

2010 CHARLES L. EDSON TAX CREDIT EXCELLENCE AWARD WINNER:

# Louisville Scholar House

## Louisville, Kentucky

Developer: Family Scholar House, Inc. and Marion Development Group

In Louisville, Kentucky, neighbors are passionate about their communities. They often require developers to prove how their proposed development will either breathe life back into a once-booming location or will complement already reformed neighborhoods, upholding hard-won mended reputations. Developer Family Scholar House, Inc., embraced this challenge resulting in a completely leased building prior to the Grand Opening and a waiting list of more than 600 families.

Louisville Scholar House is designed to meet the needs of very low-income single-parent students and their children through a full-continuum of care that includes supportive housing, academic advising, case management, on-site childcare, workforce development, life skills training, and assistance with transportation and basic family needs. Physically, all units employ universal design concepts, including an open floor plan ideal for families with young children. Six units provide additional features for full accessibility and are in use by residents with physical limitations that require such accommodations. Each unit is equipped with a refurbished computer with high-speed internet and voice over internet protocol (VoIP) communications at no cost to the resident.

The VoIP system is linked to the Louisville Department of Public Safety, allowing residents to receive all alerts sent to University of Louisville students, including weather warnings, cancellations,

delayed schedules, crime alerts, etc. The system also connects each emergency call from residents directly to the University of Louisville Department of Public Safety. This is a critical benefit as 90 percent of the residents at Louisville Scholar House have past experiences with domestic violence and have the potential for their abusers to try to find their current residence.

Louisville Scholar House provides comprehensive services to its residents. All residents are required by the project-based subsidized housing lease agreement to be full-time college students. Academic advising is provided on-site to support the educational goals of the residents. Seventy-three percent of residents are first-generation college attendees with 40 percent indicating they are the first in their family to graduate high school. Other on-site programs include Family Nutrition and Wellness workshops; the Toddler Book Club and Young Readers Club; and Passport for Success, a literacy initiative designed to teach adults and children about other countries.

In addition to more than \$7 million in Housing Credits purchased by National City Bank now a part of PNC Real Estate the University of Louisville provided \$1.5 million to fund and manage the Early Learning Campus programming. Beyond the HOME and CDBG funding included in the project, the most unique source of financing has been private donations from the community. One community member donated \$250,000 to the project and opened his home to the residents, hosting a graduation party for the first graduating class of residents. Further donations — ranging from \$3.10 from a local school child to \$1 million from other members of the community — demonstrate the widespread support enjoyed by this development.

*Ashley Bromagen, Office of the Honorable John A. Yarmuth (KY-3rd), and Rebecca Byers, City of Louisville, present the 2010 Charles L. Edson Tax Credit Excellence Award for Special Needs Housing to Louisville Scholar House. Accepting on behalf of the property: Ra'Shaun Logan, Louisville Scholar House; Cathe Dykstra, Family Scholar House, Inc.; and Jacob Brown, Marion Development Group.*

