



For Immediate Release

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**Phoenix Neighborhood Services Department's Joseph Belval Receives National Recognition
for Contributions to Affordable Housing and Community Development**

*NeighborWorks® America and NHS Phoenix Honor Belval with
NeighborWorks® Government Service Award*

Phoenix, AZ – Today NeighborWorks® America announced that Joseph Belval, city of Phoenix Neighborhood Services Department, is a recipient of the 2009 NeighborWorks® Government Service Award for Local Government Service. Belval is recognized for his significant contributions to improving the lives of the Phoenix residents through his support for community development and affordable housing. Belval will be honored tonight or on May 5 at a reception sponsored by NHS Phoenix, J.P. Morgan Chase and Bank of America at the Arizona Club.

“I am very grateful to NeighborWorks® America for this honor, especially because of the high esteem I hold for their work. I am privileged to have worked shoulder-to-shoulder with NeighborWorks staff and their local affiliates in support of community revitalization for more than thirty years,” said Belval.

Belval has a strong history with and commitment to neighborhood revitalization, stemming from the late 1970's when he worked as a community organizer in Chicago. As Development Manager, Belval is at the center of intensive, community-driven, neighborhood-specific strategies for Phoenix's older, distressed neighborhoods, overcoming blight house-by-house and block-by-block. Serving as a leader and partner, Belval provides strategic guidance and coordination to eliminate blighted properties and does whatever it takes to acquire and transform the properties, and turn them into homeownership opportunities primarily for the benefit of low- and moderate-income persons. Belval's commitment to the vision of the city's Neighborhood Services Department has produced 158 scattered-site infill homes to forward the city's revitalization agenda.

“Joe Belval has shown an unwavering commitment to and support for public policies that advance community revitalization goals,” said Patricia Garcia Duarte, President and CEO, NHS Phoenix, which nominated Belval for the honor. “Joe's leadership has helped transform his community and we are proud to honor him for his invaluable contributions to affordable housing.”

NeighborWorks Government Service Award honorees have achieved substantive accomplishments that include initiating and implementing public policies and programs that strengthen communities or expand the supply of affordable housing. They are in touch with their constituents – listening to their opinions and working with them to implement strategies and policies that succeed. Their demonstrated commitment and dedication make them stand out as leaders in touch with the people they serve.



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Belval is one of four elected or appointed local, state and federal government officials recognized by NeighborWorks in 2009. Belval's fellow honorees are Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez, U.S. House of Representatives (D-NY); Thomas C. Slater, Representative, Rhode Island House of Representatives; and Ken McCormick, Deputy District Attorney, Contra Costa County, California.

“The commitment demonstrated by these leaders at the federal, state and local government levels is ever more important given today’s challenges in the housing market and the economic crisis,” said Ken Wade, CEO of NeighborWorks® America. “The 2009 honorees recognize the far-reaching impact of community development efforts. From supporting foreclosure intervention efforts and educating families about predatory foreclosure rescue scams, to ensuring residents have access to quality affordable housing, and revitalizing communities affected by blight, the 2009 honorees have made the communities they represent better places to live. We are proud to honor them for their invaluable service.”

Wade commended the award recipients for understanding the extensive influence housing issues have on individuals, the local economy and the entire nation. For every dollar spent on quality, affordable housing, \$35 are returned in the form of job creation, increased independence and tax contributions, new businesses, and access to higher education.

For more information about Joe Belval or NHS Phoenix, contact Carole Kauffman, (602) 258-1659 x202, ckauffman@nhsphoenix.org.

For more information about the NeighborWorks® Government Service Awards and the 2009 awardees, please visit www.nw.org/network/neighborworksProgs/awards or contact Erin Angell Collins, 202-220-6317, ecollins@nw.org, or Celine Thomasson, 210-256-8470, cthomasson@nw.org.

About NeighborWorks® America

NeighborWorks® America creates opportunities for people to improve their lives and strengthen their communities by providing access to homeownership and to safe and affordable rental housing. Since 1991, we have assisted nearly 1.2 million low- to moderate-income families with their housing needs. Much of our success is achieved through our support of the NeighborWorks® network — more than 230 community development organizations working in more than 4,400 urban, suburban and rural communities in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. In the last five years, NeighborWorks® organizations have generated more than \$15 billion in reinvestment in these communities. NeighborWorks® America is the nation’s leading trainer of community development and affordable housing professionals. www.nw.org.

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