

Housing Matters

WINTER 2015
Volume 14 | Number 1

LEADING WITH SOLUTIONS



▲ 29 Palms resident, Dora Thorne, graces the cover of the Department's 2014 Annual Report.

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ADOH Releases FY2014 Annual Report

On January 8th, we released our Fiscal Year 2014 Annual Report, highlighting this past year's efforts and achievements from the Arizona Department of Housing (ADOH), the Arizona Housing Finance Authority (AzHFA), and the Arizona Home Foreclosure Prevention Funding Corporation (AHFPFC). As part of our responsibility to keep Arizona State government open and accountable, this report contains details on how our federal tax dollars are flowing back to the state and being put to work.

In FY2014, ADOH, AzHFA, and AHFPFC made combined commitments of over \$400 million in assistance available to support housing, community development activities, and foreclosure prevention initiatives throughout the state. Through the federally funded Save Our Home AZ program, over 1,900 families were able to avoid foreclosure. Together, all our resources were able to assist over 80,000 Arizona households throughout all 15 counties.

The Department continues to provide programs and critical resources to the most vulnerable populations of the state while serving as the driver for economic development and leveraging private capital. Whether it is through our work to provide safe and affordable housing, assistance to help aid our homeless and special needs populations, or our ongoing efforts to prevent Arizonans from losing their homes, we remain fully committed to finding responsible and reasonable solutions to counter the housing conditions facing our state.

It is our pleasure to share with you our Fiscal Year 2014 Annual Report. To access the report, please visit the Publications page at www.azhousing.gov.



29 PALMS: An Oasis in the Desert

Over the next fifteen years, more than 500,000 children with autism disorders will become adults. Autistic adults currently have few options for housing away from their families.

Today, many of these adults are being cared for by aging parents who in most cases will not outlive their children, leaving them with limited options for lifelong support. This growing new subset of the developmentally disabled population is too old for continued support through special education services of a public school system, and too fragile to live without assistance in the larger world. Their families face a complicated system of vocational rehabilitation services, Medicaid, disconnected government agencies, and a lack of appropriated residential care options beyond an institutional setting.

The stress and worry many Arizona families deal with can be grueling. What happens now? What are our options for the future? Do we have any? These are just a few of the questions many parents with children with autism have to face. Fortunately today, thanks to people like Denise Resnik, Founder and Board Chair of First Place AZ and Co-Founder of the Southwest Autism Research & Resources Center (SARRC), these families do have options.

29 Palms continued on page 3



Director's Message

On January 8, we released our Fiscal Year 2014 Annual Report. This report highlights this past year's efforts and achievements from the Arizona Department of Housing (ADOH), the Arizona Housing Finance Authority (AzHFA), and the Arizona Home Foreclosure Prevention Funding Corporation (AHFPC). Additionally, as part of our responsibility to keep Arizona State government open and accountable, this report contains details on how our federal tax dollars are flowing back to the state and being put to work.

While Arizona's unemployment rate has declined to approximately 6.8 percent, that doesn't address the thousands of Arizonans who are significantly under employed compared to 2006. Today, 20 percent of Arizona homeowners are still burdened with negative equity.

The need for affordable housing remains at a premium. Fortunately, thanks to the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program and a continued commitment from ADOH, we continue to promote affordable rental housing units within walking distance of public transportation throughout the entire state. Today, Arizona residents are discovering that they can find affordable housing in addition to cutting their commuting costs. Since 2010, ADOH has funded 1,776 units within a half mile radius of the Valley Metro Light Rail.

The agency continues to work with major lenders to gain support and participation in its federally funded foreclosure prevention program, Save Our Home AZ. In FY2014 we made several proactive modifications to the program along with some key modification to the qualifying provisions. These changes have allowed us to assist a significant number of more people throughout Arizona.

It is our pleasure to have the opportunity to highlight and share with you our accomplishments from the past fiscal year. Moving forward, the agency remains committed to providing programs and critical resources to the most vulnerable populations of the state. From our work to provide safe and affordable housing, assistance to help aid the homeless and special needs populations, or our ongoing efforts to prevent Arizonans from losing their homes, ADOH remains fully committed to finding responsible and reasonable solutions to address the housing issues facing our state.

29 PALMS continued from page 1



Because of Denise and her vision and dedication, these families have 29 Palms and soon they will have the First Place AZ Campus.

According to Denise, 29 Palms is a 20-year in the making dream come true. As a mother with an autistic child, Denise fully understands the difficult struggles and decisions families with autistic children encounter, especially when facing the future.

29 Palms is a newly refurbished, incredibly unique affordable multifamily housing property, co-locating fifteen apartments for seniors 55 years of age and older with six apartments for adults 18 years of age and older with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Foundation for Senior Living, in partnership with the Southwest Autism Research & Resources Center (SARRC) developed this project to provide services to enhance the quality of life of both the seniors and the young adults who desire to live there.

29 Palms is universally designed, exhibiting beautiful garden-style architecture. The community nurtures independent and dignified living while at the same time, providing the resources of a community with a life center and a secured campus.

29 Palms will act as a beta site for the First Place AZ Campus which is expected to break ground this year. The campus will include housing for young adults with autism, a two year "transition academy" and a multi-use training facility for providers, professionals and physicians.

The six set-aside units are specially fitted to adapt to autistic adults' needs. Air conditioning, refrigerators and dishwashers are extra quiet to account for sensory over-stimulation, and parents of residents can choose from an array of technology to tell them everything from if their adult child is getting out of bed, to if they're opening the cabinets.

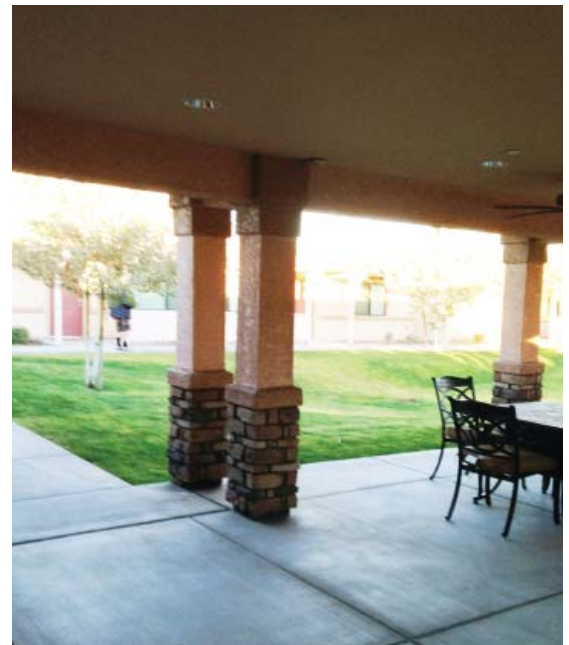
"We are thrilled with the new units for adults with autism, which represent 'independent living classrooms' for the First Place Transition Academy participants," said Denise Resnik. "Their independence is being supported by neighbors at 29 Palms; the First Place curriculum managed by the team at Southwest Autism Research & Resource Center and soon at Gateway Community College; and the remarkable development and management team from the Foundation for Senior Living. We're also thrilled by the community support. Thanks to Boys Team Charity, the property now has a beautiful raised garden that will bring neighbors together in shared activities. And thanks to Del Sol Furniture, each of the six units is fully and beautifully furnished."

Family and members of the autistic community are not the only ones excited about 29 Palms. The seniors that make up the other fifteen units of the property are proud to call this very special place home.

Dora Thorne, 85, recently moved from Tucson to 29 Palms to be closer to her son, following the passing of her husband. Since moving in, Dora has absolutely fallen in love with the neighborhood and the community. Dora, like many of the senior residents, has taken advantage of the convenient location, the proximity to the Valley Metro Light Rail, the group activities within the community, like baking cookies, and all the other wonderful amenities.

According to Guy Mikkelsen, Foundation for Senior Living, the seniors who live at 29 Palms will almost be "live-in grandparents" for the young adults living in the community and they will get to create new nurturing families.

29 Palms received a majority of its funding, \$3 million of the total \$3.7 million, from tax credits allocated by the Arizona Department of Housing and the federally funded Neighborhood Stabilization Program. Other funds came from private businesses, including LISC Phoenix and the Arizona Community Foundation. According to ADOH Director Michael Traylor, "public-private partnerships like 29 Palms work to solve problems within our communities and we could definitely benefit with more of them."





FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

BIPARTISAN BUDGET DEAL REACHED

➤ Congress narrowly avoided a government shutdown in early December by passing a fiscal year 2015 spending package just days before the prior funding bill expired. The FY2015 spending package included 11 new spending bills that will fund government, including HUD and the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the remainder of the fiscal year.

The package included \$35.6 billion for HUD programs, which was approximately \$650 million more than the House had earlier proposed; however, many of the spending levels were lower than the FY2014 appropriation, including a \$100 million cut to the HOME Investment Partnership program and \$30 million less for Community Development Block Grants. In total, the package is \$90 million less for HUD program spending than in FY2014.

TAX REFORM

➤ Back in December Congress passed the Tax Increase Prevention Act of 2014 which extended, retroactively, through 2014, a number of expired tax relief provisions, including the 9 percent minimum Housing Credit rate.

Unfortunately, the legislation did not include the establishment of the 4 percent acquisition Housing Credit minimum rate, which the Senate Finance Committee included in their version of the extender bill, approved earlier in the year.

House and Senate negotiators were forced to abandon their effort to agree upon a tax bill that would have made permanent some expiring tax provisions while extending the rest for two years, after the White House threatened to veto it for favoring tax breaks for corporations over those for working families.

Moving forward, the desire for a bipartisan bill to reform and simplify the tax code remains strong on Capitol Hill. Both the House and Senate are expected to continue to look into the issue over the course of the year as lowering the corporate tax rate continues to be a priority for both parties. Additionally, fixing the floating rate for the Housing Tax Credit at 9 percent permanently will also be explored throughout the discussion.

FEDERAL UPDATE continued on page 8



STATE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

ARIZONA FACES \$1B BUDGET SHORTFALL AS 52ND ARIZONA LEGISLATURE CONVENES

➤ The 52nd Arizona State Legislature convened on Monday, January 12, with Governor Ducey delivering his first state of the state address before a joint session of the House and Senate.

The Governor outlined his priorities for the upcoming year and beyond; however, with the state facing a significant budget deficit close to \$1B, the budget and the economy took center stage.

Governor Ducey called upon the Legislature to confront and resolve the state deficit and implement a responsible, balanced budget, without raising taxes and without delaying future tax breaks for the business community. This means the Legislature will have to make some tough choices in cutting government agency budgets.

Additionally, the Governor has implemented a state government hiring freeze with protection for vital areas, like child safety and public safety. He has also called for an unbiased inspector general mandated to find areas of savings within government.

In his speech, the Governor also proposed some major reforms to the state's education system. He announced that his budget proposal will prioritize money in the classroom through a "Classroom First Initiative" that will ensure dollars go directly to the classrooms and teachers, not to cover administrative costs.

STATE UPDATE continued on page 8



The Arizona Department of Housing congratulates Arizona's 23rd Governor, Douglas A. Ducey, who was sworn into office on January 5th.

Karia Lee Basta recognized as the 2014 ADOH Employee of the Year

Karia Lee Basta has been named the 2014 Arizona Department of Housing Employee of the Year. Karia, the Administrator for the Special Needs Division, was nominated for her outstanding work and dedication to the Department and the State of Arizona.

Karia develops and implements supportive housing programs for homeless and disabled populations in rural Arizona. Under Karia's leadership, the Special Needs Division consistently produces excellent results allowing ADOH to remain as a top competitor for the national pool of federal Continuum of Care, which provides grant dollars for housing Arizona's homeless population.

Karia's ability to forge continuously better partnerships has greatly increased the productivity of 43 supportive housing programs in rural Arizona, thereby avoiding federal funding reductions.

Housing vulnerable populations is Karia's passion while preserving vulnerable funding is her talent. Over the past year she oversaw the implementation of HUD's new HEARTH regulations, a massive undertaking resulting in a stronger more competitive Continuum of Care.

On December 18, Karia was recognized at the Department's All Agency Staff Meeting and Holiday Celebration. For this honor, Karia received recognition from ADOH Director Michael Traylor.

On behalf of the entire Arizona Department of Housing, we would like to congratulate Karia Lee Basta on receiving this honor.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The 12th Annual Arizona Housing Forum will be held at the Arizona Biltmore Hotel, August 26 - 28.

Interested in sponsoring or being involved in the Marketplace? Contact:

info Cynthia Diggelmann +
(602) 771-1016 + cynthia.diggelmann@azhousing.gov.



