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**NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS INC. OPENS NEW CREDIT UNION**

HOUSTON – February 26, 2009 – Neighborhood Centers Inc. hosted a ribbon cutting and opening celebration today for its new NCI Community Development Credit Union, which will serve low-income families in the Gulfton/Sharpstown area.

“At Neighborhood Centers, we constantly are looking for ways to help hard-working individuals strengthen their assets and gain access to economic opportunity,” said Angela Blanchard, President and CEO of Neighborhood Centers Inc. “For many families in the Gulfton/Sharpstown area, joining the credit union will be their first step on the road to the financial mainstream and a stronger financial future.”

The new credit union is the first credit union to be chartered by the State of Texas since 2004, and is designed to help low-income families establish credit, grow a business, save for a home and become financially independent. It offers free checking accounts, savings accounts, extended hours, bilingual employees, and innovative services for members, including citizenship and legal residency application loans and employment-based personal loans.

“More than 55 percent of the households in the Gulfton/Sharpstown area are unbanked,” said Randy Martinez, President and CEO of NCI Community Development Credit Union. “We offer a friendly, safe, convenient and cost-effective option for people who rely on check-cashing services, pawn shops and payday lenders.”

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Financial investors in the credit union include Neighborhood Centers Inc., the Rockwell Fund, Texas Capital Bank, Texas Dow Employees Credit Union and the United Way of Greater Houston's THRIVE initiative.

Membership in the credit union is open to all residents who live, work, worship or attend school in the zip codes of 77036, 77074 or 77081. The credit union temporarily is located in the Alliance for Multicultural Community Services building at 6440 Hillcroft, Suite 102 until construction on the new Baker-Ripley Neighborhood Center at 5500 Rookin is completed in late 2009. To learn more about the NCI Community Development Credit Union or to become a member, call 832-238-8599, or visit [www.neighborhood-centers.org](http://www.neighborhood-centers.org).

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***About Neighborhood Centers Inc.***

Neighborhood Centers Inc. brings resources, education and connection to more than 250,000 people throughout the Texas Gulf Coast area each year. Our 59 service locations offer comprehensive, community-based programs for people at every stage of life – from infants to seniors. We work with residents of underserved communities to help them discover the strengths and skills necessary to become productive, prosperous and self-sufficient. Founded in 1907 by the grandmother of former U.S. Secretary of State James A. Baker III, Neighborhood Centers Inc. combines passion, commitment and an entrepreneurial philosophy to make the human dream a reality for all who are willing to work for it. Neighborhood Centers Inc. is a United Way agency. For more information, visit [www.neighborhood-centers.org](http://www.neighborhood-centers.org)