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CalHFA Announces Grand Opening of Sunflower Gardens Apartments to Provide Housing Options for Californians

Sunflower Gardens Apartments to House 23 Adults in Salinas

SACRAMENTO, CA – The California Housing Finance Agency announced today the grand opening of the Sunflower Gardens Apartments in Monterey County. Interim Inc., the developer, showcased this beautiful, eco-friendly complex, designed by Wald, Ruhnke & Dost, and constructed by Barry Swenson Builder, at the grand opening event on June 18, 2010.

The Sunflower Gardens complex, located at 29 Sun Street in Salinas, provides housing to 23 low-income adults with psychiatric disabilities who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Residents receive support services on site.

“Individuals in need of supportive services, often find it difficult to make ends meet. It’s important for us to provide housing options such as the construction of Sunflower Gardens,” said Steven Spears, Executive Director for the California Housing Finance Agency. “We are honored to partner with the California Department of Mental Health and the Monterey Department of Mental Health to provide the capital financing to enable the development of this project and provide a better living experience for the people of Salinas.”

The new four-building complex is financed under a joint program administered by the California Housing Finance Agency and the California Department of Mental Health.

Impressive is Sunflower Gardens’ Platinum rating for LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification by the U.S. Green Building Council. The complex has “green” features such as photovoltaic panels to generate electricity and photo-thermal panels for hot water and heating. The 18-unit complex also proudly displays twenty-three mosaic tile murals of sunflower designs handmade by Breakthrough Art, a group of homeless artists in Salinas.

Each of the 24 facilities that have secured funding from the Mental Health Services Act Housing Program received financing for the capital costs associated with development, acquisition, construction and/or rehabilitation of permanent supportive housing, for a total of \$42 million in permanent funding and \$34 million in operating subsidies. Another 34 projects have received MHSA Housing Program Funding Commitments for an additional \$48 million in project funding and \$20 million in operating subsidies. In Salinas, CalHFA and the Department of Mental Health provided \$1.65 million in capital financing to assist with the construction of the Sunflower Gardens Apartment complex. An additional \$1.54 million was provided for operating subsidies.

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All of these projects were specifically created for individuals with mental illness and their families, especially mentally ill, homeless individuals or those at risk of becoming homeless.

Additional details about the MHSA Housing Program can be accessed through the Department of Mental Health at www.dmh.ca.gov and CalHFA at www.calhfa.ca.gov/multifamily/mhsa.

About the California Housing Finance Agency

The California Housing Finance Agency was created in 1975 with the goal of helping more Californians live in a home they can afford. CalHFA's Multifamily Division has invested \$1.4 billion for the construction and preservation of more than 33,000 affordable rental housing units to assist very low and low income Californians. For more information on Multifamily Loan Finance programs and the full complement of CalHFA programs, visit www.calhfa.ca.gov or call toll free 877.9.CalHFA (877.922.5432).

About the California Department of Mental Health

The California Department of Mental Health, entrusted with leadership of the California mental health system, ensures through partnerships the availability and accessibility of effective, efficient, culturally competent services. This is accomplished through advocacy, education, innovation, outreach, understanding, oversight, monitoring, quality improvement, and the provision of direct services. For more information, please visit www.dmh.ca.gov

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