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Columbus Community Center and Housing Connect Virtually Celebrate the Opening of *Hub of Opportunity* – Salt Lake’s Inclusion and Affordable Housing Crown Jewel

NextWork Autism Center provides apartments and vocational training to help transition those on the spectrum into independence.

SOUTH SALT LAKE CITY, Utah, (August 10, 2020) – Created in partnership by the Columbus Community Center and Housing Connect, the Hub of Opportunity is now open as Salt Lake’s newest innovative transit-oriented commercial and residential development for accessible and affordable housing. The project brings together a unique combination of community services, workforce development opportunities, and community living. The 200,000 square-foot building is located at 3900 S. W. Temple adjacent to the UTA Meadowbrook TRAX station in South Salt Lake City.

To celebrate the grand opening while respecting social distancing due to COVID-19, we invite media and the community to enjoy a virtual event to be hosted by Columbus Community Center and Housing Connect. The event is comprised of the launch of a video that shares the mission and purpose behind the Hub, as well as the incredible build-out of the Hub from conception to completion. The video will be followed by a Q&A with a panel of representatives from Columbus, Housing Connect, UTA, and others.

Date: Wednesday, August 19

Time: 4pm (MT) / 6pm (ET)

Video and Q&A Access: To be distributed prior to event

After the grand opening virtual event, the video will be made available for public viewing [here](#).

For those who wish to tour the Hub while strictly following CDC guidelines, reservations can be accommodated by contacting Monica Owen at (385) 715-5399.

“Columbus is thrilled and honored to be a part of a community that values inclusion by providing safe, affordable housing for those most in need,” said Kristy Chambers, CEO, Columbus Community Center. “We believe the Hub of Opportunity is the next chapter in providing a model for independent living and vocational training. This extraordinary partnership provides those we serve with the ability to pursue a life of dignity and purpose in an environment designed to accommodate essential living needs.”

The 157-unit is a labor of love designed to enhance visit-ability where residents, families, and visitors have barrier-free access to the community and to each other. This dedicated focus on inclusion is particularly important for individuals with disabilities who will now have the opportunity to be fully integrated into community living side-by-side with neighbors that reflect the demographics of the community, ranging from those with severe disabilities, to families, to young professionals.

“This is the first facility in the state of Utah that will offer an opportunity for residents with disabilities to learn, work, and live in one place,” said Mayor Cherie Wood, South Salt Lake City. “This project supports our community vision to provide services and a welcoming environment for all residents, particularly those with disabilities.”

The hallmark of the Hub is the NextWork Autism Center, a program for young adults with autism spectrum disorder (ASD.) NextWork Autism Center provides a live and work environment that includes 11 apartments, and a vocational training space to give young adults with autism a safe environment to transition to community living and employment. In addition to NextWork, commercial space on the main floor of the Hub will be occupied by Utah STEM Action Center, as well as other businesses yet to be named. Occupancy for these commercial tenants is expected to take place in early fall.

“We are honored to partner with Columbus Community Center in seeing this remarkable vision for inclusive, affordable housing to come to fruition,” said Janice Kimball, CEO, Housing Connect. “We are grateful for the sponsors and donors who generously contributed monetary support for this project that lifts the entire community, particularly those who get the chance to live, interact, and feel a sense of belonging at the Hub of Opportunity.”

Columbus Community Center was founded over 50 years ago by parents of individuals with disabilities determined to create a world more inclusive for their loved ones. Columbus extends this legacy through its partnership with Housing Connect, an organization that connects individuals and families in Salt Lake County to quality, affordable housing opportunities and related services. The Hub of Opportunity is the crown jewel that has merged the missions of

Columbus and Housing Connect to provide affordable housing needs where individuals can thrive in Salt Lake's burgeoning community.

"Projects like the Hub of Opportunity are providing a safety net and support for people facing challenges. This is the kind of project we need more of in Salt Lake County," said Mayor Jenny Wilson, Salt Lake County. "Any time our community can address a specific housing need, that's a win. But when you also create partnerships that give people a chance for success, it's all the more exciting and all the more important for the community."

To request a tour of Hub of Opportunity, please contact Monica Owen at (385) 715-5399. To learn more about the Hub of Opportunity, please visit us [here](#). To learn about leasing, please visit us [here](#).

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About Columbus Community Center

Based in South Salt Lake City, Utah, **Columbus Community Center** is a nonprofit organization that provides support services for individuals with disabilities. The program areas include supervised employment, vocational evaluation and assessment, skills training, job placement, supported employment, job coaching, therapeutic recreation, and residential housing. The programs are designed to enhance self-sufficiency, independence in the community, and play an important role in meeting the needs of each individual. These programs support its overarching mission to transform the lives of those with disabilities.

For more information, please visit <http://www.columbusserves.org/>

About Housing Connect

Founded in 1970, Housing Connect (formerly the Housing Authority of the County of Salt Lake) was established to ensure access to safe and affordable housing in Salt Lake County. This pursuit continues today embedded in the agency's mission to connect people and communities to quality affordable housing opportunities while promoting self-sufficiency and neighborhood revitalization.

For more information, please visit <https://housingconnect.org/> or <https://housingconnect.org/properties/the-hub/>