Arizona Housing Finance Authority Activities

► The AzHFA Home Plus Mortgage Loan Origination Program provides an attractive 30-year fixed rate mortgage with a 4% down payment assistance grant to be used by the eligible homebuyer for their down payment and or closing costs. A recent Federal Reserve survey indicated approximately 45% of renters did not buy a house over the past year because they did not have enough money for the down payment. Our objective is to assist creditworthy renters who can afford a mortgage but lack the resources for the down payment. A healthy first-time homebuyer market is a precursor to creating strong, stable communities.

In the last quarter of 2014, 183 new homebuyers have received a new Home Plus mortgage with a down payment assistance grant. Since the Home Plus program's inception in April 2013, 668 homebuyers have received over \$3.55 million dollars in down payment assistance. AzHFA raises funds for its initiative in the capital market and forms partnerships with banking and lending institutions to facilitate our Home Plus down payment assistance program throughout the state of Arizona.

Information on the Home Plus program may be found on our website: www.azhousing.gov

SCHEDULED MEETINGS

February 12 March 12 April 9
**check website for times*



2014-2015 AZHFA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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SAVE OUR HOME AZ UPDATE

The Save Our Home AZ (SOHAZ) program continues to successfully assist Arizona homeowners who are either facing a potential foreclosure or are significantly underwater with their mortgage payments.

Since its inception, SOHAZ has been able to assist 3,546 families avoid foreclosure and stay in their homes. Over \$113.9 million in program assistance has been expended or committed to individual homeowners as of December 31,

to assist these homeowners through the Save Our Home AZ program, funded by the United States Department of the Treasury. Additionally, Arizona's foreclosure hotline has assisted over 76,330 troubled homeowners with important information and housing counseling services.

While the housing market has improved since the height of the recession, close to 20 percent of Arizona homeowners are still underwater. Thousands of responsible homeowners who are current with their mortgages were hit hard by the recession and plummeting home prices. Many of these homeowners still need assistance and Save Our Home AZ may help.

Save Our Home AZ has a component that uses HARP 2.0, a federal program designed to help responsible homeowners who are current with their mortgages. This program applies principal reductions to homeowners with negative equity.

ADOH has successfully dispersed more than \$49.1 million to homeowners who are underwater since July 2012, reducing their mortgages by an average of \$50,428.

In October, the U.S. Department of the Treasury amended Arizona's program to allow for principal reduction to take a mortgage below the current market value of the property, if in doing so the homeowner can achieve a payment that is affordable. Assistance is provided as a due on sale loan. The amendment will allow the program to permanently assist many of Arizona's underemployed program participants who currently receive ongoing monthly assistance because their mortgages are no longer affordable given permanently reduced incomes.

Save Our Home AZ was created to assist homeowners avoid foreclosure on their primary residence. The program provides assistance in the form of Principal Reduction Mortgage Modification, Unemployment/Underemployment Mortgage Assistance, Second Lien Elimination and Short Sale Assistance.

For additional information on the Save Our Home AZ program, or to take the self assessment to determine your eligibility, please visit www.azhousing.gov or call the ARIZONA FORECLOSURE HELP-LINE at **1-877-448-1211**.



Featured Groundbreakings & Grand Openings



LEGACY ON MAIN | Mesa, AZ

➤ Located at 950 West Main Street in Mesa, Legacy on Main is a transit oriented development within walking distance of the Alma School Road Light Rail Station. Legacy on Main is an acquisition and rehabilitation project made up of 76 units set aside for 40%, 50% and 60% of the area median income with 24 of those units set aside specifically for households with children. The plan included the rehabilitation and reconfiguration of the existing 76 units by remodeling the existing buildings, converting 8 two-bedroom and 10 three-bedroom units into four-bedroom units and adding 2 four-bedroom townhomes.



Legacy on Main was funded in 2013 through the Low-income Housing Tax Credit program. The developer of the project is Glennmark Construction, Inc., the co-developer is Antares Development & Investments, Inc., and the non-profit entity is PUL-Coral Gardens Apartments, Inc, a subsidiary of the Greater Phoenix Urban League.

The community center at Legacy on Main offers an on-site after school program with an educational component, computer classes every two months, job training, search assistance and/or placement every two months, quarterly credit and financial counseling/education through their non-profit co-developer. The center will also have a resident services coordinator, who will directly provide enhanced services including family/parenting guidance, health and nutrition guidance, and English as a second language.

The project has all the usual unit and property amenities for households with children, including a pool, playground area, and a picnic area, as well as common laundry facilities, and one covered parking space per unit.

The project hosted a grand opening ceremony on November 5.

VICTORY PLACE IV | Phoenix, AZ

➤ On November 10th, Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton was joined by ADOH Director Michael Traylor for the groundbreaking of Victory Place IV. Victory Place IV is the final phase of a veterans' housing campus located on more than five acres in the South Mountain Village of Phoenix.

The fourth and final phase will add 96 permanent supportive housing units for homeless veterans to the existing 177 residences. Besides the 66 efficiencies and 30 one-bedroom homes, Victory Place IV will include a multi-purpose room, business center, social services offices and a picnic/barbecue area for residents. A range of supportive services such as case management, employment services, anger management groups, substance abuse treatment, life skills, and crisis intervention will be available for the



GROUNDBREAKINGS continued on page 7

FEDERAL UPDATE continued from page 8

PRESIDENT VISITS ARIZONA

Signs Executive Order Cutting Mortgage Insurance Premiums

▶ President Obama visited Phoenix in January to announce that he will cut mortgage insurance premiums on Federal Housing Administrative loans in a move aimed to attract new homebuyers. The rate cut will drop the FHA mortgage insurance premium from 1.35 percent to 0.85 percent and will go into effect by the end of February. While this action is not considered to be a significant game changer, it could certainly help on the margins. Administration officials say the move will save the average homebuyer \$900 a year.

The housing market has made improvements from the depth of the recession; however, home sales slowed in 2014. Additionally, in Arizona, homeownership has dropped 6 percent from the peak in 2006 and home construction is still below what most economists feel is considered to be healthy.

The President also highlighted federal mortgage foreclosure assistance through the U.S. Department of Treasury's Hardest Hit Fund Program which, in Arizona, is administered by ADOH.

STATE UPDATE continued from page 4

Through an executive order, the Governor is assembling a team of education and finance professionals charged with scrubbing every dollar in every formula in statute in order to identify ways in which to get maximum dollars into the classroom.

The Governor's plan will give public schools more access to capital so they can spend more money in the classroom and less on debt service. The Governor's budget will reserve resources that public schools can borrow against to bring down their debt service costs. Half of the projects funded will be in low-income communities.

Additionally, the Governor is calling for the creation of the "Arizona Public School Achievement District," to give Arizona's best public schools new and innovative options to expand so that thousands of families sitting on waiting lists for charter schools can finally ensure their kids get a quality education.

Finally, the Governor called for the passage of the bipartisan American Civics Bill, HB2064, to ensure every Arizona high school graduate understands basic American civics. This bill is expected to be fast tracked through the Legislature and reach the Governor's desk quickly.

Both House and Senate leadership are encouraged by Governor Ducey's outlook on the budget. On Friday, January 16th, the Governor proposed a \$9.09 billion budget for FY2016 which seeks to structurally balance the state's budget by FY2017. Ducey's budget calls for \$44 million in new spending, but fixes this year's budget through \$349 million in various spending reductions and \$304 million in one-time agency fund transfers.

info Daniel Romm, Legislative Liaison/PIO
(602) 771-1008 + daniel.romm@azhousing.gov

GROUNDBREAKINGS continued from page 7



residents. Phases I and II included 177 beds comprised of 70 VA grant and per diem transitional housing beds operated by U.S. Vets and 107 units of permanent housing with support services provided by U.S. VETS, Community Bridges, and the Phoenix VA Healthcare for Homeless Veterans program.

Victory Place Phase III added 75 units of permanent housing with support services for homeless and formerly homeless veterans aged 55 and older and featured 15 Project-Based Department of Housing and Urban Development Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD VASH) Vouchers. These vouchers are used to serve the most vulnerable homeless veterans ensuring that no veteran is left behind.

Since its start, the Victory Place Veterans Campus has operated at full capacity due to the constant demand for affordable housing for veterans. Historically it has catered to Vietnam era vets but with the influx of those returning from recent conflicts demand is not expected to diminish anytime soon.

Other partners in the development of the project include the Arizona Department of Housing, the City of Phoenix Housing Department and National Bank of Arizona. Services planning partners include Arizona Behavioral Health Corporation, U.S. VETS - Phoenix, Arizona Department of Health Services, Mercy Maricopa, Valley of the Sun United Way, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Corporation for Supportive Housing.

Calendar 2015

FEBRUARY	
3-4	LIHTC Compliance Workshop
12	AzHFA Board Meeting
16	OFFICE CLOSED - President's Day
MARCH	
2	2015 LIHTC Application Deadline
12	AzHFA Board Meeting
17-18	UPCS Workshop
APRIL	
9	AzHFA Board Meeting
21	Consolidated Plan Public Hearing

2015 ADOH Training Calendar

ADOH has scheduled the following training opportunities for 2015:

- Mar 17 & 18** U.P.C.S. Workshop , Phoenix, AZ
- July 22-23** LIHTC Compliance Workshop #2, Flagstaff, AZ
- September 15-17** LIHTC Compliance Workshop #3
(with optional HCCP Exam option), Phoenix, AZ
- October 27-28** LIHTC Compliance Workshop #4, Tucson, AZ
- November 4** HOME Compliance Workshop, Phoenix, AZ

info Visit the Event Calendar at www.azhousing.gov for additional information regarding deadlines, registration pricing and hotel accommodations.

2015 LIHTC Application Deadline

➤ The deadline for submitting applications for the 2015 Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) round is March 2, 2015 at 4:00 pm. The Qualified Allocation Plan, forms and applications can be found on the Rental Development forms page on the Department's website: www.azhousing.gov.

2015-2019 CONSOLIDATED PLAN

➤ ADOH is in the process of developing the 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan, a five year plan that sets forth goals and objectives, determines priorities, describes activities, establishes outcomes and outlines the method of distribution for the use of approximately \$80 million (from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2020) in the following federal funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development: Community Development Block Grant, HOME Investment Partnerships, Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS, and Emergency Shelter Grant programs. The Emergency Shelter Grant program is administered by the Arizona Department of Economic Security. These funds are to be used for activities benefitting low income and special needs populations primarily in the non-metropolitan areas of Arizona.

ADOH is seeking input on needs in your community. Our next public meeting will take place on April 21st, 10AM, at the Carnegie Center, 1101 W. Washington, Phoenix, AZ 85007.

New Faces



DAMARIS ELENES

Damaris Elenes has joined the ADOH staff as the Administrative Assistant in the Public Housing Authority. Damaris most recently worked at JPMorgan Chase Bank. She holds an Associates' degree from Estrella Mountain Community College and is proficient in Spanish.



BRIAN SADUSKY

Brian Sadusky has joined ADOH as a Housing Counselor/Lender Coordinator in the Foreclosure Assistance division. Brian is a part-time faculty adjunct professor at ASU. He has an extensive background in the lending industry and holds undergraduate and MBA degrees from Rutgers University.

Housing Matters

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LEADING WITH SOLUTIONS



CELEBRATE FAIR HOUSING MONTH



April is Fair Housing Month. Story page 1

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Arizona
Department
of Housing



AzHFA
Arizona Housing
Finance Authority

April is Fair Housing Month in Arizona



On April 11, 1968, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1968 into law. Popularly known as the Fair Housing Act, this historic legislation prohibited discrimination concerning the sale, rental, and financing of housing based on race, religion, national origin, sex, handicap, and family status.

In honor of the 47th anniversary of this momentous legislation, Governor Ducey has signed a proclamation declaring April 2015, Fair Housing Month, in Arizona.

This year ADOH will publish an updated Analysis of Impediments (AI) to Fair Housing Choice, a document that analyzes the current state of fair housing from a variety of sources, identifying new and ongoing impediments to fair housing within the state's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program jurisdiction, evaluates the State's effectiveness in addressing its 2010 plan, and outlines a new plan of action to address current impediments. Location-specific AIs are also required of local jurisdictions receiving CDBG funds. A draft of ADOH's 2015 AI is now available for review on the Publications page of our website and is expected to be adopted later this spring.

