



Contact: Marcelle Perry-Rhone  
Marketing & PR Manager  
314-533-0600 ext. 48  
314-497-7739 cell  
mperry-rhone@beyondhousing.org

**BEYOND HOUSING'S PAGEDALE  
CHILDREN'S DEFENSE FUND FREEDOM SCHOOL  
TO  
RALLY FOR YOUTH SUMMER PROGRAMS ON ST. VINCENT GREENWAY**

St. Louis, MO - Affordable summer programs for youth are essential to almost every community and family in some way. Unfortunately, funding for these programs is not readily available. The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) Freedom School, provided by Beyond Housing each summer at the Pagedale Family Support Center, will host a community social action event to rally for more funding for summer activities. The event will highlight the important role that summer programs play in preventing summer learning-loss, educating youth and their families on healthy lifestyles and providing exposure to great, inexpensive resources at their disposal such as the St. Vincent Greenway.

On July 22, 2011, the event titled, "A Walk on the Greenway: "Taking Leaders Back to School" will include a parade to the St. Vincent Greenway in St. Vincent's Park. At St. Vincent Greenway students will encourage attendees to sign a petition they are sending to the US Congress requesting more funding for summer programs. The day will also be filled with games, entertainment, guest speakers, refreshments, and much more!

"Summer programs are vitally important in keeping students' minds engaged and their bodies active", says Chris Krehmeyer, President/CEO of Beyond Housing. He continues, "Summer programs encourage our youth to explore their talents and interests, as well as introduce children and families to assets in their own communities like the Great Rivers Greenway, which are sometimes hidden treasures as beautiful as any national park but are more affordable."

Last year, first lady Michelle Obama started the nationwide initiative, "Let's read, let's move," to expand opportunities to engage young people in summer reading and physical activities. "Young people need to do activities that are fun, but also that help them learn new things. The CDF Freedom School requires youth to read at least 60 hours during the summer and teaches leadership skills as they share what's learned with the larger community" says Vontrice Valentine, Director of the Beyond Housing Family Support Center.

Valentine concludes, "Nationally, 1 in 3 Black and 1 in 6 Latino boys born in 2001 are at risk of imprisonment during their lifetime. This is America's pipeline to prison — a trajectory that leads to marginalized lives, imprisonment and often premature death. Although the majority of fourth graders cannot read at grade level, states spend about three times as much money per prisoner as per public school pupil. Spending that money on summer programs like Freedom School can start the process of saving our youth from prison, poverty and death. We need the community to speak clearly to our legislators by signing our petition for increased funding."

Beyond Housing  
4156 Manchester Ave. • St. Louis, MO 63110  
314-533-0600 (Phone) • 314-533-8745 (Fax)  
www.beyondhousing.org

The event is sponsored by Great Rivers Greenway District. The Great Rivers Greenway District was established in November 2000 by the successful passage of the Clean Water, Safe Parks and Community Trails Initiative ("Proposition C") in St. Louis City, St. Louis County and St. Charles County, Missouri. The GRG District works for a clean, green, connected St. Louis region. To deliver its mission, the District is spearheading the development of The River Ring, an interconnected system of greenways, parks and trails that will encircle the St. Louis region, enhancing the quality of life for residents and visitors. The Great Rivers Greenway District also is emerging as an inspirational model for comparable green space initiatives nationwide.

**Date:** July 22, 2011

**Time:** 10 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**Locations:** Pagedale Family Support Center, 1404 Ferguson Ave, Pagedale, MO 63133  
St. Vincent Greenway in St. Vincent Park, St. Charles Rock Rd, Pagedale,

### **Agenda**

10:00 a.m. Welcome and special presentations at Pagedale Family Support Center  
1404 Ferguson Ave., Pagedale, MO, 63133.

11:00 a.m. Parade from the Pagedale Center to the St. Vincent Greenway

11:30 a.m. Festivities begin on the St. Vincent Greenway

### **ABOUT BEYOND HOUSING**

Beyond Housing strengthens neighborhoods one family at a time by providing affordable housing, helping families achieve and sustain homeownership, fostering the well-being of families, and identifying and addressing neighborhood needs. Focusing on community building, service-enriched rental housing and homeownership services, Beyond Housing is one of only 96 NeighborWorks® Home Ownership Centers in the United States.

### **BEYOND HOUSING AND THE NEIGHBORWORKS® NETWORK**

NeighborWorks® America provides financial support, technical assistance and training for communities across the nation, including the NeighborWorks® network – a nationwide network of nearly 4,500 urban, suburban and rural communities across America. These organizations engage in revitalization strategies that strengthen communities and transform lives. In the last five years alone, NeighborWorks organizations have generated more than \$12 billion in reinvestment and helped more than 845,000 families of modest means secure safe, decent rental or mutual housing and assisted in helping purchase or improve their homes.