



***** NEWS RELEASE *****

August 23, 2011

CONTACT: Kathy Armstrong, Deputy Director, Proud Ground

kathy@proudground.org

503-493-0293, x18

Melissa Schaefer, Proud Ground homeowner, work party recipient

runaboutsfamilypreschool@gmail.com

503-788-6471

**** photos are available ****

Last Saturday, August 20, Wells Fargo volunteers helped a new Proud Ground homeowner transform a half-acre lot into an urban farm and preschool

Families of the preschool also participated in the work party for this first-time homebuyer

August 23, 2011, 2011 – Portland, OR –

On Saturday, August 20, Wells Fargo volunteers helped first-time homebuyer Melissa Schaefer transform her new home, which sits on a half-acre lot in outer SE Portland's Hazelwood neighborhood, into an urban farm with lots of outdoor space for her in-home preschool (Runabouts Family Preschool). Schaefer bought her home through the Portland nonprofit organization Proud Ground, which since 1999 has helped more than 130 low/moderate-income households buy their first home affordably.

The Wells Fargo volunteers, accompanied by parents from Schaefer's preschool, built a chicken run, installed padding in the children's play area, and prepared 2,000 square feet of garden beds. Volunteers also enjoyed the company of Abi the dog, cat Penny, Charlie the rabbit, and chickens Clover, Olive, Ginger, and Daphne (who just started laying eggs this month).

"This is more than I ever dreamed of. I can't believe it's really happening!" exclaims new Proud Ground homeowner Schaefer, who bought her newly renovated and energy-efficient 1,000 square foot, 3 bedroom, 1.5 bath home in Portland's Hazelwood neighborhood for just \$115,000. She continues, "My monthly payment is actually lower than what I paid in rent, which is amazing to me! I feel so much more pride and enjoyment now."

Regarding the help she received from Wells Fargo volunteers, Schaefer says, "These are projects that I thought would take years to develop, and now they are fully realized! I am so thankful to have the help and support from the community, especially Wells Fargo and Proud Ground. It's exciting to know that other people see the value in this project and are taking the time to help with it." Schaefer also expresses gratitude to Grimms Fuel for donating garden mulch to the project.

Dreams Start Here.

-more-

5288 N INTERSTATE AVE., PORTLAND, OREGON 97217, 503.493.0293, www.proudground.org

“Wells Fargo helps its communities succeed financially by providing both financial and volunteer support. Last year, Wells Fargo team members volunteered more than 77,300 hours in the Oregon region and won the Governor’s Award for having the best statewide employee volunteer program,” said Judith Olsen, Wells Fargo VP & Community Development manager for the Oregon Region. “Proud Ground has been our important community partner for many years. We are pleased to expand this partnership with our volunteerism to help provide quality homes for first-time homebuyers.”

“Our program supports first-time homebuyers just like Melissa; Melissa has a stable job and a steady income and she can qualify for a mortgage,” said Proud Ground’s Deputy Director Kathy Armstrong, “she just can’t get a \$250,000 mortgage, which is the median home price today in Portland. However, she can qualify for a \$115,000 mortgage, and now she has her first home and a place for her preschool.”

Part of the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP), this home and nine other previously foreclosed homes provide affordable home-buying opportunities for 10 families, families with steady jobs and stable incomes, but who are locked out of market-rate homeownership, even today.

“Proud Ground serves families who make about \$35,000 a year,” explains Executive Director Jesse Beason. “And even with the downturn in the housing market, these households simply cannot afford a \$220,000 home, which is the median home price in Portland today. Proud Ground’s median sales price this year will be about \$130,000. Sales prices this low means, for the families we serve, monthly house payments about the same as rent—and often less.”

Proud Ground and NSP partner NAYA Youth & Family Center were awarded \$1.1 million in NSP funds through the Portland Housing Bureau, which distributed the federal funds locally. The NSP program, and Proud Ground’s work renovating and selling foreclosed homes, is meaningful in more ways than one:

Neighborhoods hit by foreclosures are stabilized. Vacant, foreclosed homes devalue neighborhoods. According to Whitson, “NSP gets homes fixed up and into the hands of owners—contributing to the new homeowners’ stability along with the neighborhoods’.”

Renovating homes is green. “One of the greenest things we can do is restore and renovate existing homes,” explains Whitson. “When we use durable materials that won’t need replacement so quickly, we reduce the need for additional, new resources; and, we’ve preserved all the existing material original to the home. The NSP homes’ renovations will focus on durability and energy efficiency, using green, sustainable materials and local contractors.”

For information about purchasing homes through Proud Ground visit www.proudground.org/homes

About Proud Ground (www.proudground.org)

Proud Ground is a nonprofit organization that provides affordable homeownership opportunities for people who work and live in our community. Working with community partners, lenders, builders and others, Proud Ground prepares families and individuals for homeownership; renovates existing homes; builds new, energy-efficient affordable homes; offers homeowners tools to be successful; and manages transactions to keep homes affordable for generations to come.

Wells Fargo volunteers join new, first-time homebuyer in work party this Saturday
August 23, 2011
Page 3 of 3

Since 1999, Proud Ground has served 139 new homeowners:

- The median sales price of a Proud Ground home in 2010 was \$126,900, vs. \$240,000 for a market-rate home in Portland. The median Proud Ground home price in 2011 is expected to be about \$130,000.
- The median price of a Proud Ground home upon resale is \$126,000.
- The median household income of all new homeowners served by Proud Ground is \$32,200, 58% MFI.
- 50% of Proud Ground families are from communities of color.
- Proud Ground has administered \$8.8 million in subsidy to lower the purchase price of the 120 homes in its portfolio; to make those same homes affordable today would require approximately \$10 million in subsidy.
- Proud Ground has a 0% foreclosure rate.

More information, including print quality photos and Proud Ground homeowner stories:
www.proudground.org/about/media-resources

About Wells Fargo (www.wellsfargo.com)

Serving Oregonians since 1852, Wells Fargo has repeatedly been named one of the most generous companies in the nation. The company provides banking, insurance, investments, mortgage, and consumer and commercial finance through more than 9,000 stores, 12,000 ATMs, the Internet and other distribution channels across North America and internationally.
