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Locals get piece of American dream

By L.A. PARKER
Staff Writer

Sadatu Beer smiled broadly yesterday as she looked at her new residence.

Beer, 23, a Liberian immigrant, joined 11 other Trenton residents who secured a part of the American dream of home ownership.

In a late-morning ceremony at the Leewood North Willow Green off Pennington Avenue, Beer and several other local residents received golden keys to their new homes in the Canal Banks section of the city.

"This is so exciting," said Beer, a service assistant at Trenton Psychiatric Hospital who arrived in the U.S. in 2000.

Beer said she expected to be moved in completely before the Christmas holidays.

She shared the exciting moment with Gwendolyn Brinson who exhaled deeply after she received her symbolic gold key from Mayor Doug Palmer and Michael Fink, president of Leewood Real Estate Group's New Jersey division.

"I was holding my breath there, because this is just so exciting," Brinson said.

"I can't believe I'm going to be moving into this beautiful new home. I close (tomorrow) and will be moved in before Christmas," she promised.

Palmer said the Leewood homes are an opportunity for residents to experience the joy of home ownership.

"There is a story to be told here. A story of partnerships, dedication and conviction," the



Trentonian Photo/BOB CASTELLI

Sadatu Beer (left) and Gwendolyn Brinson hold their ceremonial golden keys to their new North Willow Green homes yesterday.

mayor said.

Officials expect 11 families to be moved into the 35 new homes prior to the holidays. The revitalization project is the first development in the city to include new construction market rate houses priced at more than \$100,000.

Qualified buyers purchased North Willow Green homes with sale prices ranging from \$67,990

to \$106,740, depending on model, with incomes ranging from \$26,000 per year and up.

The New Jersey HMFA-sponsored mortgage paid for 100 percent of the purchase price. Homeowners will receive generous real estate tax abatements from the City of Trenton for the first 5 years.

Developed by Leewood Real Estate Group and the Concerned

Pastors of Trenton and Vicinity, the townhome community will be home to persons and families in all income ranges.

"These new houses are more than bricks and mortar," said Fink. "They represent the achievement of the American Dream of home ownership to their new owners and their families."

Rev. Wayne Griffith of the

Concerned Pastors said, "Home ownership provides more than just a quality residence, it invests the families living there with a stake in their community and with hope for their futures."

The opening-day festivities included numerous dignitaries who packed the living room and kitchen of one of the new homes which has three bedrooms.

Other amenities include fully-equipped kitchens with dishwashers, on-lot parking spaces, two full baths, closets and storage space, central air conditioning, full basements and private back yards.

New Jersey Secretary of Commerce, William D. Watley joined deputy commissioner, Dale Caldwell, of the Department of Community Affairs, City Council president, Paul Pintella, and R. Randy Lee, CEO Leewood Real Estate.