

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Aunt Hattie's Place, a Premier Foster Home for Boys, in Sandy Spring, Maryland Begins Construction

Dr. Hattie Washington (affectionately called "Aunt Hattie"), recognized foster care expert and founder of Aunt Hattie's Place has begun construction of her newest foster care home with the assistance of neighborhood "Village Support Teams". This new home will be located in the historic village of Sandy Spring, Montgomery County, Maryland. It will be the third home that Dr. Washington has opened to support the growing need to provide superior, loving homes for young men in Maryland

Sandy Spring, Maryland, June 24, 2009 — In typical barn-raising fashion, a historic tradition in the Quaker founded Village of Sandy Spring that dates back to 1793, the construction of Aunt Hattie's Place (AHP) is a community effort. The residents of Sandy Spring and its surrounding communities have embraced the project, providing volunteers to clean up the site, relocate the original landscaping to preserve it, and provide labor for finishing activities as the project moves forward. The property on which Aunt Hattie's Place is being constructed was owned by native Sandy Spring resident Mr. Robert Hill, a prominent community leader fondly called "Uncle Bob" by the neighborhood residents. Mr. Hill was a noted builder who owned the Sandy Spring Construction Company that built houses for families who otherwise would not have been afforded the opportunity of home ownership, and a Negro League Baseball player for whom the Olney, MD baseball field is named. As his last philanthropic effort, he donated his own home specifically for the construction of this extraordinary project because he believed it was the best way to continue his legacy and to fulfill the heritage traditions of the Sandy Spring community by reaching out to provide disadvantaged youth the opportunity to have a caring and secure home.

Demolition of one wing of the home that includes a garage, pool room, large lounge area, and breezeway began last week, in order to clear the way for construction of the foster boys home. The separate living quarters of the original home will remain intact and serve as the permanent residence for "Aunt Hattie" who will be nearby to ensure the boys a loving home in which they will have a true family support system that will promote their academic, psychological and overall success. Washington said, "My mother died when I was two and I was raised by loving relatives and non-relatives called "Aunts & Uncles" giving me the feeling of "the whole village" which is why I believe Sandy Spring is the right village to raise these deserving foster boys."

The Village Support Team formed for Aunt Hattie's Place are an extension of the rich traditions in Sandy Spring and its history of neighborly service. The mission and goals of Aunt Hattie's Place support the ideals on which Sandy Spring was founded and exemplifies the village motto, "*Sandy Spring is more than a place to live. It is a state of mind.*" The Village Support Teams, are now more than 60 members strong and growing from across Montgomery & surrounding Counties. They will assist with neighborhood outreach by developing special events, home get togethers, fundraising and other support activities. The teams will also provide volunteer support for the boys when the home is completed and they move-in.

In addition to the recognition that Aunt Hattie's Place has received for excellence, the Sandy Spring expansion project has acquired funding in the form of grants from the State of Maryland and the Montgomery County government. Maryland State Delegates Herman Taylor, Karen Montgomery, and Anne Kaiser, Senator Rona Kramer, Montgomery County Executive Isaiah Leggett, George Leventhal, and the Montgomery County Council have all been supportive advocates of Aunt Hattie's Place and its expansion to Montgomery County. It is true that "*it takes a village to raise a child*" and Aunt Hattie's Place is a shining example with a proven track record of how this is done.

Aunt Hattie's Place, Inc., a registered 501(c) (3) organization with locations in Baltimore City and Baltimore County, was founded in 1997 and has served over 80 foster boys from all over the state. AHP supports their return to their biological relatives, foster homes or even adoption; however, services offered at AHP are family oriented, residential leadership development programs for boys who may remain in foster care during their entire youth. If they are in need of a long-term foster placement, Dr. Washington and the staff of Aunt Hattie's Place are committed to preparing and developing these young boys into productive, model citizens by providing wrap around services and support systems for them throughout their childhood and young adult lives. Neighbors, state and local officials, have all come together to support the needs of these children in order to provide them the best opportunities possible. The beginning of the construction of Aunt Hattie's Place is only the first step. The Village Support Team will continue working to solicit additional donations to complete the home, provide furnishings and other household needs. Financial donations may be sent to [AHP, PO Box 305, Sandy Spring, MD 20860](mailto:AHP@DillonPartners.com) or can be made online at www.aunthattie.org. ***We invite you to come by and see the construction at 17734 Norwood Road, Sandy Spring, Maryland or visit our website: www.aunthattie.org for weekly construction updates. ###***