



SMPS honors development team of sustainable housing

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The Society for Marketing Professional Services (SMPS) awarded the joint venture development team of Nos Quedamos/Melrose Associates/MJM Construction Services with its Developer Award at the 15th Annual SMPS Honors Awards Dinner held on April 12th at the Union Sq. Ballroom. The tri-venture was recognized for its role in rebuilding the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area in the South Bronx, and turning a previously blighted neighborhood into a sustainable, pedestrian-oriented mixed-use, mixed-income development.

Accepting the award were: Jessica Clemente, acting executive director of Nos Quedamos; Kenny Agosto, Nos Quedamos board member; Petr Stand, principal of Melrose Associates and Magnusson Architecture and Planning PC; and Manny Kanaris, principal of MJM Construction Services. In his acceptance speech, Agosto paid tribute to the late Yolanda Garcia, one of the founders considered to be the driving force behind Nos Quedamos.

The Nos Quedamos / We Stay Committee, a grass roots community development organization, was formed in February 1993. The fledgling group requested professional assistance from Petr Stand and Magnus Magnusson, Principals of Magnusson Architecture and Planning, PC to provide urban planning and design assistance. In 1995 Stand and Magnusson formed Melrose Associates, LLC, a development arm of their architectural firm, to partner with Nos Quedamos and Procida Realty and Construction to design and build their first development, Plaza de los Angeles, the first ownership townhomes in the neighborhood. Since then, Nos Quedamos and Melrose Associates have developed, designed and built over 1,000 units of affordable housing in Melrose Commons.

From the start, MJM Construction Services, LLC has been the masonry contractor on Nos Quedamos/Melrose Associates developments. In 2005 MJM decided to team up with Melrose Associates and Nos Quedamos to try their hand at development, and a joint venture of the three organizations was formed. While the neighborhood was flourishing from all the new development that took place over the previous decade, one of the last undeveloped sites caught the tri-venture's eye ... El Jardin de Selene.

El Jardin de Selene is one of the first affordable housing developments built on privately acquired land in 60 years. From the start, the tri-venture wanted the most sustainable development possible, while still keeping it affordable to the community. Nos Quedamos was concerned about the creation of healthy indoor and outdoor environments in an area plagued by pollution and high asthma rates. The NYSEERDA Energy Star certified and Enterprise Green Communities compliant development is awaiting LEED Gold certification.

The Joint Venture's commitment to maintaining open space and incorporating sustainable design and construction techniques was also recognized in 2010 by The United States Green Building Council. USGBC awarded LEED-ND Silver Stage II Certification to Melrose Commons for sustainable design and redevelopment of the urban neighborhood, the first such certification in New

York State.

Left to Right: Kenny Agosto, Petr Stand, Jessica Clemente, Manny Kanaris accepted the prestigious SMPS Honors Developer Award for the Joint Venture's (Nos Quedamos/Melrose Associates/MJM Construction) contribution to the built environment of New York City.

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