

—FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—

## **SOUTHWEST SOLUTIONS TO CELEBRATE THE GRAND RE-OPENING OF LITHUANIAN HALL**

*Historic building in southwest Detroit gets \$2 million makeover*

*Detroit, MI*, — From the 1920s to the mid-1980s, the Lithuanian Hall in southwest Detroit was host to Lithuanian and Hispanic celebrations, family events, children’s activities, concerts and other social gatherings. Now, after sitting vacant for more than 15 years, this neighborhood landmark has been restored. Southwest Solutions, a non-profit human services provider, headed the \$2.1 million renovation of Lithuanian Hall and will celebrate with a grand re-opening on **Thursday, December 7 from 5:00 pm to 7:30 pm**. The event is free and open to the public.

Lithuanian Hall, located at 3564 West Vernor Highway (between West Grand Blvd. and I-75), is the latest of several community development projects in southwest Detroit. Renovation of the 12,500 square-foot building began in 2005. The first floor contains 6,000 square feet of retail space with an additional 3,000 square feet of office space in the basement. Earlier this month, Southwest Housing Solutions moved its offices into the Hall’s 4,000 square-foot former ballroom. O’Brien Construction, the general contractor on the project, also has office space in the building. Future tenants are expected to include businesses and educational and cultural organizations.

“This is one of the fastest growing communities in the city, as well as one of the most diverse,” said John Van Camp, president and CEO of Southwest Solutions. “By transforming this abandoned structure into a new retail and commercial center, we are preserving the building’s rich history. We’re coming together on December 7<sup>th</sup> to celebrate the past, present and future of community development in southwest Detroit.”

Lithuanian Hall was built in the 1920s as a social and cultural center for the Lithuanian population. From the 1950s to ‘80s, the building was owned by Hispanos Unidos, a social and cultural organization in southwest Detroit. “This is an important piece of property on West Vernor that needed to be revived,” said Timothy Thorland, executive director of Southwest Housing Solutions. “Southwest Housing Solutions has invested \$60 million into revitalizing southwest Detroit over the past eight years. We consider this another major step in the rebirth of the city.”

Financing for the Lithuanian Hall renovation came from a variety of sources including the Nonprofit Finance Fund, Nonprofit Facilities Center, Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, Mexicantown Hubbard Communities, Southwest Solutions, Brownfield Single Business Tax Credits and a Federal Historic Tax Credit.

The December 7<sup>th</sup> celebration will include tours of Lithuanian Hall, photo displays of the Hall and other southwest Detroit development projects, and a formal presentation at 6:00 pm. Refreshments will be served and complimentary valet parking is available. For more

information or to RSVP, contact Bob O'Brien at Southwest Solutions, (313) 843-6371 or [bobrien@swsol.org](mailto:bobrien@swsol.org).

The new tenants of Lithuanian Hall will include Kumon, an after-school math and reading program and approved provider for supplemental services under the federal No Child Left Behind Act. Kumon's learning methods help children develop a solid command of math and reading skills, increase confidence, improve concentration and develop better study skills.

Southwest Solutions is the parent company of Southwest Housing Solutions and Southwest Counseling Solutions. The agency offers a wide range of services — mental health counseling, family literacy services, and housing and real estate development — to create a stronger and healthier southwest Detroit community. For more information, visit [www.swsol.org](http://www.swsol.org).

###