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Contact: Brett Barnes

O - 512.735.2470 | C- 512.293.3359

LifeWorks Opens The Works at Pleasant Valley, Creating its First Campus with Affordable Housing and Supportive Services – Counseling, Education, Training -- at One Location

The Works Expands the Availability of Stable, Affordable Housing Services in Austin; Its First Residents Appreciate a New Place to Call Home

AUSTIN, TEXAS – January 9, 2014 – LifeWorks, an Austin nonprofit focused on helping youth and young adults on their paths to self-sufficiency, will open the doors to The Works at Pleasant Valley the week of January 13 when new residents begin move-in. Developed by LifeWorks, The Works is a 45-unit apartment complex located at 835 N. Pleasant Valley Rd., 78702, providing traditional rental housing and permanent supportive housing to youth and families in greater Austin. Financed with private funds and 2006 public bond money, The Works at Pleasant Valley completes LifeWork’s first campus that provides easy access to all its services in one location.

Residents, LifeWorks staff, and community leaders will celebrate the grand opening of The Works with a short ceremony and open house on Fri., January 17 at 10 a.m. at 835 N. Pleasant Valley Road.

“The Works at Pleasant Valley is the result of several years advocating for a living, learning community that includes affordable housing and extensive support services within easy walking distance,” says Susan McDowell, executive director, LifeWorks. “At LifeWorks, we believe having a place to call home and access to counseling, workforce training and educational services are the keys to self-sufficiency. Seeing our new residents move in to The Works is a dream realized for all of us.”

The Works is located on Pleasant Valley Road with LifeWorks’ Sooch Foundation Youth and Family Resource Center and is adjacent to Austin Community College’s Eastview campus. By placing stable, affordable housing next to its extensive counseling, education and youth development services, LifeWorks leaders anticipate that residents of The Works will thrive.

Among The Works' new residents are Melonie Jackson-Howell and Joshua Moye, who are expecting their first child in spring 2014. A high school graduate who is studying to be a medical assistant, Melonie lived in 24 foster homes before coming to LifeWorks. "LifeWorks is giving us the opportunity to be independent," she says.

Twenty-year-old Heather Martinez and her preschool age daughter are looking forward to having their own home at The Works. Working with her LifeWorks case worker, Heather has completed a life skills class and obtained her GED. As she prepares to enroll at Austin Community College, Heather says she's continuing to grow through her relationship with LifeWorks staff. "Through the help of my case manager and support that I've been given at LifeWorks, I am learning to be self-sufficient and independent," she says.

Jackson-Howell, Moye and Martinez are among the first residents of The Works whose homes will be "made over" in LifeWorks ninth annual Home Improvement Challenge on January 17 and 18. Each year, The Challenge welcomes teams from local businesses and organizations to donate time and home goods to improve the homes of LifeWorks clients. Among the eighteen businesses and organizations participating in 2014 are Capital One Bank, New York Life, H-E-B, Grace Covenant Church, Adometry/Together Mobile, DELL, and Human Rights Campaign.

Funding partners for The Works at Pleasant Valley include U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs; City of Austin Neighborhood Housing & Community Development; Federal Home Loan Bank Atlanta; Austin Community Foundation; Capital One; Chestnut Fund – MFI; and The Meadows Foundation. Special contributors include American Campus Communities; Austin Energy Green Building Program; Bury + Partners Civil Engineers; CF Jordan Construction; Aan Coleman Associates – Landscape Architects; Craycroft McElroy Hendryx Architects; DCI Structural Engineers; Foundation Communities; Jordan Skala Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing Engineers; Dan Nelson, Attorney at Law; Techsun Solar, Thomas Isaac; Terracon; and Andy White, Attorney at Law.

About The Works at Pleasant Valley

A long-awaited feature of LifeWorks' East Austin campus, The Works at Pleasant Valley provides affordable housing with easy access to LifeWorks' Sooch Foundation Family Resource Center. With the opening of The Works, LifeWorks' East Austin campus is the first to integrate all LifeWorks services: counseling, housing, education and youth development. LifeWorks will operate its Young Parents and Permanent Supportive Housing programs from this location. It is one of the nation's only supportive housing programs to include social services and education opportunities alongside affordable housing.

ABOUT LIFEWORKS:

LifeWorks, a local non-profit founded in 1998 from a merger of four non-profits, serves young adults and young families who want to change the direction of their lives, whether they are homeless, new parents or “aging out” of the foster care system. LifeWorks offers 20 different results-focused programs – ranging from shelter, education and counseling to workforce development and affordable housing – all focused on helping clients find their path to self-sufficiency. Serving over 10,000 individuals in the Greater Austin area, LifeWorks has three youth and family resources centers, an Emergency Shelter, Transitional Living Shelter, Street Outreach drop-in center and clinic, supportive housing program, Young Parents shelter and now an affordable housing complex. To learn more about LifeWorks, visit www.lifeworksaustin.org

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