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Affordable Housing Accreditation
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The COVID-19 pandemic has made clear what advocates and providers of quality rental homes have long known: a stable, a quality home supports good health. Mission driven housing providers know that stable homes enhanced by resident services can further support health and well-being and provide a platform for addressing equity gaps for people of limited economic means. However, when making the connections between health and housing though, stakeholders can often overlook meaningful ways to include resident voice and prioritize agency.

A growing body of evidence shows that feeling we have a voice and sense of choice (or agency) helps to mitigate trauma and toxic stress and support our health and well-being. It can also increase social activity and reduce social isolation. For residents of affordable housing though, voice and agency are too often inhibited. One explanation for that is that financing partners, regulators and property owners and managers concerned about risk mitigation and safety often implement policies and house rules that leave residents feeling they have little voice or control in the place where they live. This is a persistent challenge in affordable housing, and the COVID pandemic has certainly compounded feelings of loss, stress, and having little to no control.

To better understand this challenge, SAHF conducted a series of focus groups with residents of SAHF member properties and interviews with frontline staff and senior management. What we heard confirms some of what mission-minded operators have known about the strategies that support resident satisfaction, but also offers practical examples of where even well intended operations decisions leave residents with fewer choices in their daily lives.

Some of these takeaways include:

- A property culture and environment that facilitate connection and social cohesion are important to
resident satisfaction. While the COVID-19 pandemic has stymied traditional methods of community building, such as frequent face-to-face communications and collective gatherings, planning and decisions that support open, inclusive opportunities for residents to provide feedback or play a role in how their community can foster a more equitable recovery should be considered whenever possible.

- All frontline staff — not just resident service coordinators or property managers— can play a major role in how residents’ experience the property. Residents emphasized the need for all staff who interact with residents to be “relationship-oriented”, serving as additional support in addressing resident needs more quickly.

- House rules, and how they are communicated to residents, are particularly influential in how residents perceive the social environment and their place in it. For example, changes to rules around access and use of common spaces not only change how residents gather with friends and family, but how they use these spaces to look out for their neighbors and the broader community. While many restrictions stem from valid liability concerns for the property, residents can find them frustrating—especially when little to no explanation is provided.

- Clearer communication and information sharing is needed around data collection. Residents are asked to provide significant amounts of personal data in connection with their homes, and yet most still seek to understand why their information is being collected and how it is being used. Residents also expressed an interest in accessing collected data to help them collectively solve problems like transportation (e.g. neighbors who may need a ride to the store) and snow shoveling.

Making changes to address these findings can be complicated given layers of compliance.
requirements and risk mitigation concerns. However, there are immediate steps that owners can take to support resident health, well-being and satisfaction by lifting up the voices of residents and giving residents choice and decision-making power in their homes.

The following approaches can serve as building blocks to more just and equitable communities:

• When you have to relay a tough decision or a change in rules to residents, ask how your communications can be more clear and transparent. By conveying not just what but why and how you arrived at the decision, owners and operators demonstrate respect for residents' interest in the property and may even invite valuable input from the experts in the day-to-day experience at the property.

• Consider how to create meaningful leadership roles and pathways to engagement for residents. This means seeking opportunities to involve residents in decision-making and work with them to create solutions rather than just pushing information to them or offering a one-time opportunity for feedback. Look to community organizing approaches, such as the Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership, for new ways of thinking about resident services and resident agency that focus on the strengths and assets of the residents and community.

• Find way to include residents in the design of property and development of rules and regulations. This often means engaging residents before required notices and meeting periods when many decisions have already been made. Residents in the focus groups gave examples of well-intended design changes with unanticipated impacts, such as walkways that were more environmentally friendly and attractive, but made it more difficult for people in using wheelchair or walkers to navigate. Continued and more fulsome engagement of residents and their perspective can improve the resident experience and avoid the need to conduct costly redesigns of the property and rules down the road.

• Offer trainings on trauma-informed approaches for all property staff. Trauma-informed approaches can

“The events of the past year have reminded us not only that a stable, affordable home is essential for health, but also of the many ways that a home can support well-being.”
help staff navigate or mediate confrontational or difficult situations at the property, including among staff and residents. Trauma-informed practices may also serve as a professional development and staff retention tool.

The events of the past year have reminded us not only that a stable, affordable home is essential for health, but also of the many ways that a home can support well-being. As affordable housing providers and their partners strive to provide stable home and services, they should consider how programs and policies, as well as regulatory requirements give residents choice and power in their daily lives. We urge providers to not only take the early steps outlined above, but also to do the hard work of examining how their policies and practices can be improved to elevate the voice and agency of residents. By challenging ourselves to do better, we can support the well-being of residents and build more inclusive and well-functioning communities.

Andrea Ponsor is the President and CEO of Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future (SAHF). In her role as President and CEO, Ms. Ponsor works to identify, develop and advocate for key strategic issues of concern to SAHF and its members, create a level playing field for effective, mission oriented nonprofit businesses and amplify SAHF’s impact to create more sustainable properties and communities and improve the lives of residents. Ms. Ponsor joined SAHF in 2016 as Executive Vice President of Policy, bringing with her 15 years of experience in the field of housing and community development.

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For decades, the affordable housing industry operated under the purview of its largest funder, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which has published regulations for operating programs across the country. The industry used these regulations, which encompass governance, financial management, operational performance and organizational compliance, to ensure grant and funding requirements are met for each program.

Those established requirements are just minimum standards, without which an organization will not be eligible for continued HUD funding. What was missing was a methodology for establishing and evaluating standards of excellence. Industry leaders sought to remedy this by forming the Affordable Housing Accreditation Board (AHAB) in 2013.

