



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **DENVER HOUSING AUTHORITY CELEBRATES \$3.6 MILLION WESTWOOD OPPORTUNITY CENTER OPEN HOUSE AND STAY-IN-SCHOOL PARTNERS**

**Denver, CO** -- On Wednesday, September 16, 2009 the Denver Housing Authority (DHA), city council representatives, dignitaries, residents and community members celebrated the open house for the newly constructed Westwood Homes **Opportunity Center**. DHA total cost of the new capital improvement project of the 10,000 square foot building was \$3.6 million. The new Opportunity Center replaces the obsolete management and resident services office, built in 1958.

DHA contracted with J.F. Sato and Humphries Poli for project design and Place Construction as the general contractor of this innovative building for the property management offices, maintenance operations and Opportunity Center. The building features modern energy efficiency designs and fixtures, including translucent polycarbonate panels with ultraviolet coating, energy efficient windows, energy efficient heating and cooling systems, interior sensor lighting and low-flow toilets.

Exterior improvements include modern building design elements, extensive landscaping improvements including water saving landscaping with areas of xeriscape; a maintenance garage facility and adequate parking spaces for building staff and Opportunity Center program participants.

## **Opportunity Center Programs/Stay-In-School Partners**

The Westwood Opportunity Center will offer family-self sufficiency programs, resident opportunity financial fitness programs, employment outreach & referral, job search assistance and career development services, homeownership, foreclosure prevention, senior services, disabled resources and referrals for independent living.

Additionally, the Westwood Opportunity Center launches a new and focused southwest Denver initiative – **STAY-IN-SCHOOL PARTNERS** with local DPS Kepner Middle School, the Denver University Bridge Project, Boys and Girls Clubs of Metro Denver J. Churchill Owens Branch, Gang Rescue & Support Project, and the Denver Police Department District -4 Substation. This initiative emphasizes student attendance, student retention, student responsibility, parent & community engagement and academic achievement.

According to Ismael Guerrero, DHA Executive Director, “This new Opportunity Center offers a modern and safe environment for parents, children and students to work towards self-sufficiency and staying in school.”

Established in 1938, the Denver Housing Authority is the largest housing authority in the rocky mountain region and serves more than 23,700 very low, low and moderate-income residents with subsidized housing throughout the city.

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