Finding a Smarter Solution to Ending Homelessness

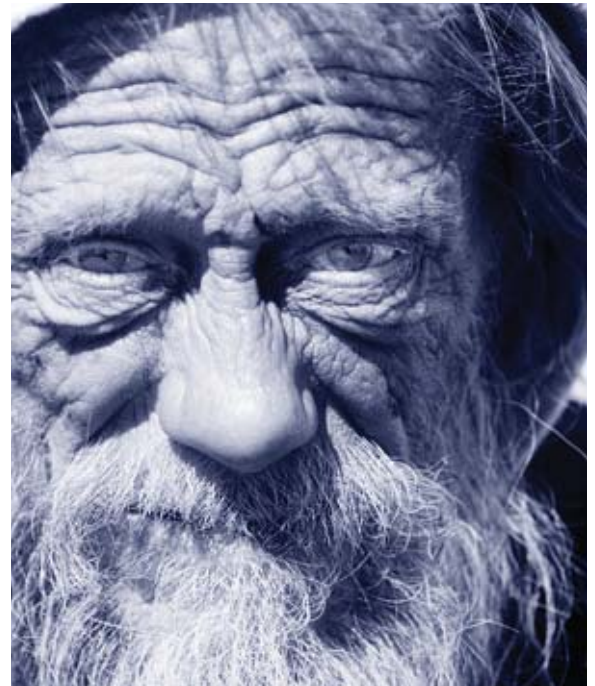
Despite numerous challenges and obstacles, such as inadequate resources, significant progress has been made towards achieving our ongoing objective to end homelessness in Arizona.

In Phoenix, we have put an end to chronic homelessness among our veteran population. Additionally, by utilizing strategies like the "Housing First" concept, we are working to remove the instability that comes with being homeless. We have seen firsthand how people's lives have been transformed once they are safe and secure in housing that is supported with services that assist people to become self-sufficient.

While we have had some victories, the battle continues, as just even one person, without a place to call home, or a roof over their head, is one too many. Working together, we are doing more as a community to better understand homelessness in our state. In doing so, we understand that there is no one-size-fits-all model or solution to addressing this issue. In order to make a real impact, we are doing a better job of zeroing in on the specific circumstances facing individuals and families encountering homelessness.

People experiencing homelessness are identified through various outreach efforts and referred to the access points either for singles or families. Individuals generally access emergency shelters first and then are assessed for the appropriate housing interventions. Outreach teams identify individuals and families experiencing homelessness. The common assessment tool known as the Service Prioritization Decision Assessment Tool (SPDAT) is now being utilized to assess the needs of the individuals or families and match them to the most appropriate intervention. Often this can entail diversion, rapid-re-housing, or permanent supportive housing.

The SPDAT has undergone rigorous testing. It has been reviewed by experts in healthcare, mental healthcare, housing and homelessness. It is effective in a range of population from an age, gender, and cultural perspective. The core premise is to get the right household to the right program



See Smarter Solutions, page 9



Director's Message

Easter, Fair Housing, National Autism Awareness and great weather, gotta love April! In honor of the 47th anniversary of the Fair Housing Act, Governor Ducey has signed a proclamation declaring April 2015, Fair Housing Month, in Arizona.

Fair Housing Act

➤ Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Fair Housing Act), as amended, prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of dwellings, and in other housing-related transactions, based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status (including children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women, and people securing custody of children under the age of 18), and disability.

In the 46 years since the passage of the Fair Housing Act, our country has made progress in building more inclusive communities across America, but some landlords, real estate agents, mortgage lenders, insurance companies, and communities still try to limit or deny equal housing opportunity.

Discrimination and residential segregation remains a significant barrier to the ability to access quality life opportunities.

According to HUD statistics, people with disabilities continue to experience housing discrimination at almost 2 to 1 over any other protected class. People with disabilities filed 53.5% of HUD fair housing complaints. Race was the next highest at 26.8%.

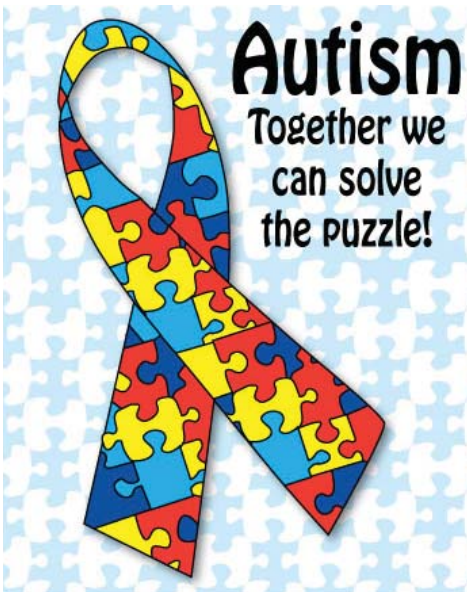
Discrimination Against the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

➤ National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA) and its members conducted 304 tests of 117 apartment complex owners and management companies in 98 cities (25 states). Of the 117 apartment complex owners and management companies tested, one out of four treated deaf callers differently from hearing callers in a manner that appeared to violate the Fair Housing Act. NFHA and its members conducted additional testing of the 25 percent of apartment complex owners and management companies that clearly discriminated during the first round of testing. Of those additionally tested:

- 40 percent hung up on deaf callers at least once;
- 86 percent gave more information to hearing persons about available apartments and the apartment complex than to deaf callers, including stating that there were more apartments available (76 percent), and providing information on specials and discounts (36 percent);
- 56 percent described additional financial qualifications and background checks to deaf or hard of hearing callers, including criminal background checks, prior evictions policies, or credit checks.

All complaints resulting from this investigation are currently pending review at HUD.

See *Director's Message*, page 8





2015 ARIZONA HOUSING FORUM

INTO THE LIGHT!

The Arizona Department of Housing invites you to attend the 2015 Arizona Housing Forum on August 26-28, at the beautiful Arizona Biltmore Resort in Phoenix, Arizona. Join us as we celebrate the 12th anniversary of this conference. The theme of this year's Forum is, "Into the Light."

Attendance at the Arizona Housing Forum is invaluable to anyone interested in Arizona's affordable housing industry. Attendees will include developers, owners and managers of affordable housing projects, lenders, syndicators, and state and local housing agency staff.

Boston Capital Corporation's David Gasson will provide Forum attendees with an in-depth Capitol Hill briefing on the work going on behind the scenes with regards to federal housing legislation. Mr. Gasson will cover possible changes to the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program through tax reform, an update on the efforts to fix the floating 9 percent rate for the LIHTC program, and the future of private activity tax exempt bonds.

Representatives from the United State Interagency Council on Homelessness and HUD will discuss the latest progress in creating a national partnership to end homelessness while seeking to maximize the effectiveness of the federal government in contributing to the end of homelessness.

Ensuring that health, transportation, community development, and economic development are components of housing planning and design is the mission of the Arizona Partnership for Healthy Communities (APHC). APHC seeks to bring together the private and public sectors to ensure that banks, health insurers, and health care providers



Ilana Preuss

are active partners alongside the government and non-profit sectors. Come learn about the goals of this important initiative.

ADOH staff will provide training on how to successfully conduct special surveys for determining CDBG low-moderate income area benefit and the circumstances under which they are required.

This year's keynote speaker will be Ilana Preuss. Ms. Preuss, formerly the head of Smart Growth American and currently the owner of her own consulting company, Re-cast City LLC, will speak about creating communities with a great sense of place, where people are excited to live and work and how to create more opportunity through thoughtful planning. For a taste of what Ms. Preuss, a much sought after national speaker has to offer, you can listen to her **TEDx** talk "**THE ECONOMIC POWER OF GREAT PLACES**" by clicking here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IF8B7vpPRiw>

Registration Fee

\$250.00 (after June 26 - \$300.00)

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HOUSING HERO AWARDS

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FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

PRESIDENT RELEASES FY2016 BUDGET

➤ Back in early February, President Obama sent Congress his FY 2016 Budget, proposing funding for all federal programs, including HUD and the Department of Agriculture's (USDA) rural housing programs. The Budget proposes a total of \$1.091 trillion in discretionary spending for FY 2016, including \$530 billion for non-defense programs and \$561 for defense programs.

The Administration proposes \$41 billion in HUD discretionary budget authority, a \$9.2 billion, or 16 percent increase over the \$35.6 billion provided in the FY 2015 spending bill the President signed on December 16, 2014.

The FY 2016 Budget proposes to increase funding for the HOME program by 18 percent over FY 2015 enacted funding, restore the nearly 67,000 Housing Choice Vouchers lost in 2013 due to cuts required under the "sequestration" Congress established to meet federal spending targets, and support the shift of project-based rental assistance funding from a fiscal-year basis to a calendar-year basis.

The Budget also contains the Administration's tax proposals. For the third year in a row, the Administration proposes to allow states to convert a portion of their private activity bond (PAB) volume cap into Housing Credit authority. This year's bond conversion proposal would allow states to convert up to 18 percent of their PAB cap to Credit authority. This proposal marks a significant increase over prior year proposals. In FY 2014 and FY 2015, the Administration's bond conversion proposal was limited to 7 and 8 percent of PAB cap, respectively.

The Administration again proposes to repeal the Mortgage Revenue Bond (MRB) program purchase price limit and refinancing restriction; create a new permanent American Fast Forward (AFF) Bond program, which would be an optional alternative to traditional tax-exempt bonds; and to cap the value of itemized deductions and other tax preferences, including the income-exclusion of interest on tax-exempt bonds, to 28 percent. Both the House and Senate

FEDERAL UPDATE continued on page 9



STATE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

THE 52ND LEGISLATURE ADJOURNS SINE DIE

➤ On Friday, April 3 at 3:34 am, the 52th Arizona State Legislature, 1st Regular Session, adjourned sine die after 81 days in session. While most legislative sessions tend to go beyond 100 days, lawmakers worked at a record pace making this the shortest legislative session in over five decades.

Unlike the last few legislative sessions, state lawmakers and the Governor were faced with the daunting challenge of having to close a significant billion dollar budget deficit while addressing the ever pressing needs of our state, including funding for education and child safety.

Lawmakers approved 344 bills with the Governor signing 324, and vetoing 20.

STATE APPROVES BALANCED BUDGET PRIORITIZING CHILD SAFETY, CLASSROOMS, AND PUBLIC SAFETY

➤ On March 7, the Arizona Legislature approved a \$9.1 billion budget package which prioritizes child safety, classrooms, and public safety without raising taxes. This is Arizona's first structurally balanced budget since 2007, reducing government spending by 2.3 percent.

"This budget reflects the priorities I ran on and addresses the problems I was elected to solve," said Governor Ducey. "It restores much-needed fiscal responsibility to government by forcing the state to live within its means and stop spending money it doesn't have. It prioritizes education, with nearly half our overall budget going toward K-12 and universities. It protects classrooms, child safety, public safety and our most vulnerable populations. And it does all of this without raising taxes on the citizens of Arizona."

Sixteen percent of this budget is dedicated to Child Safety and Public Safety. This includes \$849 million dollars for Child Safety and \$1.5 billion for Public Safety. Additionally, this budget represents the most Arizona has ever spent on education in history, with nearly a 20 percent increase in general fund investment in K-12 since 2010. These funds will go to protect Arizona's classrooms.

STATE UPDATE continued on page 9

ADOH to receive \$2.95 million through HUD Section 811 Project Rental Assistance (PRA) Program

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced on March 3, 2015, that Arizona has been chosen as one of 25 states to receive a Section 811 Project Rental Assistance (PRA) grant through a recent competitive application process conducted by HUD. The Arizona Department of Housing (ADOH) partnered with the Arizona Department of Economic Security (ADES), Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS), and the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) to apply for the funds.

ADOH will eventually receive \$2.95 million which will be utilized to provide monthly rental subsidy payments for up to 54 individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. Eligible participants will live in rental units developed through Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program or other multi-family financing available through ADOH.

ADES will be providing referrals through its Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) to fill the newly developed units which will be set aside for extremely low-income households (30% or below the area median income) where at least one person is developmentally disabled, 18 to 61 years of age, and eligible for community-based long term care services (ALTCs) provided under Title XIX of the Social Security Act. Eligible renters will also have the opportunity to engage support services customized to their unique disability-related needs through ADES/DDD.

Because of the nature of this grant—which first requires the development of the rental units that will be offered to participants, assistance is not anticipated to be available until sometime in 2017 or beyond. Developers interested in developing such units—may contact the ADOH Rental Development Division at (602) 771-1000. ADES/DDD's referral process for potential renters will eventually be posted to www.azdes.gov/developmental_disabilities/.



SAVE OUR HOME AZ UPDATE

► While the housing market, and the foreclosure crisis as a whole, has come to an end, nearly one in five Arizona homeowners are still underwater. Thousands of responsible homeowners who are current with their mortgages were hit hard by the recession and plummeting home prices. Many of these homeowners still need assistance and fortunately, the Save Our Home AZ program may be able to help.

