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Ohio CDC Assoc. announces 2011 Member Awards

Seven community development winners recognized during OGDCA's 27th annual conference in Mahoning Valley

COLUMBUS – The Ohio CDC Association announced its 2011 Member Awards during the Association's 27th annual conference at the Holiday Inn Boardman, Oct. 5-6. The conference convened more than 200 community development leaders from around Ohio under the theme, *Rethinking the Way Forward*.

The 2011 winners and their awards are:

- **Burten, Bell, Carr Development Inc.**, *CDC of the Year*
- **Presley L. Gillespie, Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation**, *CDC Staff Member of the Year*
- **Kim Cutcher, United North Development Corporation**, Toledo, *Stephanie J. Bevens Award Winner*
- **City of Dayton**, *CDC Partner of the Year*
- **The Village at New Seasons, East Akron Neighborhood Development Corporation**, *CDC Project of the Year*
- **Laura Lucas, Logan Belle HAND**, *Ned D. Neuhausel Award*
- **William R. Martin, Western Reserve Community Development Corporation**, *CDC Board Member of the Year*

“On behalf of the awards committee and our members, we congratulate the 2011 award winners for outstanding work in their communities,” said Nate Coffman, executive director of the Ohio CDC Association. “Their dedication and hard work inspires us all to step up our revitalization efforts.”

The Ohio CDC Association is a statewide membership organization of Community Development Corporations that engages in capacity building, advocacy and public policy development that fosters socially and economically healthy communities.

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Information on 2011 Ohio CDC Member Awards:

Burten, Bell, Carr Development Inc., CDC of the Year

One of the first CDCs to incorporate urban agriculture into its master plan, Burten, Bell, Carr Development Inc. (BBC) has become a national leader in innovative approaches to building stronger communities. Building on the group's long established reputation as a resourceful and highly competent facilitator in real estate development, Tim Tramble and his team have led a collaborative effort in urban agriculture that's becoming a model for the transformation of low-income communities through a local food production and distribution system. BBC will break ground Oct. 17 on Green City Growers, a cooperative to bring at least 35 jobs to the poorest neighborhood of Cleveland. To open for business next spring, Green City Growers will produce three million heads of lettuce through the hydroponic growing method. In addition, it will operate a fresh produce market, a restaurant using food from local market gardeners, a community kitchen and a mobile farmer's market. Last spring, BBC launched its Active Neighbors for Healthy Neighborhoods campaign, which established weekly block parties for pursuits such as walking clubs, yoga, inline dancing, Zumba and interactive video games and sports on Nintendo Wii, as well as cooking demonstrations and more. By the end of summer, other neighborhoods copied parts of the program. BBC continues to be a leader in real estate development, currently building 40 single-family lease-to-own homes in the Central area, where it has built more than 400 homeownership units. BBC is a key partner in Garden Valley Estates, with 158 reconstructed units on line this year in the Lower Kinsman Corridor, setting the stage for \$100 million in future development in the area. "BBC doesn't just talk community empowerment – it does community empowerment," says Tramble, the group's executive director.

Contact Tim Tramble, executive director, Burten, Bell, Carr Development Inc., 216-341-1455

Presley L. Gillespie, executive director, Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation, CDC Staff Member of the Year

"With a little more effort, something good can become great," sums the philosophy of Presley Gillespie, executive director of Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation. (YNDC). The board of YNDC sees that philosophy in action under Gillespie's leadership. Gillespie brought a wealth of experience from 18 years of working in the banking industry when he joined YNDC as executive director in 2009. His financial knowledge has proved invaluable as YNDC accumulates capital for neighborhood projects and in particular for the Community Loan Fund, which provides alternative access to credit so revitalization can continue in transitional neighborhoods. A citywide community development corporation, YNDC is actively involved in the revitalization of Youngstown. Its work in the Idora neighborhood impacts hundreds of properties by improving housing stock, promoting healthy homeownership, establishing community gardens on vacant land, creating an urban farm and engaging residents in addressing quality-of-life issues. Under the Lots of Green land re-use program, hundreds of vacant lots have been repurposed as green space or gardens that produce not only fresh food but summer employment for students and gathering spaces for neighbors. "Presley is unwaveringly optimistic about Youngstown's future, but that optimism does not blind him to the challenges of urban revitalization," the board wrote in its nomination. "He is an advocate for strategic investments in the city, speaking convincingly on the topic to officeholders and residents alike."

Contact Presley Gillespie at YNDC, 330-480-0423

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Kim Cutcher, United North Development Corporation, Stephanie Bevens Award, honoring strong community advocates who have demonstrated commitment and entrepreneurial spirit

Since 2007, Kim Cutcher has served as chief operating officer for United North Development Corporation in Toledo, advocating for small business development and affordable housing. As the agency's director of housing and economic development, she has built a rapport with residents, builders, funders, local businesses and stakeholders, making United North one of the busiest CDCs in Ohio, with more than \$50 million invested in housing and community development. When presented with obstacles, Kim has the tenacity to stick to her plan. For example, when United North partnered with Toledo City Schools to rebuild the neighborhood, Kim's persistence with financing issues allowed the projects to continue to construction and now occupancy. She lobbied for and won approval for a bus stop at Crane's Landing, an amenity needed for the project to become competitive with funders. Plans now call for the creation of senior apartments next to a 65-acre native wetland marsh, a new school and more United North single-family homes. Kim holds certification from the National Development Council in Economic Development Finance. She is active in a foreclosure prevention task force and lives in North Toledo.

