

PRESENTED BY

The Business Ledger
The Business Newspaper for Suburban Chicago



APRIL 28, 2005
ASSIGNING DISTINCTIVE BANQUETS
GLEN ELLYN, ILL.

ANNUAL AWARDS FOR BUSINESS EXCELLENCE

Recognizing the Best in Business

DuPage Pads, Inc.

Wheaton



Carol Simler accepts the notable not-for-profit organization award for DuPage PADS from Dave Strahl of SBC.

While most people think of DuPage County as an upscale place with growing wealth opportunities, those who look hard can also see the downcast eyes and troubled spirits of the homeless.

One of those is Carol Simler, executive director of DuPage PADS, Inc., with the capitalized acronym standing for Public Action to Deliver Housing. The non-profit organization, supported by local corporations, churches and congregations, government grants and scores of concerned individuals, has for 20 years provided food, shelter and other kinds of support to the hungry and homeless in DuPage County.

How many homeless people are on its streets? "There are a number of estimates, none of them really accurate," says Simler, who adds that there are probably many

more than the 500 number commonly cited. In fact, she is concerned about an increase in homeless children and families, more in the sixth month period ending in April of 2005 than in the previous 12 months.

In the face of debate over the number of homeless, the need for PADS services is telling. More than 26,000 nights of shelter are given to individuals and families annually; more than 100,000 meals are served each year and volunteers offer more than 61,000 hours of support every 12 months.

2005 AABE

Notable Not-for-Profit Organization

PADS' objective has changed from managing the problem of homelessness to a more daunting task, to "end and prevent homelessness here in DuPage County."

The typical homeless person in DuPage County is a white male, aged 40-60. Most frequently cited reasons for homelessness are unemployment, insufficient income and family problems.

PADS operates an overnight shelter program, a support center for case management and basic care, life skills coaching, employment support, transitional housing and permanent supporting housing. Volunteers are always needed.

Total services cost PADS more than \$1.2 million each year, but excellent community response is helping Simler and her staff make plans for expanding services, including a night shelter to stay open 365 days a year. In the words of a former client who is now living independently, "...at DuPage PADS there is hope and possibility."