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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CITY OF ORLANDO, ORANGE COUNTY GOVERNMENT AND LIGHTHOUSE CENTRAL FLORIDA RECEIVE AUDREY NELSON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

"Statement from Lee Nasehi, President & CEO Lighthouse Central Florida & Lighthouse Works!"

January 7, 2016 - ORLANDO, FL -The National Community Development Association (NCD) has recognized the collaborative effort between the City of Orlando, Orange County Government and Lighthouse Central Florida by honoring them with the 2015 Audrey Nelson Community Development Achievement Award. The award will be presented at the National Community Development Association event in Washington, D.C., on January 22, 2016.

This partnership is being recognized as a national model for the use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to uplift the local community and benefit residents with unique needs like sight impairment. The project – Lighthouse Works! – was funded by CDBG funds in the amount of \$900,000 from Orange County and \$300,000 from the City of Orlando, supporting Lighthouse Central Florida's efforts to acquire, rehabilitate and expand a warehouse facility to provide workplace opportunities for individuals with blindness and severe vision loss in the Central Florida area.

"The City of Orlando is proud to have partnered with Lighthouse Central Florida and Orange County Government on this important community project," said Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer. "This furthers our efforts to ensure all of our residents have access to jobs, training and opportunities that both strengthen our economy and the quality of life in our City."

In the first four months since the expansion, employment of individuals with vision impairment has increased by more than 150 percent. Mitchell Glasser, Manager of Orange County's Housing and Community Development Division, noted that Lighthouse Central Florida has been a recipient of CDBG public service funding from Orange County for a number of years. "Through our ongoing partnership with this agency, we recognized the need for this type of capital investment which has elevated the work and outcomes of this organization."

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About Lighthouse Central Florida:

Since 1976, Lighthouse Central Florida has provided education, independent life skills and job training and placement to more than 100,000 people with sight impairment and their families. They are the only private, non-profit agency offering a comprehensive range of services to people living with sight impairment in the tri-county area. Through effective programs, proven curricula, certified instructors and years of personal and professional experience, Lighthouse ensures that individuals of all backgrounds have the tools they need to lead productive, independent lives while pursuing their dreams and goals without limitations.

About City of Orlando Housing and Community Development Department:

The City of Orlando Housing and Community Development Department administers local, state and federal funds designated for housing and community development. The Department plans, develops and implements programs and activities that meet identified needs in the community such as home ownership, rental and owner-occupied housing rehabilitation, public facilities and improvements and assistance to the homeless and persons with HIV/AIDS

About Orange County Government Housing Department:

Since 1975, Orange County Government has received federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to address the needs of low to moderate income persons in Orange County. The Housing and Community Development Division administers approximately \$5.5 million in CDBG funds annually to implement a wide range of capital improvement projects, housing, and public services, principally for low to moderate income persons.

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