



MEDIA RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MANNA – 100 Years of the Whitelaw

Washington DC – November 22, 2019 – This month, MANNA celebrates the 100th anniversary of the Whitelaw Hotel. MANNA will hold a 100th Anniversary Celebration in honor of the hotel on Thursday, February 6th, 2020 at The Whitelaw at 1839 13th St NW. The celebration will be held in February 2020 to coincide with Black History Month.

The Whitelaw Hotel, located on the corner of 13th and T streets in Northwest Washington DC, opened its doors November 24, 1919 as a luxury hotel and apartment building for African American guests, one of the first of its kind in the United States. The celebration of any notable event in the African-American community was surely held in the Whitelaw's ballroom and numerous black celebrities, including Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway, Joe Louis, and Thurgood Marshall, stayed at the hotel. In the 1970s and 1980s, the Whitelaw and surrounding neighborhoods fell into disrepair. Several for-profit organizations tried to develop it into market-rate housing. However, in 1990, MANNA succeeded in pulling together an innovative financing package in the form of a public/private partnership with the goal of creating affordable rental housing in the gutted remains of the Whitelaw.

The Whitelaw was the first project that combined Low-Income Tax Credit (LITC) and historic tax credit in DC. Additionally, the Whitelaw was MANNA's first rental project and first multi-

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unit project. “We were extremely honored and privileged to be part of this,” said MANNA Founder and CEO Rev. Jim Dickerson.

The Whitelaw Hotel Apartments have 35 units: 5 one-bedroom units, 20 two-bedroom units, and 10 three-bedroom units. Whitelaw residents enjoy their own heating system and dishwasher, a common washer and dryer, access to parking, and handicap-accessible units. “Most of our Whitelaw residents stay for a long time,” said MANNA Director of Property Management Ken Simpson. “We always have a waiting list. I think it’s popular because of its location, the fact that it is a high-quality historic building, and its affordability.” Low and moderate-income households are defined as those whose income is below 80% AMI.

MANNA continues to be a leading nonprofit in Washington D.C with over 37+ years of experience in the field of affordable housing assisting first-time homebuyers from low- and moderate- income households to achieve the dream of affordable housing. The American Dream continues to be homeownership, but the goal is no longer as simple. Homeownership has become the gateway to financial security, but the work that comes after becoming a homeowner is the true challenge facing the affordable homebuyer in 2020. MANNA is committed to assisting its clients not only to become homebuyers, but to ensure that they are able to thrive in their new homes, avoid the pitfalls of foreclosure and share their successes with their future generations.

“Today, the Whitelaw continues to be a great symbol,” said Rev. Jim Dickerson. “Through our preservation of the Whitelaw, history continues to be passed on in the Shaw neighborhood.”

Founded in 1982, MANNA, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit housing and community development organization in the District of Columbia, working towards the goals of affordable home ownership, affordable housing preservation, and neighborhood revitalization. In 2014, MANNA received national acclaim from the National Community Reinvestment Coalition (NCRC). NCRC awarded MANNA the James Rouse Award for national achievement in a major US urban center. Over the past 30 years, MANNA has developed more than 1,200 affordable homes that have been sold to lower-income, first-time homebuyers in the District. In turn, these same households have built more than \$162 million in equity, collectively, and have provided much-needed stability in traditionally underserved neighborhoods in DC.