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## PRESS RELEASE

# Primavera Foundation's Las Abuelitas Housing Featured at NYC Cooper Hewitt

Exhibition Series on Socially Responsible Design "By the People: Designing a Better America"



*The Primavera Foundation's multiple award-winning Las Abuelitas housing in South Tucson, Arizona.*

**Tucson, Arizona, October 3, 2016** – The Primavera Foundation's multiple award-winning Las Abuelitas affordable housing community, designed in collaboration with grandparents raising their grandchildren and located in South Tucson, Arizona is featured at the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum exhibit in New York City entitled, "By the People: Designing a Better America."

The exhibit is on view now through February 26, 2017. It is a display of 60 collaborative designs from across the United States, which challenges the country's growing crisis of social and economic inequality. Through installations, interactive media, and video, the exhibition shares how designers

are engaging the public in creating more inclusive and sustainable communities, and delivers a powerful message of optimism for achieving a more just and equitable society for all Americans through design.

Las Abuelitas is showcased in the exhibit as a design of civic spaces helping under-represented communities and new voices share, both in the physical and digital commons. The 12-unit development includes a community center with a multi-purpose room, computer lab, playroom/library, kitchen, office, and children's art display area. Shared outdoor space includes a playground, a "Common Green" sitting area, a community garden, and a basketball play area, and all are accessible to the neighborhood.

"At Primavera, part of our DNA is really trying to listen to and be responsive and engaged with the community," said Peggy Hutchison, CEO of Primavera. "Over our 33-year history, programs have been developed because folks in the community have presented us with a challenge that connects with our mission."

The community building and some of the units have net zero energy designation, which means these buildings produce as much energy through renewable resources as they consume. From conception to construction, energy efficiency was a primary consideration.

"We really wanted to have the focus be green, energy-efficient, long-term sustainability," said Hutchison, "and we understood that would be a big investment on the front end, but that it would have a lasting impact both for the residents and for Primavera."

Recognized for its progressive design and environmentally sound construction, Las Abuelitas has received numerous awards and certifications such as becoming the very first net zero energy building certified by Pima County in Arizona, and achieving Platinum Certification by the US Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED).

Las Abuelitas was made possible through key partnerships with the advocacy of Arizona Grandparent Ambassadors; land donated by Pima County with the support from the leadership of the City of South Tucson; financial support from NeighborWorks® America; the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Neighborhood Stabilization II and HOME programs in partnership with Pima County, the Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco, NeighborWorks® Capital, and generous Primavera donors; architectural design by Poster Frost Mirto, Inc.; and construction by Lloyd Construction Company, Inc.

#### **ABOUT THE PRIMAVERA FOUNDATION**

The Primavera Foundation provides pathways out of poverty through safe, affordable housing,

workforce development, and neighborhood revitalization. Primavera's vision promotes social and economic justice, while working to build a future in which all people are assured basic human rights, a livable income, and safe, affordable housing. Primavera's continuum of services over the past 33 years focus on the following four main areas: 1) survival – emergency shelters, day-time drop-in centers, homeless prevention and intervention; 2) stability – safe, affordable housing, job readiness training, temporary day labor work assignments, and permanent job placement assistance; 3) security – financial and homeownership education promotion and preservation, financial coaching, housing counseling, and asset-building services such as incentive-based savings programs; and 4) sustainability – working collaboratively with a variety of multi-sector community partners on neighborhood revitalization, resident engagement, leadership development, education, and advocacy to create greater equity, healthy neighborhoods, and to support collective action around critical policy issues impacting low-income working families.

**ABOUT POSTER FROST MIRTO, INC.**

Poster Frost Mirto, Inc. is a full service architecture and planning firm specializing in four primary work areas: historic preservation, community architecture, workforce housing, and urban planning. These four areas are interrelated and reflect the core values of community, urbanism, place-based environmental design, and innovation. For more than 30 years, the work of Poster Frost Mirto has been rooted in the communities served and developed with the creative quality of ideas and commitment to the cultural and historical context of Arizona.

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