



Media Contact:

Roshana Gossoff

305.441.1272

roshana@balseapr.com

**NHLA Kicks Off Garden Rally Initiative on Earth Day
in support of Good Shepherd Housing Foundation**

DC area member landscape companies join forces to lend a hand to local non-profit

MIAMI, FL–April 17, 2014- The [National Hispanic Landscape Alliance](#) (NHLA) plans to provide a landscaping makeover for a [Good Shepherd Housing Foundation](#) (GSHF) home for chronically mentally ill and at-risk residents on Earth Day, April 22, 2014. NHLA member companies, as part of a Day of Service project, will remove undesirable vegetation and install new plants according to a landscape plan that will beautify the GSHF Grayson Property and make the outdoors more functional.

Participating NHLA members include [Alexandria Lawn Service](#), [Denison Landscaping](#), [Epling Landscaping and Lawn Services](#), [RulyScapes](#), [Ruppert Landscape](#) and [JK Enterprise Landscape Supply](#), all of which will take part in one or more aspects of the project which includes planning, designing, and executing a landscape makeover for the not-for profit housing facility. This effort will be followed on May 3, 2014 by the Garden Rally; a community fundraising effort to benefit needed improvements to other GSHF properties.

“The NHLA is proud that our members, even during this very busy time of the year, are taking this opportunity to help an organization that cares for the often marginalized and underserved of our society by donating the manpower, equipment, and plant material necessary for this much needed project. This effort will help to contribute to the health, safety and well-being of Good Shepherd residents and provide usable outdoor space,” said Raul Berrios, NHLA president and RulyScapes owner.

By commencing this demonstration project, the NHLA and the Good Shepherd Housing Foundation hope to set an example for the community while raising awareness of a critical societal issue that is often ignored – mental illness. [Research conducted by the University of Washington](#) found that outdoor activities in parks and other natural landscapes can help alleviate symptoms of Alzheimers, dementia, stress, and depression, among other types of mental health conditions.

“We are so grateful for the efforts of Morelli & Associates and Valerie Meale-Hayslett for their continuing support of Good Shepherd and for making our needs known to the NHLA. We also are in awe of the generosity of the NHLA members for their help in providing an environment that reflects the care and concern of the larger community for those less fortunate,” said Bob Allard, president of the Good Shepherd Housing Foundation.

As part of its mission, the NHLA encourages members to seek opportunities to engage non-profit organizations in initiatives that better communities. Earlier local beneficiaries

of such efforts include the SYA Youth Sports Complex in Centreville. The NHLA advances the professionalism of Hispanics in the landscape industry through leadership training and education on proper landscape practices, and is a strong advocate for sustainable practices that maximizes carbon sequestration and oxygen production, controls storm water run-off, and reduces summertime ambient temperatures naturally.

About NHLA

The [National Hispanic Landscape Alliance](#) is an association that facilitates and promotes the advancement of Hispanics as landscape industry professionals and leaders and provides the nation's half million Hispanic-American landscaping professionals a voice in the national dialogue on environmentally responsible landscape practices, and a means through which to advocate on behalf of their businesses, the livelihood of their employees, and the quality of life in their communities.

About Good Shepherd Housing Foundation

[Good Shepherd Housing Foundation](#) is celebrating its 25th anniversary in September. Since 1989, the Foundation has been providing housing for individuals and families struggling with mental illness and families with low income.

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