



ECHO RIDGE WINS 2012 AD ASTRA AWARD FOR SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT IN HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

--Innovative, Eco-Friendly Housing Community Offers 66 Multi-Family Units to Topeka Residents--



Dennis L. Mesa of KHRC presents John Johnston and Kathryn Mesner with the 2012 Ad Astra Award.

MANHATTAN - The Kansas Housing Conference is pleased to announce that Echo Ridge in Topeka received the 2012 Ad Astra Award for Special Achievement in Housing Development – Urban. The award honors the 66-unit affordable housing development for incorporating numerous state-of-the-art green building practices, a playground, walking paths, individual and shared gardens and a community center. Funding for Echo Ridge included \$10 million from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) Public Housing Capital Fund Recovery Competition Program, an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act initiative and \$5 million in federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits from Kansas Housing Resources Corporation (KHRC).

Accepting the Ad Astra Award in Manhattan, Kathryn Mesner of Mesner Development Co. said, “We are thankful to HUD and KHRC for the opportunity to participate in this green community endeavor. It has given us the opportunity to explore new sustainable design concepts for affordable housing. We have learned a great deal and we are eager to incorporate and share what we have learned in order to move future affordable housing projects toward greater sustainability.”



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John Johnston, CEO of the Topeka Housing Authority, said “We were delighted to have this opportunity to create a unique, green community that is a resource for affordable housing builders and advocates across the state.”

Additional partners include Midwest Housing Equity Group, Architect Tim Schaller, Engineers: Latimer, Sommers and Associates, and Cook, Flatt and Strobel; Additional Architects: Patti Banks and Associates, and El Dorado; General Contractors: McPherson Contractors, Inc. and Kelley Construction Company; and Columbia Capital Management, as well as the Law Firms of Tenopir and Huerter, and James Ramsey, LLC.



Sustainable amenities at Echo Ridge include Energy Star fixtures and appliances, low-flow water fixtures, passive solar design, reflective roofing, triple glazed windows, eco-friendly paint and floor coverings, photo-voltaic outdoor lighting, rainwater conservation and an integrated closed loop geothermal heating and air conditioning system serving the entire development. The community center and four of the homes have planted roofs. Nut trees, berry bushes, flowering trees and hardwoods are planted throughout the development. Plantings shade more than half of all sidewalks, patios and driveways.

Rents for the one, two and three-bedroom units range from \$50 to more than \$400. Income-eligible tenants pay 30 percent of their income for rent and utilities.

Other Ad Astra award winners honored at this year’s Kansas Housing Conference include:

Special Achievement in Affordable Housing Development - Rural

Homestead Senior Residences - Mulvane

Excellence in Partnership

Broadview Towers, Inc. – Emporia

Outstanding Housing Advocate

John Scott, CEO, Interfaith Housing Services

Affordable Housing Trail Blazer

Margene Swarts, Assistant Director, Planning and Development Services, City of Lawrence

Innovation in Housing and Community Development

Poehler Loft Apartments - Lawrence

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The Ad Astra Awards are given out each year at the statewide Kansas Housing Conference. The awards honor individuals and organizations who demonstrate excellence in developing affordable housing, shaping housing policy and creating innovative housing solutions to meet the daily needs of low and moderate-income Kansans. The awards celebrate housing leaders who consistently make a positive impact on their communities, as well as showcase best practices of housing developers, housing authorities, community service organizations and others.

For more information about Echo Ridge in Topeka, please contact the Topeka Housing Authority at 785-357-8842 or visit www.tha.gov. To learn more about the 2012 Ad Astra Awards or the Kansas Housing Conference, visit www.kshousingconference.org.