



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LATIN AMERICAN DELEGATIONS VISIT U.S. RENEWAL COMMUNITIES

Washington, DC— Delegations of Guatemalan and Nicaraguan private and public sector representatives will visit the United States this month to learn how Renewal Communities, a model for overcoming poverty in poor communities, may be adapted for implementation in their countries. On July 17, the Inter-American Foundation (IAF), an independent agency of the U.S. Government which is sponsoring their travel, will honor the delegations at a reception at its Arlington offices starting at 5pm.

President George W. Bush presented the Latin American Opportunity Zones initiative, proposed by the IAF, at the Summit of the Americas in Mar del Plata, Argentina in November 2005. Opportunity Zones are self-defined economic development areas that bring together community, private, government and non-profit leaders to promote economic growth through tax incentives, training and technical assistance programs.

The two delegations of approximately eight individuals will each spend a week visiting three U.S. Renewal Communities. The Guatemalan delegation will travel to Yakima, Washington; Chattanooga, Tennessee and Booneville in Eastern Kentucky. The Nicaraguan delegation will visit the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone in New York City; the Central Mississippi Planning and Development District in Jackson; and the

Northern Louisiana Renewal Community/Northeast Louisiana Economic Alliance located in Ferriday. Koch Foods, Inc., a poultry processing plant in Chattanooga, which received over \$4 million in tax incentives allowing them to expand their facilities, is just one of the locations the delegations will visit as examples of successful U.S. businesses from the renewal community initiative.

While in Washington D.C., the delegations plan to meet with Ambassador John Maisto, the U.S. permanent representative to the Organization of American States, and Nelson Bregon, the General Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Community Planning and Development at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Amb. Maisto's State Department office administers the U.S.'s participation in the Summit of the Americas. HUD oversees urban Empowerment Zones and urban/rural Renewal Communities in the U.S.

The IAF is an independent U.S. government agency that assists the organized poor in Latin America and the Caribbean and the groups that support them. Since its founding in 1969, the Inter-American Foundation has awarded 4,578 grants worth more than \$586 million. Together, the IAF and its grantees have improved conditions for hundreds of thousands of families. To learn more about the IAF's involvement with local development log onto the IAF Web site, www.iaf.gov.

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Para clarificación en español o más detalles, llame al 703-306-4319.

For more details, call 703-306-4319.

For details on the reception, contact Cindy Soto by email csoto@iaf.gov or by telephone at 703-306-4318.