mission \$20,000 Monday, February 2, 2004. This special grant will be allocated as continuing funds for Panama City Rescue Mission’s long-term addiction recovery program, “Power to Choose,” which started in 2002.

In awarding the grant to Panama City Rescue Mission, Rep. Allan Bense, Allstate Insurance and Corrections Corporation of America formally recognize the high value of the Mission and the necessity for the perpetuation of its work, including its efforts to return people to society as productive citizens with successful lifestyles.

“This program addresses the heart of people’s problems, of which incarceration and homelessness are only symptoms,” said Thurman Chambers, Executive Director of the Mission.

Rep. Bense concluded the press conference with a challenge to the business community to help raise an additional \$20,000 for the Mission. He also added that he would contribute an additional \$5,000 if the business community pulls through. This grant comes in the midst of opposition from the Downtown Improvement Board, sending the message of hope the Mission so tries to convey to all of its clients each day, Mission staff states.

Corrections Corporation of America and the Mission are exploring the possibilities of a partnership that would help better utilize funds sustaining men in recovery programs for drug offenders. The average cost to sustain one man in “Power to Choose,” is estimated at \$21 a day. Corrections Corporation of America operates a similar program called “Lifelines.”

The Mission’s “Power to Choose” program provides vocational training, job placement and education, and ongoing living in a recovery-oriented environment through transitional housing. Panama City Rescue Mission is dedicated to providing an environment of compassion and innovation in helping families and individuals achieve their highest potential for self-sufficiency to lead independent and productive lives through their relationship with God and their fellow man.

Panama City Rescue Mission is a non-profit organization that does not accept government funding. It relies solely on contributions of individuals, businesses, churches and foundations. The Mission may be reached at 850-769-0783.

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