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Jardines de la Fuente Grand Opening



Unseasonably good weather greeted the grand opening in Pharr, Texas on January 14 by the National Farm Workers Service Center Inc. and its partner, the Encinas Group of Texas, of 200 units of high-quality affordable

housing for working families at 30, 40, 50 and 60 percent of area median income. With the Pharr project, NFWSC has built or rehabilitated 3,700 units of affordable housing in four states. The ceremony marked the third South Texas

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Letter from the Vice President

Another exciting year ahead for the National Farm Workers Service Center Inc. The year could not have started better. We began with a grand opening celebration for Jardines de la Fuente in Pharr, Texas. This new housing development that will be home to approximately 200 families in South Texas. We are also undertaking construction of two other housing projects, Casa Saldana and Village at Meadowbend II, which combined will offer approximately 298 units of multifamily housing.

150 multi-family homes, has begun. Rehabilitation of Vista del Monte in San Francisco has started.

On March 11, 2005, NFWSC will sponsor the grand opening of Hacienda Manuel Chavez in Somerton, Arizona. It was the dream of Cesar Marenco, Senior Project Manager for the NFWSC's New Mexico properties. Cesar will be leaving NFWSC after dedicating five years of his life to the movement. We wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

In California construction of Comunidad 16 de Septiembre in Bakersfield, which consists of

The community services component of NFWSC is now up and operating at two of our

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C O R N E R S T O N E S
 THE NATIONAL FARM WORKER SERVICE CENTER HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEWSLETTER

Grand Opening! (cont)

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housing project sponsored by NFWSC. The new development in Pharr features two- and three-bedroom apartments. Amenities include ceiling fans, frost-free refrigerators, gas stoves, dishwashers, covered patios, walk-in closets and ceramic tile. Common areas boast access gates, playgrounds, swimming pools, three laundry facilities, computer facilities and on-site social services for tenant families provided by La Union del Pueblo Entero (LUPE).

Bank of America provided the construction and permanent loan. Related Companies provided investor capital. Cost of the project is more than \$16 million. Rodriguez + Simon Design was the architect, LUPE the community services provider, Pacesetter Multifamily Construction the general contractor and Capstone Real Estate Development, Inc. the property management agent.

NFWSC's first project, 346 units of rehabilitated apartments, was completed in San Antonio in 2002. A second complex with 196 units is under construction in Mercedes.

The new development is named Jardines de la Fuente, to honor the late Pedro de la Fuente, a dedicated UFW activist and early associate of Cesar Chavez in both Texas and California during the 1960s. His youngest

son, Efrain de la Fuente, was presented with a plaque to honor his father. A replica of this plaque will be displayed at the property. Little Joe y La Familia provided live music and delicious food was served by Hinojosa's Catering. Among those in attendance were Mayor Polo Palacios, County Judge Ramon Garcia, Fannie Mae representative Marissa Trevino and Eva Watts from Family Forward. Mayor Palacios spoke, praising projects like this "which contribute to solve the affordable housing problem that low income groups face."

Texas Tax Credits

Monica Poss, Senior Project Manager for the NFWSC/Rufino Contreras Affordable Housing Corporation submitted an application to the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs' Housing Tax Credit Program for low income housing tax credits that will help to build 76 units of multifamily units. The project is located in Edcouch.

Edcouch is located about eight miles north of Weslaco/Mercedes, Texas, with a population of approximately 5,000 people, the majority Latino decent.

Notice of awards will be announced by Summer 2005.

Letter from the Vice President (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

properties in Arizona. The Si Se Puede Learning Centers are being coordinated by Americorp*VISTA volunteers.

We are also pleased to start off the year with NFWSC's latest additions. Monica Poss, Senior Project Manager, boasts more than 10 years of real estate experience. Monica's assistant is Rachel Beers, an intern from the University of Texas at Austin. Bert Ortiz, Area Director of Property Manager for Arizona and New Mexico, joined NFWSC in late 2004. While many faces at NFWSC have changed throughout the years, it is only because of their dedication and hard work that we are able to undertake our mission.

While we have much to be proud of because of our combined labors, much more work remains ahead. This will be a milestone year as we confront and overcome many challenges. There is no doubt in my mind that 12 months from now NFWSC will be impacting more lives in increasingly tangible ways. It is with your help that we

face the challenges ahead. With enthusiasm and hope we will continue fulfilling Cesar Chavez's dream.

Thank you very much for your support of our endeavors. We look forward to working with you in the journey ahead.

