

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Valerie Capone, Marketing Communications + PR Manager

C 781.720.9906 T 617.889.4402 E vcapone@architecturalteam.com

**The Architectural Team Designs Boston Kroc Community Center
New England's Largest Social Services Facility
Transforming Neighborhood with Troubled History**

A striking and sustainable new neighborhood asset brings vibrancy to Boston's Dorchester community – The Salvation Army Ray and Joan Kroc Community Center is praised by local leaders and Mayor Menino for its attentive design, ample amenities and comprehensive planning.

Chelsea, MA, April 5, 2011 – The award-winning architecture and master planning firm The Architectural Team, Inc., has announced the ribbon-cutting of New England's largest new social services center, The Salvation Army Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center in Boston's Dorchester neighborhood. The 90,000-square-foot, \$35 million brick-and-masonry building is another example of The Architectural Team's commitment to helping revitalize and transform some of America's most challenged urban areas.

Situated on a 6-acre site adjacent to a newly renovated commuter rail station, the building restores a long-neglected neighborhood, replacing empty lots and derelict buildings with an engaging new intergenerational facility whose design is a product of community involvement drawing in area residents for education, workforce development, sports, swimming lessons, as well as emotional and spiritual care.

The project has been hailed by community members, social services groups, and local officials for its broad mandate and user-friendly, landmark design. According to the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI), the building symbolizes a new dawn for a community's ravaged by decades of arson, disinvestment, neglect and redlining practices. "With its thoughtful design and extensive programs, this new building is an anchor and an example of sustainable development for our community," says John F. Barros, DSNI executive director. "Since it was announced, we've seen investment in new affordable housing and a major commuter rail station."

According to Mark J. Rosenshein, LEED AP, lead designer and Senior Project Manager for the project, the building's design reflects its neighborhood and history as well as responding to specific local cultural needs. "For example, the peace chapel was designed to accommodate the weeklong mourning rites of Cape Verdean neighbors as well as a non-denominational healing sanctuary for a community that has seen a disproportionate share of violence,"

When the Salvation Army announced the project, local leaders in Boston urged the group to build in Dorchester. “We believed that this is where a community center would have the single greatest impact,” says Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino. “The Kroc Center is an ambitious project that we believe will catalyze investment in the Dudley Street area of Dorchester, while also meeting 20 years of community expectations and need.”

The facility accommodates a broad range of activities and functions -athletic, social, educational and spiritual, making it a multi-functional focus of community activity. In addition to three gyms, a pool and a soccer field, the facility incorporates a learning center, a library, an auditorium, a music room, a chapel, and even a recording studio. “The extensive capabilities of the Kroc Center illustrates the significance of this project and the lasting impact it will have on thousands of local children and families,” said Major Robert Kountz, Administrator of The Salvation Army Kroc Center.

Special building for a special neighborhood

The Architectural Team, the architect and planner behind the project, is known for its leadership in executing major urban revitalization projects. The firm’s award-winning work includes renewal projects with affordable housing, new mixed use developments, conversions of defunct factories, as well as Boys & Girls Clubs. “We’re privileged to work on a commission of such social and economic importance to the community as well as being a critical piece of urban design,” says Michael Liu, AIA NCARB, Principal-In-Charge of the project. “It’s rare to have the opportunity to design a facility that is as significant on as many levels as the Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center.”

Rosenshein notes that an early challenge to the project was one of site assembly -creating a single contiguous lot from 54 abandoned parcels of land. “But once the lot was formed it was ideally situated both in terms of access along a major arterial road abutting the Uphams Corner rail station and symbolically occupying the heart of a proud, but disadvantaged neighborhood, a former center of civil unrest.”

Through over 150 meetings with the Salvation Army, DSNI and community residents, The Architectural Team crafted a sensitive, effective revitalization plan. “We participated in visioning sessions with the stakeholders to ensure we captured the vision of the residents, as well as the client,” says Rosenshein. “Their input drove the design of the interiors. Our concept was to create a lively extension of the community, an open space of diverse activity, an interior village where people can see and be seen.”

The light-filled environment reinforces this interior village feel as well as assisting intuitive wayfinding through the facility. Thoughtful details further support the sense of the outside brought within from exterior light fixtures

which continue into the main lobby, and out the back door to a two-story water slide in the natatorium which, enclosed in a Plexiglas tube, leaves the building and re-enters to return laughing children to the pool.

