

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Julia Maglione, 360-567-3176, jmaglione@swwdc.org

**YouthBuild Vancouver Accepting Applications from High School Dropouts, ages
17-24, for Free Training and Education Program**

At-risk youth encouraged to attend YouthBuild information session

VANCOUVER, Wash. (Dec. 30, 2014) — Clark County residents, ages 17-24, who do not have a high school diploma and are interested in obtaining one or their GED and job-related skills are invited to attend a YouthBuild Vancouver information session to learn more about the program.

Information sessions will be held **January 8, 15 and 20** from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at Partners in Careers, 3210 NE 52nd Street, Vancouver 98663. To register for the free information session, contact Dave Cole at 360-696-8417 or dave@swwpic.org.

To participate in YouthBuild, an individual must be:

- A Clark County resident
- Between the ages of 17 and 24 years old
- A high school dropout in need of a high school diploma or GED
- Interested in gaining job skills and experience

Those enrolled in YouthBuild will have the opportunity to:

- Obtain their GED or high school diploma
- Gain two nationally-recognized construction certifications
- Participate in building a house for a family in need
- Receive services, including job, college and career preparation

The program is funded through a \$1.1 million grant from the Department of Labor, so there is no cost to participants.

YouthBuild Vancouver will help up to 60 at-risk Clark County youth, who have dropped out of high school, obtain high school diplomas or GEDs and learn leadership and other work-related skills through academic trainings, on-site work experiences and community service activities. Participants will also have access to apprenticeships and industry certifications in the construction trades as well as transitional housing opportunities. The program will culminate with the participants building two energy-efficient homes for low-income families enrolled with Evergreen Habitat for Humanity.

Led by the Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council (Swwdc), the YouthBuild team includes Partners in Careers, Innovative Services NW, Evergreen Habitat for Humanity, Vancouver Housing Authority and WorkSource.

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ph 360.567.1070
fax 360.567.1054
www.swwdc.org

Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council (SWWDC), a nonprofit organization founded in 2002, is the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) for Clark, Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties. SWWDC brings together funding, service providers, colleges, economic development and community organizations to provide free employment and training services to businesses, job seekers and youth. For more information, visit www.swwdc.org.

Partners in Careers (PIC) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to create self-sufficiency through specialized job training and employment services. PIC has more than 30 years of experience connecting physically, educationally and economically-challenged people to career counseling, job training, placement and coaching to achieve economic self-sufficiency. PIC provides programs for at-risk youth, low-income seniors, refugees, people with limited English proficiency, veterans, ex-offenders and individuals receiving government assistance. www.partnersincareers.org.

Innovative Services NW has, for more than 50 years, been creating opportunities, achieving results and changing lives by offering a continuum of services including therapy and early learning for children, employment training and job support for teens and adults, intervention and support for foster youth and families, and adult day health care for senior citizens and adults who require daytime assistance. www.innovativeservicesnw.org.

Evergreen Habitat for Humanity (EHFH) is an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International and works in partnership with people in need from all walks of life to develop communities by building safe, affordable housing. Habitat builds and rehabilitates simple, decent houses with the help of the homeowner (partner) families. This is accomplished through volunteer labor and tax-deductible donations and materials. Habitat houses are then sold to the partner families at no profit and financed with affordable, no-interest loans. The homeowners' monthly mortgage payments are then placed into a revolving fund that is used to build more houses. www.ehfh.org.

Vancouver Housing Authority (www.vhausa.com) serves more than 7,500 very low-income children, parents, elderly and disabled people with 587 units of subsidized housing and more than 2,300 Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers. The VHA Work Opportunities programs provide subsidized residents with a wide range of services as they work toward self-reliance. The VHA contributes to the sustainability of Clark County with community development activities and 2,293 units of non-subsidized affordable workforce housing that provide homes for an additional 5,000 people.

WorkSource is a partnership of state agencies, local service providers, colleges and community organizations that provide free employment and training services to employers and job seekers. WorkSource assists employers to recruit and screen for qualified applicants, provides wage reimbursement opportunities through On-the-Job Trainings, and supplies cost-savings information on employment tax credits. WorkSource serves more than 1,000 jobseekers and 200 businesses each month. Go information, go to www.go2worksource.com.