**For Immediate Release**

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HEART awards $25K in affordable housing grants

## Facebook donation enables new HEART grant fund for Menlo Park and East Palo Alto

*South San Francisco, California*—HEART , the Housing Endowment and Regional Trust of San Mateo County, has awarded two grants of $12,500 each to MidPen Housing and AbleWorks for immediate support of new affordable housing programs in Menlo Park and East Palo Alto. This new grant fund was established in 2012, thanks to a generous grant of $25,000 from Facebook. Lori Goler, Facebook Vice President of People, announced the donation as part of her keynote address at HEART’s 2012 annual May fundraising lunch.

MidPen Housing, a nonprofit affordable housing developer based in Foster City, will use the grant for a site and design feasibility study for a proposed upgrade to their existing Menlo Gateway property in the Belle Haven neighborhood of Menlo Park. The City is supportive of adding 78 additional units to the 130-unit affordable family rental housing, located on Willow Road, and has slated it to be upzoned as part of the Housing Element process.

AbleWorks, a nonprofit in East Palo Alto supporting leadership, financial and housing programs, recently acquired a four-unit apartment complex on Poplar Avenue. They will use the grant to help rehabilitate and reconstruct the property into dorms for 10 low-income students attending local colleges and participating in academic support programs.

“We are delighted to be able to support the development and construction of new affordable homes for working families and students in our own backyard,” said John Tenanes, Director of Global Facilities and Real Estate for Facebook.

"HEART is extremely grateful to Facebook, one of our county's newest employers, for their investment in our community. This is a wonderful example of our community working together to provide affordable homes for our residents," said **San Mateo City Councilmember Jack Matthews**, the chair of HEART’s board of directors. HEART also works in close partnership with the San Mateo County Department of Housing, which provides staffing to HEART’s loan programs.

**HEART’s mission** is to raise funds from public and private sources to meet critical housing needs. HEART makes loans to fund affordable rental housing construction or rehabilitation and offers downpayment assistance loans to first time homebuyers. To date, HEART has invested $10.1 million to fund the construction, renovation or purchase of over 825 affordable homes in San Mateo County. In the process, HEART has leveraged over $223 million in funds from other sources, creating jobs and stimulating the local economy as well as providing affordable homes. HEART is a joint powers authority that includes 19 of the 20 cities in the county plus the County of San Mateo. HEART’s public/private board of directors consists of 11 elected officials and 9 members of the private sector.

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