The building is finished in glass, brick, tile, metal panels and concrete block – a varied material palette reflecting the diversity of Dorchester. Behind the building, excavated granite foundation blocks from houses destroyed by riots and fires were recycled to create the base of a community garden, the produce of which will be harvested for use in the facility's teaching kitchen.

Neighbors have been quick to compliment the design as well as the program offerings at the center, which has an operating budget of about \$3.5 million annually. "Driving down Dudley Street -it's like the sun coming up," said community resident Keila Barros, who lives a block away from the new center and reflects the positive reaction from the neighborhood. "Seeing the building take shape after more than 20 years of envisioning it—it's incredible."

For The Architectural Team, a firm of 55 employees based in Chelsea, Mass., the 90,000 square foot project is the largest and most sophisticated of its portfolio of community/athletic centers which include the award-winning Jordan Boys and Girls Club of Chelsea, as well as the Yawkey Boys and Girl's Club and Roxbury Boys and Girls Club. The project also continues the firm's 40-year history of work revitalizing disadvantaged urban areas throughout the U.S, including, among others, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Baltimore and Washington, D.C. Recent major revitalization efforts in Boston and have included the last of 14 derelict mill structures of the Baker Chocolate Factory complex in Dorchester which the firm renovated as mixed-income housing and artist live/work lofts, and the Jordan Boys and Girls Club in Chelsea, MA – two examples of the firm's transformative work.

"The Salvation Army is grateful for the hard work and dedication of all of our partners on this project, including Suffolk Construction and The Architectural Team," added Kountz, referring to the project's general contractor and the architect.

Selected for a gift

According to The Salvation Army, the Boston project was selected from among applications by 29 communities in the Eastern United States. Before beginning construction, the Salvation Army was asked to consider the Dudley Street location, recommending it based on need and potential impact. The faith-based volunteer group then raised \$20 million from local sources and developed new programs.

“The Kroc Center is not just a building. It will be a home away from home where the underserved in our community can find a safe environment to learn and grow, both intellectually and spiritually,” said John Fish, Chairman and CEO, Suffolk Construction. “We are extremely proud to have played a role in making the dream of this important new facility a reality.”

In addition to the Boston site, The Salvation Army is building as many as 30 new centers, each endowed with a 2003 gift of between \$50M and \$100M from Joan Kroc, widow of McDonald’s founder Ray Kroc. The intergenerational centers respond to a growing trend in the United States of creating community facilities that serve residents of all ages. We are honored to be a part of the Dudley Square neighborhood and look forward to working with the community for years to come,” said Major William Bode, Divisional Commander of The Salvation Army of Massachusetts.

“It’s extremely satisfying to see impact of this revitalization work on the surrounding community. Accessibility to this state-of-the-art facility, with such comprehensive services, affords residents of this neighborhood an opportunity to enrich and change their lives,” Rosenshein adds. “The Architectural Team has always been committed to these types of design endeavors – revitalizing neighborhoods and bringing much needed access to the underserved. Every participant in this collaborative process took great care to ensure that the community received an inspired result.”

###

About The Architectural Team, Inc.

Founded in 1971, The Architectural Team, Inc. is a 55-person master planning and architectural firm that has grown through its design excellence and commitment to responsive and collaborative client relationships. The firm has developed a portfolio of distinctive design solutions for a broad range of building types and programs, and has earned more than 75 awards for design excellence. These include the new construction of large urban mixed-use developments, residential, commercial, hospitality, recreational, and academic facilities, as well as a national reputation in the area of historic preservation and adaptive reuse. The firm is located in the restored 1840s-era Commandant’s House in Chelsea, Mass. Visit the firm’s website at www.architecturalteam.com.

Kroc Corps Community Center of Boston

FACT SHEET

Master Planning / Architecture / Interior Design: **The Architectural Team, Inc.**, Boston
Mark Rosenshein, LEED AP, Designer & Project Manager
Michael Liu, AIA, NCARB, Principal-in-Charge;

Project Name: **The Salvation Army Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center**

Owner / Developer: **The Salvation Army of Massachusetts**

Size: 90,000 square feet

Budget: \$35 million construction cost

Site: Located in Boston's economically challenged Dorchester neighborhood, the project was built on a large 6 acre urban site composed of 54 parcels bought from city and private owners. The project occupies both sides of Dudley Street, with the building (650 Dudley Street), outdoor playgrounds, gardens and parking on the north side and an artificial turf athletic field on the south. The project site is serviced extensively by public transportation, including five MBTA bus lines and a recently renovated train platform, through which over a million people pass monthly on the commuter rail train.



