



Rebuilding Together Greater Des Moines 1st Annual Neighborhood Conference

DES MOINES, Iowa (August 29, 2012) –

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Rebuilding Together Greater Des Moines will hold the 1st Annual Neighborhood Conference next week. The Neighborhood Conference will enhance efforts to centralize volunteerism and neighborhood revitalization in the City of Des Moines and Polk County. The Neighborhood Conference will be held at the United Way building located at 1111 9th street on Thursday September 6th from 3-8 p.m. Presenters at the Neighborhood Conference will include: Home Inc., City of Des Moines Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Police Dept, Planning and Zoning, Code Enforcement, Community Services, Neighborhood Based Service Delivery (NBSD), Polk County Services and Neighborhood Development Corporation.

The conference is free and open to the public and dinner will be included. Four continuing education credit hours from Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) will be available for attendees that wish to enroll, which enrollment will be handled at the conference.

Rebuilding Together programs work to improve the housing stock and quality of life of low income residents, including families and individuals, while also creating community volunteerism and stable housing conditions. One of the programs provided by Rebuilding Together Greater Des Moines is The Neighborhood and Community Leadership Certificate Program. This program strategically works to connect residents, volunteers, corporations and local government in creating a neighbor to neighbor approach for delivery of services.

The educational Leadership Program works in collaboration with DMACC and is celebrating the start of its 6th year on September 27th. The Fall 2012 class schedule is attached. These classes provide skill building exercises to citizens to help build the capacity of neighborhoods and volunteerism. The program provides both core and elective classes on Thursday's and Saturday's in both the fall and spring semesters at the DMACC Urban Campus. Scholarships for low to moderate income residents are available through funding provided by Polk County. Students are able to enroll in one or more classes or obtain a certificate if all 40 credit hours are completed.

"The core element of building capacity with community volunteerism is citizen involvement," said Kimberly Hansen, Executive Director of Rebuilding Together Greater Des Moines. "We

have had great success over the past five years with over 20 program graduates and an average of 16 different neighborhoods taking classes each semester.” The conference will be facilitated by DMACC instructor, Dr. Victor Raymond, who has taught the classes for the past five years at the Urban Campus.

Background information on Rebuilding Together Greater Des Moines Rebuilding Together Greater Des Moines is celebrating their 17th anniversary this year. In their first year 3 homes were rehabilitated and this year over 280 homes will receive services from the local nonprofit.

Since its founding, Rebuilding Together Greater Des Moines has repaired or rehabilitated over 1,000 houses and nonprofit facilities through the efforts of 17,000 volunteers who have donated 130,000 hours of volunteer time. The result is more than \$7.5 million in added market value to Des Moines homes and neighborhoods.

Rebuilding Together preserves and revitalizes homes and communities by assuring that low-income homeowners such as elderly, disabled and families with children live in warmth, safety and independence. Rebuilding Together serves low to moderate income homeowners with home rehabilitations such as: interior and exterior painting, carpet, flooring, roofing, wheelchair ramps, senior assistance items and many more. This program helps keep individuals safe in their home and helps revitalize the neighborhoods.

Rebuilding Together works with volunteers from corporations, small businesses and neighborhood associations to provide the labor. The annual workday is the first Saturday in May each year. On the May work day typically 40 homes are completed utilizing over 700 volunteers each year. Other work days throughout the year are sponsored by corporation such as: Meredith Corporation, Wells Fargo, Aviva, Principal Financial, Sears and Lowe’s.

In 2009, Rebuilding Together took over the Senior Emergency Repair program when Community Housing Development Corporation closed. This program provides emergency repair to low-income homeowners age 60 and above at no cost.

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