



**October 9, 2013**

**Cuyahoga Land Bank**  
Katherine Bulava, Hatha Communications  
[Katherine@hathacommunications.com](mailto:Katherine@hathacommunications.com)  
216-357-9508

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Cuyahoga Land Bank celebrates Disabilities Awareness Month;  
Conclusion of a 2nd year of partnering with Koinonia Homes, Inc. to  
maintain properties**

For the second year in a row, through a partnership between Koinonia Homes, Inc. and the Cuyahoga Land Bank, a crew of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities gained meaningful work experience while helping eliminate blight in Cuyahoga County.

The Cuyahoga Land Bank first worked with Koinonia Homes to establish a vocational urban agricultural farm that serves as a multi-faceted resource. Koinonia teaches their clients about farming, along with producing high-quality naturally grown food for citizens throughout the County. It was while working on this project, Cuyahoga Land Bank President Gus Frangos realized the Cuyahoga Land Bank could also team up with Koinonia to provide employment for individuals served by Koinonia.

In 2012, Frangos proposed the creation of a work experience program that would maintain vacant properties in the Cuyahoga Land Bank inventory and that utilized the talents and skills of those Koinonia serves. Not every property acquired by the Cuyahoga Land Bank can immediately be turned around through renovation or demolition and these properties must be maintained to prevent further deterioration and safety hazards. As a part of that maintenance, between May and October, the grass at these properties must be cut regularly.

“At the Cuyahoga Land Bank we are continually seeking mutually beneficial partnerships, such as the one we have with Koinonia,” said Frangos. “We are thrilled to be able to provide a meaningful work experience for Koinonia clients.”

This month, the Koinonia work crew is concluding its second grass cutting season. In that time, Koinonia clients have regularly maintained 35 lawns, gaining valuable work experience and improving the quality of life for neighboring residents.

According to Koinonia President & CEO, Diane Beaström the relationship has been a win-win. “The Land Bank had a need and Koinonia had the talent,” Beaström affirms. “We serve many people, all of whom have abilities and skills that make them an eager labor force. They want to be productive. We are grateful to the Land Bank for the opportunity to fulfill both of our priorities.”

**###**