The Save Our Home AZ program is committed to assisting Arizona homeowners avoid foreclosure, reduce negative equity, and stay in their homes. Since September 2010 the program has been dedicated to providing meaningful assistance to homeowners who played by the rules. In doing so, the program has been fiscally responsible, ensuring that those who need the assistance most are getting it.

One of the most successful components of the program applies principal reductions to homeowners with negative equity. This component became available in July 2012 and to date ADOH has dispersed more than \$51.9 million to homeowners who are underwater, reducing their mortgages by an average of \$50,168. If a resident qualifies for HARP 2.0 or other comparable refinancing they could save thousands annually. Additionally, the program may also be able to reduce their principal by as much as \$100,000.

In the fall of 2014 the U.S. Department of the Treasury approved an amendment to Arizona's program to allow for the below market buy downs of principal if the homeowner's mortgage lender will recast the loan payment to an affordable payment

for an underemployed homeowner after applying the principal buy down. In this way, homeowners who have searched but not found more meaningful employment in today's economy may remain in their home with an affordable payment. Principal buy downs that are made to bring mortgage balances below market are provided as due on sale loans. Such loans are providing a reasonable alternative for Arizonans challenged by reduced circumstances as a result of the Great Recession.

Many individuals who were denied in the past think that they can't qualify, but they may be eligible this time because circumstances, within the program and with the resident's finances, may have changed.

Currently, 3,736 families have avoided foreclosure and stayed in their homes. Over \$120.1 million in program assistance has been committed to individual homeowners as of March 31, 2015, to assist these homeowners through the Save Our Home AZ program.

Arizona's foreclosure assistance hotline has assisted over 77,000 troubled homeowners with important information and housing counseling services

The Arizona Department of Housing's dedicated staff is eager to lend a hand. Eligibility for Save Our Home AZ assistance is based on a variety of factors. To find out if you qualify, visit housing.az.gov or call **(877) 448-1211**.

Arizona Housing Finance Authority Activities



"Many current renters could likely realize significant monthly savings by buying a home now and taking advantage of terrific affordability driven by low mortgage rates and home prices that remain below peak in most areas," said Zillow Group Chief Economist Stan Humphries. "But even while buying a home is essentially as affordable as it's ever been, renting is less affordable than ever," Humphries said. "Widespread and rapid growth in rents, combined with stagnant wages, are keeping many would-be buyers stuck in rental housing, writing ever-larger checks to their landlords instead of saving for a down payment."

The Arizona Housing Finance Authority's HOME Plus Home Loan Program provides an attractive 30-year fixed-rate mortgage with down payment assistance grant equal to 4% of the mortgage amount. The program objective is to assist creditworthy renters who can afford a mortgage but lack the resources for the down payment, eliminating a major obstacle in the marketplace and presenting qualified renters a pathway to homeownership.

Over the last 90 days, 233 new homebuyers have received a Home Plus mortgage with an accumulative \$1.4 million dollars in down payment assistance. Since the Home Plus program's inception in April 2013, 736 new homebuyers have received just under \$4.0M in down payment assistance. AzHFA raises funds for its initiative in the national capital markets and forms partnerships with banking and lending institutions to facilitate the Home Plus Home Loan Program throughout the state of Arizona.



➤ AzHFA Administrator Dirk Swift was recently a guest on the local **The Home Hunter** television show. Dirk was invited to talk about the Finance Authority's Home Plus Home Loan Program.

The Home Hunter, hosted by Tiffany Hunter, has been airing in the Phoenix market for over 32 years and is the longest running real estate talk show in the U.S. The half-hour weekly show primarily previews local new homes for sale.



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SCHEDULED MEETINGS

- May 14
- June 11
- July 9

*check website for times

Find information on the Home Plus Home Loan Program on our website: www.azhousing.gov

Featured Groundbreakings & Grand Openings



NORTH MOUNTAIN VILLAGE | Phoenix, AZ

➤ On February 4th, a groundbreaking ceremony took place at the future site of North Mountain Village. North Mountain Village, located at 10825 North Cave Creek Road in Phoenix, was funded in 2014 as a permanent supportive housing project for chronically homeless persons, with a preference for veterans.

The ownership entity of this project is UMOM Housing III, LLC and the developer is Helping Hand Housing Services. UMOM and Helping Hand Housing Services will utilize tax credits, allocated by the Arizona Department of Housing, to develop North Mountain Village.

North Mountain Village includes acquisition and demolition of a blighted structure called North Mountain Lodge. The finished property will feature 48 units (12 one-

bedroom, 6 two-bedroom, and 30 three-bedroom). 34 of these units (or 71 percent) are specifically set aside for the chronically homeless at 30 percent or less of AMI. The remainder of the units will be for persons whose incomes are at or less than 50 percent and 60 percent AMI.

One hundred percent of the housing units will include a monthly rental subsidy, which will make the rent even more affordable for low-income residents. Helping Hand Housing Services has their own private rental subsidy through the Family Rental Assistance Program. Additionally, 10 Section 8 vouchers have been awarded and are available to future residents.

A 5,000 sq. ft. community center has been designed to offer, through the service provider UMOM New Day Centers, Inc., a variety of free supportive and tenant-based services, including before and after school child care services, a computer lab, case management and the use of a large activity area. A full-time Resident Support Services staff member will be onsite to coordinate all services and assist both adults and children with the resources needed to break the cycle of poverty and improve their lives.

The tenant based services will include the Rent Subsidy Program, "Live Your Dream" Education Scholarship Programs, after-school homework assistance and arts and crafts, summer reading programs and camps, periodic field trips, monthly community activities, and guest speakers on drugs and alcohol, gang and bullying and self esteem issues as well as personal hygiene.

The supportive services will include case management, computer-based GED tutorials, "Launching Our Career Success" (LOCS) Program for job development, "Keys to Enhancing Your Success" (KEYS) life skills, financial literacy classes, periodic health screenings, health referral services, and adult education in crime prevention, parenting skills and cooking and housekeeping skills.

North Mountain Village will have most of the usual unit and property amenities including a community room, tenant services, carports, a playground, and BBQ and picnic area.



Ghost Ranch Lodge Nominated for NDC Award

➤ Ghost Ranch Lodge has been named as a semi-finalist by the National Development Council in the Category of Housing Development and will be showcased at the 2015 NDC Academy in Washington, D.C. this May. The Tucson project was

developed by Atlantic Development.

Ghost Ranch Lodge was opened in August of 2010 for seniors 55 and older who are between 40, 50, and 60 percent of the area median income. The historic structure, which sat crumbling for many years, was able to utilize low-income housing tax credits, allocated by the Arizona Department of Housing, to provide affordable housing to the senior community while revitalizing an area that for many years had been neglected.

Built in 1941, on what was formerly a working cattle ranch, Ghost Ranch Lodge is known for its unique cactus gardens. An oasis in the desert, the Ghost Ranch Lodge provides 83 single story rooms and casitas on 8 acres of lush desert gardens and lawns. All of the guest rooms have a regional décor and private fenced patio, while the suites have a backyard and a kitchen.

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE continued from page 2

Calvin's Happy World – Through the Eyes of an Autistic Child

Calvin Shin, a 19 year old student at Saguaro High School in Scottsdale, sees the world a little differently than you and I. At age 3 ½ he was diagnosed with autism; however, this life-affecting disability has not broken his spirit or his positive outlook on life. Calvin is a self described, "happy, happy person."

Growing up with a disability, it would be very easy for anyone to see the world and their surroundings as a cruel and unfair place; however, Calvin chooses to focus on all the good the world has to offer and he expresses this through his artwork. His drawings are often depictions of the places he wants to go and the people he wants to meet.

At an early age, Calvin began drawing. At first he struggled with this task. The objects within his drawings were repetitive and unknown to anyone expect himself. Over time, and with a lot of practice, his artwork began to evolve and take shape.

On Friday, April 24th, come meet the "happy, happy" artist, Calvin Shin. His artwork will be on display at the Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts located at 7380 E. 2nd Street, Scottsdale, AZ 85251.

For more information or to learn more about Calvin and his artwork please visit <http://www.happycalvinshin.com/home>.



Nearly a quarter century ago, the Autism Society launched a nationwide effort to promote autism awareness, inclusion and self-determination for all, and assure that each person with ASD is provided the opportunity to achieve the highest possible quality of life.

FACTS ABOUT AUTISM

- Autism now affects 1 in 68 children and 1 in 42 boys
- Autism prevalence figures are growing
- Autism is the fastest-growing developmental disorder in the U.S.
- Autism costs a family \$60,000 a year on average
- Boys are nearly five times more likely than girls to have autism
- There is no medical detection or cure for autism

Research shows that early intervention treatment services can greatly improve a child's development. Early intervention services help children from birth to 3 years old (36 months) learn important skills. Services include therapy to help the child talk, walk, and interact with others. In Arizona we're very fortunate to have SARRC and First Place.

The **Southwest Autism Research and Resource Center (SARRC)** was formed in 1997 as a research center. Today SARRC operates the Sybil B Harrington Campus for Exceptional Children, Colonel Harland D. Sanders Center for Autism Studies and SARRC's Vocational & Life Skills Academy.

First Place represents home for individuals who live there, peace of mind for family and friends who come and go, and an inspiring and enriching environment for those who work and learn there. It represents a new residential prototype for adults with autism and related disorders and individuals without disorders, that aspires to be an international model.

First Place vision is to enhance their quality of life through jobs, friends, homes and a supportive community that provide for individuals today and when family members are no longer able to care for their loved ones.

The Arizona Department of Housing celebrates the advancements achieved to eliminate discrimination through fair housing and the ongoing progress to enhance the quality of life for individuals with autism.

FEDERAL UPDATE continued from page 4

have passed their own budget resolutions. The two chambers are expected to form a conference committee shortly to resolve their differences before moving the budget package forward; however, the White House has been critical of both budget packages stating that they rely on budgeting gimmicks.

FIXING THE FLOATING RATE FOR THE LIHTC PROGRAM

➤ On February 26, Representatives Patrick Tiberi (R-Ohio) and Richard Neal (D-Massachusetts) once again released legislation (H.R. 1142) that would create a permanent minimum rate for the low-income housing tax credit (LIHTC). The bill would permanently established fixed 9 percent (for new rental construction property) and 4 percent (for existing property) rates for buildings placed into service after December 31, 2014.

The Housing and Economic Recovery Act (HERA), passed in 2008, established a temporary 9 percent floor for properties, allowing developers to receive additional tax credits during the economic recession. The fixed rate has since expired and the LIHTC industry has since gone back to a floating rate system that has a rate of around 7.5 percent.

Senators Maria Cantwell (D-Washington) and Pat Roberts (R-Kansas) are expected to release a companion bill in the Senate shortly.

The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit is the nation's largest and most successful affordable housing production tool. Since it was established in 1986, it has created or preserved over 2.7 million affordable homes by leveraging over \$100 billion in private capital.

SMARTER SOLUTIONS continued from page 1

at the right time to end homelessness, based upon evidence of strengths, understanding of needs and housing status.

The SPDAT has enhanced our ability to better serve in that it has reduced our subjectivity and increased objectivity in referring and working with people to see that they obtain the best service and housing for their needs. With agreement on using the same assessment tool, there is consistency in the evaluation process.

Organizations like UMOM New Day Center in Phoenix have seen firsthand the benefits of using this assessment tool. They have been using SPDAT since October 2013. It is officially part of their intake process and families are assessed within the first 7 days upon entering an emergency shelter. The use of the SPDAT has greatly improved their screening process, better serving the families that walk through their doors.

Homelessness is not a choice most people make for themselves. No one necessarily wants to be homeless; however, as a society, we often blame people for their state in life rather than realizing that it really could happen to any of us. Homelessness just doesn't impact the homeless, it impacts all of us. These individuals are our neighbors and their struggles have an effect on all of us.

STATE UPDATE continued from page 4

While significant and necessary budget cuts were made to force our state government to live within its means, the annual appropriation for the Arizona Housing Trust Fund remained fully intact and there will be no negative effects on ADOH programs and operations. Governor Ducey signed the complete budget package on March 12.

info Daniel Romm, Legislative Liaison/PIO
(602) 771-1008 + daniel.romm@azhousing.gov

Unfortunately, for a number of years, there was not a collective conscience fighting this issue, just individuals and organizations thinking they had the right answers. In order for us to continue to make progress it will take a community effort. We must remember that it's about community outcomes, not individual program outcomes. While this can often be a challenge, we are confident that we are now using the right tools and methods to make a real difference.

