

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Grab Your Home Improvement Kits, South Florida!

Neighborhood Housing Services of South Florida (NHSSF) Hosts Community Paint and Beautification Day in Brownsville

Miami, FL – March 2, 2011 – Paint... check! Brush... check! Community pride... check! South Floridians are gearing up to lend a helping hand for the annual **Community Paint and Beautification Day** (Paint Day) hosted by **Neighborhood Housing Services of South Florida (NHSSF)**, taking place on **Saturday, March 12 at 7:30am** in the Brownsville community. The premise of this event is to encourage neighbors helping neighbors and NHSSF's staff and volunteers will help over 250 area residents revitalize the area to ensure that this neighborhood will be a safe haven for families to live and raise their children for a long time to come.

The Brownsville neighborhood was hit hard by the current housing crisis, leaving many homes in foreclosure, boarded-up or abandoned. The real estate crisis is leading to decreases in property values in the vicinity, which discourages community involvement and further withdrawal of interest from local residents.

Aiming to change this, NHSSF's annual Paint Day event will contribute to the stabilization of this community by empowering its residents and teaching them that a little TLC can increase the value of their homes. During the event, Paint Day participants will paint the exteriors of 15 low and middle-income homes, as well as landscape their front yards. Citizens for a Better South Florida, an environmental education non-profit organization has been a partner in the planning and execution of this event for the past three years and will provide urban greening and community forestry education to homeowners about creating and maintaining a native landscape in their homes. Along with leading the landscaping efforts with native plants and trees of each homeowner's choosing, CITIZENS is providing the landscaping materials and staff to assist in the event.

Miami-Dade County, through the coordinating efforts of its Office of Sustainability, will augment NHSSF's resources by adding sustainability-related activities, including a home energy savings workshop, weatherization of local area homes, a showerhead/lightbulb exchange, as well as other activities and programs designed to assist residents with reducing their energy and water consumption in order to save money. In a small community like Brownsville, working together on a project such as this can help create a stronger neighborhood unit.

"Through Paint Day, residents are able to show their love and pride for Brownsville and their commitment to see it prosper," says Arden Shank, president of NHSSF. Shank continues, "All South Floridians have a responsibility to help our neighbors with projects like this to show that we are one united community who want to improve our streets and neighborhoods for everyone to enjoy. "

Although this event will have a great deal of impact on the local community, NHSSF's commitment to the Brownsville neighborhood extends far past this one day. NHSSF has recently purchased a plot of

abandoned land near Brownsville, in the Gladeview neighborhood, in order to build 27 affordable single-family homes, giving local residents safer, affordable places to live.

Donations and volunteer applications are currently being accepted for this year's Paint Day event. For more information, to donate or to register to get involved in improving the Brownsville, please contact community@nhssf.org or call 305-751-5511, ext. 1155. Working alongside their neighbors, participants will help improve South Florida's streets, one neighborhood at a time.

For more information about NHSSF or to arrange an interview with Arden Shank, president of NHSSF, to discuss Community Paint and Beautification Day and NHSSF's plans for revitalizing the Brownsville neighborhood, please contact Amada Williams at awilliams@thinkinkpr.com or 305.749.5342 ext. 238.

About Neighborhood Housing Services of South Florida (NHSSF)

Neighborhood Housing Services of South Florida (NHSSF) is a local nonprofit organization that turns housing dreams into reality by providing affordable housing and neighborhood revitalization services throughout Miami-Dade and Broward Counties. Sponsored in part by Miami-Dade County, services and classes are conducted in English, Spanish, and Creole. A certified NeighborWorks® Homeownership Center, NHSSF is also a chartered member of the NeighborWorks® network, a nationwide network of 245 trained and certified community development organizations at work in more than 4,400 communities across America. For more information, please visit www.nhssf.org

About Citizens for a Better South Florida (CITIZENS)

CITIZENS is a 22-year old, 501(c)(3), non-profit, non-advocacy environmental education organization whose mission is to provide environmental education, particularly to the diverse underserved community that inspires active stewardship and preservation of the South Florida environment. CITIZENS envisions a South Florida where people preserve and protect the environment because they understand the connections between their actions and the resultant impacts on their neighborhood, the local community, and ultimately the global community. For more information, visit www.abettersouthflorida.org.