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## **HSBC AWARDS \$100,000 GRANT TO IMPROVE MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. PARK NEIGHBORHOOD**

### *Funds Designated to the Better Schools Better Neighborhoods Collaborative & Olmsted Parks*

HSBC Bank USA, N.A. (HSBC) has awarded \$50,000 to the Community Action Organization of Erie County, Inc. (CAO) and \$50,000 to the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy to further the work of the Better Schools Better Neighborhoods Collaborative. The Collaborative is a demonstration project that seeks revitalize the Martin Luther King, Jr. neighborhood on Buffalo's east side into a great place to live, work, play and raise a family, while also achieving a comprehensive, integrated model for community development that can be replicated in other parts of the city and region in hopes of transforming distressed urban neighborhoods.

The Collaborative is the result of a partnership among the Community Action Organization of Erie County, Olmsted Parks Conservancy, Buffalo Municipal Housing Authority, UB Center for Urban Studies, King Urban Life Center, Fillmore Avenue Business Association, Martin Luther King, Jr. Block Club and the City of Buffalo. The funds donated by HSBC will support improvement efforts between Parade and Urban Streets and between Josephine and Marshall and the Route 33 Expressway.

"By focusing community development, education and the environment in a single initiative, the Better Schools Better Neighborhoods Collaborative takes a unique, holistic approach to neighborhood revitalization which is very appealing to HSBC," said Kathleen Rizzo Young, Senior Vice President, Community Development, HSBC Bank USA. "The organizations involved have a strong track record of neighborhood improvement and we are confident that this initiative will make a critical difference in the Martin Luther King Jr. Park neighborhood."

"The Better Schools Better Neighborhoods initiative offers the chance to improve the desirability of living in the MLK, Jr. Park community. By focusing a variety of resources to strengthen the housing stock, provide opportunities for children and working age adults, and improve neighborhood safety and quality of life, this community will stabilize and grow in ways that reflect its richness and character. Interconnected residents empowered to make and implement decisions that shape this community will make quality of life, and not income, the reason why residents choose to live and raise their families here", said L. Nathan Hare, President, CAO of Erie County, Inc. The Olmsted Conservancy will provide trees and plants, offer landscape design plans and planting models to homeowners and businesses, and help the community transform vacant properties into floral and vegetable gardens and displays. MLK Jr. Park, which runs adjacent to the neighborhood, continues to be revitalized with the restoration of the historic Humboldt Basin for year-round use. "The Olmsted Parks Conservancy is pleased to partner with HSBC and Better Schools Better Neighborhoods because we all have the same goal in mind - making Buffalo a better place to live, work and play," said Thomas Herrera-Mishler, president and CEO of the Conservancy.

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