

## Leominster development earns Communities of Quality award

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LEOMINSTER -- The New England Affordable Housing Management Association recently announced that Riverside Village, a 312-unit community in Leominster, has been awarded its prestigious Communities of Quality Award for Exemplary Family Developments.

This award honors the achievements of affordable-housing providers who make unprecedented contributions to the affordable-housing industry, by developing and operating outstanding communities that provide the highest quality of life for their residents.

Owned by Retirement Housing Foundation (RHF), a national faith-based nonprofit headquartered in Long Beach, Calif., and managed by the Schochet Companies of Boston, Riverside Village consists of 312 apartments in 26 buildings spread over nearly 30 pastoral acres abutting the Nashua River.

Of the 570 residents at Riverside Village, 29 percent are children under the age of 18.

RHF and Schochet pride themselves on providing service-rich living environments with a wide range of programs targeted to the needs of their low-income residents. Among the services offered at Riverside Village are classes in cooking, computer skills, parenting, money management, English as a Second Language and résumé writing. There are also several affiliate programs for children and teens through The Boys and Girls Club, The Spanish American Center, Mount Wachusett Community College and The United Way Youth Venture.

"Riverside Village provides an environment where children and families can thrive," said Dr. Laverne Joseph, president and CEO of RHF. "Exceptional staff, providing residents with programs to enhance their lives, and investing in the infrastructure of the physical plant are all crucial elements that contribute in creating an exceptional community."

"We are extremely honored to have been selected as a recipient of this award," said Richard Henken, president of the Schochet Companies. "Since acquiring the property in 2011, under RHF's direction we have successfully completed a \$3.9 million renovation program which included unit upgrades, infrastructure enhancements and improved access for individuals with mobility impairments. At the same time, we have ensured that this critical affordable-housing resource will be preserved for low-income families for the long term."

Winners of the Communities of Quality Award are chosen by an independent panel of representatives from the affordable-housing arena, including government, academia and trade associations. Awards will be presented at the NEAHMA Annual Conference and Trade Show on Wednesday in Norwood.