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Community Enrichment Program at Hazel Hill Apartments in Fredericksburg, VA Awarded Distinction of Best Community Life Program in Northern Virginia

Program Recognized for Creatively Addressing the Social and Economic Challenges of Low-Income Families

FREDERICKSBURG, VA –The National Housing Trust-Enterprise Preservation Corporation (NHT-Enterprise) has received the 2007 Housing Association for Nonprofit Developers' (HAND) award for Best Community Life Program in Northern Virginia for its "Community Enrichment Program" at Hazel Hill Apartments, a project-based Section 8 property in Fredericksburg, VA. The award was announced on June 4th at HAND's annual meeting and award luncheon.

More than a collection of trainings, seminars, and workshops, the Community Enrichment Program is seen as a unique approach to addressing the overall needs of low- income families and seniors. Services range from community policing and an on-site community nurse, to student tutoring and financial literacy classes. Even Tai-Chi classes have been offered. Through an array of targeted resident services, the program creates strong community ties and helps residents achieve their goals and realize their full potential.

Hazel Hill Apartments is located in a historic and gentrifying neighborhood of Fredericksburg and is home to approximately 450 people, including 130 children. Families pay no more than 30 percent of their income to rent the apartments.

Trina N. Robinson, Resident Services Coordinator for Hazel Hill, and Cpl. James Keubler and Officer Ron Swaney of the Fredericksburg police department, accepted the award on behalf of NHT-Enterprise. Scott Kline, Vice President, and Beverly Fanelli, Director of Asset Management, of NHT-Enterprise were also present.

The award included a \$500 prize which NHT-Enterprise will donate to Hazel Hill to help fund additional resident services.

The cornerstone of the Community Enrichment Program is a less than traditional approach to community safety. NHT-Enterprise donated \$50,000 to the City of Fredericksburg to help fund community police officers at the property. The officers walk (not patrol) the community, actively meeting with residents, and participating in resident service programs and community social events. Becoming involved at the community level, the police officers have an opportunity to know the residents, and the residents in turn learn to rely upon the police officers as a resource.

"The community police officers' high visibility and accessibility has largely contributed to the reduction in crime in the neighborhood through their interactive association with NHT-Enterprise, the apartment management, and the community residents themselves," commented David Nye, Chief of Police for the City of Fredericksburg.

Integral to the success of the program is a resident services coordinator who is responsible for assessing residents' needs and designing appropriate services. Recent programs include computer classes, student tutoring, off-site GED classes, fundraising for back-to-school supplies, financial and budget seminars, parenting classes, nutrition seminars, Real Estate Careers and Homeownership guides as well as Tai-Chi classes. The programs are offered out of the newly constructed community center.

“The resident services programs have been a great support to the Hazel Hill community since we have had movie night, homework club, and the computer lab. These are all positive changes in our community. These programs have made the children feel better about themselves,” said Marlanette Lucas, a resident at Hazel Hill.

Clarence A. Robinson, Director of Fiscal Affairs for the City of Fredericksburg, agreed that NHT-Enterprise deserved this recognition. “In the short span of little more than three years, NHT-Enterprise has clearly demonstrated its commitment to the residents of Hazel Hill. NHT-Enterprise strives to empower residents of their properties to take an active role in supporting local government,” said Mr. Robinson.

A community nurse addresses residents’ health issues, transports residents to and from doctor appointments, and monitors the well-being of seniors. The nurse operates from an office separate from the community center, ensuring resident privacy and confidentiality. The nurse meets with approximately 35 clients a month and makes an additional 35 house calls.

Hazel Hill Apartments was acquired in 2004 by NHT-Enterprise. A complete renovation costing more than \$47,000 per unit and the construction of a new free-standing multipurpose community center were completed in June 2006.

HAND’s annual meeting and awards luncheon is the DC-metropolitan area’s largest gathering of affordable housing professionals, advocates, elected officials, and organizations. With over 600 attendees at the June 4th event, the HAND annual meeting and award luncheon has become a leading supporter for affordable housing initiatives. HAND’s 2007 Housing Achievement Awards recognized several local affordable housing nonprofit developers and programs for their contribution towards affordable housing.

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National Housing Trust-Enterprise Preservation Corporation is a joint effort of the National Housing Trust and Enterprise Community Partners, Inc. NHT-Enterprise partners with investors to raise the capital necessary to buy and renovate affordable apartments that are deteriorating or at risk of being converted to market rate. NHT-Enterprise has preserved more than 4,000 affordable homes in seven states and the District of Columbia.

The National Housing Trust preserves and revitalizes affordable apartments to better the quality of life for the families and elderly who live there. NHT is the only national nonprofit engaged in affordable housing preservation through real estate development, lending, and public policy initiatives. Over the last twenty years, NHT has helped save more than 21,000 affordable homes in 41 states and the District of Columbia.

Enterprise is a leading provider of the development capital and expertise it takes to create decent, affordable homes and rebuild communities. For more than two decades, Enterprise has pioneered neighborhood solutions through public-private partnerships with financial institutions, governments, community organizations and others that share our vision. Enterprise has raised and invested \$8 billion in equity, grants and loans and is currently investing in communities at a rate of \$1 billion a year. Visit www.enterprisecommunity.org and www.enterprisecommunity.com to learn more about Enterprise’s efforts to build communities and opportunity, and to meet some of the half a million people we have helped.