Now, the affordable housing industry has an opportunity. In December 2020, the U.S. Congress passed an appropriations bill that was accompanied by report language encouraging HUD to look at the feasibility of partnering with an accrediting body for evaluating organizational performance. AHAB is such an accrediting body that developed industry-vetted standards in 2017 and went live with an accreditation system in 2018. This system has resulted in accrediting eight diverse housing organizations, which vary in size and geography and community makeup but are united in their demonstrations of excellence.
Currently, HUD’s regulations touch on four standard domains:

- Governance through board composition and meetings;
- Financial management, via audits;
- Compliance, through eligibility determination and documentation; and
- Operational performance, such as vacancy rate and unit turnaround time.

HUD’s reviews focus on finding out whether the housing organization is meeting federal regulations at a point in time. A HUD auditor may find a file is not in compliance with eligibility requirements, or a unit may not meet housing quality standards based on an unexpected event coinciding with an inspection. These two examples may be one off occurrences and not be indicative of the usual practices of the organization.

The AHAB accreditation system examines how an organization is meeting its full mission including how it is conforming with all of the industry developed standards. AHAB considers not only the above four domains but adds four more:

- Executive leadership
- Community engagement,
- Quality of life for residents and
- Customer service.

Two of the domains distinctly interrelate with how an organization meets its mission and excels in all eight domains: executive leadership and community engagement. Executive leadership evaluates how the people at the top interact with each other, their staff, their supervisors (the Executive Director and/or Board of Directors), their customers – residents, regulators, other community agencies — and members of the public. An organization that seeks feedback about itself and utilizes the information to make changes based on the suggestions, demonstrates a high level of customer and employee satisfaction. All AHAB-accredited organizations survey their staff regularly to gauge satisfaction around organization communication, job performance and morale. They use resident surveys, not just as a regulatory requirement, but to discover trends in needed services or operational issues that may be confined to one program or building. Accredited organizations also communicate rapidly and transparently. During the COVID-19 response in March 2020, the public and resident trust was ranked high with accredited organizations because they quickly communicated expert advice to the entire community, worked with other organizations to obtain protective equipment and implemented revised procedures.

For the community engagement standard, AHAB evaluates how effectively an organization collaborates with its allied partners and officials for the greater good. Relationships that ensure a swift and effective response to a global pandemic are not established just in the emergent moment. The accredited housing organizations have spent decades working consciously on community engagement and relationships. They’ve collaborated on domestic violence awareness and training, paid work programs for teens, ensuring public transportation pathways include neighborhoods with affordable housing, linking childcare and elder services – all of these programs and initiatives
“Accreditation also provides credibility with regulators, funders and increases public confidence.”

are in a day's work for accredited housing organizations. While performance across all eight domains impact an affordable housing organization's ability to succeed and thrive, excellence in the executive leadership and community engagement standards are the key to ensuring organizational success.

So why pursue accreditation?

Accreditation demonstrates credibility. An industry that adopts national standards that have been created with input from communities and residents creates transparency, which in turn helps with earning trust. Accreditation also provides credibility with regulators, funders and increases public confidence. A seat at the proverbial community table with hospitals, higher education and other institutions that anchor our cities can only serve to strengthen all of our daily lives as citizens.

Accreditation demonstrates that your organization – and that your industry at large — knows what it's doing. When the industry adopts standards and evaluates its practices according to those standards, government tends to follow suit and becomes more reliant on those industry-established standards.

We are at a point where Congress has finally given direction to HUD to look at accreditation for public and affordable housing to determine the feasibility of a partnership to encourage accreditation of organizations. At a March 24 hearing on public housing, Oscar Duran, the Executive Director of the Municipal Housing Agency of Council Bluffs, included in his testimony a section on the impact of a voluntary accreditation program in the public housing industry. This is a long-needed acknowledgment that the affordable housing industry can be trusted to work with regulators and monitor the way in which it provides, develops, and manages high-quality affordable housing. We should act on it quickly and enthusiastically.

Diana McWilliams became CEO of the Affordable Housing Accreditation Board in January 2017. She has over 25 years of management experience helping transform public and non profit organizations to work more effectively for the people and communities they serve. Her leadership experience includes working on accreditation from the service provider side, with accrediting bodies of the National Children's Alliance, Council on Accreditation, and the National Association for the Education of Young Children.
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At the 2021 NAHRO Online National Conference and Exhibition, NAHRO will honor 182 Awards of Merit-winning programs from member agencies all across the country.

More than 20 years ago, NAHRO created the Awards of Merit program to honor member agencies' successes and amplify the innovative ways in which they've improved their agencies, their communities, and the lives of the people they serve. Over these past two decades, the association has recognized well over 6,000 affordable housing and community development programs of all types — communications initiatives, sustainable energy use, budget and financial awareness education, health and wellness programs, supportive housing projects, veterans' housing, apprenticeship training, and so much more. This year, amid the new developments, educational programs and resident services, we also honor the various ways our member agencies kept their staff and residents safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. Awards of Merit-winning programs also become eligible to compete for Awards of Excellence.

More details and the 2021 Awards of Merit catalog are available on the NAHRO website at www.nahro.org/membership/awards.
Eligible students must reside in HUD-assisted affordable housing administered by NAHRO member agencies, who submit applications on their behalf. The NAHRO-LDG Scholars program is a 10-year venture that provides $1 million in scholarships and internship opportunities to low-income students from around the country. Students also receive networking opportunities with housing professionals from NAHRO member agencies nationwide.

This year's cohort includes:

Yvonnah Ann Marshall from Fargo, N.D.
Fargo Housing and Redevelopment Authority
Attending Concordia College in Minn. this fall and studying healthcare administration.

Karen Medina from Harlingen, Texas
Casa Grande Cameron County Housing Authority
Attending Texas State University and pursuing a career in healthcare.

Deschalyn Riase from Port Huron, Mich.
Port Huron Housing Commission
Attending Central Michigan University in Mich. and hoping to pursue a career as a teacher or lawyer.

Christopher Chieng from Franklin, Mass.
Franklin Housing Authority
Attending Vassar College in N.Y. and studying international studies.

