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## **POAH Opens 65-unit Senior Housing Development and Comprehensive Workforce Development System in Woodlawn**

*Part of a \$30 Million HUD Choice Neighborhoods grant, new developments invest in neighborhood for local economic growth and jobs*

Chicago (October 22, 2015) – Another sign of the bustling redevelopment taking place in Chicago’s Woodlawn community, Preservation of Affordable Housing (POAH) was joined by Deputy Mayor Steve Koch, 20<sup>th</sup> Ward Alderman Willie B. Cochran and several community residents and leaders to officially open *The Burnham at Woodlawn Park*, a housing development for seniors. The Burnham will also house the *Woodlawn Resource Center*, a comprehensive workforce development system designed to work with businesses and job seekers.

Both are important components of Woodlawn Park, a mixed-income, mixed-use development on the site of the former Grove Parc Apartments complex. The Burnham at Woodlawn Park provides 65 apartments for seniors in an energy-efficient, five-story building with the latest amenities on 62<sup>nd</sup> and South Cottage Grove Avenue. The Woodlawn Resource Center offers assistance for those seeking employment or greater digital or financial literacy.

“The Burnham at Woodlawn Park is an example of how we’re investing in the future of Woodlawn and strengthening the social fabric and the economic future of our city,” said Mayor Rahm Emanuel in a written statement. “This important development has created safe and affordable housing for seniors and will have a lasting impact on our neighborhoods.”

POAH’s commitment to redevelop Grove Parc expanded when, in partnership with the City of Chicago, it was awarded a \$30.5 million HUD Choice Neighborhoods Initiative grant to broaden the scope of their revitalization efforts in Woodlawn. Since then, POAH and the city have built or renovated more than 400 apartments in mixed-income buildings, led new community collaborations and initiated economic development along the South Cottage Grove Avenue corridor.

The apartments at the Burnham are rented to seniors earning 50 percent or less of the area median income. The \$24.3 million project also includes a community garden, laundry facilities on each floor and the Chicago headquarters for POAH Communities, Inc., POAH’s property management affiliate.

The Woodlawn Resource Center is a comprehensive workforce development service designed to work with businesses and job seekers. Modeled in conjunction with the Local Initiatives Support Corporation Chicago (LISC-Chicago), its mission is to improve workforce development services and support job creation and economic development in and around the Woodlawn community. The Center helps job-

seekers prepare for and find jobs, connect to career services and access a range of resources while better serving the needs of employers by ensuring they have a skilled labor force that meets market demands.

“The strategy that guides our work is a marriage of common sense and complexity - build new mixed income housing to replace outmoded, all low-income housing; use resources to acquire and transform vacant or distressed buildings into well-managed, well-appointed mixed income properties throughout the community; and use resources to ensure that Woodlawn procures the educational, recreational, retail, transportation and other fundamental resources a healthy community needs to thrive,” said Aaron Gornstein, President/CEO of POAH.

The Resource Center also provides case management services to POAH’s Woodlawn Park residents as part of POAH’s ongoing commitment to help its tenants overcome barriers to economic advancement. The resident services, which are funded through the HUD Choice grant, are delivered through SGA Youth and Family Services, a 100-year-old Chicago social service organization.

The ribbon cutting today is another significant step toward fulfilling the vision of what it takes to create a “Choice community,” said Alderman Willie B. Cochran. “This deliberate process of leveraging resources responsibly and in partnership, with holistic emphasis on community, is positively impacting the Woodlawn community in a way that we can all be proud of.”

Woodlawn Park is being developed on the site of the former Grove Parc apartment complex, a 504-unit, HUD assisted housing development built in the 1960s on the 6000 to 6300 blocks of South Cottage Grove. The development has been demolished in phases and rebuilt as a mixed income development.

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