Contact Terry Glazer, CEO, United North Development Corporation, 419-255-8406

City of Dayton, CDC Partner of the Year

The City of Dayton has been a key strategic partner in the mission of St. Mary Development Corporation since its founding more than 20 years ago. The City and the nonprofit organization have worked closely to create innovative housing solutions for low income families and seniors in the Dayton area. The City's investment in St. Mary Development Corporation housing communities has exceeded \$15 million, including City-supported tax abatements. That investment, in turn, has leveraged nearly \$85 million in additional housing development capital, primarily low-income tax credits for St. Mary's senior and lease-to-purchase communities.

In the past year alone, the City's assistance with nearly \$4 million will result in the construction of more than 100 affordable homes and apartments and the rehabilitation of Marvin Gardens, a 1910 apartment complex on the edge of downtown in what was once a blighted and uninhabitable property. For the Roosevelt Homes project under construction, the City acquired 25 vacant lots to help St. Mary develop 40 single family homes and expedited the foreclosure process, cutting the typical time by 75 percent. The project will be anchored by a new City recreation center and a new boys' elementary school. Also of note is the City's more than \$2 million investment in the restoration of Grand Place, recognized by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. In making the nomination, St. Mary's noted the responsiveness and professionalism of the City's Department of Planning and Community Development and the department's two most recent directors, John Gower and Aaron Sorrell.

Contact Tim Bete, communications director, St. Mary Development Corporation, 937-277-8214

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Laura Lucas, Logan Belle HAND, Ned Neuhausel Award, honoring housing developers who demonstrate a lifelong commitment to people with disabilities

Named for long-time leader in Ottawa County's disability support system who died in 2007, this award goes to Laura Lucas, executive director of Logan Belle HAND, a developer of affordable housing for people with disabilities in the Logan County area. A licensed social worker, Lucas came to nonprofit housing development with a background in theater and the arts, public relations and marketing and youth counseling and outreach. Her initial focus was homeownership, and under her direction the agency rehabilitated more than 30 homes and built nine new homes before turning to a goal of increasing the supply of rental housing. She persevered through the challenges of completing the Pratt and Seymour Street Apartments, 12 units of affordable housing for the homeless and disabled. Her next project, Wright Place, is transitional housing for female victims of domestic violence. Lucas has already received a pre-development grant from the Community Development Finance Fund, and is well on her way in developing this project.

In nominating Lucas, the Ohio Housing Finance Agency cited her ability to build relationships and partnerships with OHFA and with local government and agencies. "Laura works hard with lenders, local government and social service agencies to improve the quality of life for vulnerable populations," OHFA said in its nomination. "Not only does the agency develop housing – it also provides other valuable services to the community, such as individual development accounts, homebuyer education and an innovative youth arts project in conjunction with the United Way and the Ohio Arts Council."

Contact Laura Lucas at Logan Belle HAND, 937-599-1845

The Village at New Seasons, East Akron Neighborhood Development Corporation, CDC Project of the Year

This three-story senior living project features 50 one- and two-bedroom affordable apartments above a ground-floor medical office and out-patient treatment center operated by Summa Health System. Expected to be fully rented in November 2011, the Village at New Seasons features supportive services, security systems and design elements and recreational and social amenities attractive to older adults. The project includes a lobby/parlor on the first floor, a community dining room, a roof-top garden and garden house, a recreational/multi-purpose room, a two-story library and a crafts room, among other features. Each apartment has air conditioning, a complete kitchen, window treatments and ample storage space. Supportive services include availability of light housekeeping, meals, transportation, recreation and information and referral. Security features include tamper-resistant windows, Web-based security cameras at entrances and throughout the building, a manager whose office is at the main entrance and support for a neighborhood watch program.

Developed by East Akron Neighborhood Development Corporation, the Village at New Seasons was built by Testa Builders and is owned and managed by EANDC, which used low-income housing tax credits, a green community grant and other programs to help finance the project.

Contact: Grady Appleton, executive director, EANDC, 330-773-0345

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William R. Martin, Western Reserve Community Development Corporation, CDC Board Member of the Year

President and CEO of Barrington Homes, Bill Martin joined the Board of Western Reserve Community Development Corporation five years ago and was named chairman in 2009 as the organization was facing a tough economy and staff turnover. From early 2010 to early 2011, the CDC lacked an executive director, and Martin stepped in to fill the role. In addition to assuming the responsibilities of the director, Martin secured more than \$1.5 million in Neighborhood Stabilization Program funds and \$400,000 in Community Development Block Grants. Martin continues to be active on the Board, serving on both the Executive and Construction committees.

Contact: Sabrina Waytes, executive director, Western Reserve CDC, 440-357-4400

For more information on the Ohio CDC Association, visit www.ohiocdc.org

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