Calendar 2015

MAY	
14	Arizona Housing Finance Authority Board Meeting
25	OFFICE CLOSED - Memorial Day Holiday
JUNE	
11	Arizona Housing Finance Authority Board Meeting
JULY	
3	OFFICE CLOSED - Independence Day Holiday
9	Arizona Housing Finance Authority Board Meeting
22-23	LIHTC Compliance Workshop - Flagstaff

2015 ADOH Training Calendar

ADOH has scheduled the following training opportunities for 2015:

- July 22-23** LIHTC Compliance Workshop #2, Flagstaff, AZ
- September 15-17** LIHTC Compliance Workshop #3 (with optional HCCP Exam option), Phoenix, AZ
- October 27-28** LIHTC Compliance Workshop #4, Tucson, AZ
- November 4** HOME Compliance Workshop, Phoenix, AZ

info Visit the Event Calendar at www.azhousing.gov for additional information regarding deadlines, registration pricing and hotel accommodations.

2015-2019 Consolidated Plan

▶ The **2015-2019 Consolidated Plan** is in the final stages of development. ADOH gathered considerable public comment through meetings held in Tucson, Parker, Benson, Cottonwood and Phoenix. Over 100 individuals and agencies also provided a response to the web based survey. Consolidated Plan goals and strategies respond to a wide variety of needs identified throughout Arizona. ADOH will submit the Consolidated Plan to HUD on May 15th, the approval of which will release over \$16 million in 2015 HUD formula allocation from CDBG, HOME, ESG and HOPWA.

FFY 2015 Formula Allocations

▶ **CDBG**

The total FFY2015 CDBG allocation is \$10,127,360. The State retains 2% plus \$100,000 or \$302,547 for administration and 1% or \$101,274 for technical assistance activities. Additionally, HUD mandates that the state expend 10% of its total allocation or \$1,012,736 for projects located in areas designated as Colonias. The remaining adjusted allocation is divided into 85% or \$7,404,183 for the Regional Account and 15% or \$1,306,620 for the State Special Projects (SSP) Account.

▶ **HOME**

The total FFY2015 HOME allocation is \$4,459,753 of which 15% or \$668,693 must be set aside for Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) project funding.

▶ **HOPWA**

The total FFY2015 HOPWA allocation is \$236,060.

▶ **ESG**

The total FFY2015 ESG allocation is \$1,545,994 which is administered by the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES).

For more detailed information on the allocations, see Information Bulletin 03-15, dated February 25, 2015, posted on the ADOH website **Publications** page.

Housing Matters

SUMMER 2015
Volume 14 | Number 3

LEADING WITH SOLUTIONS



▲ 2015 Arizona Housing Forum is right around the corner! Register at <http://www.azhousing.gov>

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Arizona
Department
of Housing



AzHFA
Arizona Housing
Finance Authority



2015 ARIZONA HOUSING FORUM **INTO THE LIGHT!**

The Arizona Department of Housing invites you to attend the 2015 Arizona Housing Forum - Into the Light, on August 26-28, at the beautiful Arizona Biltmore Resort in Phoenix, Arizona. Join us as we celebrate the 12th anniversary of this conference.

We in Arizona know firsthand just how important housing issues are to our state. Housing is much more than four walls and a roof. Housing creates stability, job growth, healthy communities, and a strong economy.

While housing conditions throughout the state have improved since the darkest days of the Great Recession, it is critical that we all come together to share best practices and bring these important issues, "Into the Light."

The 2015 Arizona Housing Forum is invaluable to anyone interested in Arizona's affordable housing industry. Attendees will once again include developers, owners and managers of affordable housing projects, lenders, syndicators, and state and local housing agency staff.

This year, we are very excited to include a CDBG track offering sessions designed to enhance the education of those working on projects in non-entitlement cities, towns and counties that receive funding through the State and Small Cities CDBG Program.

We have brought back many of your favorite speakers including Dr. Lee McPheters, Director of the JP Morgan Chase Economic Outlook Center at ASU. Dr. McPheters will bring his charts, humor, and his insight on the economic pulse of Arizona.

This year's keynote speaker, Ilana Preuss, of Recast City LLC, will speak about creating communities with a great sense of place, where people are excited to live and work and how to create more opportunity through thoughtful planning.

The awards will be presented for the eleventh straight year at a luncheon reception on Friday, August 28. The Brian Mickelsen Housing Hero Awards recognize outstanding service by individuals and organizations for their commitment to numerous housing issues throughout the state. The awards are named in honor of the outstanding public service exemplified by the late Brian Mickelsen, an original member of the Arizona Housing Finance Authority and former city manager for the Town of Cottonwood. Nominees in seven different categories are selected based on their efforts to support affordable housing for moderate and low-income Arizona families. Recipients of the awards are selected by their peers as the best in their field.

This year's Housing Forum is sure to be a fantastic and memorable event. We look forward to seeing you there! For more details, to register, or for sponsorship information, please visit, <https://housingaz.gov>. On-line registration for the Forum closes on Friday, August 14. After August 14, all registrations will be handled at the door.



Ilana Preuss



Director's Message

The Department is excited to present the 2015 Arizona Housing Forum. Our goal each year is to bring together all of our dedicated partners in housing and community revitalization to share best practices. We challenge each other to continually improve and commit to more aggressive goals to end homelessness, provide decent, safe, location efficient housing and community revitalization that improves peoples' lives.

Once again we are blessed with many talented speakers and timely subjects.

Stephanie Smelnick, HUD, Beverly Ebersold, USICH, and Amy Schwabenlender, VSUW, will present national goals and objectives to end homelessness. Arizona has made good progress adopting and implementing national goals and objectives. We are developing coordinated entry for single persons and family intake, assessments and solutions. All three Arizona continuum of care regions have adopted the Service Prioritization Decision Assessment Tool (SPADAT). Communities are realigning resources for housing options in lieu of various temporary programs. Funders and providers are working together better than ever to end homelessness in our state. Be sure to attend other ending homelessness sessions on **Housing First, Rapaid Re-Housing** and **Coordinated Entry**.

Do you feel like you never have enough time to accomplish your goals? Come listen to Barbara Bergeron of SOS Organizational Services, at her session titled, "The Science of Getting More Done." Barbara will compliment her first session with **"The Science of Getting More Done with Your Team."** The possibilities for improvement abound!

We're learning every day how to build better, more effective affordable housing and sustainable communities. Serena Unrein, AZ Partnership for Healthy Communities, CJ Eisenbarth Hager, St Luke's Health Initiatives, and Terry Benelli, LISC Phoenix, will present **"Creating and Sustaining Healthy Communities."** Come learn the significant advantages provided to affordable housing residents when we ensure that health, transportation, community development and economic development are components of housing planning and design.

Bob Baum, Gould Evans Architects, has spent a lifetime designing innovative urban housing developments in San Francisco and other notable urban areas. Join Bob and his team - Roy Alston, Strategic Development Partners, and Tom Cain, GSV Sustainability Partners, to learn about **"Connecting Culture and Community."** Learn how to leverage cultural connections to promote better urban living, the availability of unique funding sources and how to increase project profitability. These concepts can be applied to rural areas too.

We heard from our Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) partners that they would like more sessions pertaining to community development. The 2015 Forum has five CDBG learning opportunities, one for every breakout session. Even if CDBG isn't your area of expertise I would encourage you to attend session 5, **"State CDBG Projects: Showcasing the Most Innovative and Successful around the State."**

The Arizona economy is finally recovering and our goal over the next four years is to make Arizona the best place to live, work and play.

We're excited to see you, learn from you, and with you, to improve our ability to offer opportunity for all.



FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

FEDERAL BUDGET UPDATE

▶ The budget process on Capitol Hill continues to be stalled with no sign of a compromise coming soon. Moving forward, it remains unclear how Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) plans to move forward in the process as Senate Democrats are blocking all appropriations bills from reach the Senate floor. The latest budget impasse has President Obama threatening to veto any appropriations bills that follows the sequester's spending cap limits.

Democrats are calling for President Obama's proposed budget to be used as the framework for negotiations; however House Budget Chairman Tom Price (R-GA) has already publically stated that revenue increases proposed by the President are a "non-starter."

The 2013 bipartisan budget deal, orchestrated by Congressman Paul Ryan (R-WI) and Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) used a mixture of mandatory spending cuts and non-tax revenue increases to provide an additional \$63.2 billion in discretionary spending over two years, split equally between defense and non-defense spending, along with \$23 billion in deficit reduction.

Senator Murray and Congressman Ryan no longer chair the budget committees so it is unclear who will step forward to help broker any potential deal. Further complicating negotiations is the need to once again raise the debt ceiling, which the Congressional Budget Office estimates will be reached in October or November.

SENATE T-HUD BILL ESSENTIALLY ELIMINATES THE HOME PROGRAM

▶ The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) heard its Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 funding bill on Tuesday, June 23 and the full Committee passed the bill on Thursday, June 25.

The bill effectively eliminates the HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) program, providing just a mere \$66 million. This proposed cut represents a reduction of 93% from HOME's already record-low FY 2015 funding level of \$900 million.

FEDERAL UPDATE continued on page 8



STATE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

BUDGET NEWS

▶ State revenue projections for the fiscal year are much better than many expected. The once projected shortfall of \$132 million for FY 2016 has now grown into a surplus of around \$266 million.

Individual and corporate income tax collections surpassed budget expectations; however, moving forward, lawmakers are expected to remain fairly conservative when it comes to spending this upcoming legislative session, especially with the uncertainty surrounding K-12 spending requirements.

Last year, the Arizona Supreme Court determined that the legislature failed to adequately fund K-12 education during the economic recession.

Proposition 301, passed by the voters, in the early 2000s, requires the legislature to account for inflation when funding K-12 education. Early on in the decade, the State paid more than what was required; however, when the economic recession hit, the legislature stopped making these payments. The school districts are now demanding back payments that could total close to \$1.7 billion.

Legislative leadership continues to argue that the court does not have the authority to force the legislature to make these back payments; however, they do claim that if they are forced to pay, the amount should take into consideration earlier overpayments.

ARIZONA'S UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DROPS

▶ The state's unemployment rate dropped from 6.0 percent in April to 5.8 percent in May, the fourth consecutive decrease of the jobless rate. This rate was the lowest reading since May 2007, when the unemployment rate was 5.6 percent.

ARIZONA HOUSING MARKET SEES MIXED RESULTS

▶ The total housing inventory in the Greater Phoenix area is (15.1)% smaller than May of last year. Inventory levels have been steadily decreasing since March 2014. The median price of a single family home was \$220,000 in May, a (1.0)% decrease from April. The price is 7.3% higher than May of last year.

STATE UPDATE continued on page 8

ADOH 2015 Employee Engagement Survey

► Over the last few years, the Arizona Department of Administration (ADOA) has conducted a statewide employee engagement survey of all employees of the State of Arizona. The 2015 survey gauged the Arizona Department of Housing's overall employee engagement ratio to be 7.2:1.

We are happy to report the Department's results demonstrates the Department's employee engagement rate to be head and shoulders above the national average for all organizations, as well as compared to the overall State employee engagement rate.

In order to understand our agency's results it is important to understand what is meant by **Employee Engagement**.

WHAT IS MEANT BY EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT?

The world's top-performing organizations understand that employee engagement is a force that drives business outcomes. Research shows that engaged employees are more productive employees. Engaged employees are more profitable (where profit is the goal), more customer-focused, safer, and more likely to withstand the temptations to leave the organization.

WHAT IS AN ENGAGEMENT RATIO?

The Gallup organization specializes in research in the area of Engagement Ratios. Gallup's engagement ratio is a macro-level indicator of an organization's health that allows management to track the proportion of engaged to actively disengaged employees. The average national working population ratio of engaged to actively disengaged employees is not quite two to one and is expressed as 1.83:1.

Actively disengaged employees erode an organization's bottom line, while breaking the spirits of colleagues in the process. In stark contrast to the average, world-class organizations have an engagement ratio of more than 9:1. As organizations move toward this benchmark, they greatly reduce the negative effect of actively disengaged employees while unleashing the organization's potential.

"Engaged employees" are defined as those who are engaged and inspired at work. An average "disengaged employee" simply is not engaged in their work. While those defined as "actively disengaged" are so disengaged, they are known for actively working to spread their discontent amongst their co-workers.

The Department is proud to employ such a highly engaged workforce and credits the Director and management staff for creating an environment where a high engagement rate is attainable.

2015 Customer Satisfaction Survey: "Overall Satisfaction with ADOH" Hits All-Time High

► Every year since becoming a state agency, the Arizona Department of Housing (ADOH) has surveyed its constituency to gauge its performance and seek feedback as to how the agency can improve its ability to serve Arizona. This year ADOH's constituency gave it the highest ranking in "Overall Satisfaction" over the last ten years. In rating its overall satisfaction with the Department, ADOH's constituency gave the Department a rating of 5.87, out of a possible top rating of 7.

