

COMMON GROUND COMMUNITY HDFC

New York, New York

SEVENTEENTH

Maxwell Awards
of
Excellence

2007

The Foyer at The Christopher

The Foyer at The Christopher is a prime example of Common Ground's commitment to innovation. The Christopher, developed by Common Ground, has a total of 207 supportive housing units for single adults. Forty of these units are set aside for The Foyer, a residential program focused on youth who are aging out of foster care, 26 percent of whom become homeless in New York City every year.



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The Foyer provides young adults ages 18-24 with two years of affordable housing linked to education, employment and mentoring support.

During their time at The Foyer, residents are prepared for a transition to a stable and independent adulthood.

The Christopher is Common Ground's first green design building; it incorporates high efficiency condensing boilers, finishes made from recycled materials, bamboo flooring, and the first green roof on an affordable housing project in NYC.

The property manager for the building is Common Ground Management, an affiliated nonprofit company that provides high quality management services – and revenue for Common Ground. The social services partner for the Foyer program is Good Shepherd Services.

The Christopher was financed by a combination of low-income housing tax credit equity and state and city non-amortizing loans at nominal interest rates. As a result, most of the building's income is available for operating expenses, enabling Common Ground to provide a staffed lobby continually throughout the week.

The on-site social services are funded through government contracts, preserving operating income to meet costs associated with the management of the building. Additionally, the green elements incorporated into the building's design have reduced energy consumption and have a direct impact on operating expenses.

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SPONSORING ORGANIZATION

Established in 1990, Common Ground creates and operates housing that is attractive, affordable, well-managed, and linked to the help that homeless and low-income individuals and families need to rebuild their lives. To date, Common Ground has created more than 2,000 units of affordable permanent and transitional housing in New York and Connecticut; the organization manages more than 1,600 units of permanent and transitional housing.

FUNDING FOR THE CHRISTOPHER

- NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development
- Federal Home Loan Bank of New York
- Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program
- NY State Homeless and Housing Assistance Program

CREATIVE APPROACHES TO SERVICE DELIVERY

- Employment and educational counseling, with a requirement that participants are employed and/or in school
- Development of savings plans and budgeting assistance to help young adults achieve financial independence
- A variety of workshops providing life skills training, such as healthy meal preparation and conflict resolution



BOARD LEADERSHIP

Board Chairman: Peter Ezersky, Managing Principal, Quadrangle Group LLC

Treasurer: Jide J. Zeitlin, The Keffi Group

STAFF LEADERSHIP

President: Rosanne Haggerty

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IN 1988, TO COMMEMORATE FANNIE MAE'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY, the Fannie Mae Foundation announced the Awards of Excellence Program, which seeks to encourage and recognize non-profit organizations working to develop and maintain housing for low-income Americans. The program also is intended to encourage more corporations and foundations to be involved as funding and investment partners. The Awards were renamed in honor of David O. Maxwell, who retired in 1991 after 10 years of service as chairman and chief executive officer of Fannie Mae and chairman, Fannie Mae Foundation.

FOR THE 17TH MAXWELL AWARDS PROGRAM, the Foundation, in collaboration with the Partnership to End Long Term Homelessness is awarding up to \$75,000 to each selected nonprofit organization.

THE FANNIE MAE FOUNDATION creates affordable homeownership and housing opportunities through innovative partnerships and initiatives that build healthy, vibrant communities across the United States.

THE PARTNERSHIP TO END LONG TERM HOMELESSNESS was created to galvanize the philanthropic leadership and dollars needed to end long-term homelessness in America. Serving as an open knowledge network for funders, the Partnership shares strategic thinking, wide-ranging experience, and expertise to prevent and address