



December 12, 2011

Cuyahoga County Land Reutilization Corporation



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Cuyahoga Land Bank partners with the International Services Center to create a home for refugees

The Cuyahoga Land Bank and the International Services Center (ISC) will announce The Discovering Home Program: A New Beginning - a partnership in order to provide housing for refugees settling in Northeast Ohio, starting with a home in Lakewood - on **December 14th at 2 pm at 1443 Hopkins Avenue, Lakewood, Ohio.**

“We really saw this as the perfect partnership,” said Gus Frangos, President of the Cuyahoga Land Bank. “The ISC has identified housing as one of the most challenging aspects of settling refugees in Northeast Ohio and we have housing on hand to supply.”

Placing refugees in housing has been challenging for the ISC as landlords are often reluctant to accept tenants with no credit history, work history in the United States or current employment. At the same time, the ISC has noted that refugees, who are anxious to lead normal lives after having lived in refugee camps and looking to settle down permanently, take great pride in their homes and help stabilize neighborhoods.

The partnership will kick off with a home at 1443 Hopkins Avenue in Lakewood. The organizations, along with Fannie Mae, will invest in renovations of properties selected for the partnership. The refugees in ISC’s program will also participate in the renovations, building a sense of pride and ownership through sweat equity.

Rehabilitation work on the Hopkins Avenue property began in November with a projected move-in ready date of February 2012. The Cuyahoga Land Bank and ISC intend to complete seven units of refugee housing by the end of 2012. All of the units will be located in Cuyahoga County.

“We have a unique opportunity for investing in lives that will establish roots in our local community,” said Karin Wishner, Executive Director of International Services Center of Cleveland. “Refugees come with very little, but find a way around obstacles with a willingness to become self-sufficient.”

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