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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***Zak Thomas Joins Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and Neighborhood Allies to Lead Community Lending******Neighborhood Allies Launches Local Real Estate and Small Business Lending Program***

Pittsburgh, PA (July 29, 2015) – Zak Thomas, a local attorney has been tapped by Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), a national leader in philanthropic and social investment, in partnership with Neighborhood Allies, a local community development support organization, as Senior Program Officer, Community Development Lending. He will launch and manage the LISC and Neighborhood Allies lending and investing partnership to increase investment in real estate, small business and other development initiatives to help revitalize Pittsburgh's most distressed neighborhoods.

Mr. Thomas comes to LISC/Neighborhood Allies from the Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney Law Firm, where he served as Shareholder in the Financial Institutions, Bankruptcy and Real Estate Section, concentrating his practice in the areas of banking, loan restructurings, insolvency and cash management. His legal career started in 2000 at Klett Rooney Lieber & Schorling, which later merged to become Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney. He was elected to the shareholder position in 2013.

In addition to his professional efforts, Mr. Thomas serves on the Board of Directors of The Chuck Cooper Foundation and the Parkinson Foundation of Western PA and the Board of Advisors of PublicSource. He is a graduate of the most recent Leadership Pittsburgh Class (XXXI) and an active volunteer for the Veterans Leadership Program for Western Pennsylvania. He has also participated as a pro bono attorney at the McKees Rocks Legal Clinic, counseled consumer referrals in chapter 7 and 13 bankruptcy cases and represented victims in Protection from Abuse cases. "The opportunity to take what I have learned in 15 years of working with, and learning from, some of the top banking and real estate lawyers in the country and apply it in a community development context is a dream come true," said Zak Thomas. "To top it off, I get to work locally with the talented leaders at Neighborhood Allies and have the backing of the national leader in community development lending. The support and encouragement I have received already from colleagues and clients has been amazing. I look forward to leveraging those relationships in my new role and have great expectations for what we will accomplish together", adds Thomas.

The hiring of Mr. Thomas also launches Neighborhood Allies' commercial & small business lending line of business, through its LISC partnership, who will now begin offering loans and equity investments aimed at rebuilding distressed and transitional neighborhoods. Mr. Thomas will also assist in the provision of technical and development assistance to partners, positioning Neighborhood Allies as a stronger technical and training resource for local community organizations.

"We are very fortunate to attract a professional of Zak's caliber to our team", said Presley Gillespie, President of Neighborhood Allies. "He is energetic, entrepreneurial, and passionate about serving his community, and brings skills to Neighborhood Allies that we think will be invaluable as we work to assist our partners in developing real estate strategies for sustainable and equitable revitalization. We are now a truly unique community development partner; part funder, lender, connector and consultant", adds Gillespie.

Mr. Thomas officially joins LISC/Neighborhood Allies on August 14, 2015 and will be located at the Neighborhood Allies office.

About LISC: *LISC's mission is to equip struggling communities with the capital, strategy and know-how to become places where people can thrive. Working with local leaders we invest in housing, health, education, public safety and employment - all basic needs that must be tackled at once so that progress in one is not undermined by neglect in another. For more information, visit www.lisc.org.*

About Neighborhood Allies: *Our mission is to support the people, organizations and partnerships committed to creating and maintaining thriving neighborhoods. Our vision is a Pittsburgh with healthy neighborhoods that are thriving, resilient and livable for all. For more information, visit www.neighborhoodallies.org.*

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