Program: The Kroc Center project is the largest private, nonprofit, social services investment in New England and the largest community center in Massachusetts. The Center provides five major program zones: culinary arts; education and learning; performing arts; fitness; and aquatics. Each of the program zones includes spaces and activities designed for all users, from children under 3 to neighborhood teens to senior citizens. Specific spaces include a 300 seat dining hall and fully integrated teaching kitchen, a Kroc Café, a gymnasium sized for an NCAA regulation Basketball court, ropes course and climbing wall space, a large recreation style swimming pool with current channel, lap lanes, zero depth entry play area, an indoor / outdoor slide, and access to the outdoor sprayground, a full cardio and weight fitness equipment area, men's, women's and family changing rooms, a computer lab, teen lounge, library, classrooms, art room, senior lounge, babysitting room, four community meeting rooms, and a 300 seat chapel / theater with a fully equipped sound and audio recording studio suite.

Design: The Architectural Team worked closely with the Salvation Army and the community to configure the program components appropriately on the site as part of the master planning services for the project. Locating the building directly on Dudley Street and the parking in the rear of the site helped to reinforce the urban characteristics of the project and the neighborhood. The building façade is a contemporary assemblage of larger and smaller scale volumes, sympathetic to the size, scale and traditional building materials of the surrounding neighborhood context. The project massing at Dudley and Burgess Streets was arranged to reduce the apparent length of the over 400 foot long building. The facades are composed of ground faced block, metal panel and brick, mixing contemporary and traditional materials to provide durability and texture. Extensive glazing was used on the north and south facades both to take advantage of natural light in the interiors and to provide a strong visual connection between the program spaces and the surrounding neighborhood.

Interiors: The interior design of the Kroc Center focuses on brightly colored, open spaces with visual connections between programs and lots of natural light. A highly efficient, fluid interior architecture was developed to maximize program space, with as few hallways as possible and more open circulation zones for community interaction. An effort was made to draw the community into the building interior with the use of exterior light fixtures in the lobbies and corridors and broad curving patterns sweeping through the interior and exterior spaces. Interior visibility was critical to this sense of community connectedness and as an expression of vast opportunity. From the main lobby one can see into all of the main program spaces, including a 26 foot glass wall to the pool with a great view of the slide and water play areas. Visually, the classroom spaces are connected to the performing arts area, the chapel is connected to fitness and the gym program, and the lobby serves as a central hub to all of the programs – all of which is intended to promote integration of programs and creative thinking about how various aspects of the community, a persons experiences and the Kroc Center work together to strengthen an individual and the neighborhood. The open nature of the building also helps to reduce staffing by increasing the effective coverage of individuals supervising the spaces while also increasing safety and security. In areas like the Education suite central staff offices with windows allow views of all program areas, including the teen lounge, computer lab and classrooms. Much of the color palette of the finishes in the building is bright and vibrant, reflecting the ethnic and cultural styles of the diverse neighborhood and community. At the same time, spaces like the Peace Chapel, Senior Lounge and Chapel / Theater include richer and more formal finishes to convey an appropriate level of sophistication and styling.

Firm: Well known in Boston and nationally for design excellence and commitment to responsive and collaborative client relationships, The Architectural Team, Inc. has developed a portfolio of distinctive design solutions for a broad range of building types and programs, and has earned more than 75 awards for design excellence. These include the new construction of large urban mixed-use developments, residential, commercial, hospitality, recreational, and academic facilities, as well as a national reputation in the area of historic preservation and adaptive reuse. The firm was founded in 1971, and has grown

into a thriving, 55-person master planning and architectural practice. The firm's offices are located in the restored 1840s-era Commandant's House in Chelsea, Mass. Visit the firm's website at www.architecturalteam.com.

Affiliated organizations:

General Contractor: Suffolk Construction Co.

Structural Engineer: McNamara Salvia, Inc.

Civil Engineer: Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.

M/E/P Engineer: AHA Consulting Engineers

Landscape Architect: Copley Wolff Design Group

Lighting Designer: Collaborative Lighting LLC

Others: GZA (geotech); Water Technology Inc. (aquatic); Cromwell consulting (kitchen); Schirmer engineering (codes); John Lodge Architects (theater); Kalin Associates (specifications); Acentech (acoustics)

Photographs: Andy Ryan

***PRESS CONTACT: For more information, photographs and interviews,
contact Chris Sullivan at 914.462.2096 or chris@ccsullivan.com.***







