

For Immediate Release
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Neighborhood Group Surpasses 4,000th Volunteer – Cleaning up and Beautifying Oakland

Pittsburgh, PA (Oakland) – Oakland Planning and Development Corporation (OPDC), a non-profit community development corporation, has just surpassed hosting its 4,000th volunteer. Through the “Keep It Clean, Oakland!” (KICO) program, OPDC holds cleanup and beautification events 3-4 times per month. The goal of KICO is to engage Oakland residents, both students and long-term residents, in the community, creating a sense of place in and attachment to Oakland. KICO volunteers work to cleanup and beautify the community through events such as litter pickups, vacant lot cleanups, and community garden planting projects. KICO is a way for residents of all ages to take pride in the Oakland neighborhood.

Since KICO’s inception in August 2003, OPDC has hosted 4,236 volunteers who have collected over 1,790 bags of litter and debris off of Oakland’s streets. These volunteers have also helped to clean up 3 vacant lots in the neighborhood, plant a wildflower garden, and plant a community garden, among other things. There are several organizations that contribute their time on an ongoing basis, through the Adopt-a-Block program. Through this program, student groups and community organizations can adopt a street, vacant lot, garden, or playground, and by doing so, vow to clean up their adopted area(s) once per month for the entire academic year. OPDC has 35 active Adopt-a-Block groups.

Not only is KICO a unique way to deal with neighborhood cleanliness issues, it also symbolizes how community residents, when they work together, can solve community-identified problems.

OPDC would like to thank the following organizations for donating their time to KICO and/or Adopt-a-Block:

University of Pittsburgh Groups

Alpha Kappa Psi, Alpha Phi Omega, Chi Omega, the Coalition, Collegiate Eagle Scout Association, Circle K, Delta Delta Delta, Delta Phi Epsilon, Delta Tau Delta, Free the Planet, Golden Key International Honors Society, Jumpstart, Kappa Alpha Psi, Kappa Kappa Psi, Lambda Sigma, National Society of Collegiate Scholars, Panther Psychology, Phi Eta Sigma, Phi Sigma Pi, Pi Kappa Alpha, Pi Kappa Theta, Pitt Cross Country Team, Pitt Program Council, Sigma Alpha Epsilon, Sigma Alpha Lambda, Sigma Alpha Mu, Sigma Delta Tau, Some of God’s Children Gospel Choir, Students for Disaster Relief, Tau Beta Sigma, Tau Epsilon Phi, Theta Phi Alpha, Urban Studies Association, Zeta Beta Tau, and Zeta Phi Beta

Duquesne University Groups

Alpha Phi Omega and Lambda Sigma

Carnegie Mellon University Groups

Circle K, Delta Delta Delta, Delta Gamma, Kappa Alpha Theta, Kappa Kappa Gamma, Taiwanese Student Association, and Zeta Psi Sigma

Oakland Community Groups

Community Human Services Corporation, FOCUS, the Lawn Street Garden Club, the Oakcliffe Housing Club, OPDC Board and Staff, and the Oakland Square Historic District residents

If you or your organization are interested in volunteering for KICO, would like to learn more about it, or would like to donate to OPDC, please call Laura at 412-621-7863.

About OPDC

OPDC is a 501 (C) (3) non-profit community-based organization whose mission is to engage in planning and development activities that contribute to the revitalization of Oakland. OPDC accomplishes this mission through three programmatic areas – real estate development, workforce development, and community organizing. Please check out OPDC's website for more information, www.oaklandplanning.org.

KICO Schedule February-April 2006

February

Saturday, February 18th – 10am-1pm – Distribution of Renter's Resources and Code Enforcement Brochures to off-campus houses and apartments (just in time for apartment finding for next year!)

Sunday, February 26th – 11am-2pm – General Litter Pick-Up in Central Oakland

March

Saturday, March 18th – Adopt-a-Block – 10am-1pm – Meet at OPDC's office at 10am to pick up supplies. Groups must pre-register with OPDC by officially adopting a street, playground, or vacant lot.

Sunday, March 19th – 10am-2pm – Clean up at the Community Parklet Site on Lawn Street

Friday, March 24th – 9am-1pm – Lawn Street Community Parklet planting

Saturday, March 25th – 10am-2pm – Cleanup and Planting Project at the corner of Bigelow Boulevard and North Craig Street

April

Saturday, April 1st – Adopt-a-Block– 10am-1pm – Meet at OPDC’s office at 10am to pick up supplies. Groups must pre-register with OPDC by officially adopting a street, playground, or vacant lot. Volunteer recognition party will begin at 12 noon at OPDC.

Friday, April 7th – 1pm-4pm – Clean up and replanting at the KICO Wildflower Garden on Frazier Street

Saturday, April 8th – 9am-2pm – Rain date for Lawn Street Garden Planting; Could also do work at the other community garden on Lawn Street; Lunch will be provided.

Saturday, April 22nd – KICO Earth Day Celebration – “Spring Cleaning” – General litter pick up throughout all of Oakland