

2015 AGENCY AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

ADMINISTRATIVE INNOVATION

Implementation of the Data Compliance System

The Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles (HACoLA) is responsible for ensuring that families assisted through rental housing programs comply with federal, state, and local rules and regulations. However, there is no HUD prescribed method or system to provide public housing agencies the means to precisely detect fraud or crime in rental housing programs. As a result, HACoLA and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department partnered to create the Data Compliance System, which automates the transfer of publicly available arrest data from Los Angeles County law enforcement agencies to HACoLA for its use in reviewing criminal activity of program participants.

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Implementation of the Green Route System

The Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles (HACoLA) administers rental subsidy programs for over 24,000 Los Angeles County families. Each family's rental unit is inspected before leasing and at least once annually thereafter. Through 2011, HACoLA employed 17 inspectors to conduct approximately 43,000 inspections per year, and seven administrative staffers to manually schedule inspections, maintain logs of inspected units, assign and map inspectors' routes, and generate notices. As a cost reduction measure, HACoLA contracted RBAS People, LLC, to design a Green Route System (GRS) to use geographic data to automate the outdated process. The GRS automated the inspection process and absorbed four employees' positions.

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Bringing Opportunity Home Video Project

As part of its strategic planning process completed in 2013, the Housing Authority of the City of Austin (HACA) engaged in a video project to help promote its renewed mission and vision of Bringing Opportunity Home. The project culminated in the creation of a series of short videos that captured inspirational resident success stories and promoted effective, transformational programs offered by HACA and its non-profit subsidiaries. The videos serve as a powerful outreach mechanism for clients, as well as a marketing and general awareness tool for potential funders, the community, elected leaders, and the general public.

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Voucher Lease-Up Extravaganza

In May 2014 HUD notified the Sioux Falls Housing and Redevelopment Commission (SFHRC) that it had been identified as one of the top 25 Housing Authorities with leasing potential. HUD strongly encouraged SFHRC to take steps to significantly increase its leasing for the remainder of 2014 as it would impact its funding for 2015. Increasing leasing using its normal business practices would not produce the desired results. SFHRC held a 2-day Lease-Up Extravaganza which resulted in 90 vouchers being issued in two days and another 35 vouchers issued within the following week.

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AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Jack Capon Villa Developmentally Disabled Housing

Jack Capon Villa is the City of Alameda's first multi-family affordable housing project for adults with developmental disabilities designed to help meet the extreme need for affordable supportive housing. The project is named after the late Jack Capon, an esteemed Alameda resident, who founded the city's Special Olympics. The property provides 18 (plus a manager's unit) permanent affordable one- and two-bedroom apartments for households in which at least one member has a disability and total household income is at or below 50 percent of the area median income. It was the city's final project funded through the redevelopment agency.

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Cedar Pointe Apartments, a Smart Living Community

Tampa Housing Authority and Hillsborough County Affordable Housing Department recently cut the ribbon on their newest collaboration, Cedar Pointe Apartments. It is a new multi-family development of sustainable smart living, consisting of 1, 2, and 3 bedroom units. Cedar Pointe is a 100% affordable living community that transforms lives. A Smart Living community that provides unique resources to help individuals and families progress in life in order to reach new positive goals. Tampa Housing Authority and Hillsborough County partnered in redeveloping a dilapidated apartment community, utilizing NSP1 funds, to provide first rate, quality housing worthy of emulation.

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Rittenhouse

New Hope Housing shatters stereotypes of low-income, single room occupancy housing – proving that it can be both visually attractive and affordable. Rittenhouse, New Hope’s seventh property, gives back to the community by providing 160 people in the Houston area the opportunity to live in a high-quality, environmentally friendly, affordable housing development with the critical support services to help them exit the cycle of homelessness and stabilize their lives. The intentional design of Rittenhouse, a combination of art and nature, provides a serene and safe place that inspires personal and communal growth.

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A Pivotal Point for Domestic Violence Survivors

Partnering with Domestic Violence Services of Snohomish County (DVS) the Everett Housing Authority coordinated to convert an Army Reserve Center into a shelter and construct twenty units of supportive housing with a preference for survivors of domestic violence experiencing homelessness. The project utilized complex funding from various sources and required nearly a decade of planning. Pivotal Point Apartments, completed in August of 2014, has quickly achieved nearly 100% occupancy. Residents have access to onsite services, as well as services at the adjacent DVS emergency shelter, and they have a safe place for their families to begin to heal.

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COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION

Preservation of an Expiring HUD-236 Project

Pendleton Park was built by a faith-based, not-for profit with HUD-236 funding. In 2012, the HUD-236 contract expired, and the owner's desire was to dispose of the asset. Notwithstanding the preference to sell, the owner did not want to displace the low-income residents of the property, many of whom were long-time church members. Given the affordable housing crisis in the DC MSA, the preservation of this neighborhood as affordable depended on the conscience of the seller, and their ability to look beyond the market value of the site to the longer term good of not displacing the families.

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Terrace @ Bruce Street

Terrace had become the worst property in the neighborhood after only 20 years. Once a new construction development with built in subsidies to aid low income families, it had become a festering sore that was condemned by the local zoning department and advertised for foreclosure. The Franklin Redevelopment Housing Authority allocated non-federal funds to purchase the property at auction, and then they compiled a team that included a community lender and many leaders in the neighborhood. The property was redesigned and renovated to better accommodate families, and it is now a modern housing development that is affordable to low- and middle-income families.