An analysis of all eleven categories that the survey covers reveals that ADOH received its highest scores in every category within the past three years, when compared to all survey scores received by ADOH since 2005. This tells us that even though there may have been slight changes in satisfaction within individual categories from one year to the next over the past three years, ADOH has made its best strides in improving its customer service in its most recent past, when compared to its survey rankings over the past decade.

We are committed to continuous improvement and will strive to get better.

Arizona Housing Finance Authority Activities

► The homeownership rates in Arizona mirror the national average, which is at the lowest rate in almost two decades. New household formations, a leading indicator of homeownership, while improving are below historical averages with Millennials being the largest group of underrepresented homeowners. Zillow research found that Millennials are now actually more eager to own a home than older Americans, but their biggest challenge is coming up with enough money for a down payment.

The Arizona Housing Finance Authority's HOME Plus Home Loan Program provides an attractive 30-year fixed-rate mortgage with down payment assistance grant equal to 4% of the mortgage amount. The program objective is to assist creditworthy renters who can afford a mortgage but lack the resources for the down payment, eliminating a major obstacle in the marketplace and presenting qualified renters a pathway to homeownership.

Over the past ninety days, 475 new homebuyers have been assisted through the HOME Plus Home Loan Program with over \$3.0 million dollars in down payment assistance. Since the Home Plus program's inception in April 2013, 1,337 new homebuyers have received just over \$5.6 million dollars in down payment assistance. AzHFA raises funds for our initiative in the national capital markets and forms partnerships with banking and lending institutions to facilitate our HOME Plus Home Loan Program throughout the State of Arizona.

Information on the HOME Plus Home Loan Program may be found on our website: www.azhousing.gov



2015-2016 AZHFA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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AZHFA'S HOME PLUS PROGRAM FEATURED ON TV

► The AzHFA's HOME Plus Home Loan Program was recently featured on Phoenix's Channel 12 NBC News. To learn more about the program and find out how it helped Karlie and Michael Piercy from Chandler become first time homeowners, please click [here](#).

SCHEDULED MEETINGS

- August - None
- September 10
- October 8

*check website for times

GOVERNOR DUCEY APPOINTS TWO NEW AZHFA BOARD MEMBERS

► On May 7, 2015, Governor Ducey appointed Peter Burch to the Arizona Housing Finance Authority (AzHFA) Board of Directors. Additionally, on July 6th the Governor appointed Mr. Craig Tribken to the Board.

Mr. Burch is a Manager at Metropolitan Land Company, based in Phoenix, where he specializes in new investments and land acquisition. Mr. Burch replaces long serving board member, Paul DeSanctis, whose term had expired.

Mr. Tribken, a former Phoenix City councilman, is currently a spokesman, handling external relations for the Central Arizona Shelter Services (CASS).

The Arizona Department of Housing and the AzHFA would like to welcome our two new board members. Additionally, we would like to thank Mr. DeSanctis for his dedication and years of service to the AzHFA Board of Directors and to the State of Arizona.



SAVE OUR HOME AZ UPDATE

► The Save Our Home AZ (SOHAZ) program continues to successfully assist Arizona homeowners who are either facing a potential foreclosure or are significantly underwater with their mortgage payments.

Since its inception, SOHAZ has been able to assist 3,899 families avoid foreclosure and stay in their homes. Over \$126.8 million in program assistance has been expended or committed to individual homeowners as of June 30, 2015, to assist these homeowners through the Save Our Home AZ program, funded by the United States Department of the Treasury. Additionally, Arizona's foreclosure hotline has assisted nearly 79,000 troubled homeowners with important information and housing counseling services.

While the housing market has improved since the height of the recession, close to 18 percent of Arizona homeowners are still underwater. Thousands of responsible homeowners who are current with their mortgages were hit hard by the recession and plummeting home prices. Many of these homeowners still need assistance and Save Our Home AZ may help. ADOH has successfully dispersed more than \$55.4 million to homeowners who are underwater since July 2010.

Save Our Home AZ has a component that uses HARP 2.0, a federal program designed to help responsible homeowners who are current with their mortgages. This program applies principal reductions to homeowners with negative equity.

Homeowners who qualify for a HARP 2.0 refinancing can save thousands annually with a lower rate or other more favorable terms. Additionally, the program may also be able to reduce their principal by as much as \$100,000, although the average assistance to date has been just over \$49,000.

Save Our Home AZ was created to assist homeowners avoid foreclosure on their primary residence. The program provides assistance in the form of Principal Reduction Mortgage Modification, Unemployment/Underemployment Mortgage Assistance, Second Lien Elimination and Short Sale Assistance.

For additional information on the Save Our Home AZ program, or to take the self assessment to determine your eligibility, please visit www.housing.az.gov or call the **ARIZONA FORECLOSURE HELP-LINE** at **(877) 448-1211**.

ADOH Announces LIHTC Reservation List

On Tuesday, June 30, 2015, the Arizona Department of Housing released the 2015 Low Income Housing Tax Credit Reservations List. The follow projects were selected to receive funding:

- La Mesita Phase 3, Mesa, AZ
- Esperanza en Escalante, Tucson, AZ
- Kingman Heights Apartments – Amy Neal Retirement Center, Kingman, AZ
- Rodeo Court, Lakeside, AZ
- Pascua Yaqui Homes III, Guadalupe, AZ
- Yavapai-Apache Homes V, Camp Verde, AZ
- Landmark Senior Living, Glendale, AZ
- Sunnyside Point Villas II, Tucson, AZ
- El Rancho II, Mesa, AZ
- Legacy on Main Phase II, Mesa, AZ
- Valor on Eighth, Tempe, AZ
- 7th Avenue Commons, Tucson, AZ
- Briarwood Apartments, Lake Havasu, AZ
- Florence Sunrise Apartments, Florence, AZ
- Sunshine Valley Apartments, Safford, AZ
- Northern Gardens, Phoenix, AZ

Congratulations to all the projects receiving awards. For additional information, please download the list here: <https://housing.az.gov/documents-links/forms/rental-development-lihtc>. The Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) was created to promote the development of affordable rental housing for low income individuals and families. To date, it has been the most successful rental housing production program in Arizona, creating thousands of residences with very affordable rents. Please visit www.azhousing.gov for more information on this program.

FEDERAL UPDATE continued from page 4

According to HUD, if HOME were zeroed out in FY16 and not funded at the President's requested level of \$1.06 billion, there would be a loss of an estimated 38,665 affordable housing units (16,045 homebuyer units, 15,099 new or rehabilitated rental units, and 7,521 owner-occupied homes rehabilitated for low income homeowners), and 8,813 fewer families would be assisted with HOME tenant based rental assistance.

Subcommittee Chairwoman, Senator Susan Collins (R-ME), explained the cut by saying that she believed she needed to prioritize funding for rental assistance and homelessness programs, and that HOME affordable housing activities can be accomplished through CDBG.

Attempts were made by various members of the T-HUD Committee to restore HOME funding; however, they were shot down mostly because they exceed the Committee's allocation cap limit.

The Subcommittee's allocation share of total federal discretionary spending authority is \$55.6 billion, slightly higher than the House T-HUD Subcommittee's \$55.3 billion allocation. While higher than the House allocation, the Senate's allocation is still extremely tight and it will be difficult for appropriators to provide sufficient funding within this cap for HUD and other programs covered by this bill.

The House-passed HUD appropriations bill would effectively eliminate the new federal Housing Trust Fund (HTF) by transferring all money from HTF to HOME to supplement the bill's reduced HOME appropriations level and barring the transfer of other funds to HTF.

The final numbers for the HUD appropriations bill are far from being determined. Without a negotiated budget resolution, members may have to settle on a flat funding continuing resolution as a temporary stopgap.

STATE UPDATE continued from page 4

Single family housing construction is increasing slightly, while multi-family construction seems to have peaked. Arizona's 12-month total of single-family building permits is 18,624, or 4.5% more than a year ago. The comparable single-family permit growth rate for the entire U.S. is 4.1%. Based on 12-month totals, multi-family building permits have grown strongly. Arizona's total of 8,826 multifamily building permits is 7.9% above 2014. Arizona's rate of increase is now roughly equal to the comparable multi-family permit growth for the U.S. as a whole which is 7.5% above 2014.

info Daniel Romm, Legislative Liaison/PIO
(602) 771-1008 + daniel.romm@azhousing.gov

ADOH Issues Warning to Consumers Regarding Potential Section 8 Fraud

▶ The Arizona Housing Department of Housing (ADOH) is warning consumers who are seeking Section 8 housing to be cautious of fraudulent solicitations and websites. The Federal Trade Commission is reporting that scammers have posted fake Section 8 waiting-list lottery sites that ask for personal information and even fees, but don't enroll victims on lists. Some offer housing listings in exchange for a month's rent via wire transfer or prepaid card.

These fake websites look similar to registration sites for Section 8 waiting lists; however, housing authorities do not charge fees, and they will not reach out to you by phone or email to suggest that you join a waiting list. A housing authority also will never ask you to wire money or pay with a prepaid card. Those are sure signs of a scam.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has issued tips to help consumers avoid becoming victim to this scam:

- Contact your local housing authority to find out how to register for the Section 8 waiting list. If you do not have this information, it can be found on the HUD website (www.HUD.gov)
- Know that housing authorities do not charge fees, and they won't reach out to you by phone or email to suggest that you join a waiting list. A housing authority also will never ask you to wire money or pay with a prepaid card.
- Treat your Social Security number and other personal information, such as credit card number, like cash.

ADOH is asking individuals who believe that they have come across this type of consumer fraud to contact the Arizona Attorney General's Office at (602) 542-5763 or by email at consumerinfo@azag.gov. You can also file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) through their website at <https://www.ftc.gov/complaint>, or by email to HUD at Hotline@HUDOIG.gov.

For additional information, call the FTC at 1-877-382-4357, or HUD's Public Housing Authority at 1-800-955-2232.

Calendar 2015

AUGUST

26-28	Arizona Housing Forum - Arizona Biltmore Hotel
27	Public Hearing - 2016 Annual Action Plan - Phoenix, AZ
28	QAP Focus Group - Phoenix, AZ

SEPTEMBER

4	QAP Focus Group - Tucson, AZ
7	OFFICE CLOSED - Labor Day Holiday
10	Arizona Housing Finance Authority Board Meeting
15-17	LIHTC Compliance Workshop - Phoenix, AZ

OCTOBER

8	Arizona Housing Finance Authority Board Meeting
12	OFFICE CLOSED - Columbus Day Holiday

2015 ADOH Training Calendar

ADOH has scheduled the following training opportunities for 2015:

- September 15-17** LIHTC Compliance Workshop #3
Phoenix, AZ
(with optional HCCP Exam)
- October 27-28** LIHTC Compliance Workshop #4
Tucson, AZ
- November 4** HOME Compliance Workshop
Phoenix, AZ

info Visit the Event Calendar at www.azhousing.gov for additional information regarding deadlines, registration pricing and hotel accommodations.

PUBLIC HEARINGS/FOCUS GROUPS SCHEDULED

➤ ADOH has scheduled the following Focus Groups to receive feedback on the draft 2016 Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP). The Draft QAP is available on the ADOH website on the Forms page for Rental Development LIHTC.

Phoenix

Friday, August 28, 2015 at 2:15 pm
Arizona Biltmore Hotel (McArthur Ballroom, Salon 5-6-7)
2400 E. Missouri Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85016

Tucson

Friday, September 4, 2015 at 11:00 am
Pima County Housing Center
801 W. Congress Street
Tucson, AZ 85745

➤ A Public Hearing on the 2016 Annual Action Plan has been scheduled to hear comments on the draft of the 2016 Annual Action Plan. A copy of the draft Plan will be available on the ADOH website ***DATE

Phoenix

Thursday, August 27, 2015 at 4:15 pm
Arizona Biltmore Hotel (McArthur Ballroom, Salon 1)
2400 E. Missouri Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85016

Housing Matters

FALL 2015
Volume 14 | Number 4

LEADING WITH SOLUTIONS

Think You Can't Afford To Buy A Home? Think Again...



Home Loan Program

▲ Get the low down on the no down program helping Arizona homebuyers.

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Arizona
Department
of Housing



AzHFA
Arizona Housing
Finance Authority

HOME PLUS PROGRAM:

Making Homeownership A Reality

Buying a home is a big life decision for anyone wanting a place to call their own. Homeownership has many benefits and with low mortgage rates and stable home prices, many Arizona renters can realize monthly savings on buying versus renting a home.

Now there is even more incentive in Arizona to buy, not rent, with hundreds of millions of dollars available across Arizona through the HOME Plus program. This homebuyer assistance program provides down payment and closing cost assistance combined with an attractively priced first mortgage.

