



NEWS RELEASE

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**Walnut Park Apartments Wins 2013 MetLife Foundation Award
for Excellence in Affordable Housing**

*Portland Senior Community Receives \$50,000 Grant for Best Practices
in Health Care, Supportive Services and Green Building*

PORTLAND, Ore. – [MetLife Foundation](#) and [Enterprise Community Partners, Inc.](#) (Enterprise) today named REACH Community Development a recipient of the 2013 MetLife Foundation Award for Excellence in Housing, lauding the nonprofit’s Walnut Park Apartments.

This year’s MetLife Foundation Award focused on connecting senior housing to health care programs, supportive services and green building standards. Four winners were selected in the national competition, with each receiving a \$50,000 unrestricted grant to sustain and to expand its work in senior housing.

“With the rapid growth of the aging population and increasing longevity, senior housing coupled with preventative health care and supportive programs is essential to provide for older adults’ needs,” said Dennis White, President and CEO, MetLife Foundation. “We are pleased to join Enterprise in recognizing REACH Community Development for their leadership in service-enriched, senior housing.”

“Thanks to REACH, the Walnut Park Apartments remain affordable in a neighborhood that was quickly gentrifying, and because of building upgrades and new services, residents have a safe, healthy, supportive environment to enjoy their lives,” noted M.A. Leonard, Vice President and Pacific Northwest market leader, Enterprise. “We’re proud to be a part of the MetLife Foundation Award program and to honor Walnut Park Apartments.”

In 2008, REACH worked with the City of Portland to buy the apartments from a private owner who wished to convert the apartments to market-rate rentals. After the purchase, REACH begun

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building rehabilitation that included design input from residents, who were not displaced during the six-month project. The work included extensive energy upgrades, a reconstructed building envelope and the addition of energy- and water-efficient appliances and fixtures. REACH instituted a no-smoking policy inside the buildings, educated residents on green living and installed elevated gardening beds to promote a more active and healthier lifestyle.

To provide quality services for its residents, REACH works with local agencies including the University of Portland's School of Nursing, the Oregon Food Bank, Ride Connection and Meals on Wheels. Many residents receive case management and other services from the nearby Urban League Multicultural Senior Center, where residents also enjoy participating in social activities.

"Walnut Park is a perfect example of how community partners came together to save existing affordable housing and create a sustainable asset for the neighborhood," said Dan Valliere, CEO, REACH CDC. "This award will support REACH's ability to preserve more long-term affordable housing for seniors living across Portland. We thank Enterprise and MetLife Foundation for this wonderful recognition."

The other winners of the 2013 MetLife Foundation Award for Excellence in Affordable Housing are:

- Christian Church Homes of Northern California for Sierra Meadows in Visalia, CA
- Mercy Housing Lakefront and Neighborhood Housing Services for Roseland Place Senior Apartments in Chicago, IL
- Presbyterian Senior Living for Presbyterian Apartments in Harrisburg, PA

Established in 1996, the MetLife Foundation Awards have honored 97 affordable housing providers across the country and awarded a total of \$2.1 million to the winners. Created to showcase models of excellence in design, supportive services, operations and property management in affordable housing, the awards have elevated the winning organizations through support and recognition for their work.

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“This year’s recipients have adeptly responded to the increased need to connect primary and preventative health to senior housing, while navigating the ever-changing healthcare landscape,” noted Victoria Shire, Vice President, Vulnerable Populations, Enterprise. “These organizations have determined how to best direct internal resources and how to leverage external partnerships to ensure their residents receive maximum services within a safe, healthy, supportive environment to enjoy their lives.”

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MetLife Foundation was established in 1976 to continue MetLife’s long tradition of corporate contributions and community involvement. The Foundation is committed to building a secure future for individuals and communities worldwide which is reflected in its new focus on financial inclusion. MetLife Foundation supports innovative approaches to help low income people acquire the financial tools and capabilities to dramatically improve their lives. Since it was established, it has provided more than \$570 million in grants and \$100 million in program-related investments to nonprofit organizations.

Enterprise works with partners nationwide to build opportunity. We create and advocate for affordable homes in thriving communities linked to jobs, good schools, health care and transportation. We lend funds, finance development and manage and build affordable housing, while shaping new strategies, solutions and policy. Over more than 30 years, Enterprise has created 300,000 homes, invested nearly \$14 billion and touched millions of lives. Join us at www.EnterpriseCommunity.com or www.EnterpriseCommunity.org.