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Contact: Jennifer Koch
Communications Manager
Work: (805) 659-3791, ext. 125
Cell: (805) 797-3502
jkoch@cabrilloedc.org

NEIGHBORS AND VOLUNTEERS WILL WORK SIDE BY SIDE TO START A CHILDREN'S COMMUNITY GARDEN ON SATURDAY JUNE 6 AS PART OF NATIONAL NEIGHBORWORKS® WEEK

Oxnard, California—More than 50 volunteers will grab their shovels and gardening gloves and participate in a neighborhood gardening project organized by the Cabrillo Economic Development Corporation (CEDC) as part of this year's national NeighborWorks® Week. NWW is a national effort launched by NeighborWorks® America, a network of more than 240 community development and affordable housing organizations. NWW, now in its 26th year, is celebrating revitalization efforts taking place this year in more than 4,400 communities across the nation.

The community garden project will take place at CEDC's Villa Solimar apartment community located at 902 Donlon Street in Oxnard on Saturday, June 6th and will be a special garden just for children who live at the development and in the local area. Volunteer work for the day will take place from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The project is part of a special NeighborWorks Plants! effort taking place nationwide with the goal of using plants to beautify communities around the nation contributing to the "green" effort in U.S. neighborhoods. Spearheaded by the area's Meta Street Coalition, volunteers will start this children's community garden to ultimately benefit the entire neighborhood. Titled "Nuestra Meta es Verde" (Our Goal is Green) Community Garden Project, the garden being installed will eventually yield harvests of vegetables, fruits, flowers, herbs and other crops that all neighborhood members can enjoy. The garden will also serve as a focal point for community gathering, interaction and learning by both youth and adults.

Just prior to installing the garden on Saturday, volunteers will comb the area's local streets to pick up any debris or trash as a community clean-up and beautification effort.

After volunteers complete their clean-up effort and gardening work in the morning, they will be able to attend workshops in the afternoon from 2 p.m. – 3 p.m. on the topics of permaculture and healing the earth.

This is the eighth consecutive year that CEDC has assisted a neighborhood in coordinating a revitalization project as part of NWW since CEDC became a chartered member of NeighborWorks America (www.nw.org) in 2001. Past NWW revitalization projects took place in Oxnard, Ojai, Santa Paula, El Rio, Fillmore, Santa Paula and Ventura.

CEDC and Citibank are generously sponsoring this year's project. Citibank is the title sponsor of this year's NeighborWorks® week projects and has been the title sponsor of this event each year since 2003. Many other businesses are also donating products or services to make the week-long project a success.

Last year's NeighborWorks Week project consisted of revitalizing the Tender Life Maternity Home in Ventura which included replacing windows, preparing surfaces for painting, painting several interior areas, installing posts for fencing, power-washing outdoor building surfaces and general clean-up and beautification of the property. Volunteers from local neighborhoods and businesses across Ventura County devoted their talents to transform the home, which is one of Ventura's valued non-profit organizations providing pregnant women with safe housing and supportive services.

"CEDC has been committed to community building and neighborhood revitalization projects like this for 28 years," says Kathryn Benner, Community Building Manager for CEDC's Community Building and Neighborhood Revitalization division and coordinator of this year's revitalization project. "This is the first community garden project sponsored by CEDC and NeighborWorks Week in our area. Community members and volunteers are tremendously energized by the idea of creating a common place where people can literally enjoy the fruits of their labor in the months ahead."

Volunteers, supplies and donations are still needed. Anyone interested in making a donation of time, money or supplies, is asked to call Kathryn Benner or Priscila Cisneros at 805/659-3791.

CEDC is a private non-profit community development corporation that provides comprehensive housing services, through a community building approach, in Ventura and Santa Barbara counties. Since its incorporation in 1981, CEDC has built more than 1,000 units of affordable for-sale and multi-family rental housing, manages 440 affordable rental units, and has helped more than 250 families into homeownership through education, counseling, and lending services. CEDC is a chartered member of NeighborWorks®, a national network of more than 220 community development and affordable housing organizations. This year marks CEDC's 28th year of operation.

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