Developed by the Arizona Housing Finance Authority (AzHFA), the HOME Plus Home Loan Program provides an attractive 30-year fixed-rate mortgage with a down payment assistance (DPA) grant equal to 4 percent of the mortgage amount. The DPA assistance is a true grant, with no repayment terms or conditions. If you lack the resources for a down payment, the HOME Plus program may be able to help accelerate your path to homeownership.

"The object of the program is to assist someone who can qualify for a mortgage and can afford a monthly payment but lack the funds for a down payment or closing costs," said Dirk Swift, AzHFA Homeownership Programs Administrator. "We mirror the standard mortgage



Karlie and Michael Piercy, Chandler, AZ

"Apartments are so popular now, they're rising and rising in price but usually for the same money or less you can own your own home," said Robertson, of Academy Mortgage.

There are a few parameters to qualify for the program. You need a credit score of at least 640, make less than \$88,000 and purchase a home under \$350,000 for the state to consider helping you with a down payment. All homebuyers are also required to complete a pre-purchase homebuyer education course, either online or in person through a HUD approved homebuyer education provider.

While the program has existed in Arizona's rural counties for years, Maricopa County residents just became eligible last fall. That has allowed the Piercy's, and many other young millenials, to step into the housing market, thanks to the state's program.

"We're servicing about 150 clients a month," said Swift. Additionally, the AzHFA raises funds for their initiatives in the national capital markets and forms partnerships with banking and lending institutions to facilitate the HOME Plus Home Loan Program with no taxpayer funds.

To get more information including program details and a list of HOME Plus Participating Lenders, please visit www.azhousing.gov or contact, Dirk Swift via email at the Arizona Housing Finance Authority at dirk.swift@azhousing.gov



process, which is as fast as any normal transaction and makes it easy on everyone from realtor and lender to buyer."

Former renters Karlie and Michael Piercy from Chandler are one of the couples who have taken advantage of the program. The couple was looking for more space, but didn't think they had the savings to buy.

"I didn't think it was a possibility because everyone says you need 20 percent down, and I was thinking 20 percent of what we got now, no way," Michael Piercy said.

However, after speaking with mortgage broker, Duncan Robertson of Academy Mortgage, Karlie and Michael, learned that the HOME Plus program allows those with little savings to purchase a home.



Director's Message

On behalf of the Arizona Department of Housing, thank you for making this year's Housing Forum the best one yet!

We hope you found the topics and sessions meaningful, applicable to your work and took away some nuggets of new knowledge that will help you and your organization be even more successful.

We always enjoy spending this time with our community partners collaborating, gaining new insights and planning on how we can do our part to make Arizona the best place to live, work and play.

The 2015 Arizona Housing Assessment demonstrates the challenges many Arizona households face when attempting to find decent, safe, affordable housing. 35% of Arizona households pay more than 30% of their income for housing expenses. 375,200 or 16% of Arizona households are severely cost burdened and spend 50% or more of their income on housing costs. Throughout the state, there are nearly 374,400 households in need of an affordable housing option. While every county indicates a need for additional affordable housing, Maricopa, Pima, and Yavapai Counties account for the vast majority of need. Unfortunately, the affordability gap has worsened over the past 10 years as income has grown 11.2% but rents have grown 18.3% over the same period.

We are fortunate in Arizona to have many professional, hard working and innovative nonprofit and for profit affordable housing developers that strive daily to meet Arizona's need for more affordable housing.

Thank you for attending and contributing to the success of this year's Arizona Housing Forum. Our team is already hard at work planning next year's Housing Forum in Tucson. As always, please let us know if you have any suggestions on how we can make the next forum the best yet.

Please continue to be engaged, stand up for housing, and together we can all bring these important issues "Into the Light."





ADOH Hosts 12th Annual Housing Forum

On August 26-28, the Arizona Department of Housing hosted their 12th Annual Arizona Housing Forum in Phoenix at the Arizona Biltmore Resort. The Arizona Housing Forum continues to be the only statewide housing conference in Arizona and has become a venue for elected officials, policymakers, industry professionals, advocates, and community leaders from across the state and nation to address the

significant challenges facing Arizona's housing market.

Once again, we put together a fantastic program filled with a great lineup of speakers and guests. The theme of this year's housing Forum was "Into the Light," to emphasize the importance of bring housing issues to the forefront for discussion.

Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton kicked off the Forum by welcoming everyone to his great city. ADOH Director Michael Traylor followed the Mayor with a special presentation highlighting the work being done around the state to improve housing conditions for one of Arizona's most vulnerable populations, our homeless.

The Director's presentation focused on a few of the organizations and partnerships that are helping to end homelessness in Maricopa County. He highlighted the progress that is being made by the Funders Collaborative, a partnership between the major funders of homeless services in Maricopa County. The Family Housing Hub, a coordinated entry system created through the partnership of 12 different agencies who came together with the goal of ending family homelessness. Along with the Phoenix Rescue Mission a faith-based solution for individuals facing chronic homelessness.

This year we were very excited to include a CDBG track which offered sessions enhancing the education of those working on projects in non-entitlement cities, towns and counties that receive funding through the State and Small Cities CDBG Program.

This year's keynote speaker, Illana Preuss, founder of Recast City LLC, spoke about "Lighting Up the Neighborhood Economy", the role small-scale manufacturing can play in affordable housing development. Creating communities with a great sense of place, where people are excited to live and work by creating more opportunity through small scale manufacturing and maker industries.

Boston Capital's David Gasson provided attendees with an in-depth Capital Hill briefing on federal housing legislation and possible changes to the federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program.

Lloyd Pendleton an expert on the Housing First Model discussed what's working and what still needs to be done to augment this highly effective model for housing homeless persons.

Mark Sween from Dominion along with their finance and legal professionals discussed building and operating multi-family affordable housing for the long term, how bonds can work for LIHTC Preservation.

Barbara Bergeron from SOS Organizational Services presented two personal development sessions on "The Science of Getting More Done" one session for teams and one for individuals.

Representatives from the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), HUD and VSUW discussed the latest progress in creating a national partnership between the Federal Government and the non-profit sector to end homelessness, by maximizing the effectiveness of the Federal Government's contribution.

ADOH staff provided training on how to successfully conduct special surveys for determining CDBG low-moderate income area benefit and the circumstances under which they are required.

Kevin Walters introduced attendees to Feng Shui and Housing, understanding the impact that the physical form can have on the residents of the spaces we create.

The Arizona Partnership for Healthy Communities, LISC and St. Luke's Health Initiative talked about creating and sustaining a collaboration to ensure health, transportation, community and economic development as components of housing planning & design, the first step to creating healthy communities.

Arizona State University Research Professor and Economist, Dr. Lee McPheters once again delivered a very informative and enjoyable economic forecast briefing during the Friday morning breakfast plenary.

Hopefully, these highlights give you a brief look at the speakers and sessions that made this year's Housing Forum a great success.

For a full list of the 2015 Arizona Housing Forum speakers, copies of their presentations, and photos from the Forum, please visit the Training and Events page on our website.

To view Director Traylor's videos from the Forum, please visit the Housing Success Stories page on our website at: www.azhousing.gov

2015 BRIAN MICKELSEN HOUSING HERO AWARDS

The 2015 Brian Mickelsen Housing Hero Awards were presented at a special luncheon at the Arizona Biltmore Resort during the Arizona Housing Forum on August 28th. The Brian Mickelsen Housing Hero Awards recognize outstanding service by individuals and organizations for their commitment to numerous housing issues throughout the state. Nominees in seven different categories were selected based on their efforts to support affordable housing for moderate and low-income Arizona families. The awards are named in honor of the outstanding public service exemplified by the late Brian Mickelsen, an original member of the Arizona Housing Finance Authority and former city manager for the Town of Cottonwood.

▶ The **Outstanding Affordable Housing Initiative Award** went to Coffelt Lamoreaux a comprehensive and historic renovation of 301 units, housing 800 residents, on 38 acres, just outside of Phoenix. This redevelopment project is a public/private partnership between the Housing Authority of Maricopa County and Gorman & Company, Inc. It is the first affordable housing project in Arizona to utilize HUD's Rental Assistance Demonstration program. This program allows public housing agencies to leverage public and private debt and equity in order to reinvest in its public housing stock. The program shifts units from the Public Housing program to the Section 8/Multifamily program, so that the providers may leverage the private capital markets. This innovative approach is allowing the 301 units to be brought up to modern standards. Without these funds, current residents at the site would have been forced to relocate with no guarantee of long term rental assistance.

▶ Flagstaff Shelter Services was recognized with the **Innovative Supportive Housing Program Award**. This award recognizes creative programs and services that provide outstanding housing related support and resources to individuals. Flagstaff Shelter Services is an 87 bed emergency shelter in Northern Arizona that does not turn anyone away, regardless of faith, sobriety, or mental health. The shelter sees more than 120 people a day and provides critical services to those most likely to die on the streets. They use Housing First to bring individuals and families experiencing homelessness into housing as quickly as possible and then provide services to help those same people remain housed. Utilizing this approach not only enables Flagstaff Shelter Services to serve hundreds more each year, but most importantly, it creates a housing plan for each person that has historically been dependent on the shelter system.

▶ This year's **Tribal Initiatives Award** went to the Tohono O'odham Ki:Ki Association (TOKA) Sells Rehabilitation project. TOKA is currently completing the reconstruction of 60 substandard and uninhabitable rental units in serious need of rehabilitation. This renovation project is providing safe, decent and



Director Traylor and Phoenix City Councilman Michael Nowakowski, Brian Swanton of Gorman and Company, and Gloria Munoz, Housing Authority of Maricopa County accepting the Outstanding Affordable Housing Initiative Award for Coffelt Lamoreaux.



Director Traylor and Ross Altenbaugh of Flagstaff Shelter Services, accepting the Innovative Supportive Housing Program Award.



Director Traylor and Pete Delgado, along with staff from TOKA, accepting the Tribal initiatives Award for the Sells Rehabilitation project.

continued on page 5

HOUSING HERO AWARDS (continued from page 4)

affordable rental housing to 60 low-income families in Sells, Arizona, the Capitol of the Tohono O'odham Nation. Having homes in this region is vitally important from a cultural and economic standpoint. The 60 units, which account for more than half of the 112 rental homes managed by TOKA, in Sells, have dramatically improved the quality of life for the O'odham families who now enjoy them. Of the 60 renovated units, 12 were modernized to provide accessibility for disabled and elderly individuals.

▶ Joann Hauger, Executive Director for Community Housing Resources of Arizona (CHRA), was awarded with the Arthur Cozier **Partner in Housing Award** which celebrates the single action or a lifetime of success of an individual committed to improving the lives of families and the health of communities through recognition that decent, affordable housing is basic to our social fabric. Joann has spent 26 years leading CHRA, one of the state's most successful nonprofit organizations educating more than 15,000 lower income families about the advantages and responsibilities of home ownership.

▶ The **Exemplary Urban Multifamily Project Award** recognizes an outstanding multifamily rental project in urban Arizona that serves low to moderate income individuals, families or seniors. This year's winner was A New Leaf's La Mesita Apartments.

Located in Mesa, the La Mesita Campus offers 80 affordable housing units with 30 units reserved from chronically homeless households, a 16-unit Family Emergency Homeless Shelter, and 30 additional housing units reserved for households who are chronically homeless with an emphasis on Veterans. The Campus offers comprehensive wrap-around services, most of which are offered onsite, to help vulnerable households maintain long-term stability.

▶ Foundation for Senior Living's Flagstaff Senior Meadows was recognized with this year's **Exemplary Rural Multifamily Project Award**. This award recognizes an outstanding multifamily rental project in rural Arizona that serves low to moderate income individuals, families or seniors. Flagstaff Senior Meadows consists of 60 affordable apartment units for low-income seniors 62 years and older. Their environmentally conscious universal design promotes the highest quality of life for Flagstaff seniors with incomes ranging from 40 percent to 60 percent of Area Median Income. The project allows seniors to "age in place" maintaining self-sufficiency and independence.

▶ Mesa Mayor John Giles was presented with the 2015 **Elected Official Award** which recognizes an Arizona elected official who has demonstrated ongoing support for affordable housing projects and programs including housing for homeless, domestic violence, special needs and low income families and seniors. Mayor Giles exemplifies this award through his ongoing advocacy for affordable housing and transit oriented developments in Mesa and throughout the Valley. In addition to the Brian Mickelsen Housing Hero Awards, the Arizona Housing Finance Authority (AzHFA) gave out an additional award.



Director Traylor and Joann Hauger accepting the Partner in Housing Award.



Director Traylor with Michael Hughes and Torrie Taj accepting the Exemplary Urban Multifamily Project Award for A New Leaf's La Mesita.