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PROJECT DESIGN

Cathedral Gardens

The Cathedral Gardens development is a public-private partnership between the City of Oakland Housing Authority (OHA) in Oakland, CA and EAH Housing (EAH) in San Rafael, CA. The partnership was formed for the acquisition of a former historic Catholic Cathedral, which included an existing historic rectory, the construction of two new buildings, and the rehabilitation of the rectory to create 100 units of affordable family housing. Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) funding was secured to provide new services to family members who have special needs.

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Two Creeks Outdoor Classroom

The Two Creeks Outdoor Classroom is a physical representation of Metro West Housing Solutions' (MWHS) commitment to the Two Creeks community by acting as a multi-functional piece of public art. Less than 1,000 feet from light rail, in the heart of the 40 West Arts District, the sustainably-built classroom is a venue for learning, meeting, and informal gathering. This spring, a community garden will open adjacent to the classroom. MWHS partnered with CU Denver's graduate architecture Design Build Program to design and construct it. The Outdoor Classroom is well-used by residents and community partners, and it receives accolades from architects and designers across the globe.

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Trio at Encore

Trio at Encore is Tampa's newest multifamily rental housing development. It consists of 141 mixed income, mixed-use multifamily units. The development is configured within a 3-building framework of green construction, LEED Silver Certification minimum. Residents of the Trio enjoy amenities such as a library, theater, pool, fitness center, computer room, retail space, community room, and early childhood education center. Tile murals depicting the former Central Avenue business district and music themed art are featured throughout the development. The Trio was developed through a partnership between the Tampa Housing Authority and Banc of America Community Development Corporation.

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Deskins Commons

The Housing Authority of Yamhill County (HAYC) developed a 3+ acre site near downtown Newberg, OR. The site required extensive efforts working with local government and surrounding neighbors to change property zoning, preserve the existing historic homes and larger trees, deal with poor soil percolation, integrate into the neighborhood without being intrusive, and create a safe environment for residents consisting of workforce families and integrated special needs clients. The resulting 56-unit development addressed all of these issues, and created a cornerstone property of which all can be proud.

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Park at Sutton Oaks

The existing vacant public housing property was re-developed through partnership efforts between the neighborhood residents, San Antonio Housing Authority (SAHA), the City, and Franklin Development staff into The Park at Sutton Oaks. This previous public housing site had been plagued with isolation, ground movement building issues, deferred maintenance, and lack of energy efficient building components and systems. This phase two re-development features 208 apartments of mixed income families in 49 public housing, 113 affordable and 46 market rate units. The property was built to comply with Build San Antonio Green (BSAG) Level II, a city department managing energy conservation programs.

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Bud Bailey Apartment Community

The Housing Authority of the County of Salt Lake recently completed construction on the Bud Bailey Apartment Community on a vacant parcel of industrial land along the light-rail line. The project stemmed from community need to create affordable housing for large refugee families. Spacious, four bedroom units are part of the 136 units of housing available to refugee families, chronically homeless families and individuals, homeless youth, and other qualifying low-income households. To unite this diverse population, the site was developed around a central court yard and community center to encourage resident interaction and provide on-site activities and services for residents.

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RESIDENT AND CLIENT SERVICES

Little Outdoor Libraries

In May of 2014, the Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara and its affiliate nonprofit, Second Story Associates, created “Little Outdoor Libraries” on the premises of three public housing family developments with the goal of promoting literacy among low-income youth. 61% of low-income families have no books at home for their children. The Little Outdoor Libraries have provided a way to make books accessible to low-income youth, and to promote reading in a fun and original way, while at the same time creating a gathering place for children residing in these communities.

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Mariposa Neighborhood EcoPass Program

Continual input is solicited from residents as part of the community-driven Master Planning process for the Mariposa TOD redevelopment. Residents identified that the light rail station in their neighborhood was under-utilized due to cost. Transportation is often a barrier to self-sufficiency; even public transportation is unaffordable for most public housing residents. To address this barrier, the Mariposa neighborhood worked with local public transportation to create a pilot bus pass program. Mariposa residents can now receive an annual pass for only \$20. The “NECO Pass” has given residents unlimited access to transportation, creating opportunity where there once was none.

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Youth Toastmasters Program

The Housing Authority of the City of Norwalk (NHA) maintains a strong, comprehensive education component delivered through their Learning Centers' after school enhancement programs. They continually look for innovative ways to improve student school performance through out-of-school activities, providing what kids find beneficial, interesting, different, and fun. They see in their middle and high school students the potential for leadership development through improved social discourse skills, public speaking and comportsment confidence, and better listening abilities. These skills will serve the students well as they move through public school and prepare for college and job interviews.

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It's Your Time to Shine Theater Arts Program

The "It's Your Time to Shine Theater Arts Program" began on July 10, 2013 for youth ages five to seventeen in the Claremont Courts community. The program inspired imagination and provided a needed platform for youth's talent to shine. Thirty-seven youth practiced and performed three play productions entitled "You Look Ridiculous (2013)," "A Mixed Up Fairytale (2014)," and "Drug Related: A Deadly Dream (2014)." By collaborating with Foxfire Productions Performing Arts Development Center, Greensboro Housing Authority youth gained a sense of self-worth, respect for others, teamwork, the ability to express emotions, and most importantly, stronger reading and writing skills.

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Compass to College - College Readiness Program

Recognizing that high school completion is only the first step toward self-sufficiency, the Housing Authority of the City of Austin worked with Communities in Schools to develop Compass to College, a curriculum that builds the knowledge, skills, and habits essential for college enrollment and completion. Compass to College is currently offered at two Austin high schools. Participating resident high school students are provided with professional support as they choose high school courses and complete college admissions, scholarship, and financial aid applications. In 2014, every senior that participated in the program was accepted into college.

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