Sincerely,



Manuel H. Bernal, Vice President
Housing and Economic Development

Thanksgiving at Glenbrook Terrace



Excitement filled the air as La Campesina placed banners and Bernard Allison Management Services put balloons around trees and plants lining the grassy courtyard at Glenbrook Terrace. This was turkey day! Residents lined up the Wednesday before Thanksgiving to receive a turkey for the next day's dinner and listen to La Campesina's daily radio show with Alfredo Gutierrez, Maria Barquin and special guest City of Phoenix Councilman Claude Mattox. Councilman Mattox's put people at ease as he joked with residents and delivered turkeys to several young families. La Campesina arranged for some of the turkeys to be provided to residents courtesy of Food City. The balance were purchased with a \$1,200 grant from Hutchinson, Shockey, Erley & Co.

Meanwhile, Glenbrook Terrace is starting to take on a new look as rehabilitation begin around the exterior of the property. Buildings are being painted in muted green, tan and yellow tones. Landscaping gravel has been placed with new plants alongside buildings. The pools are being resurfaced. Damaged siding is being replaced and new roofs are continuing to go up on every building. The renovation began in August 2004 and will be completed by

Senior Housing

NFWSC received an allocation of more than \$6.8 million from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's 202 program to construct 69 units of senior housing in Avondale, Arizona. The site is conveniently located near the Avondale Community Center so residents will have easy access to service programs that can

Computer Center



make a big difference in their lives.

Hacienda Manuel Chavez in Somerton, Arizona will soon be home to a new computer center. The Beaumont Foundation of America is providing state-of-the-art laptop computer lab equipment valued at \$22,850 that was delivered to the site in mid-February. Cesar Hernandez, an AmeriCorps Vista volunteer, will coordinate structured computer classes ranging from computer basics to ESL, GED, adult basic education and job development training. In addition, the computer lab will be open up to 30 hours per week for residents who wish to do research for school classes and job searches. Please check our next issue of Cornerstones featuring Hacienda Manuel Chavez' grand opening celebration scheduled for

A Good Start!

March 2005.

Congratulations to the California team on funding received for two projects in the state.

Comunidad 16 de Septiembre received an award in September from the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee in the form of tax credits to build 150 multifamily units and construction began March 1, 2005.

In December 2004, Vera Fleischman, director for California projects, and her team received noticed that Las Rosas Courts in Shafter, California had been awarded \$6,514,398 in grants from the Multifamily Housing Program, Joe Serna Jr. Housing Grant and the Affordable Housing Program. These funds will be used in building 80 apartments for low income families in the Kern County community. Construction is expected to start in the summer.

Property Management News...



In many ways 2004 was another successful year for NFWSC. Most of our properties operated as projected with minimal challenges. Financially, the Property Management division posted a modest surplus of administrative revenue over expenses. Programmatically, our division confidently stepped-up to the growth challenge and assume the day-to-day management of more than 1,900 units. In addition to these units, NFWSC acquired or constructed an additional 510 units that are being managed by third-party management companies. The Property Management division is now overseeing those companies as well. We are very proud of our accomplishments in 2004.

Nevertheless, there is much work that remains to be done. As it does every year, in late 2004 the Property Management team met to evaluate its operations and identify areas of priority for 2005. We agreed that the two areas are growth management and improved performance.

Regarding growth, in 2004 Property Management began to receive the work that our development division has been working on for the last two years. The development division is operating under the mandate of impacting the living conditions of at least 100,000 individuals over the next ten years. As a result, the development division is working feverishly to add units to our portfolio. It goes without saying that the Property Management division must be ready to receive and properly manage the new flow of units. As we looked at our infrastructure, we felt that certain changes needed to take place in order to better accommodate the coming growth of the portfolio.

Those changes have already begun to take place. The cornerstone decision was to re-structure the Property Management division in a manner that best oversees our geographically-dispersed portfolio. We recognize that it is no longer the most effective option to manage our entire portfolio from a centralized office in Fresno, California. In response, we are moving towards a regional office structure. By the middle of 2005 we will have a California office based out of Fresno, an Arizona/New Mexico office based out of Phoenix and a Texas office most likely based out of Austin. These regional offices will have operational oversight of the properties within their jurisdictions with the power to make critical property performance decisions.

While the California team is solidly in place, our new

staff in Arizona and New Mexico stand as evidence of our serious commitment to transition into this structure without delay. Mr. Bert Ortiz joined the NFWSC late in 2004 and has assumed the role of the Area Director for Arizona/New Mexico. Ms. Jeannette Vandekamp will join NFWSC in March 2005 and serve as the Regional Property Supervisor for New Mexico. We are currently recruiting for a Texas Senior Property Supervisor. The Texas Senior Property Supervisor will allow the NFWSC to better oversee its current and growing portfolio in that state. We project that before the end of 2005, NFWSC will have controlling interest in 940 units. So many units demands a physical presence of NFWSC Property Management in Texas. A Texas Senior Property Supervisor also lays the groundwork for absorbing more units into our management portfolio.

