



**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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## Neighbors Celebrate End of Drug Terror with Block Party Oakland Officials Praised for Work to Rid Neighborhood of Drug House

(OAKLAND, CA)— After twenty years of being terrorized by drug-dealers, the residents of the 3000 block of School Street in the Fruitvale marked the end of the terror with a block party. Dozens of residents gathered, despite the rain, to celebrate reclaiming their neighborhood from the shootings and drug dealing that used to frequent the street.

"This case is a perfect example of what is possible when we get dedicated lawyers on the streets to fight on behalf of our residents", said Neighborhood Law Corps creator and Oakland City Attorney John Russo. "I only wish we'd been able to rid the street of the dealers sooner."

The owner of the drug house and matriarch of the convicted drug-dealing family, Ruby Harris, agreed to sell her home in October 2005 in a settlement filed by the Neighborhood Laws Corps. The settlement required the Harris clan to move out.

President of the Council, Ignacio De la Fuente, joined the residents in the festivities and Bar-B-Que provided by local Oakland favorite, Everett & Jones. "It's a great day for the neighborhood," said De la Fuente. "This proves that the key to revitalizing Oakland is to take back neighborhoods, one at a time. We can only do this when city leaders work cooperatively with community residents."

After multiple shootings and arrests at the site, and at least one homicide, the City of Oakland, led by De La Fuente and Russo, with the diligent work of the Oakland Police Department, negotiated a settlement with the owner of the property. The settlement waived certain penalties and fees in trade for the sale of the property and a commitment that the Harris Family would move out of Oakland. For years, city officials tried through signed agreements to get Ms. Harris to control the drug-dealing by her children and grandchildren. Time and time again Ms. Harris' family members violated those agreements.

"For years the drug dealers have owned the street and harassed my tenants," said Paul Watts, a property owner on the street. "All day and night they have stood on the sidewalks, selling drugs, blocking pedestrians, and terrorizing the neighborhood. Today, we take back our street and don't fear for our safety."

In January, the home was sold, and a new owner now occupies the site and has agreed to help organize a Neighborhood Watch for the community.

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