

# Unique Collaboration Turns Renters Into First-Time Homebuyers in Lake Worth Beach

*Community Partners of South Florida and the Lake Worth Beach Community Redevelopment Agency have discovered a solution to make affordable housing possible.*

LAKE WORTH BEACH - There is new hope for working-class residents seeking an affordable first-time home in Palm Beach County's skyrocketing housing market.

Community Partners of South Florida (CPSFL) and the Lake Worth Beach Community Redevelopment Agency (LWBCRA) have announced their most recent collaboration: affordable rental apartments where residents are immediately put on the path to homeownership through free financial literacy and matched savings programs.

"Think of it as a workforce housing apartment complex that will double as a first-time homebuyer's club where qualified tenants receive financial guidance, down payment matching funds, and support one another in reaching their goal of home ownership," said Lynda Charles, CPSFL's vice president of housing services.

The housing solution is the result of a unique collaboration between CPSFL, a comprehensive community development nonprofit, and the LWBCRA. The LWBCRA acquired the six-unit rental building from the City of Lake Worth Beach. The LWBCRA donated the building to CPSFL, who will rehabilitate the building creating six affordable rental units, manage the property, qualify renters, and guide them as they save for a home and move up and out, opening the apartment for the next renter on the path to home ownership. Current tenants will be the first to have the opportunity to become eligible for the new program.

"It's a solution where everyone

wins," said Emily Theodossakos, LWBCRA's marketing program manager. "The City benefits from a refurbished building, the LWBCRA accomplishes property redevelopment at no cost to taxpayers, CPSFL adds inventory to their successful housing programs, and working-class people can rent an affordable apartment in Palm Beach County while saving for a home."

The program is aimed at working-class residents and essential workers, including police officers, teachers, and service industry employees. Once the building is rehabilitated within the next six to nine months, eligible residents may apply for the two-bedroom units that will be offered at rents lower than the county's \$2,500 market rate.

"We would not be able to rent below market if we had to purchase the building," said Charles. "By the LWBCRA providing it to us at no cost, we can

pass savings onto families. We're showing how collaboration is the way to do affordable housing."

The collaboration between CPSFL and the LWBCRA began in 2008 during the foreclosure era when the neighborhood stabilization programs (NSP-2) were created to assist families experiencing foreclosures and to reclaim the houses or assets left vacant. The Department of Housing and Urban Development provided NSP funds to the LWBCRA to acquire, rehabilitate and sell and/or rent the properties to households making 120% of AMI or lower. CPSFL worked with the clients and provided counseling and income certification to determine eligibility.

The relationship evolved into a Lake Worth Beach Homebuyer's Club, with CPSFL assisting any of the City's residents with education and resources to begin the path to homeownership, and

CPSFL and the LWBCRA collaborating on Individual Development Accounts where eligible program participants residing in the LWBCRA's district may receive up to \$2,000 in 1:1 matching funds to be utilized as a down payment to purchase anywhere in lake Worth.

"CPSFL has a proven track record and is a great partner to our city and our residents—current and future," said Theodossakos. "We knew they were the right organization to take this next step in developing an affordable rental apartment building and helping renters become permanent residents."

"We have the same goals," added Charles. "We believe in comprehensive services to create opportunities for families and communities to thrive."

For more information about the project, please contact Lynda Charles, vice president housing services, Community Partners of South Florida, lcharles@cpsfl.org.

## Palm Beach State College to Host Supply Chain Management Expo & Job Fair

LAKE WORTH - Palm Beach State College is hosting a Supply Chain Management Expo & Job Fair on Saturday, Sept. 16, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Public Safety Conference Center, room PSD 108, on the Lake Worth campus, 4200 Congress Ave.

Free and open to the public, the event will provide a unique opportunity for students and career changers interested in entering the in-demand supply chain industry. Attendees will have the chance to engage with local supply chain professionals, receive career coaching and meet

potential employers, such as Amazon, Niagara Bottling LLC and Tropical Shipping.

The first 70 students who enroll in one of PBSC's supply chain programs will receive one of their required courses (TRA 1010 or TRA 0011) for free. Classes begin on Oct. 23.

PBSC offers a comprehensive and flexible supply chain pathway with certificate and degree options, including the Global Logistics and Supply Chain Technology Career Certificate Program with 600 hours of instruction, the 18-credit Logis-

tics and Transportation Specialist College Credit Certificate and the 60-credit Supply Chain Management Associate in Science degree.

Attendees also will have the chance to learn about grants, scholarships and financial aid available for those who qualify. Job seekers should bring their resumes to make the most of the event.

Attendees are encouraged to RSVP for the event by visiting online at [www.palmbeachstate.edu/events/supply-chain-expo.aspx](http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/events/supply-chain-expo.aspx) or call 561-868-3548 for more information.

# Palm Beach State College and Community Pay Tribute to 9/11 Victims

LAKE WORTH - Palm Beach State College commemorated the 22nd anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks with more than 500 staff, students and members of community and military service organizations gathering at a College remembrance ceremony held outside the Public Safety Conference Center on the Lake Worth campus on Monday, Sept. 11.

The event, kicked off by Lake Worth campus Provost Barbara Cipriano who gave opening remarks, was open to the public and featured the Olympic Heights Community High School Color Guard, Florida Atlantic University ROTC, facts about the attacks and personal testimonies from PBSC staff, including Vincent Morton, PBSC's criminal justice director. Morton was one of 22 members of the U.S. Army Drill Team stationed in Arlington, Va. at the time of the tragedy. He and his team made a run to the Pentagon after the first tower was hit.

When Morton was on the east side of the Pentagon, he noticed a plane flying directly toward him getting lower and lower until the roof completely obscured the plane.

"I remember the shock wave knocking us off our feet and a very cool day getting warm very fast," said Morton. "And no matter how much I try, I still can't re-

member the sound of the impact."

Morton noted that as people were running out, his squad leader realized there was little they could do and told the team to head back to the base, where they were immediately placed on security detail. Shortly after, they were told to go back to the Pentagon to assist with body and evidence recovery.

"Without going into gory details, I still remember the smell," Morton said. "Most people hear my story and say oh that's amazing you were there or indicate that I'm some type of special person. However, I've never found it amazing or considered myself special. To me, it has only been negative memories and images stitched into my brain. However, on days like today where you take the time to remember, thank the fallen, and show your respect for those who will sacrifice themselves for you and listen to our stories is what makes our negative memories worth it."

Adding to Morton's remarks was Emergency Medical Services Director Matt Keeler, who was just coming off a shift at the fire station when the tragedy occurred.

"As a third-generation firefighter, that day was a mix of emotion," Keeler said. "The one thing that makes me remember that day more than anything else was

hearing the sound of the PASS devices going off for the first few hours which is an alarm that goes off when a firefighter can't move.

Keeler, who eventually traveled to ground zero to help in the recovery efforts, said there were 343 devices that went off that day. "It's difficult to hear that sound because it tells you that one of your brothers or sisters cannot get up."

Keeler also noted that many students today are growing up not knowing about these major events like Sept. 11 or Pearl Harbor and that it's the job of first responders to make sure that does not hap-

pen.

Others who spoke were Dr. Peter Barbatis, vice president of student services and enrollment management, Fire Recruit Director David Hamel, Dr. Germany Dixon, associate dean of public safety, Provost and Dean of Student Services Dr. Van Williams, and Ronnie Malave, dean of student services, who gave closing remarks from PBSC alumna Daverlin Young. The invocation was given by Chaplain Eligio Marquez Veray and the national anthem was sung by Laiylah Jeudy.

The event was also available for viewing online.

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