"The LDG Foundation is proud to once again support an amazing group of students who are committed to furthering their education and pursuing a college degree. Not only has this year’s NAHRO/LDG scholarship recipients proven themselves in the classroom, but through their extracurricular activities, civic engagement and community service; they have demonstrated their commitment to improving the neighborhoods in which they reside," said Chris Dischinger and Mark Lechner, co-founders and co-principals of LDG Development. “Clearly, the NAHRO/LDG scholars represent the very best this country has to offer and we look forward to watching and supporting them as they evolve into the leaders of tomorrow.”

Headquartered in Louisville, Kentucky, LDG has developed almost 10,000 units for families and seniors across eight states. The company was founded about 25 years ago based on the belief that everyone deserves a quality place to live. NAHRO is a national organization of affordable housing and community development professionals and industry partners, whose members provide housing to more than 8 million people.
A July 2019 press conference held by tenant advocacy organizations, community organizers and renters at Minneapolis City Hall called for the passage of a proposed tenant protection ordinance. The ordinance was passed in September 2019. Photo courtesy of Tram Hoang.

Advancing ANTIRACISM in Community Development

BY TRAM HOANG

This article was previously published in Shelterforce Magazine on Jan. 12, 2021
Community organizing and community development share deep roots. Grassroots movements that opposed urban renewal fought to flip the false narratives of “urban decay” and “blight” that led to the destruction of communities of color, and in doing so, fought for the right to control the destinies of those neighborhoods through community-led development with an asset-based lens. Decades later, the proliferation of community development organizations has created an entire industry focused on complex finance tools and the mobilization and attraction of private capital. Over time, the professionalization of the community development field has led to the slow but accelerating divergence of organizing and development.

This division becomes even clearer if we focus on the bottom line of each group: community development works to shift resources into disinvested communities, whereas community organizers seek to shift power into them.

Of course this distinction makes sense, given our inequitable housing system. With such scarce resources from every level of government, community development practitioners face increasing pressure to master qualified allocation plans (QAP) and tedious funding applications to compete for low-income housing tax credits. However, this pivot on the part of community developers toward technical competence has left a vacuum in the space where organizational time and resources dedicated to grassroots movement building used to lie. Meanwhile, community organizers, the majority of whom are not employed by affordable housing developers, have continued to focus on building and shifting power in ways that make systems and institutions more antiracist.

In the Twin Cities, for instance, our CDC landscape has diverged into two general categories. The first consists of small, place-based community development organizations that focus their efforts in specific neighborhoods, and do not depend solely on housing development as their vehicle for growth. These organizations tend to be more connected to the specific community in which they operate, whether that’s through organizing or long-term community engagement. Generally, they are grassroots organizations that have fewer staff and less resources. The latter category consists of large, areawide nonprofit developers whose sole activity is developing and maintaining large-scale housing projects, and in order to sustain that, they focus much of their staff capacity on attracting both public and private capital. These organizations are rarely deeply rooted in any neighborhood because their work is spread across geographies, and engagement is only conducted as needed to continue development (such as neighborhood engagement prior to seeking planning commission approval of new projects).

Resources and power are certainly not mutually exclusive, and both are incredibly important to creating and sustaining equitable cities—and combating the white supremacy deeply embedded in our nation. Community developers frequently advocate for vital
resources in Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities, such as funds for affordable housing development and preservation, small business support, and economic inclusion efforts, all of which are important assets and community needs. Organizers aim to build the power and voice of BIPOC communities so that they may participate in public policy and decision-making spaces. Their grassroots work centers practices like leadership development, deep relationship-building, alignment of people and/or organizations across sectors and identities via coalition-building, and allowing BIPOC communities to define their own needs.

Minneapolis’ 2019 housing victories paint the picture of these two different approaches well: Make Homes Happen ecosystem, these two approaches could and should be working together to address our deep racial inequities.

The division between the two means that sometimes community development organizations are not as connected to antiracist work as they might have been. How can community development organizations be better antiracist partners from their position in the field? With specific actions. As Professor Ibram X. Kendi writes in How to Be an Antiracist, “‘Racist’ and ‘antiracist’ are like peelable name tags that are placed and replaced based on what someone is doing or not doing, supporting or expressing in each moment.” He defines an antiracist person as “one who is supporting an antiracist policy through their actions or expressing an antiracist idea.”

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was a coalition of community development organizations that successfully advocated for historic investments in affordable housing at the municipal level, whereas a coalition of tenant advocacy orgs fought for and won increased tenant protections. The former fought for increased funds for housing production, and the latter fought to dismantle systemic barriers to housing access. Both are critical needs. In a more ideal ecosystem, these two approaches could and should be working together to address our deep racial inequities.

The division between the two means that sometimes community development organizations are not as connected to antiracist work as they might have been. How can community development organizations be better antiracist partners from their position in the field? With specific actions. As Professor Ibram X. Kendi writes in How to Be an Antiracist, “‘Racist’ and ‘antiracist’ are like peelable name tags that are placed and replaced based on what someone is doing or not doing, supporting or expressing in each moment.” He defines an antiracist person as “one who is supporting an antiracist policy through their actions or expressing an antiracist idea.”

In that spirit, here are three actions organizations can take:

1. Take clear public stances on social justice issues that are not directly related to community or economic development. I’m from the Twin Cities, and the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd by the Minneapolis Police Department is front and center as an example of this for us. Amid the uprising, community members and grassroots organizations would ask community developers “where does your organization stand?” When that happens, interpret it not as a challenge and a pressure to be as radical as possible, but a calling in to join antiracist conversations and movements that are shifting power. You can also reassess the ways that your own organization interacts with police departments (events with police presence, neighborhood watches) and reflect on how that aligns with your community’s definition of public safety. Community developers have political clout and narrative influence that grassroots groups often don’t—it’s critical to deploy that in ways that show solidarity with racial justice movements. It doesn't mean your organization has to say “abolish the police,” but it means you can and should publicly acknowledge the role of policing as an institution rooted in white supremacy in the ways that it disparately impacts the communities we work with.

