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## **Cruz Companies unveils new corporate branding and a new headquarters**

October 20, 2023 - Construction Design & Engineering



Boston, MA One of the country's oldest and largest Black-owned construction and real estate

development and management enterprises, Cruz Companies has unveiled new corporate branding and a new headquarters building as it earns awards and new project wins. The new look and honors come as Cruz Companies grows nationally and implements a number of new company initiatives and enhancements.

Honored recently by regional advocates of affordable housing and community development as well as the global awards program “Brands That Matter” by Fast Company Magazine, Cruz Companies has been recognized for “Enduring Impact” and its “commitment to dismantling legacies of systemic inequity with a deep focus on economic empowerment and building community wealth.” This comes as Cruz Development has embarked on several new building projects including a 50-unit affordable housing community in College Park, Md.; a mixed-use, 170-unit complex with a five-story affordable wing plus a 10-story condominium with under-ground parking in the Roxbury, Mass. Nubian Sq. district; a five-story, 48-unit affordable project at One Waverly in Boston; and an 80-plus-unit affordable community in New Bedford, Mass., announced by the state’s governor Maura Healey.

“After 75 years of growth and hard work, we are delighted to earn this recognition from such disparate and highly respected groups,” said Justin Cruz, who has been elevated to COO of Cruz Companies. “It is a credit to our team and our time-tested processes for creating attractive, attainable communities that we continue to operate today.”

Cruz Companies has “demonstrated committed leadership and a relentless focus on ‘community, quality & integrity’ to overcome local histories of redlining, displacement and disinvestment,” according to Fast Company’s Brands That Matter. “Since founding 75 years ago by the son of Cape Verdean immigrants, this third-generation, family-held business creates enduring impact through dedication to affordable housing, community service, and nurturing ecosystems of BIPOC-owned businesses, including 50-plus suppliers and contractors.”

The Fast Company award, which puts Cruz Companies in the winner’s circle alongside such renowned companies as General Motors, Intel, and St. Jude’s Children’s Hospital, comes as the three Cruz companies, along with their nonprofit arm Cruz C.A.R.E.S., have initiated critical process improvements and elevated several key employees and executives to new positions. Among the closely held enhancements are their expansion into the metro Washington, D.C. market, new partnerships with nonprofit community organizations, implementation of state-of-the-art property management software, and realigned external and corporate communications. The company also has just been designated by a city housing authority for a 30-unit neighborhood revitalization, including the adaptive reuse of a historic firehouse as affordable housing, in conjunction with a prominent waterfront historic preservation group. In addition to establishing an Office for Mid-Atlantic Development (OMD) in College Park, Maryland, Cruz Companies has also added staff to accommodate future growth while elevating several key team members.

This year alone, Cruz Companies has announced major mixed-use and housing developments including their 170-unit, multi-use campus rising in Boston’s Nubian Sq., the 50-unit Branchville

Crossing project in suburban Washington, D.C., and their newest opening, the Michael E. Haynes Building with 56 units of affordable housing and the company's new global headquarters offices. One of Cruz Companies' seminal works, the 73-unit Taurus Apartments in Roxbury, Mass., celebrates its 50th anniversary this year.

The modern new headquarters for Cruz Companies sports elegant signage with their new brand logo and graphics, all designed by Chicago agency a5 with C.C. Sullivan, updating the company's trademark identity in new variations of Cape Verde green. "Our new brand image represents the emerging generation of leadership and the sophisticated yet sensitive business processes we're continually improving to benefit the neighborhoods we champion around the country," said CEO John Cruz III. "While we can never forget where we've come from, we are committed to a future of greater equity and opportunity — that's why chose our brand rallying cry, 'Pioneering Progress, Empowering Communities.'"

"A strong voice for equity and opportunity spurring national conversations, Cruz offers proven and increasingly relevant roadmaps for building a better world," according to the Fast Company program. This business focus animates related charitable work and philanthropic initiatives, much of it under the banner of Cruz C.A.R.E.S., their 501(c)(3) nonprofit with the acronym of Community, Arts, Recreational and Educational Services. Since its inception, Cruz C.A.R.E.S. has hosted after-school programs, free summer camps, college scholarships, company internships, and resident field trips — including field trips for children to ski in New Hampshire and ride bicycles on Martha's Vineyard — as well as a youth holiday celebration.

Emphasizing the heritage of Cruz Companies' founders, first-generation emigrants from the Cape Verde Islands, the companies and their executives support various community organizations and events including the Cape Verdean Association in New Bedford and the Annual Cape Verdean Independence Day Festival. Adding to his successes and wins, John Cruz III was honored as the Grand Marshall for the 51st Cape Verdean Recognition Parade.

"Brands That Matter honorees don't just recite corporate vision statements or management talking points; they have achieved relevance through cultural impact and social engagement, and their branding authentically communicates a brand's current mission and ideals," according to Fast Company, which pledges to honor "brands from around the world — including the largest multinational conglomerates and small-but-mighty companies, too."