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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony Officially Opens Brooklyn's Newest Subsidized Senior Housing Facility

Sunset Gardens, now home sweet home for Brooklyn seniors

July 31, 2008, Brooklyn, New York...On Monday, Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez, Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) staff, Lutheran HealthCare staff and community members and leaders marked the grand opening of Lutheran's newest subsidized senior housing community, Sunset Gardens in Sunset Park, Brooklyn.

"The new Sunset Gardens residence will offer a great service to the community by providing seniors with the opportunity to live safely and independently," Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez said. "If there is a challenge today for New York City and our nation, it is a shortage of affordable housing particularly for seniors. I would like to thank Lutheran HealthCare for stepping up and providing not only wellness services, but a supportive, community-oriented environment for our seniors to live."

Located at 405 44th Street (near 4th Avenue), Sunset Gardens includes 80 units and is the area's newest affordable community for adults 62 plus years of age. The development was made possible through significant financial backing from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), secured by Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez, and additional dollars committed by Borough President Marty Markowitz.

"With our world-class museums, restaurants, and cultural attractions, there isn't a better place in the world than Brooklyn for people to spend their golden years. But since many seniors are on a fixed income, the realities of the New York real estate market make it difficult for them to find housing here uniquely tailored to their needs," said Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz. "As a 'mature' Brooklynite myself, I was delighted to support a project that allows more people to live the best years of their lives in the greatest city in the world."

As Lutheran's third subsidized senior housing complex, Sunset Gardens joins Harbor Hill Housing (also in Sunset Park) and Shore Hill Housing in Bay Ridge, totaling more than 700 affordable apartments. All three facilities provide a variety of quality care services and programming for the disabled, elderly and frail elderly. They are each designed to provide individuals with options that allow them to live independently and in an environment that provides specific support activities.

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Lutheran HealthCare – add one

“HUD has no greater mission than providing decent, safe, and affordable housing for our elderly citizens,” said Sean Moss, HUD Regional Director for New York and New Jersey. “That is why we are so proud to partner with Lutheran HealthCare, who will provide new units of senior housing plus needed quality care services and programming. This is the second Section 202 development that Lutheran has built, and I wish to congratulate them again for their continued commitment in ensuring that our elderly receive the very best housing and health care.”

“With more than 3,000 applications for Sunset Gardens’ 80 units, it’s abundantly apparent that the need for subsidized senior housing overwhelmingly exceeds the availability of affordable units in Brooklyn,” said Wendy Z. Goldstein, Lutheran HealthCare’s president and chief executive officer. “Throughout our 125-year history, we’ve defined health to include many things beyond traditional hospital care. We know a ‘healthy’ community has access to high quality care, but also has employment and educational opportunities, and most importantly, decent housing. We are very pleased to have received broad community support for this housing initiative and even more pleased to affirm our commitment to each aspect of care as we define it.”

Each unit at Sunset Gardens is convertible for the handicapped and equipped with an emergency alert system to contact security in the event a tenant needs urgent assistance. Built to encourage social interaction and activity, the complex offers a community room for events, gatherings and celebrations, a library, a 6th floor terrace and a landscaped backyard. Residents will also have full access to a wide variety of senior programs offered through Lutheran’s Services for Older Adults Program which offers wellness, transportation, and caregiver support services, adult day programs and much more.

Note to editors: ribbon cutting and facility photos are available. See captions below.

Photos and captions:

Small group family photo: New residents Rong Ji Li and Li Wen Zhou and their daughter Jie Hong Li know all too well the importance of senior housing. Rong and Li, who are in their eighties, have looked for senior housing for the past ten years. “We’ve looked all over Brooklyn and applied at many different senior facilities,” says daughter Jie. “We feel fortunate and love the new facility.” In fact, Jie visited with her own family and children to share in the Lutheran HealthCare opening celebration with her parents and other siblings.

Large group photo: Community leaders and residents celebrate along with (starting from mid-left: Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz; John Crane, Lutheran HealthCare’s director of Senior Housing (behind/right is U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Regional Dir. Sean Moss); U.S. Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez (directly behind her is Thomas J. Edwards, chairman of the Lutheran HealthCare Board of Trustees); Violeta Maya, president, Sunset Park Health Council, Inc., and a director of the Sunset Gardens Housing Development Fund; N.Y.C. Council Member Sara M. Gonzalez (behind her is Frederick G. Hadad, Lutheran HealthCare Board of Trustees member and a director of the Sunset Gardens Housing Development Fund); Larry McReynolds, Lutheran Family Health Centers’ executive director; Claudia Caine, Lutheran HealthCare’s chief operating officer; Richard Langfelder, Lutheran HealthCare’s chief financial officer; Myles Davis, Lutheran HealthCare’s senior vice president for Corporate Services and president of the Sunset Gardens Housing Development Fund.

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As Brooklyn’s premier health care network, Lutheran HealthCare (LHC) is a comprehensive medical and social support system committed to providing services for the whole person -- physically, emotionally and spiritually. The LHC system of community health providers includes Lutheran Medical Center, the Lutheran Family Health Centers, Lutheran Augustana Center for Extended Care and Rehabilitation, Community Care Organization, Inc, Health Plus, senior housing programs and more. Learn about LHC and its 125-year-old commitment to serving Brooklyn neighborhoods by visiting www.LutheranHealthCare.org.