Not all community developers in the Twin Cities met this
challenge. Some were more concerned for their bottom line regarding potential property damage and did not recalibrate their perspective to the arc of history that included centuries during which Black people were considered property and denied property ownership. But some community developers did lead the way. For example, the Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers (MCCD), a nonprofit association of nonprofit community developers in the Twin Cities, released the following statement in the aftermath of George Floyd's murder:

Our community is powerful and we can enact change.

This past week has been a difficult one for our neighbors and community members following the horrific murder of George Floyd. Our hearts go out to his family, friends, and the broader community. We acknowledge that this violence is just one part of a system of oppression that permeates our society and culture. We cannot allow the targeting of Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities to continue and we stand with those who call for justice.

MCCD's mission to build strong, stable communities can only be achieved by addressing the inequities that have shaped housing policy and prevented BIPOC and other communities from accessing capital and wealth building opportunities. We can and must do better.

And as an organization that works daily with small businesses and believes strongly in the power of ownership, MCCD will continue to stand alongside our business community in rebuilding. We commit to using our CDFI and public policy platforms to advocate for resources that will restore our vibrant commercial districts.

MCCD will stand with our partners and BIPOC leaders in dismantling systems designed to perpetuate disparities. Our community is powerful and we can enact change.

When we don't say anything, we are neutral, which maintains the status quo. When we take a stand, we demonstrate our readiness to be in solidarity and actively antiracist.

2. Own your role in the movement as the insider.

There are many roles to play in advancing systems change, and the asset that community developers bring is a deep knowledge of how to navigate systems and bureaucracies. Share that knowledge! You know QAPs and RFPs inside and out, and you know where levers of power are. Open that knowledge up to conversations with people who see barriers to equity within those processes. Use that expertise to critique and improve systems, and bring new voices with you. At The Alliance, where I am a policy advocate, we convene a coalition called “Equity in Place.” Membership ranges from housing organizers and lawyers to community developers and policy advocates. One of the bodies of work we’ve been engaged in is changing the way Minnesota Housing, the state housing finance agency, prioritizes its housing investments by influencing the qualified allocation plan. (QAPs outline specific criteria and eligibility requirements for funding applications and include a point system through which projects are evaluated.)

QAPs are notorious for being extremely technical and inaccessible documents—often dozens, if not 100 pages long—but have enormous implications for where housing dollars go, and therefore, who benefits from housing investments. With the help of nonprofit community developers who are experienced in QAP documentation and processes, our coalition has brought about meaningful changes to the Minnesota Housing QAP. These include increasing points for longer and deeper affordability (which disincentivizes for-profit
developers who consume public subsidy for private gain), and prohibiting the use of credit scores as a screening criterion for LIHTC developments (which disparately excludes immigrant, refugee, and BIPOC households from rental housing).

community developer members of Equity in Place in a tight spot. Of course they understood that unemployment disparately impacted residents living in their buildings, who were predominantly people of color, and that therefore rent would be difficult to pay. At the same time, the rent they collected helped with building maintenance, resident services, and keeping the organization afloat—canceling it would put their organizational stability at risk. However, community developers who employed organizers were able to be in closer relationship with residents, more aware of their struggles in that moment, and more responsive to their needs. Ultimately, these organizers helped their organizations reach a more nuanced understanding and approach to the campaign, and influenced our strategies (for example, approaching banks to discuss mortgage cancellation for multifamily buildings), even if that meant holding tension and having challenging conversations with coalition partners. Equity in Place still supported the campaign as a coalition, but our talking points came from the perspectives of both renters and service providers.

It will take a lot of work, but it is possible to reconnect the community development field to its roots, and to the fold of ever-growing racial justice work.

When we hoard our knowledge of systems, we maintain the status quo. When we share that knowledge with others, we share the power to make our systems more equitable.

3. **Incorporate community organizing into your work by hiring a community organizer.** The organizer could work in coalition with other organizations who are advancing issue-specific campaigns that impact your residents and neighborhoods in which you work. Your organizer could even organize your residents—getting to know what they care about, increasing civic engagement, building trust and, more importantly, building power in community. Having a community organizer is a game-changer, because when someone asks at a staff meeting “what do our residents think about X?” you’ll have your finger on the pulse. When the pandemic began and the Cancel the Rent campaign gained momentum, it put the
and nonprofit property owners who understood their role as a “landlord” differently: rentership not just as a transactional financial relationship, but as a focal point for community stability. Therefore, it was in their best interest to advocate to those who held power in their transactional financial relationship: their mortgage holders. While conversations with banks did not go very far, the Equity in Place members who do operate affordable housing were a part of efforts urging the Minnesota governor’s administration to release additional housing assistance ($100 million was made available), and some even fundraised additional private donations, which were dedicated to covering lost rent to ensure that none of their tenants entered housing debt.

It will take a lot of work, but it is possible to reconnect the community development field to its roots, and to the fold of ever-growing racial justice work. We must be intentional about how daily organizational decisions either move us toward antiracism or perpetuate racism—sharing power or preserving the status quo—and most importantly, we must develop a lens on race and power to allow for that intention.

We must do it quickly, before the field becomes too caught up in market-based housing solutions and neoliberal approaches to development, and before the field loses touch with the people and movements that made it possible in the first place.

Tram Hoang is policy advocate for The Alliance, a coalition of community-based organizations and advocacy groups that build shared power to advance campaigns around the intersections of racial justice, economic justice, environmental justice, and health equity.
During the past 18 months, housing and community development agencies have faced unprecedented challenges and incredible opportunity. Housing professionals emerged from the chaos of a world-wide pandemic stronger – ready to innovate and to find new ways to serve their residents and their communities.

