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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Reeb Avenue Center Ribbon Cutting Ceremony and Grand Opening Celebration  
Building a Hub of Hope**

Columbus, Ohio – September 24, 2015 – The Reeb Avenue Center Board of Directors is proud to announce the official opening of Reeb Avenue Center after one year of construction and four years of planning. The historic Reeb Avenue School was built in 1904, with additions in the 1920s and 1960s.

The ribbon cutting ceremony will be held on the steps of Reeb Avenue Center, 280 Reeb Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43207, at 10:00 am on Friday, September 25, 2015.

"The Reeb Avenue Center represents hope for the residents in the Southern Gateway neighborhood. This community is no longer underserved, it will now be well served with housing opportunities, job services, re-entry training, early learning and addiction services," said Mayor Michael B. Coleman

The loss of the South Side Settlement House was a critical moment for this community. When City of Columbus Mayor Michael B. Coleman asked for South Side Champions to work with him to bring about positive change in the neighborhood, three families – the Grote family (Donatos Pizza), Crane family (Crane Group), and Kelley family (Donald W. Kelley & Associates) – were the first to heed the call and co-create with the Mayor a vision for Reeb Avenue Center.

"We are proud to have our businesses and families invest in Reeb Avenue Center," said Tanny Crane and Jane Grote Abell, campaign co-chairs and Reeb Avenue Center board members. "We believe in the power of education to lift families up and look forward to seeing the impact that Reeb Avenue Center will have on the lives of our neighbors."

The ceremony will begin with a one-block procession from the former site of the South Side Settlement House (the land is currently being re-developed as a park), on Innis Avenue, to Parsons Avenue, to Reeb Avenue. The significance of the walk is to commemorate the revitalization of the neighborhood including business growth on Parsons Avenue, opening of the Maloney Health Center and Parsons Village senior housing, as well as renovated and newly constructed single-family homes, in addition to Reeb Avenue Center.

Program participants for the ceremony include:

- South High School Drum Corps will provide music for the procession.
- Franklin County Common Pleas Judge Kimberly Cocroft will sing the national anthem.
- Veterans will raise the U.S. flag that hung at the South Side Settlement House.
- Neighborhood leader Ruth Bell, whose children and grandchildren attended Reeb Avenue School, will welcome guests.
- Tanny Crane and Jane Grote Abell will recognize the generosity of donors.
- Hub of Hope, a song written by Christina Grote and sung by Judge Cocroft and Tom Krouse, will be performed.
- United States Senator Robert Portman will address creating opportunities in neighborhoods.
- Ohio Lieutenant Governor Mary Taylor will speak about the importance of partnerships.
- Mayor Coleman will address his vision for building a Hub of Hope.
- Columbus City Council President Andrew Ginther will speak to the community's commitment, especially the role of the nonprofit sector, in creating this project.
- South Side Learning & Development Center Board President Mary Cusick will address the importance of education.

- Rev. John Edgar of Community Development for All People will lead a multi-faith blessing of the building prior to the official ribbon cutting.

All are then welcome to tour Reeb Avenue Center. South Side Roots Café will provide refreshments in the gym, and the café will be open for lunch.

### **About the Building**

Moody Nolan is the architect and Thomas & Marker is the general contractor. The City of Columbus owns the building, located in the heart of the Southern Gateway, and the Reeb Avenue Center nonprofit leases it as the master tenant. The building is 67,000 square feet. Construction was \$12.5 million and an endowment of \$4 million is being raised to offset building operating costs. A complete list of donors will be distributed at the ceremony.

The programs and services offered in the building are presented by the building tenants:

- Upper floor of historic school is dedicated to school-aged youth
  - **Boys & Girls Clubs of Columbus** will operate a new club location serving youth in K-12 with after-school and summer programs.
  - **Eastway Behavioral Healthcare** will operate a continuum of care location for youth needing case managers and therapists.
- Middle floor of historic school is dedicated to adult learning and job training
  - **Digital Works** will offer IT/CRM job training and placement.
  - **Godman Guild Association** will offer adult education including GED preparation and transitional workforce classes.
  - **Alvis House** will offer job-readiness training and job placement services for individuals and families that have been involved in the criminal justice system.
  - **St. Stephen’s Community House** will offer its Family-to-Family program in collaboration with Franklin County Children’s Services.
  - Addiction recovery services will be offered jointly by **Amethyst** for women and families and **House of Hope** for men, which are critically needed.
- Garden level of historic school is dedicated to community connection
  - **Mid-Ohio Foodbank** and **Community Development for All People** will operate a pay-what-you-can South Side Roots Café & Market six days per week, creating a “third place” to gather.
  - **Lutheran Social Services** will offer a Benefit Bank site and case management through the Siemer Institute for Family Stability.
  - City of Columbus **South Side Neighborhood Pride Center** will connect residents and the community to needed services.
- New addition to the east of the historic school is dedicated to early learning
  - **South Side Learning & Development Center** will have eight classrooms, plus outdoor learning spaces, for infants through preschoolers including two rooms dedicated for second shift care.
- The gymnasium/multi-purpose room will be used by tenants and the community for youth activities, job fairs, GED graduation ceremonies, and much more.

### **Reeb Avenue Center Board of Directors:**

President Tanny Crane, CEO Crane Group  
 Secretary Jane Grote Abell, Chairwoman Donatos & Jane’s Dough  
 Treasurer Paul Rakosky, Director, Dept. of Finance and Management, City of Columbus  
 Members Pat Kelley, Vice President, Donald W. Kelley & Associates  
 Erika Clark Jones, Director, Celebrate One, City of Columbus  
 Rev. John Edgar, Executive Director, Community Development for All People  
 Ruth Bell, neighborhood leader

### **Southern Gateway Boundaries**

High Street to the west; Lockbourne Rd/Champion Ave to the east; Frebis Ave/Moler Rd to the north; and, Route 104 to the south.

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