A final word regarding structure. With this new structure we will also need a national Director of Property Management, a position that I am holding on an interim basis. NFWSC has been recruiting for this position and hopes to select an individual by the middle of March. The Director of Property Management will be entrusted with managing the entire, nationwide, Property Management operation.

Of course, all this investment on infrastructure is driven by expectations on property performance. Both short term and long term. Even though our portfolio performed fairly well financially in 2004, we at the NFWSC are convinced that there is always room for improvement; if not occupancy, at least in physical appearance, customer service and saving for replacements. Early in 2005 we set financial and non-financial performance benchmarks (much beyond operating budgets) and those benchmarks will be tracked throughout the year. We are committed to becoming more and more sophisticated on how we manage our assets. The end result must be better overall performance of our portfolio.

We have done much thinking and planning. Not only are we confident that this is the correct manner of managing our growing portfolio, but we are very excited about taking NFWSC Property Management to a higher

Farewell Cesar!

level of achievement.

We want to wish good luck to Cesar Marengo who served with us as Senior Project Manager for the past five years. Cesar joined NFWSC in September 1999 when the HED office was first relocated to Los Angeles, California. He will continue working in the affordable housing field in New Mexico.

Staff Additions

With enthusiasm we present the latest staff members. Texas: Monica Poss, Senior Project Manager, and Rachel Beers, Assistant Project Manager. New Mexico: Bert Ortiz, Area Director for Property Management. Arizona: Mayra Carolina Rodriguez, Americorps*VISTA Member/Community Services Coordinator. Help us welcome them to the Farm Worker Movement.



Monica Poss joined NFWSC in December 2004 and is responsible for overseeing and coordinating all phases of project development. Specifically, Ms. Poss' duties include, but are not limited to, identifying potential projects, coordinating initial feasibility,

assessing and securing community, political and financial support, assembling the development team, submitting financing applications, closing loans and investments, supervising the project during construction and coordinating transfer of all projects from the development team to the property management team.

Prior to joining NFWSC, Poss spent six years in finance before going to business school at Stanford University. After moving back to her home state of Texas and before joining NFWSC, she ran her own home building company, constructing affordable single family homes for sale in Austin.



Rachel Beers joined NFWSC in January 2005 as a project manager intern on a part-time basis. Ms. Beers is responsible for providing support for coordination of all projects, assessing and securing community, political and financial support, submitting financing applications, closing loans and investments, and coordinating transfer of all projects from the development team to the property management team.

Ms. Beers is a student at the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin where she is expected to receive her Masters of Public Affairs in spring 2006. Prior to joining NFWSC, she was the Policy Research Team member and Task Team leader for the School of Public Affairs and executive assistant to the president and CEO for the New England Council in Boston, Massachusetts.



Bert Ortiz Joined NFWSC in October 2004. He is responsible for overseeing properties in Arizona and New Mexico. He also oversees properties currently being managed by third party management agents. He is based out of the NFWSC Housing Development office in Phoenix, Arizona.

Prior to joining NFWSC, Ortiz was regional portfolio manager for ConAm Management, where he directly managed more than 1,300 units in eight communities. Prior to joining ConAm, Ortiz worked for Monarch Properties Inc. for five years as its regional property supervisor out of Albuquerque, New Mexico. There he directly managed more than 1,200 units covering 15 communities, prepared annual community budgets, reviewed and analyzed delinquent accounts on a monthly basis, inspected and evaluated the physical condition of buildings and arranged for necessary repairs or maintenance. Ortiz boasts more than 10 years in property supervision.



On November 1 2004, Mayra Carolina Rodriguez joined the staff in Arizona as an Americorps*VISTA member. She will serve for one year under the supervision of Gloria Muñoz. Ms. Rodriguez was assigned to work at Glenbrook Terrace Apartments as its first Resident Services Coordinator. She will identify the priority needs of residents and facilitate services to meet specific needs.

The first task in identifying priority needs was conducting a survey in the Glenbrook community. The results showed services for children are the top priority. Therefore, Rodriguez developed and is administering an after-school tutoring program. She will also be contacting service providers in the area and serve as a bridge between them and the residents.

Rodriguez received a Bachelors of Arts degree in English and comparative literary studies from Occidental College in May 2004. She plans to work with us for one year, then return to Los Angeles and teach before applying to graduate school for a degree in literature or education.



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The Beaumont Foundation of America	

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You can read past newsletters, learn about our staff and Board of Directors, as well as view our past and present accomplishments. It's a great site! Please visit us there soon!

Please let us know if your address has changed or will change by e-mailing our office at: hed@nfwscmail.com