



**For Immediate Release**

May 25, 2023

## **ONE Neighborhood Builders Celebrates 35th Anniversary, Looks Ahead at Next Decades of Impact**

*Celebrating thirty-five years of success, ONE|NB honors three notable community members who have demonstrated a commitment to improving the lives of all Rhode Islanders*

**PROVIDENCE, RI** - [ONE Neighborhood Builders](#) (ONE|NB), the state's leading community development corporation, celebrated its 35th anniversary last night and honored three impactful leaders for their contributions to the region. Since its founding in 1988 as the Olneyville Housing Corporation, ONE|NB has worked tirelessly with neighbors, community leaders, and policy makers to cultivate healthy, vibrant, and safe communities. Over the last three and a half decades, the organization has expanded its mission to serve a broader population of Rhode Islanders and has developed replicable best practices that have earned the organization the respect of community development and housing leaders from across the country.

"Strong and healthy communities are built, they aren't born. They're built by neighbors who come together with a common purpose. For 35 years, ONE|NB has provided an opportunity and resources to bring neighbors together," said **Jennifer Hawkins, President and Executive Director of ONE|NB**. "For over three and a half decades, this organization has sparked a revitalization and a reimagining of community. With support from our partners and with the trust of our neighbors, we have created a foundation for job growth, home ownership, youth development, and better health outcomes. We are now building on that foundation to ensure that the next generation of community leaders can continue to come together with common purpose."

During the 35th anniversary celebration, ONE|NB honored three [Community Catalysts](#): Lt. Governor Sabina Matos, retiring Rhode Island Foundation President Neil D. Steinberg, and Rhode Island Health and Human Services Assistant Secretary Ana P. Novais. Each honoree

has personally championed ONE|NB initiatives that have helped Rhode Islanders achieve housing security and financial independence.

- **Rhode Island Lieutenant Governor Sabina Matos**, the first Afro Latina elected to statewide office in Rhode Island, has been one of the state's leading advocates for safe, affordable, and accessible housing for more than a decade and a half. Her lived experience as a single mom who faced housing insecurity has informed her public work as a member of the Providence City Council and as Lt. Governor. She played a key role in 2022 to ensure that the Rhode Island state budget included a record \$250 million investment for housing.
- **Neil D. Steinberg** will retire as President and CEO of the Rhode Island Foundation at the end of the month. Over the past 15 years, he has transformed the philanthropic organization and created a culture of impact. His work on housing and community development led most recently to the [Housing Supply and Homelessness in Rhode Island](#) report, which provides the state Department of Housing with observations and options for jumpstarting action on Rhode Island's housing crisis.
- **Ana P. Novais, Assistant Secretary of the RI Executive Office of Health and Human Services**, a tireless champion of health equity for over 25 years, has helped support ONE|NB's role as the backbone of [Central Providence Opportunities: A Health Equity Zone \(CPO-HEZ\)](#). With roots in Portugal and Angola, Novais understands the unique challenges, opportunities, perspectives, and experiences faced by immigrants living in and around Providence. Novais' leadership was key to the creation of the RI Health Equity Framework which launched the HEZ initiative that has been recognized and implemented in cities and states nationwide.

ONE|NB welcomed more than 250 people to the anniversary celebration at the Graduate in downtown Providence. During the celebration, ONE|NB highlighted key accomplishments from the last 35 years, including the development of more than 460 affordable apartments, efforts to help more than 130 low- and moderate-income households purchase a home, and the creation of nearly 35,000 square feet of commercial and community space that has created community wealth and sparked job growth in Central Providence.

In recent years, ONE|NB has expanded its work to convene [Central Providence Opportunities: A Health Equity Zone](#) which is one of the state's leading examples of community-based health solutions.

#### **ABOUT ONE NEIGHBORHOOD BUILDERS:**

ONE Neighborhood Builders (ONE|NB) is a nonprofit community development leader in Rhode Island that is expanding its work to the broader Greater Providence area while maintaining its deep roots in its historic home of Olneyville. ONE|NB's mission is to develop affordable housing and engage neighbors to cultivate healthy, vibrant, and safe communities. Since its founding in 1988, then as Olneyville Housing Corporation, ONE|NB has developed 466 affordable apartments; 130 for-sale homes for low- to moderate-income homebuyers; and nearly 35,000 square feet of commercial and community space —totaling more than \$135

million of investments. ONE|NB is the convening entity of [Central Providence Opportunities: A Health Equity Zone](#), which brings together residents, more than five dozen community-based organizations, health professionals, local businesses, elected officials, and others to address root causes of health disparities and to improve neighborhood conditions. As the convener, ONE|NB is the backbone organization of this collective-impact initiative to increase economic mobility for residents in Central Providence. ONE|NB also created [the first free community wireless network](#) in Rhode Island, providing high-speed broadband to nearly 3,000 unique users in the Olneyville neighborhood.

###

**Media Contact (for ONE Neighborhood Builders)**

Mike Raia, Half Street Group

401-340-9425 | [mike@halfstreetgroup.com](mailto:mike@halfstreetgroup.com)