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Partnership with YouthBuild provides training, jobs for disadvantaged youth

PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA – Next week, the Pinellas County Housing Authority (PCHA) will begin painting the exterior of one of their public housing properties with the help of disadvantaged youth trying to make a better life for themselves. As part of the contractor's Section 3 compliance, they have agreed to work with WorkNet Pinellas YouthBuild participants.

The YouthBuild program is in place to educate and provide employment skills to disadvantaged youths, ages 18-24, who are either looking for a career in the construction industry, or are seeking their GED or high school diploma.

The purpose of PCHA's Section 3 program is to ensure that employment, training, and other economic opportunities, generated through federal funds, are directed towards recipients of government housing assistance. Last year, the PCHA implemented a successful procedure to actively and continuously certify residents which will connect them to employment and training opportunities within and outside of the housing authority.

On the other side of that effort, the PCHA is actively recruiting local businesses in Pinellas County to become certified Section 3 business partners which will help in meeting the Authority's hiring and contracting goals. Recently, B & L Investments of Orlando, did just that.

B & L Investments, the contractor awarded the project to paint the exterior of Lakeside Terrace, a PCHA public housing complex, have readily agreed to work with YouthBuild on this project.

There will be 14 participants (6 to 7 on-site at once) rotating in 2-week intervals for the duration of the project, which is expected to last approximately 5 weeks. In addition, an on-site supervisor from YouthBuild will oversee the participants. The rotation affords the participants with an equal opportunity to enhance their skills.

Regina Booker, Resident Services and Programs Director for the PCHA is thrilled about the opportunity to work with YouthBuild. "This is a very exciting collaboration and such a positive experience for PCHA, YouthBuild and the contractor, B & L Investments."

In an effort to promote Section 3 Compliance training, the PCHA also just hosted the Florida Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (FAHRO) free Section 3 Compliance Technical Assistance Training on February 16. The training focused on regulatory compliance,

defining requirements, easy compliance methods with compliance solutions, and Section 3 Compliance successes. The training was geared towards public housing management and staff, municipal housing and community personnel, architects and developers doing business with public housing authorities and other recipients of HUD funded projects or properties.

For more information about Section 3 compliance and certification for residents and contractors, please visit PCHA's Web site at www.pin-cha.org or call 727-443-7684, extension 3050.

About Pinellas County Housing Authority (PCHA):

Formed in 1965 and governed by a five member Board of Commissioners appointed by the Governor of the State of Florida, the Pinellas County Housing Authority (PCHA) provides housing and rental assistance to a total of more than 4,200 families in Pinellas County. The authority is proud to be rated by HUD as a "High Performing" agency. More information about the authority's programs and services can be found at www.pin-cha.org.

About WorkNet Pinellas / YouthBuild:

WorkNet Pinellas has been awarded with a grant by the Federal Department of Labor for a three year YouthBuild program. The grant is part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and will be used to provide disadvantaged youth with educational and employment skills necessary to achieve self-sufficiency in construction related fields while participating in meaningful service to the community. More information about WorkNet and the YouthBuild program can be found at www.worknetpinellas.org.

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