



Center for Neighborhood Enterprise

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August 30, 2006

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For Immediate Release

Media Advisory

WHEN: Thursday, August 31, 10 a.m.

WHAT: Announcement of Benning Terrace peace initiative

WHO: Center for Neighborhood Enterprise President Robert L. Woodson, Sr.
Benning Terrace Youth Opportunity (BYTO) Executive Director Charles Penny;
East Capitol Center for Change Executive Director Curtis Watkins
Benning Terrace Resident Management Council Mrs. Evelyn Munderay
DC Housing Authority
Concerned residents of Benning Terrace

WHERE: Benning Terrace Recreation Center

The Center for Neighborhood Enterprise together with community leaders and concerned residents of the Benning Terrace neighborhood in Southeast Washington are launching a new Benning Terrace Peace Initiative that builds on the nine years experience of maintaining the truce between the Avenue and the Circle youth factions. We will employ some of the activities that have been crucial to the success of the peace as a foundation for the expansion into other areas of rebuilding the Benning Terence community.

Nine years ago, in January, 1997, the Center for Neighborhood Enterprise (formerly known as the National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise) and a grassroots organization the Alliance of Concerned Men, were able to negotiate a truce between warring youth factions in Benning Terrace that had resulted in more than 53 deaths in a two-year period. Partnering with the DC Housing Authority, a program of activities, work preparation, life skills, and jobs cemented that peace and it held for the past nine years with no crew-related deaths. Twenty young men who were once involved in the feuding have volunteered all these years to create football teams for the youngsters in Benning. They are led by former Benning resident Charles Penny, founder of the Benning Terrace Youth Opportunity organization.

Today violence is again escalating in the area, as resources have diminished. The Center for Neighborhood Enterprise, Benning Terrace Youth Opportunity, East Capitol Center for Change, and the DC Housing Authority are partnering to create a new initiative to once again bring peace to Benning Terrace.