As federal funding continues to cycle between increases and decreases, many agencies are expanding the programs and services they offer. This time of growth and expansion has challenged agencies to hire and retain employees with the knowledge and skills required for today, and tomorrow's work. Housing and community development agencies are focusing on strategic initiatives that will position their agencies as strong innovative industry leaders.

NAHRO Professional Development recognizes the shifting needs and priorities of agencies. Last year, NAHRO Professional Development leveraged the challenges of the pandemic by launching an unprecedented restructure of our training and development program and increasing the number and type of courses and certification opportunities offered virtually.

The Professional Development team also spent time researching and analyzing the current and future competencies of housing commissioners, staff, managers, and executive directors, launching its first new Learning Path for Housing Commissioners. Learning paths assist agency staff and commissioners a way to easily identify fundamental training for newer staff and courses specifically designed for more experienced staff. Each new Learning Path will provide course descriptions, clear outcomes, and indicate NAHRO's recommend course sequencing.
best part is that individuals will be able to mix and match based on the unique role that they play at their housing authority!

The new Housing Commissioners Learning Path supports the important roles of Housing Commissioners and includes six newly revised courses. Maintenance and Asset Management Learning Paths will be launched in early 2022.

Learn more about our virtual and in person classes on the NAHRO website. We can also bring training to your agency or region. Contact professionaldevelopment@nahro.org to learn more.
NAHRO
BUYER’S GUIDE

Our annual directory of manufacturers, suppliers and service providers specializing in housing and community development
Welcome to the 2021 Buyer’s Guide, a directory of manufacturers, suppliers and service providers who specialize in fulfilling the needs of the housing and community development (HCD) industry. The *Journal of Housing and Community Development* does not endorse any product or service offered by the companies listed, but does advise that you use the guide to search for vendors who are familiar with the particular needs of HCD organizations.

**NOTE:** NAHRO is not responsible for errors or omissions in this Buyer’s Guide.

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Suite 201
Birmingham, AL 35242
WEBSITE: www.aprio.com

» Berrale Renshaw CPAs and Advisors LLC
6200 Chippewa St.
Saint Louis, MO 63109
PHONE: (314)-726-3308
FAX: (314)-725-6308
CONTACT: Louis Berrale
EMAIL: lou.berrale@brskcpa.com
WEBSITE: www.berrale-renshaw.com

Berrale Renshaw Sailor Khan LLC is a full-service CPA firm located in St. Louis that has specialized in public housing authority auditing since 1984. The firm is licensed in five states and practices in the Midwest and Southern regions of the United States. The current staff has close to a half century of combined experience in public housing authority auditing with Berrale Renshaw Sailor Khan alone. We offer outstanding value for your PHA auditing needs.

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Philadelphia, PA 19103
PHONE: (215)-564-1900
CONTACT: Brian Alten CPA, CEO
EMAIL: balten@bdo.com
WEBSITE: www.asherco.com

A full-service CPA firm providing expertise in auditing and special services for housing authorities, including compliance, control, fraud, forensic and project-based asset management.

» Emphasys Software
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Suite 9
Petoskey, MI 49770
PHONE: (231)-347-8787
CONTACT: Greg Gagnon
EMAIL: ggagnon@emphasys-software.com
WEBSITE: www.emphasysPHA.com

For over 35 years, Emphasys Software has been providing management software and services to public housing agencies of all sizes. Emphasys products help organizations streamline daily business processes and improve productivity through automation. Our complete software suites and services include solutions for areas such as Housing Choice Vouchers, LIHC, inspections, reporting, wait list, financials, PBA/asset management, web-based technologies and information products.

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Needham, MA 02494
PHONE: (781)-444-6630
CONTACT: Teresa A. Ewald, CEO
EMAIL: office@feacpa.com

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CONTACT: Teresa A. Ewald, CEO
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» Fenton, Ewald & Associates
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PHONE: (215)-416-6798
CONTACT: Roman Kubas
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» The Michaels Development Company
2 Cooper St.
Camden, NJ 08102
PHONE: (856)-596-5817
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» Urlaub Accounting and Computer Services
P.O. Box 2663
Ada, OK 74821
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WEBSITE: www.urlaubaccounting.com

ACCOUNTING/ AUDITING

» Berman Hopkins Wright & LaHam, CPAs & Associates LLP
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WEBSITE: www.bermanhopkins.com
CONTACT: Beth Kirchner
EMAIL: kirchner@bermanhopkins.com
PHONE: (321)-757-2020

A full-service CPA firm providing expertise in auditing and special services for housing authorities, including compliance, control, fraud, forensic and project-based asset management.

» Eide Bailly LLP
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P.O. Box 2545
Fargo, ND 58108
PHONE: (701)-239-8500
FAX: (701)-239-8600
CONTACT: Shannon Breuer
EMAIL: sbreuer@eidebailly.com
WEBSITE: www.eidebailly.com/ah

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500 S. Second St.
Suite 200
La Crosse, WI 54601
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CONTACT: Angie Campbell
EMAIL: acampbell@hawkinsashcpas.com
WEBSITE: www.HawkinsAshCPAs.com
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CONTACT: Arthur J. Schuldit, Jr., CEO
EMAIL: art@sgba.com
WEBSITE: www.sgba.com
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Lexington, KY 40504-3329
PHONE: (859) 224-1351
CONTACT: Newby Walters
EMAIL: nwalters@scbarchitects.com

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122 Michigan St.
Suite 200
South Bend, IN 46601
PHONE: (574) 233-2119
CONTACT: Andrew Grontkowski
EMAIL: agrontkowski@forumarchitectsllc.com
EMAIL: whentschel@forumarchitectsllc.com
WEBSITE: www.forumarchitectsllc.com

SGB Architects LLC has been designing affordable housing for public housing authorities across the country since 1982. Our program expertise includes mixed-finance, RAD and LIHTC.

