



## **Case Study: Grandparents Raising Grandchildren**

Nearly a decade ago, CRT became aware of the increasing number of grandparents who were stepping in to parent their grandchildren. The US Census showed at least 2,100 grandparents in Hartford who were officially raising their grandchildren. The city estimates this number is at least three times higher, when those with informal custody are added. Financial resources are often stretched when grandparents take over the fulltime care of their grandchildren.

After considerable research into best practices for supporting these courageous grandparents, CRT designed a housing development and sought funding from public and private sources, to build a much-needed development on a site provided by the City of Hartford. We thank MMA Financial, the CT Department of Economic and Community Development, US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the IRS Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program, Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) and Northeast Utilities for partnering with us to develop this \$10 million campus that strengthens both grandparents and our entire community.

Generations includes

- 24 affordable multi-bedroom town houses for grandfamilies
- 16 apartments in an historic school building for “empty nest” seniors
- Recreation and education space for seniors, youngsters and teens, with appropriate leadership and supervision; and
- Supports (case management, mental health and others) to help residents of all ages thrive in the community.

This innovative development opened in Fall 2007, and is now home to 100 adults and children. Back decks overlook play spaces where children gather spontaneously; a computer lab is used daily by seniors and youth; after school activities combine homework support with cultural enrichment; and informal cook-outs often attract 40 or more people. Generations has added components which bring in non-residents – including Grandparents University (a three-day summer program that brings grandparents and children to stay at UConn in Storrs.)

Generations has received acclaim from many organizations. Both AARP and Generations United have highlighted the exemplary program in publications and video productions. It was named the best affordable development for families by Affordable Housing Finance magazine, and honored at the 2008 Tax Credit Developers’ Summit in Chicago. It was also named Best Small Commercial Development of the year by the Connecticut Chapter of Associated Builders & Contractors, Inc.

The renovation of the historic school, designed by architect Paul Bailey of New Haven, won awards from the Hartford Preservation Alliance and the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation. Most recently, Generations received the Case in Point Platinum Award for Social Work and Case Management, a national recognition from Wellpoint, a division of Dorland media group.