



Press Release

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New affordable housing will turn hurt into hope for families in need

Blue Sky Communities and Metropolitan Ministries collaborate to build SabalPlace, 112 new units in Hillsborough County

Mango, Fla. (October 4, 2019)—Angela Rocke will share her testimony of fleeing abuse and living in a storage unit with her two teenage children before finding help at Metropolitan Ministries.

Blue Sky Communities and Metropolitan Ministries have collaborated to build SabalPlace, 112 new affordable housing units in Mango, Fla., Hillsborough County to help more families with similar circumstances.

The ground-breaking ceremony will take place on Monday, October 7, 2019 from 9:00 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. The property is located at [10920 E. Broadway Ave., Mango-Seffner, FL 33584](#) (corner of Broadway and Williams).

Lack of affordable housing is one of the leading causes of homelessness. Since 2012, the number of families receiving housing through Metropolitan Ministries' programs has grown tenfold from 43 to more than 450 in Tampa Bay. Metropolitan Ministries is compelled by its mission to implement innovative alternatives. The partnership with Blue Sky Communities enables the ability to address the needs of the community and ensures at-risk families maintain self-sufficiency.

Tim Marks, president and CEO of Metropolitan Ministries said, “We have witnessed an explosion of need even as the economy soars and unemployment rates drop. Our monthly number of assessments for onsite residential programs has doubled and peaks at 200 families a month.”

“We have hundreds of working families on the waiting list at our nearby properties. SabalPlace is a part of the solution for Hillsborough County,” said Shawn Wilson, president of Blue Sky Communities.

The investment and initial initiative will pave the way for Metropolitan Ministries to gain valuable lessons, which can lead to further projects throughout Tampa Bay. This is the first new development to receive new funding allocated by the County Commissioners especially for Affordable Housing.

Funding is provided by Hillsborough County, Florida Housing Finance Corporation, and JPMorgan Chase & Co.

“As Tampa continues to grow at a rapid pace, we need to make sure that all residents have access to affordable housing,” said April Monteith, executive director and vice chair of JPMorgan Chase’s Tampa market leadership team. “We’re proud to invest in this project that will give hundreds of local residents a place to call home.”

JPMorgan Chase helped Metropolitan Ministries expand its affordable housing arm through a \$400,000 grant last year. The firm also provided construction financing to Blue Sky Communities to help fund the development. JPMorgan Chase has more than 5,000 employees working in the Tampa Bay area.

SabalPlace will be a family community of apartment homes built of durable CBS construction and featuring one, two, and three-bedroom units. Nestled among natural lakes and wetlands, resident families will enjoy amenities such as a clubhouse, playground, splash park, lake views, and case management services through Metropolitan Ministries.

Interviews and photo opportunities

Shawn Wilson, president of Blue Sky Communities, and Tim Marks, president and CEO of Metropolitan Ministries, will jointly articulate the collaborative value and economic impact of affordable housing in our community.

Braulio Grajales, president of High Point Engineering, a civil engineer and native of Colombia, will share how Hillsborough County welcomed him to do business in the community and what the project means to him personally.

April Monteith, executive director and vice chair of the Tampa market leadership team at JPMorgan Chase & Co.

Florida Senator Darryl Rouson, Hillsborough County Commissioners Kimberly Overman and Pat Kemp.

Metropolitan Ministries resident, Angela Rocke.

Tours of the property will be available following the program.

About Metropolitan Ministries:

Founded in 1972, Metropolitan Ministries is a nonprofit, nondenominational, faith-based organization that provides comprehensive care for poor and homeless families in the Tampa Bay region. Through services that alleviate suffering, promote dignity and instill self-sufficiency, the Ministries strives to offer the power of love, heal broken lives, and help build a strong, caring community. Metropolitan Ministries' main campus is located at 2002 N. Florida Ave., Tampa, FL 33602 and the Pasco campus is located at 3214 US HWY 19, Holiday, FL 34691. www.metromin.org

About Blue Sky Communities:

Blue Sky specializes in working with non-profit organizations to develop new and rehabilitate existing multifamily housing communities. Its extensive experience with the non-profit sector allows Blue Sky to create affordable housing that benefits the partners, residents and stakeholders of the properties with which it works. Blue Sky is based in Tampa, FL, but the company serves the needs of working-class families, seniors and disabled veterans throughout the State of Florida. In all markets in which Blue Sky operates, they are committed to creating and inspiring affordable housing. www.blueskycommunities.com

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