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507 E. Michigan St.
Milwaukee, WI 53202
PHONE: (763) 227-7709
CONTACT: Mary Fox
EMAIL: mary.p.fox@jci.com
WEBSITE: www.johnsoncontrols.com
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Maryville, TN 37801
PHONE: (440) 991-6628
CONTACT: Abhijit Verekar
EMAIL: av@averoadvisors.com
WEBSITE: www.averoadvisors.com
When systems like Emphasys Elite, Yardi, and other leading Public Housing Authority (PHA) software are adequately integrated, they can streamline processes, optimize workflows between departments, and create continuity between other enterprise systems within your organization. However, many times Public Housing Authorities struggle with fully integrating and maintaining this highly customizable housing software due to poor vendor support, lack of experienced technical staff, resources, or existing complex and broken organizational processes. Avero Advisors has partnered with numerous Public Housing Authorities across the nation to either optimize existing housing software or guide agencies through finding the right system that fits their organizational needs.
With years of experience working in the PHA industry, Avèro has become a primary liaison with organizations, Emphasys, or other leading PHA software vendors. As a liaison or Project Manager, Avèro ensures that all processes are optimized, requirements documented, and vendor relationships and support managed to maximize the system’s value and achieve your mission.

Whether your Public Housing Authority is large or small, Avèro curates tailor-made solutions that have been expertly assessed, documented, and strategically organized to become part of your long-term IT strategy and team. Avèro creates trusted client partnerships that cultivate success in not only their organizations but communities.

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Mountain Home, AR 72653
PHONE: (800) 506-8064
CONTACT: Shannon Brooks, President
EMAIL: shannon@bjmweb.com
PHONE: (870) 425-8064
CONTACT: Jodie Elizabeth Jeffrey, Vice President
EMAIL: jej@bjmweb.com
PHONE: (800) 506-8064

Brooks Jeffrey Marketing Inc. is a women-owned, full-service multimedia marketing, website and digital design firm, headquartered in Mountain Home, Arkansas. Founded in 1984, the firm has built a solid reputation for national award-winning, results-driven communication solutions. Brooks Jeffrey’s experience with website development and digital marketing began in 1996. The firm currently provides website services for housing authority clients across the United States. Brooks Jeffrey’s talented team of artists, writers, designers and web programmers has created hundreds of successful web solutions including custom solutions specifically to address the needs of housing authorities. Mobile-friendly, responsive website designs with interactive property maps, online forms, notifications to subscribers via text and/or email, social media integration, password-protected HA staff portals and easy-update content management systems (CMS) allow you to provide information, tools and resources 24/7 to your housing authority clients, staff and the public. Brooks Jeffrey can also assist with logos, branding and printed materials to provide a professional, integrated marketing strategy for your housing authority. Contact us to view demo websites, work examples and references.

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PO Box 87122
Canton, MI 48188
PHONE: (734) 725-0338
CONTACT: Adnan Naqvi, CEO
EMAIL: ceo@cremsen.com
WEBSITE: www.cremsen.com

Cremsen provides secure cloud-based (SaaS) digital signage solution to manage your display devices, zones, contents, creative and schedules.

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Suite 3-205
Deerfield Beach, FL 33441
PHONE: (954) 457-3330
EMAIL: sam@designingsuccess.us
WEBSITE: www.designingsuccess.us

Designing Success developed and markets Tracking At-A-Glance® (TAAG), a user-friendly, web-based case management and performance tracking software program. We help track your clients from recruitment through program completion. TAAG is used to track housing programs like FSS, HOPE VI, Moving to Work and ROSS. We offer a Grant Module, where housing authorities can create their grants and track actual against projected goals and milestones. We have developed a relocation module that automatically calculates replacement housing payment (RHP) under the URA and Section 104(d). We were recently endorsed by the American Association of Service Coordinators for tracking their members’ Family Self-Sufficiency Programs.

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Ste 115
San Antonio, TX 78217
PHONE: (210) 828-8343
CONTACT: Paul Stahl
EMAIL: Paul.Stahl@dynatouch.com
WEBSITE: www.dynatouch.com

DynaTouch is a technology integrator and developer, specializing in secure, self-service kiosk solutions. Built from the ground up for Public Housing Authorities, our PHA OneStop Resident Self-Service Kiosks are tailored to the specific community needs of each PHA, with our expert team of professionals working alongside them every step of the way. Our COVID-19 Response Technology allows you to continue safe and effective operation of your housing programs while assisting and protecting your residents, applicants, and employees. The kiosk’s document management functions minimize the handling of paperwork and allow residents to fill out and sign digital applications, scan and upload recertifications, access online payments, and submit maintenance requests—all from a one-stop self-service customer kiosk. PHA OneStop Resident Self-Service Kiosk will reduce employee time dedicated to appointments, provide access to affordable housing assistance for those in need, and provide secure, contactless digital document collection.
For over 35 years, Emphasys Software has been providing management software and services to public housing agencies of all sizes. Emphasys products help organizations streamline daily business processes and improve productivity through automation. Our complete software suites and services include solutions for areas such as Housing Choice Vouchers, LIPH, inspections, reporting, waitlist, financial, PBA / asset management, web-based technologies and information products.

GoSection8.com
5000 T-Rex Ave.
Suite 150
Boca Raton, FL 33431
PHONE: (561) 362-1099
CONTACT: Dominic Muttillo, CEO
EMAIL: dominic@gosection8.com
WEBSITE: www.gosection8.com
Since GoSection 8’s inception in 2004, our Rent Reasonable, web-based software has performed more than one million certifications. GoSection 8 also supplies comparable data and a landlord listing service and housing locator.

McCright & Associates LLC
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MRI Software
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Solan, OH 44139
PHONE: 1 (800) 321-8770
CONTACT: Jennifer Kelly
EMAIL: jennifer.kelly@mrisoftware.com
WEBSITE: www.mrisoftware.com
MRI’s industry-best software for managing a variety of funding programs for public housing authorities and city and state housing agencies, including HCV, MTW and RAD, takes the complication out of compliance and enhances operational efficiency. Our innovative solutions include self-service assistance portals, online application collection, resident screening, automated resident communications, PIC management and free accounting services.

