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*****PHOTO RELEASE*****

**COOK COUNTY LAND BANK AUTHORITY CELEBRATES CREATION OF \$195 MILLION IN
COMMUNITY WEALTH BY HONORING SUCCESS OF SMALL DEVELOPERS AT 2024
AWARDS LUNCHEON**

*Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle and Cook County Commissioner Bridget Gainer
Also Honored for Their Contributions*

CHICAGO—The Cook County Land Bank Authority (CCLBA) on Thursday celebrated the creation of \$195 million in community wealth since its inception by recognizing the achievements of the small, local developers who have made the Land Bank’s success possible. Hosted by ABC7’s Val Warner, the 2024 Awards and Recognition Luncheon celebrated recently completed projects. Photos of the event are available below and for download [here](#).

“The Cook County Land Bank brings together so much talent and commitment on behalf of the developers, small business owners, nonprofits, municipalities and elected officials who are dedicated to investing in our communities,” **said Jessica Caffrey, Cook County Land Bank Executive Director.** “We’re proud to recognize all of their contributions in helping us to create more than \$195 million in community wealth.”

In addition, Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle was awarded the Housing Equity Champion Award for her career-long dedication to making housing more accessible for all. Cook County Commissioner, CCLBA Chair and Land Bank Co-Founder Bridget Gainer was awarded the Mark Satter Visionary Award, named after a prominent civil rights activist who fought for housing throughout much of the 20th century, for her vision in helping to create the Land Bank and ensure its success.

“Many of the communities in which the Land Bank operates have seen disinvestment for generations, and the Land Bank provides opportunities for small developers to transform their own neighborhoods,” **said Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle.** “One of its biggest achievements is creating a group of more than 500 community developers who do this work in their own communities where big developers wouldn’t bother stepping.”

“Once the Land Bank made it possible to navigate the bureaucracy of the Scavenger Sale and cut through the red tape of acquiring properties, we could see that there is huge demand for

property all over Cook County and on the South and West Sides,” **said Cook County Commissioner and CCLBA Board Chair Bridget Gainer.** “The Land Bank puts those properties into the hands of hundreds of talented developers who know how to bring these properties back to life and give them value.”

The 2024 award winners include:

West Side Developer of the Year

Lashaun Lashley of Lashley Enterprises

West Suburban Developer of the Year

Gremell Pickens, Robert Elliott and Sadia Gulam of SRG Investors Group

South Suburban Developer of the Year

Craig Morton of Morton Construction and Development

South Side Developer of the Year

Derrick Walker of Awesome Flippis

Commercial Project of the Year

PCC Wellness

Green Developer of the Year

Benjamin Van Horne of Greenline Homes LLC

Residential Project of the Year

“Buy Back the Block” - Bonita Harrison, Dajuan Robinson, Sean Jones, Keith Lindsey and Derrick Walker

Nonprofit Developer of the Year

Rebuild Foundation

IFF

New Construction Project of the Year

Timothy Swanson of Inherent L3C for 647 N Lawndale in Chicago.

PHOTOS: [Available for download here.](#)



Jessica Caffrey, CCLBA Executive Director, addresses audience at the Cook County Land Bank 2024 Awards and Recognition Luncheon



Left to right: Darlene Dugo, Deputy Director of the CCLBA, Cook County Commissioner and CCLBA Board Chair Bridget Gainer; Ron Austin, PCC Community Wellness Board Chair and Winner of Commercial Development of the Year; CCLBA Executive Director Jessica Caffrey; Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle; Cook County Commissioner Tara Stamps



Left to right: Keith Lindsey, Bonita Harrison, Derrick Walker, Sean Jones and Dajuan Robinson, Winners of the Residential Project of the Year for the Buy Back the Block initiative on 6300 S. Evans

The CCLBA, launched in 2013, acquires properties that have sat tax-delinquent, abandoned and vacant for years and sells them at fair-market rates to qualified community-based developers. The properties are rehabbed for prospective homeowners or small business owners, reducing blight and generating community wealth across Cook County communities. The Land Bank has generated more than \$195 million in community wealth, which signifies the increase in property value that Land Bank properties have created. The Land Bank model, which does not rely on taxpayer dollars, has disrupted decades of disinvestment and enabled small developers to build businesses and create jobs, leading to greater stability in their own neighborhoods.

For more information about the Cook County Land Bank Authority, visit www.cookcountylandbank.org.

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