

# FAMILIES FORWARD

DIGNITY • EMPOWERMENT • HOPE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Families Forward Announces Availability of New Affordable-Housing Units in Lake Forest**

*A model for collaboration between the City of Lake Forest, HomeAid Orange County, Marx|Okubo and Brookfield Residential to create more affordable housing choices.*

**IRVINE, CALIF. (December 14, 2015) –**

On Thursday, December 10, 2015, Families Forward unveiled 4 renovated units designated for affordable housing, resulting from a partnership with the City of Lake Forest to provide more affordable options for Lake Forest residents. Families Forward purchased the 4-plex from the City of Lake Forest in September 2015 and it was quickly rehabilitated by a diverse project team with representatives across the design and building industries. These firms provided extensive leadership, expertise, time and materials as part of their commitment to address Orange County's severe affordable housing crisis. This joint effort is a model for efficiently utilizing existing funds to create more places for low-income families to live permanently.

Leading the project as the owner's representative, Marx|Okubo, provided invaluable guidance throughout the construction process ensuring that the property would meet the objectives set by Families Forward and the City of Lake Forest and stay within budget, scope and quality expectations. Gary Cohn, Executive Vice President, remarked, "Every member of the project team brought more than their expertise and resources; they brought a passion to create an environment where a family can find a place they can afford to live and raise their children."

HomeAid Orange County has provided leadership for 26 years in matching building industry involvement with non-profit initiatives to expand the number of housing units in Orange County to serve homeless and disadvantaged populations. They joined the project immediately and served as liaison to bring additional service providers, community volunteers, builders and specialty contractors to complete the renovation quickly and at a lower cost. Scott Larson, HomeAid OC Executive Director, remarked, "The commitment and generous contribution from so many members of the building industry in Orange County have aided numerous non-profit organizations to bring significant positive change to thousands of lives."

Providing the on-site, day-to-day, construction management and oversight, Brookfield Residential contributed the most significant amount of time and resources to ensure the project's successful completion in time for families to move in for the holidays. John O'Brien, Vice President of Housing commented, "When we see the challenges facing families in Orange County, it is clear that the solution requires a major joint effort by industry, government and nonprofit all working together to change the housing landscape. The entire team at Brookfield Residential is committed to building strong communities that can serve the diversity of families living and working in Orange County."

Many other firms contributed significantly to the rehabilitation including architects Bassenian Lagoni, landscape architect Stantec, and interior designer Tracie McCloskey of TLM Interior Designers.

“We wouldn’t be here today without the vision of the City of Lake Forest leadership to pursue a team approach to providing affordable housing for its citizens,” reflected Margie Wakeham, Executive Director at Families Forward, “ By choosing Families Forward as its nonprofit partner, we were able to quickly gather a diverse team of professionals to donate time and services. In addition, these families will be supported by an agency with more than 30 years of experience working to bridge families to independence and self-sufficiency.”

**Ceremonial Ribbon Cutting on December 10, 2015.**



**Representatives from the City of Lake Forest, the Building Industry and Nonprofits, all dedicated to addressing the affordable housing crisis in Orange County, gather to celebrate the Grand Opening of the Saguaro Project on December 10, 2015**





**Lake Forest Mayor, Scott Voigts, congratulating Margie Wakeham, Families Forward Executive Director.**



**John O'Brien, VP of Housing, Brookfield Residential, describes the commitment of his team to affordable housing and thanks the site manager, Roger Malcolm.**



**Margie Wakeham thanks Tracie McCloskey, Families Forward Board member for providing extensive interior design services to benefit the Saguaro project.**



**The Gonzalez family shares their gratitude for everyone who worked together to create a place they can afford to live, including local government, nonprofit and industry contributors.**



### **About Families Forward**

Since 1984, Families Forward has worked with families to help them achieve self-sufficiency through housing, food, counseling, career coaching, education, and other support services. Operating with a guiding principal of support with accountability, last year Families Forward improved the lives of nearly 8,000 children and adults by providing safety-net services through the framework of our values: Dignity, Empowerment, Accountability, Community Spirit and Hope. For more information about Families Forward please contact us at 949-716-5858 or visit [www.families-forward.org](http://www.families-forward.org).

### **About HomeAid Orange County**

HomeAid Orange County is the founding chapter of a national non-profit organization with the vision and purpose to end homelessness. Through its mission of building new lives for homeless families and individuals through housing and community outreach, HomeAid, develops housing, advocates and provides service in the community to the homeless.

Since 1989, HomeAid Orange County has completed 54 developments, adding 1,136 shelter beds throughout the County. HomeAid acts as the housing developer and liaison between service providers, community volunteers, builders and specialty contractors. Tragically thousands are still in need of shelter each and every day. To help solve this social crisis, new housing developments are being planned and constructed throughout Orange County. To learn more, visit [www.homeaidoc.org](http://www.homeaidoc.org).

### **About Marx | Okubo**

Marx|Okubo began in 1982 with a simple mission: Use pragmatic construction expertise to solve problems in a complex and challenging real estate market. What started as an inspired two-person operation has transformed into a company of nine offices nationwide—with more than 100 team members, each one bringing greater energy and depth to Marx|Okubo. To learn more, visit [www.marxokubo.com](http://www.marxokubo.com).

### **About Brookfield Residential**

Brookfield Residential Properties Inc. is a land developer and homebuilder in North America with its headquarters in Calgary, Canada. The Company entitles and develops land to create master-planned communities; builds and sells lots to third-party builders as well as their own home building division. The Company also participates in select, strategic real estate opportunities including infill projects, mixed-use developments, and joint ventures. For more information on Brookfield Residential, please visit our website at [www.BrookfieldResidential.com](http://www.BrookfieldResidential.com).