NEC Software Solutions
300 Tri State International
Suite 150
Lincolnshire, IL 60069
PHONE: (636) 368-6451
CONTACT: Jeff du Manoir
EMAIL: jeffdu.manoir@ncews.com
WEBSITE: www.ncews.com
NEC Software Solutions (formerly Northgate Public Services) provides Housing Software around the world for customers from small, to over 140,000 units. Our NEC Housing solution is a web-based and modular solution covering the end-to-end the provision and management of Housing, from assessing household needs, through matching, and waitlisting, rental and administration, subsidy entitlement, arrears management, all complemented by the asset-based modules including repairs, planned maintenance and capital works and lifecycle management. Our solutions bring people, properties and organizations together into a single system, letting you manage and report on the critical intersection. Our solutions bring efficiency, and compliance, through workflows and wizards, advanced role-based security, an intuitive interface that runs across devices, and web browsers. Visual Dashboards, Advanced Reporting and end-user interactions minimize the demands on IT, support rapid decision making, and maximize user productivity. As part of the NEC family, we have the backing of one of the world’s foremost providers of Internet of Things, Smart Cities and advanced communications.

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EMAIL: sales@realpage.com
WEBSITE: www.realpage.com
RealPage is a leading global provider of software and data analytics to the real estate industry. Clients use its platform to improve operating performance and increase capital returns. Founded in 1998 and headquartered in Richardson, Texas, RealPage currently serves more than 12,400 clients worldwide from offices in North America, Europe and Asia. For more information about the company, visit www.realpage.com.

WSD Digital
750 Main St.
#327
Hartford, CT 06103
CONTACT: Cynthia Bates
PHONE: (774) 293-0117
EMAIL: cbates@wsddigital.com
WEBSITE: www.wsddigital.com
A foremost provider of Internet of Things, we have the backing of one of the world’s foremost providers of Internet of Things, Smart Cities and advanced communications.
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» Yardi Systems
430 South Fairview Ave.
Goleta, CA 93117
PHONE: (805) 699-2040 ext. 239
CONTACT: Kris Panks
EMAIL: kris.panks@yardi.com
WEBSITE: www.yardi.com

Yardi® develops and supports industry-leading compliance, accounting and property management software for all types and sizes of public housing agencies. Yardi solutions streamline compliance with Public Housing, Housing Choice Vouchers, HUD 50058, HUD 50059 and all major affordable housing programs. Clients choose Yardi for quality products, expert support and stability. They stay with us for evolving solutions that keep up with the ever-changing technology landscape. For more information on how Yardi is energized for tomorrow, visit yardi.com.

CONSULTANTS

» Contractor Compliance and Monitoring, Inc.
635 Mariners Island Blvd Ste 200
San Mateo, CA 94404-1060

CONTACT: Steven Noguera
PHONE: (443) 906-2187
EMAIL: snoguera@ccmilcp.com
WEBSITE: www.ccmilcp.com

» CVR Associates Inc.
2309 S. MacDill Ave.
Suite 200
Tampa, FL 33629
PHONE: (813) 223-3100
CONTACT: Fradique A. Rocha
EMAIL: cvr@cvrassociates.com
WEBSITE: www.cvrassociates.com

CVR Associates is a full-service management consulting firm specializing in providing management solutions to affordable housing programs. Our professional staff includes former executive directors and senior level staff of PHAs, comptrollers, CPAs, attorneys, urban planners, architects, engineers, property appraisers, construction managers and information systems specialists, whose backgrounds provide us the insight to assess program and agency-wide operations holistically. This multidisciplinary approach ensures CVR clients receive creative, yet practical, solutions that are grounded in the realities of the current affordable housing methods to assess operations and provide solutions to our clients that ensure program compliance with HUD regulations. We specialize in providing management solutions for affordable housing programs, including the Housing Choice Voucher program, mixed-finance development, modernization and capital funds, and public housing. Services include technical assistance, program management, strategic planning, inspection services, operational assessments, process improvement, training, construction management, improved asset management practices and technology solutions.

» Du & Associates Inc.
4350 E West Hwy
Ste 310
Bethesda, MD 20814
PHONE: (301) 913-9628
CONTACT: Lucie Du
EMAIL: lucie.du@duassoc.com

A professional consulting firm, founded in 1996, that provides asset management, underwriting, legislative and other consulting services to the affordable housing industry.

» Gans, Gans & Associates
7445 Quail Meadow Road
Plant City, FL 33565
PHONE: (813) 986-4441
EMAIL: simone@gansgans.com
WEBSITE: www.gansgans.com

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Suite 200
La Crosse, WI 54601
PHONE: (608) 784-7737
CONTACT: Angie Campbell
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CONTACT: David Morgan
EMAIL: dimorgan1127@att.net
WEBSITE: www.dlmorganandassociates.com

Providing technical assistance, consultation, program assessments, file reviews and training on an array of subjects in assisted housing programs.
Housing and Development Law Institute
630 Eye St. NW
Washington, DC 20001
PHONE: (202) 289-3400
CONTACT: Lisa L. Walker, CEO
EMAIL: lwalker@hdli.org
WEBSITE: www.hdli.org

A nationwide, nonprofit membership organization that serves as a legal resource to local housing and redevelopment agencies and their counsel. HDLI provides a wide variety of services in support of its members including period publications, legal educational conferences, on-site training, one-on-one legal counseling and assistance, useful form documents and policies, an active list serve and amicus curia appearances.

» Kell Consulting LLC
15 Oak Creek Trail
Madison, WI 53717
PHONE: (608) 841-1092
EMAIL: amykell@kellconsulting.com
WEBSITE: www.kellconsulting.com

With over $170 million in federal grant funds awarded, KCLLC is a national leader in grant writing services for public housing authorities. Grants awarded over the past 21 years have included Choice Neighborhoods Planning and Implementation grants, HOPE VI, Section 8 Contract Administration, Self-Sufficiency, Family Unification, Mainstream Vouchers, ROSS, Section 811 Capital Advance, and others. KCLLC is known for working collaboratively with PHA clients to showcase the best of what each proposal has to offer its residents, the community at large, and HUD.

