



South Mississippi Housing and Development Corp. breaks ground on senior housing development in Lamar County

LUMBERTON, Miss. (April 19, 2012) – South Mississippi Housing and Development Corp. officials held a groundbreaking ceremony today for the regional nonprofit’s newest development, Azalea Gardens, an independent-living community for seniors. The mixed-finance development, located in Lamar County’s city of Lumberton, is being developed in partnership with Landmark Development Services to continue SMHD’s mission to meet the affordable housing need in 14 counties of South Mississippi.

Azalea Gardens, with a total development cost of \$9,545,386, will be built on Camp Avenue on three and a half acres that was formerly the site of a 38-year-old public-housing development. The project will offer 48 two-bedroom units, each featuring washer and dryer connections, a dishwasher, garbage disposal, air conditioning, cable and Internet access and ceiling fans. Amenities include a 1,500-square-foot community center with meeting rooms, a media room, business center and a leasing office.

“South Mississippi Housing and Development Corp. has nine developments in operation as a result of partnerships created following Hurricane Katrina, and three planned developments, including Azalea Gardens. Many of these communities are fully or in-part dedicated to providing housing for seniors because we believe it is imperative that safe, attractive housing and support services should be affordable and obtainable for the elder members of our community,” said Demetria Simpson, president and CEO of SHMD. “And we are truly grateful that this philosophy is shared by so many others in our area who have helped launch this beautiful independent-living development, including Landmark Development Services, Mississippi Regional Housing No. VIII, the city of Lumberton and the Lamar County Board of Supervisors.”

Azalea Gardens is being developed for individuals 62 years of age or older with household incomes less than 60 percent of the area median income. Twenty-three units will be operated as public housing and 25 units will be operated as project-based voucher units.

Editor’s note: Go to <http://thelastword.zenfolio.com/smhdazaleagroundbreaking> (password: SMHD) for downloadable high-resolution renderings and logos. Photos from the event will be available by 3 p.m.

About SMHD: In August 2006, in the wake of Hurricane Katrina’s devastation to South Mississippi, the board of commissioners for the Mississippi Regional Housing Authority No. VIII formed South Mississippi Housing and Development Corp. in an effort to respond to the increased need and demand for affordable housing in the southern region. SMHD was formed as a locally based instrumentality nonprofit. The independent organization provides affordable housing opportunities and a sustainable living environment for low-, moderate- and middle-income individuals, families and seniors in a 14-county region of the state. As a 501(c)3, SMHD is actively involved in the acquisition, construction and rehabilitation of multiple mixed-income developments with partnerships that leverage public and private funding. Through its partnerships SMHD has developed or redeveloped nine communities, creating, to date, more than 900 housing units, furthering the organization’s goal to stimulate economic growth and increasing the supply of affordable housing in South Mississippi.