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Michigan Community Resources Awards \$50,000 in Grants to Detroit Community Organizations

DETROIT – December 18, 2013 –Michigan Community Resources awarded 16 mini-grants totaling \$50,000 to help community-based organizations improve the appearance and safety of their neighborhood. The mini-grants are part of Michigan Community Resources’ (MCR) Security Alternative Funding and Education (SAFE) program.

SAFE provides mini-grants to support community-initiated action. Launched in 2011, SAFE is the evolution of MCR’s Community and Property Preservation (CAPP) mini-grant program. Initially, CAPP provided funding solely for neighborhood beautification activities. SAFE expanded on the beautification focus to include activities that improve community safety.

This is the fourth round of SAFE mini-grants issued by MCR since the program began and the second round awarded this year. This round was funded by the JPMorgan Chase Foundation and was targeted to the Southwest and North End/Central Detroit neighborhoods.

Activities funded this round include creating a community garden to increase intergenerational dialogue; instituting community-wide clean-up days; securing vacant buildings; creating safer routes to schools; rehabbing a community park; expanding a CB radio patrol; and demolishing a dangerous and vacant building.

“This program is really important to support Detroit’s neighborhoods,” said Jill Ferrari, CEO at MCR. “It shows the big impact that a few people can make when working together with a just a little investment.”

“We are proud of the role SAFE has played in revitalizing areas of Detroit and serving as a catalyst to bring Detroiters together for the betterment of their community.”

Community-based organizations that received a SAFE mini-grant this round are:

- Sages & Sprouts
- New Electric Vision
- Springdale Block Club
- New Horizons CDC
- Urban Neighborhood Initiatives
- Southwest Detroit Environmental Vision
- Summer in the City
- Clark Park
- Vanguard CDC
- Universal Empowerment Center for Women
- Stafford House
- Cameron Street Block Club
- Greater Woodward CDC
- Motor City Youth All Stars
- North End Neighborhood Patrol
- North End Neighbors Block Club

Each of the 16 organizations received a small grant of up to \$5,000 for resident-led projects specific to the needs of their neighborhood and addressed through a variety of methods.

“One of the things we love best about our SAFE program is the creativity in projects,” said Shamyle Dobbs, education and outreach director at MCR. “Because the requests are coming directly from those who are living in and taking care of the needs of their community, they know what is needed most that can make the biggest impact, and often come up with very creative ways to make it happen.”

Many of the projects funded through the SAFE program would not receive full or partial funding otherwise. Some of the award winners will leverage their award to receive matching gifts from other donors and grant makers.

MCR received over 32 applications with all award decisions made by MCR’s external review committee which is comprised of representatives from community-focused nonprofits throughout Detroit.

Since 2009, MCR has awarded over \$850,000 in mini-grants to over 75 community-based organizations in Detroit. MCR is planning to issue another round of SAFE mini-grants in 2014.

About Michigan Community Resources

Michigan Community Resources supports and empowers nonprofit community organizations in Michigan that serve low-income individuals and communities – with an emphasis on community economic development – by providing pro bono legal services and technical assistance. Founded in 1998, MCR has provided over \$13 million in free legal assistance to over 1000 nonprofits in Michigan and vacant property related assistance to over 200 community organizations in Detroit. Find MCR at www.mi-community.org.

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