» Management Resource Group Inc.
2402 Mount Vernon Road
Suite 200
Atlanta, GA 30338
PHONE: (770) 396-9856
CONTACT: Howard S. Fleisig
EMAIL: atlmrg@comcast.net
WEBSITE: www.mrgatl.comcastbiz.net

Consulting and training services to housing authorities throughout the United States. A few of our services include: salary studies, green physical needs assessments, rent reasonableness studies, developing plans and policy’s for both public housing and Housing Choice Voucher programs, Section 504 compliance, designated housing plans, environmental review studies, PHA annual and five-year plans, capital fund programs, energy audits and utility allowance studies.

» National Facility Consultants Inc.
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Marietta, GA 30068
PHONE: (770) 977-4134
CONTACT: W. Sawyer Shirley, President
EMAIL: wsshirley@icloud.com
WEBSITE: www.nfcinc.biz

NFC has almost 30 years’ experience providing a broad range of consulting services to over 450 affordable housing providers across the nation. With experience in strategic and agency planning, operational improvements, policy development, energy services, construction management, general consulting, and staff and board training, NFC has the expertise to provide professional services to address any issue facing an affordable housing organization today. NFC is a leader in performing physical needs assessments (including GPNA and RAD PCAs), conducting energy audits, and developing property-specific utility allowances. NFC strives to complete every engagement in an individual, creative and professional manner to meet the specific needs of each individual client.

» Norris Consulting and Development
13602 N. 18th Drive
Phoenix, AZ 85029
PHONE: (602) 451-6162
CONTACT: Isaiah Norris
EMAIL: isaiah@norrisbusinessconsulting.com
WEBSITE: norrisconsultinganddevelopment.com

Norris Consulting and Development (Previously Norris Business Consulting) provides clients with high-quality solutions and services regarding operations, affordable housing solutions, outsources HCV and specialty program contract services, and Contract HQS inspections.

» Recap Real Estate Advisors
38 Chauncy St.
Suite 600
Boston, MA 02111
PHONE: (617) 338-9484
CONTACT: Gina Martinez, CEO
EMAIL: slsetan@recapadvisors.com
WEBSITE: www.recapadvisors.com

For more than two decades, Recap Real Estate Advisors has worked with the multi-family owners, investors, lenders and regulators to execute cutting edge transactions, stabilize and reposition properties, and design innovative programs and strategies. Capital needs assessments, energy audits and REAC services are provided by Recap’s wholly owned subsidiary, On-Site Insight.

CONSULTANTS/ CONTRACT STAFF

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EMAIL: ldoyle@ahdcinc.com
CONSULTANTS—OPERATIONS

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PHONE: (202) 248-1967
CONTACT: Rhae Parkes
EMAIL: parkes@ejpconsultinggroup.com
WEBSITE: www.ejpconsultinggroup.com
Providing services regarding real estate development, strategic planning and portfolio repositioning, human capital development, and Choice Neighborhoods planning and implementation services. EJP provides consulting services to housing agencies and their partners nationwide. These include: strategic planning; portfolio assessment and repositioning; comprehensive neighborhood planning; Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI) planning and implementation; Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) conversions; mixed-finance development; relocation and human capital planning and implementation; and training and capacity building. EJP works with clients that self-develop and those who partner with private developers.

» Management Resource Group Inc.
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WEBSITE: www.mrgatl.comcastbiz.net
Consulting and training services to housing authorities throughout the United States. A few of our services include: salary studies, green physical needs assessments, rent reasonableness studies, developing plans and policy’s for both public housing and Housing Choice Voucher programs, Section 504 compliance, designated housing plans, environmental review studies, PHA annual and five-year plans, capital fund programs, energy audits and utility allowance studies.

» Quadel Consulting and Training LLC
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CONTACT: Mirna Bonilla
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WEBSITE: www.quadel.com
Quadel Consulting is a leading national expert in public housing. Housing Choice Voucher programs, Section 8 Multifamily Contract Administration, Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program and HUD’s Rental Assistance Demonstration Program. With over three decades of experience, our affordable housing clients benefit from diversity of our experience and deep knowledge of housing programs.

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P.O. Box 385
331 N. Platt St.
Lansing, IA 52151
PHONE: (563) 538-4224
CONTACT: Dave Monsrud
EMAIL: dave@lansinghp.net
WEBSITE: www.lansingHP.net
Lansing Housing Products is a U.S. manufacturer of heavy duty security screen doors, security storm doors, safety screens and security screens. We have a wide range of steel doors with features to reinforce the door’s strength at an affordable price. Custom manufactured to withstand the use and abuse associated with being installed on multifamily housing. Keep intruders out and kids in with our robust Tough Tek Metals® Screens, designed to lower maintenance costs while increasing security. We pride ourselves on our ability to provide excellent customer service, quality, attractive and innovative products.

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180 Willmott St.
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Cobourg, ON K9A 4R5
PHONE: (800) 787-2620
CONTACT: Robert Young
EMAIL: sales@ruscomfg.com
WEBSITE: www.ruscomfg.com
Rusco Manufacturing Inc. has been supplying to public housing for over 80 years. Our strength is steel, and we manufacture steel and aluminum screen doors, storm doors, steel and aluminum security screens. We manufacture one of the strongest and most energy-efficient insulated entrance doors for new construction or replacement in public housing.

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Suite 900
Shreveport, LA 71101
PHONE: (318) 226-1411
FAX: (318) 213-1090
WEBSITE: callhsa.com
ENERGY SERVICES

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Framingham, MA 01701-2090
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PHONE: (813) 223-3100
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