

May 21, 2011

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## **Beyond Housing Will Host Over 500 Volunteers to Conduct Progress In Bloom Mass Planting Throughout Normandy School District**

On Saturday, May 21, 2011, Beyond Housing will hold the first annual Progress In Bloom event. Over 500 people, including residents, stakeholders and volunteers from Express Scripts, United Way, Normandy School District, and Big Brothers, Big Sisters, will conduct a mass planting of the Rose Verbena flower to commemorate the completion of the 24:1 Initiative Community Plan and visually demonstrate the emerging spirit of unity between the 24 municipalities served by Normandy School District. The 24:1 Initiative stands for **24 communities with one vision: *Strong Communities, Engaged Families and Successful Children.***

The 24:1 Initiative is an innovative, place-based community development partnership convened and facilitated by Beyond Housing to address the serious challenges facing residents and communities of the 24 municipalities that comprise Normandy School District. The partnership includes elected officials, residents, community-based organizations, area businesses and the school district.

Current World Record Holder and Four-Time Olympian Jackie Joyner Kersee, St. Louis County Executive Charlie Dooley and Susan Lang of Express Scripts will participate in the brief program to rally the hundreds of volunteers who will travel to city halls, churches, schools and other public spaces to plant the Rose Verbena seedlings. Big Brothers, Big Sisters, a partner organization, will have over 20 teams of Bigs and Littles working together at a planting site. Nearly 100 volunteers from Express Scripts will also participate in the planting alongside teachers and staff from Normandy School District, and elected officials from many of the municipalities.

Event sponsors include Express Scripts, Emerson, Midwest BankCentre, UM-St. Louis, Missouri Wildflower Nursery, Missouri Women In Trades, St. Louis Composting and Wayside Community Garden.

“The stakeholders within the 24:1 area have worked side-by-side with Beyond Housing to create this plan for sustainable progress. It is vital that the community’s voice be heard and that any plan for progress come from within the community with support from Beyond Housing in collaboration with other organizations serving the area”, says Chris Krehmeyer, President/CEO of Beyond Housing. Krehmeyer continues, “The 24:1 Initiative is off to a great start and we expect that the momentum will continue to build as we implement the community’s vision for strong communities, engaged families and successful children”. Beyond Housing received a \$3 million grant from a local foundation to staff the 24:1 Initiative. The dates, times and locations for Progress In Bloom are as follows:

**Date:** Saturday, May 21, 2011  
**Location:** Normandy Senior High School  
6701 St. Charles Rock Rd  
Wellston, MO 63121

## **Agenda**

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Registration and breakfast

9:00 a.m. – 9:25 a.m. Brief Program and 24:1 Initiative Community Plan Unveiling

9:25 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. Jackie Joyner Kersee leads group stretch

9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Volunteers pick-up tools and leave for planting sites

11:45 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Appreciation Bar-B-Q at UM-St. Louis Millennium Student Center

## **ABOUT BEYOND HOUSING**

Beyond Housing's mission is to strengthen neighborhoods, one family at a time. We do this by providing support services to families, children and seniors; being a catalyst for community-wide rebuilding efforts; empowering residents to be leaders of their own neighborhood revitalization efforts; and promoting individual and community asset building.

Beyond Housing is located at 4156 Manchester Ave, St. Louis. The phone number is 314-533-0600. For more information, access [www.beyondhousing.org](http://www.beyondhousing.org)



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