



**MEDIA ADVISORY**  
***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

**Sarasota Housing Authority**

Contact: Bill Russell  
(941) 361-6210, ext. 224  
wrussell@sarasotahousing.org  
www.sarasotahousing.org

**SARASOTA HOUSING AUTHORITY: A COMMUNITY REVITALIZED**

SARASOTA, FL (November 28, 2011)—The Sarasota Housing Authority (SHA) and its development partner, Michaels Development, celebrate the grand opening of Janie’s Garden Phase II, Friday, December 2 at 10:00 a.m., followed immediately by a demolition ceremony at the distressed site of the Mediterranean apartments.

“We are proud to unveil the completion of an impressive example of community revitalization and the commencement of yet another,” says Bill Russell, SHA’s Executive Director. “These two redevelopment efforts are ridding the community of significant blight, revitalizing the neighborhood, providing quality affordable housing, and putting people to work.”

High-ranking officials from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) will be joining the festivities today to salute the tremendous work of SHA as well as the leadership and commitment shown by both the City of Sarasota and Sarasota County in revitalizing the Newtown community. The HUD officials will make remarks and see the tremendous results being made, thanks in large part to HUD stimulus grants.

The \$14 million Janie’s Garden Phase II features 68 affordable apartments and 10,500 square feet of retail space fronting Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Way. The project has boosted the local economy by providing much needed work for construction contractors and local workers, who are being targeted for employment. The construction of Phase II alone has resulted in over \$1 million in wages paid to workers who reside locally, including over \$275,000 in wages paid to workers from Newtown.

“SHA was determined to set up a hiring process that would get local workers hired. Tandem Construction directed its subcontractors to go through the Suncoast Workforce Career Center to fill job orders. As a result, more than 88% of those job orders have been filled with Newtown residents, so we celebrate that success,” says Bill Russell.

“As one who voted to dissolve the former board and usher in the HUD takeover in 2005, it is amazing to now witness and reflect on how much the Housing Authority, under this administration and board have accomplished in just a few short years,” says SHA Board Chairman John Colón.

The Sarasota Housing Authority was established in 1938 under Florida statute to administer federal housing assistance for low, very low and extremely low-income families. SHA is a quasi-governmental agency, separate and distinct from the city or county government. SHA provides housing for over 1,800 low-income families in Sarasota, FL. SHA administers an annual budget of more than \$19 million with a staff of 30. SHA’s mission is to provide quality affordable housing that enhances the lives of our residents.