



BERGEN *County* NEW JERSEY

MEDIA ADVISORY

Unique Public/Private Collaboration Welcomes 14 Formerly Homeless Veterans to New and Beautifully Furnished Apartments in Emerson

For Release:
October 10, 2017

What: The Housing Development Corporation of Bergen County (HDC), the non-profit development arm of the Housing Authority of Bergen County, and the County of Bergen will host a Unit Furnishing followed by a Ribbon Cutting ceremony for more than 300 elected officials, government offices, local businesses, and community leaders, non-profit partners and friends to celebrate 14 formerly homeless veterans' move into new Supportive Housing apartments in Emerson.

Media is invited to witness the furnishing of the final apartment at 9:00 a.m.
The official ceremony begins at 10:00 a.m.

Where: Wednesday, October 11, 2017
9:00 a.m. – Unit Staging
10:00 a.m. – Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

When: 324 Main Street, Emerson NJ – behind the American Legion Hall.

Who: Jim Tedesco, Bergen County Executive
The Bergen County Board of Chosen Freeholders
Lynn Bartlett, Housing Authority of Bergen County & Housing Development Corporation of Bergen County
Al Restaino Jr., HDC President
Daniel Ortega, HABC Chairman
Lynne Patton, HUD Regional Administrator, New York and New Jersey
Tony Marchetta, Executive Director NJHMFA
A.J. Luna, Director, Bergen County Division of Veterans Services
Emerson Mayor Louis Lamatina and members of the Emerson Council
Cynthia W. Massarsky, Director, Making-It-Home
John Westervelt, Catholic Charities
Bergen County Veterans

Corporate and Nonprofit Sponsors Include: Samsung Electronics America, Valley National Bank, Home Depot, Rotary Military Family Assistance Center, Suez, Unity Bank, Gallagher Agency Farmers Insurance, Cort Furniture, NJ State Elks Association, Nam Knights MC America and BPOE Lodge 1505 Lyndhurst

Background Detail:

The Housing Development Corporation of Bergen County (HDC), the non-profit development arm of the Housing Authority of Bergen County has completed the construction of 14 one-bedroom apartments for disabled veterans with special needs. Project funding was provided by the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (HMFA), Bergen County Community Development and the Housing Development Corporation of Bergen County. All 14 units were furnished by generous donations of labor, material or funding by the Bergen County Division of Veteran Services, American Legion Post 269, Making-It-Home, and many corporate and nonprofit donors.

The property, occupied by the American Legion Post 269, was donated by the Post to the project. Arcari & Iovino Architects of Little Ferry designed the 7-building complex which features 14 single-story, one-bedroom duplex style apartments for disabled veterans with incomes of less than 50% of Area Median Income. The site was selected in 2014 to be the first of an Innovation in Affordable Housing Student Design and Planning competition sponsored by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Policy Development & Research.

Applications for the apartments were publicized widely and open to disabled veterans with special needs. The Housing Authority of Bergen County, Division of Veteran Services, and Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Newark determined the applicant eligibility. Catholic Charities will provide supportive services to all project residents, including onsite case management, connections with community organizations for health care and other services as well.

Making-It-Home, a Bergen County nonprofit, decorated the 14 apartments and coordinated the fundraising effort to pay for new furnishings. Making-It-Home brings donated furniture and a safe, healthy and comfortable living environment to veterans, formerly homeless families, disabled individuals, the elderly, and victims of domestic violence who are referred by partner agencies and moving to new but unfurnished apartments.

Sponsors for furnishing the Emerson Veteran apartments include \$22,400 in financial contributions from Valley National Bank, Nam Knights Motorcycle Club, Lyndhurst Elks, Rotary Military Family Assistance Center, Suez, Camp Merritt American Legion Post 21, Unity Bank, The Gallagher Agency of Farmers Insurance, and CPL Jedh C. Barker Memorial Post 153. More than \$21,900 in product and installation services were donated by Samsung Electronics America (14 Full HD LED TVs and Blu-ray™ Players on behalf of the Samsung Veterans Community), NJ State Elks (bed frames, mattresses, housewares), Home Depot (window blinds), and CORT Furniture (discounts on living room and bedroom sets).