FSL's Steve Hastings and Judy Greene accepting the Exemplary Urban Multifamily Project Award for Flagstaff Senior Meadows.

continued on page 6

HOUSING HERO AWARDS (continued from page 5)

➤ The Arizona Housing Finance Authority presented Academy Mortgage with the **2015 High Volume Producer** Award for their amazing work assisting first time homebuyers in Arizona achieve the dream of homeownership. The loans for these homebuyers were made possible through the AzHFA.

To see the full list of past Brian Mickelsen Housing Hero Award recipients please visit the Training and Events page on our website at www.azhousing.gov.



Director Trailor with Mesa Vice Mayor Dennis Kavanaugh accepting the Elected Official Award on behalf of Mayor John Giles.



2015 Brian Mickelsen Housing Hero Awards



Director Trailor with Academy Mortgage's Robert Wasieko, Dean Wegner, and Duncan Robertson accepting the AzHFA's High Volume Producer Award.





SAVE OUR HOME AZ UPDATE

The Save Our Home AZ (SOHAZ) program continues to successfully assist Arizona homeowners who are either facing a potential foreclosure or are significantly underwater with their mortgage.

Since its inception, SOHAZ has been able to assist over 4,000 families avoid foreclosure and stay in their homes. Over \$133.7 million in program assistance has been expended or committed to individual homeowners as of September 30, 2015 to assist these homeowners through the Save Our Home AZ program, funded by the United States Department of the Treasury. Additionally, Arizona's foreclosure hotline has assisted nearly 80,179 troubled homeowners with important information and housing counseling services.

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Homeowners who qualify for a HARP 2.0 refinancing can save thousands annually with a lower rate or other more favorable terms. Additionally, the program may also be able to reduce their principal by as much as \$100,000, although the average assistance to date has been just over \$49,500.

Save Our Home AZ was created to assist homeowners avoid foreclosure on their primary residence. The program provides assistance in the form of Principal Reduction Mortgage Modification, Unemployment/Underemployment Mortgage Assistance, Second Lien Elimination and Short Sale Assistance.

For additional information on the Save Our Home AZ program, or to take the self assessment to determine your eligibility, please visit www.azhousing.gov or call the **ARIZONA FORECLOSURE HELP-LINE at 1-877-448-1211**.

TRANSFER OF STATE'S WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS TO ADOH

Effective November 9, 2015, the State's Weatherization grant programs—the Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) and the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), as well as several utility provider grants, are being transferred to ADOH from the Arizona Department of Administration/Governor's Office of Energy Policy. The programs will reside within the Community Development & Revitalization (CD&R) division at ADOH. Two Weatherization staff, Michael Frary and Trisha Ekenberg, will also transfer to the ADOH with the program. ADOH incorporated Department of Energy and other Weatherization Standards into its Single Family Housing Rehabilitation Program two years ago with great success. CD&R stands ready to absorb these programs into their division, as a natural fit. CD&R's existing resources are often utilized by the same organizations and sometimes the same projects as the Weatherization resources, which should result in more efficient and effective uses of the resources.

Questions from current Weatherization grantees and other interested parties may be directed to Kathy Blodgett, CD&R Administrator, at (602) 771-1021 or Kathy.Blodgett@azhousing.gov.



FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

CONGRESS PASSES TEMPORARY BUDGET MEASURE

➤ Narrowly avoiding a government shutdown, Congress passed a continuing resolution (CR) on September 30th that will fund federally funded programs through December 11, 2015 at slightly below FY2015 funding levels, on an annualized basis.

Congress needed to approve the CR or other funding legislation to avoid a government shutdown prior to the start of the new fiscal year which began on October 1. The CR includes no funding adjustments for HUD or U.S. Department of Agriculture rural housing programs.

With the CR expiring on December 11, Congress will either need to approve another CR or other FY2016 funding legislation to ensure that the federally funded programs continue operating after that date. Given the political environment on Capitol Hill, it remains unlikely that Congress will be able to approve a package of new FY2016 funding bills in an omnibus bill, similar to the way FY2014 appropriations were finalized. It's more likely than not that another funding extension will be the resolution for the short term.

COMPREHENSIVE TAX REFORM & LIHTC FLOATING RATE FIX

➤ Going into a big election year, it does not appear that a bipartisan tax reform bill will take place this year. Additionally, the prospects for any major tax legislation over the next year also looks out of reach and most likely won't be considered until 2017.

However, Congress is expected to consider a tax extender package by the end of 2015 that is expected to include the fix to the 9 percent Housing Credit rate floor for new construction.



STATE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

ARIZONA SURPRISING ENDS FY15 WITH BUDGET SURPLUS

➤ State revenue projections continue to come in better than expected with the state collecting \$32.2 million more than the forecasted amount.

As of mid August, the state is currently sitting on an operating balance of \$1.9 billion with \$458.2 million in the Rainy Day Fund.

At the end of the legislative session, FY2015 was projected to have a shortfall of \$132 million. This shortfall was to be filled with a conditional transfer from the Rainy Day Fund; however, this will no longer have to occur with the most recent data showing that Arizona ended FY2015 with a balance of \$320 million. This has allowed the state to start FY2016 with a larger beginning balance and if all holds true, instead of being \$35 million in the hole, Arizona will have a \$278 million balance by the end of FY2016.

Approaching the legislative session, all early indications seem to show that lawmakers will remain conservative when it comes to spending. The uncertainty surrounding K-12 funding requirements and the pending litigation that would require Arizona to pay an estimated \$320 million per year to cover K-12 inflation costs has lawmakers thinking twice about increasing expenditures.

The Legislature will return to work on Monday, January 11, 2016; however, there may be an upcoming special legislative session to address K-12 education funding issues before the next session.

Arizona Housing Finance Authority Activities

▶ A recent NeighborWorks America study showed 70 percent of Americans are unaware of down payment assistance programs. When potential homebuyers don't know down payment assistance programs exist, they aren't seeking these solutions when a lack of funds are the only thing keeping them from moving from renting to buying. HOME Plus creates a pathway to homeownership by giving creditworthy renters who can qualify for a mortgage, but cannot afford the down payment, the funds to move forward. An active and healthy first-time homebuyer market generates a positive economic ripple effect throughout the community.

The Arizona Housing Finance Authority's HOME Plus Home Loan Program provides an attractive 30-year fixed-rate mortgage with down payment assistance (DPA) grant to be used for the down payment and/or closing costs. The amount of the grant is equal to a percentage of the principal balance of the new mortgage loan, ranging from 2 percent to 5 percent depending upon the underlying mortgage type.

Over the past ninety days, 632 new homebuyers have been assisted through the HOME Plus Home Loan Program with over \$4 million in down payment assistance. Since the HOME Plus program's inception in April 2013, 1,945 new homebuyers have received just over \$11.6 million in down payment assistance.

AzHFA raises funds for our initiative in the national capital markets and forms partnerships with banking and lending institutions to facilitate our HOME Plus Home Loan Program throughout the State of Arizona.

Information on the Home Plus program may be found on our website: www.azhousing.gov.



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SCHEDULED MEETINGS

November 12, 2015

December 10, 2015

*check website for times

Merger of Public Housing Authority and Housing Compliance Divisions

▶ Effective November 2, 2015, ADOH's Public Housing Authority and Housing Compliance Divisions were merged to create a new division called the Section 8/Compliance Division. The PHA's Administrator, Greg Cooper, will head this new division, and will be assisted by Juan Bello who has been promoted to a Senior Compliance Officer position. In this new position Mr. Bello will manage the day-to-day teamwork of the Compliance staff. The division formerly called the Public Housing Authority oversees the Section 8 Project-Based Contract Administration (PBCA) duties, as well as the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV)

Program for Yavapai County, and the Housing Compliance division conducts ongoing monitoring of rental properties financed through ADOH resources, including but not limited to LIHTC, HOME and Housing Trust Funds. These two divisions have been engaged in similar work and both have relationships with many of the same property owners and management companies, and in some cases, monitor the exact same properties. As a result, ADOH expects the merger to result in a more efficient and effective interaction with the rental property owners and management companies.

Questions concerning the Section 8 (PBCA and HCV) duties of the division should be directed to Greg Cooper, Section 8/Compliance Division Administrator, at (602) 771-1051 or Greg.Cooper@azhousing.gov. Questions concerning LIHTC, HOME, HTF and other rental property monitoring may be directed to Juan Bello at (602) 771-1074 or Juan.Bello@azhousing.gov.

Featured Groundbreakings & Grand Openings



MADISON HEIGHTS | Avondale, AZ

A groundbreaking ceremony was held on August 12th for Madison Heights Apartments, 1103 N. Sixth Street in Avondale, a project of the Housing Authority of Maricopa County (HAMC). This project is the first in Arizona to take advantage of a new federal program called the HUD Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program, designed to redevelop the nation's aging stock of public housing. It allows public housing agencies to leverage public and private debt and equity in order to reinvest in the public housing stock. The program is cost-neutral.

Through the program, units move to a Section 8 platform with a long-term contract that, by law, must be renewed, and ensures the units remain permanently affordable to low-income households. Residents continue to pay 30 percent of their income toward the rent and maintain the same basic rights they possess in the public housing program. The RAD program has allowed local communities across the country to raise more than \$989 million in new capital funding, which affected almost 18,000 units.

Developers broke ground in July on the two-story project which will have 143 units. The project should be completed in December 2016. The state-of-the-art, environmentally friendly, multi-family develop-



Artist's rendition of the new Madison Heights

ment will replace 77 existing dilapidated units on the property, which were built in 1973 and have evaporative coolers.

"Several residents are still living in the current units, and will be given the option to return to the property at their same rental amount once the new buildings are complete," said Brian Swanton of Gorman and Company. Demolition on the existing units began in September.

"It was painfully obvious that this wonderful housing project had outlived its economic and physical usefulness," said Mike Trailor, Director of the Arizona Department of Housing. "These days, for people to be living in substandard housing with swamp coolers in Arizona when it's 113 degrees is not a very good situation."

To qualify for the housing, residents must earn at or below 60 percent of the area's median income. The amount is adjusted by family size and a variety of other factors, but roughly equals \$20,000 to \$40,000 a year, said Brian Swanton, Arizona market president for Gorman and Co., one of the project's partners.

The new housing units have varying floor plans, and the property will feature on-site amenities, including a computer lab, fitness center and multipurpose community room with free before- and after-school programming. It will also offer services such as job training, job search assistance and job placement.



Gloria Munoz, HAMC



Ophelia Basgal, HUD



Brian Swanton, Gorman & Co.

Calendar 2015

NOVEMBER	
4	Home Compliance Workshop
11	OFFICE CLOSED - Veteran's Day Holiday
12	Arizona Housing Finance Authority Board Meeting
DECEMBER	
10	Arizona Housing Finance Authority Board Meeting
25	OFFICE CLOSED - Christmas Holiday

2016 LIHTC APPLICATION WORKSHOP

▶ The Arizona Department of Housing has scheduled the 2016 LIHTC Application Workshop for Tuesday, January 19, 2016 from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm. The workshop will be held at the Phoenix Airport Marriott Hotel, 1011 North 44th Street, Phoenix, AZ 85008.

The Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) requires Developer, Co-Developer or Consultants submitting an application for the 2016 round to attend this workshop and submit a certificate of attendance in their application.

Online registration is now available. The cost is \$75.00. No at door registration will be available. The deadline to register for this workshop is January 14, 2016.

Visit the Training & Events tab on the Department's website <http://www.azhousing.gov>. For additional information, contact Michele Meyerkorth, michele.meyerkorth@azhousing.gov.

PUBLICATION SPECIALIST CYNTHIA DIGGELMANN RETIRES



▶ Cynthia Diggelmann retired on Friday, October 2, 2015, after 13 years of public service.

Cynthia began her career with the Arizona Department of Housing in February of 2002 as the Assistant to the Director. In January of 2004 she became the Publication Specialist, where she completed the remainder of her state service with the Department.

Cynthia was responsible for the website, information bulletins and newsletters, along with the organization of all 12 of our Arizona Housing Forums and our Department trainings. She was an important member of our team. We wish her all the best in her retirement!

2015-2016 ADOH Training Calendar

ADOH has scheduled the following training opportunities for 2015 and 2016:

- Nov 4** Home Compliance Workshop
Phoenix, AZ
- Jan 19** LIHTC Application Workshop
Phoenix, AZ
- Feb 23 & 23** LIHTC Compliance Workshop #1
Phoenix, AZ
- July 20 & 21** LIHTC Compliance Workshop #2
Flagstaff, AZ

info Visit the Event Calendar at www.azhousing.gov for additional information regarding deadlines, registration pricing and hotel accommodations.