

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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The Columbus Foundation Awards \$194,000 for New Safety Initiative in Weinland Park— Grant awarded to Direction for Youth and Families and implemented in Conjunction with Community Properties of Ohio (CPO) and the Public Safety Task Force of the Weinland Park Collaborative (The Foundation Grant will provide funding for a transformational safety initiative in the Weinland Park area.)

November 13, 2012, Columbus, OH – The Columbus Foundation, the ninth largest community foundation in the United States, recently awarded a \$194,000 grant to Direction for Youth and Families in conjunction with CPO and the Public Safety Task Force of the Weinland Park Collaborative to support a program aimed at reducing crime and increasing public safety in Weinland Park, an inner city neighborhood in Columbus, Ohio struggling with criminal activity.

The Weinland Park area is undergoing a comprehensive neighborhood redevelopment involving many local community development organizations and groups. CPO, the property management affiliate of Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing, has rehabilitated all of the units in their portfolio of affordable housing in this neighborhood. CPO has developed a successful safety initiative called “Eliminate the Elements” – a pro-active policing and property management strategy that empowers Columbus Police Officers, working special duty, to address criminal activity on and near CPO properties in Weinland Park. This is an extension of the successful Eliminate the Elements program in a new and innovative partnership.

Weinland Park residents are concerned with the criminal activity in the neighborhood, especially crimes being committed by young people. The bulk of the \$194,000 award will go to an initiative composed of three strategies to increase public safety in Weinland Park and target youth offenders.

The Weinland Park Collaborative, an organization focused on improving and sustaining the quality of life in Columbus’ Weinland Park neighborhood and CPO have partnered together to implement the initiative. As part of the Initiative, Direction for Youth and Families (DFYF) will provide comprehensive outreach treatment for referred or at-risk juveniles, a Special Duty team of police officers from the Columbus Police Department will provide direct support and encouragement to juveniles and their families, as well as enforcement, and CPO will coordinate the work of the Special Duty officers and provide technical support to participating landlords in the area who want to address illegal and disruptive behaviors on and around their properties.

Isabel Toth, CPO President said “CPO is glad to be a partner in the implementation of this critical program that will assist the youth in the community. This initiative illustrates the Collaborative and CPO’s continuing commitment to providing safe, stabilized communities in our city.”

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