



SAN JOSE MISSION

The Role of Churches and Faith-Based Organizations in Affordable Housing was a well attended workshop at the Florida Housing Coalition's 17th Annual Statewide Conference. Churches throughout Florida have substantial resources to bring to the table. Those resources include the ability to outreach and be trusted in the communities they serve, and to garner the support of human and financial resources in the form of volunteerism and donations. Most importantly, churches frequently own land. The success of churches and faith-based organizations is highly dependent on partnerships. The Florida Housing Coalition works with churches and faith-based organizations to assist them in developing partnerships, and providing them with technical assistance through programs well suited for their needs, such as the Florida Community Loan Fund and Florida Housing Finance Corporation's Pre-Development Loan Program.

BY ARNOLD ANDREWS

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October 15, 2003 will be a day long remembered in the strawberry fields of Dover/Plant City. It will be remembered as the day when 300 people from all walks of life came together in solidarity to celebrate a successful, decade-long effort to provide safe, affordable and dignified homes for farmworker families.

The San Jose Mission is a residential community and education/social services campus for farmworker families. The Mission is located in the rural agricultural community of Dover, near the Plant City area, known worldwide for its delicious strawberries.

The Mission currently hosts a community partnership of health, education, and social services agencies that provide a day care center for 90 children (operated by Redlands Christian Migrant Association); an adult education and literacy program (provided by Hillsborough County Schools); a parish nurse (provided by St. Joseph's/Baptist Hospital); and a food/clothing pantry (operated by the St. Vincent de Paul Society). Catholic Charities provides professional counseling and case management for children, families, and

individuals. In addition, Catholic Charities, in collaboration with the Catholic Medical Association, operates a Mobile Medical Unit staffed by volunteer physicians and nurses.

The Mission currently offers 80 units of affordable rental housing with 42 more units under construction. Funding for the housing was made possible by the State of Florida DCA, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Hillsborough County, HUD, the Florida Community Loan Fund, and the Federal Home Loan Bank, with SunTrust as participating lender.



The San Jose Mission has been recognized as a national model by USDA, HUD, the Catholic Health Association and Catholic Charities USA. It is the recipient of the prestigious Achievement Citation for Extraordinary Programs Award for the year 2002 from the Catholic Health Association.

The San Jose Mission illustrates how ALL OF US... working together... as a government; a faith community; and people of good faith can cultivate a small seed of compassion to create a model of justice and dignity for farmworkers. 