

Award of Excellence Winners Announced at 2025 Washington Conference

Nominated from among the Awards of Merit winners each year, the Awards of Excellence, selected by national juries, represent the best work of housing and community development agencies nationwide. This year, we will present the award-winning entries in the categories below. Congratulations to all our winners! For more information about these winners, check out the Award of Merit Catalog online.

Get Behind the Address

Dothan Housing adopted the “Get Behind the Address” campaign within their communities to better understand and assist their residents with needs and barriers. The agency partnered with Troy University (TU) to conduct a comprehensive community needs assessment to identify challenges and barriers that impact the residents.

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OCHEC: Community Anchor

Our Community Housing and Enrichment Center is a product of Dothan Housing’s Community Preservation and Revitalization (CPR) initiatives. This community revitalization project utilized a donated former Montana Street Magnet Elementary School, to re-establish a new administrative building for the agency and a “community anchor” for the historic Baptist Bottoms Neighborhood in Dothan, AL.

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WDSF+ ADU Pilot Program

The West Denver Single Family+ (WDSF+) ADU Pilot Program is a community-responsive program initiated in nine gentrifying neighborhoods of Denver to stabilize homeowners, minimize displacement, provide wealth-building opportunity, create new affordable units, and promote equitable access to ADU development.

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Food Pantry at Edythe K. Richmond Homes

The Food Pantry at the Edythe K. Richmond Homes provides a site-based delivery of free food for residents. The monthly food distribution program is established and staffed by Authority employees and supported through partnerships with the United Way of Southeastern Connecticut and the Gemma Moran Food Center.

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HCV Voucher Core Application

The District of Columbia Housing Authority worked with The Lab @ DC, part of Mayor Muriel Bowser and the Office of the City Administrator to simplify and streamline access to government services. The Lab@ DC uses scientific insights and methods to test and improve policies and provide timely, relevant, and high-quality analysis to inform the District's most important decisions.

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The Phoenix Health HUB

Created to help staff make healthy choices after 16 weeks of working from home during COVID, the Phoenix Health HUB includes Meditation Mondays, The Phoenix Walking Trail, Workout Wednesdays, a mental health day, and A Taste of Phoenix, where healthy food could be sampled and education offered on the nutritional benefits of the food.

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Phoenix Rising

To remain sustainable and continue revitalization, the creation of an affordable rent platform garnered \$325K annually. This produced 48 renovated public housing units and a mixed-income community of teachers, hairdressers, bus drivers, entrepreneurs, and postal workers that live in affordable housing with a crime rate of less than 2%.

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Eddie Woodard- Residents Programs

Eddie Woodard is a new three-story affordable family community with many amenities and residential services offered through the Lakeland Housing Authority. The financial education program at Eddie Woodard helps people of all ages enhance their financial skills and create positive banking relationships. Our program includes adult literacy training, employment assistance, and financial management.

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Encore Infrastructure- Project Design

ENCORE is a public-private partnership between Banc of America Community Development Corporation & the Tampa Housing Authority. A 40-acre mixed-use, mixed-income redevelopment community within Downtown Tampa's urban core. LEED-certified, ENCORE supports a commitment to environmentally responsible development. Estimated 2,300 rental housing units at build-out, ENCORE created more than 4,000 jobs during construction and 1,000 permanent jobs.

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Race on Third

Lexington Housing Authority aggressively seeks development opportunities in its community. Race on Third was designed to infill adjoining empty lots and create affordable housing continuing revitalization of the surrounding urban area. A blighted area now anchors a busy thoroughfare with an attractive 6-unit townhome complex and off-street parking. These units offer 2 bedrooms, 2 and a half baths, covered porches, patios, and laminate wood flooring throughout modern open-concept units.

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Eviction Intervention through Mediation

Legal Aid of the Bluegrass (LABG) and the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Housing Authority collaborated to advance the priorities of the organization and the tenants. With tenants at risk of eviction and the housing authority at risk of forfeiting significant rent arrearage, the parties proposed to refer delinquent tenants to a neutral mediator. Both entities and all tenants find this project successful.

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Beyond New Beginnings

The Carver County Community Development Agency and Beyond New Beginnings have a Memorandum of Understanding signed for the project. The agency owns and manages four units of rental housing and Beyond New Beginnings provides the programming. The property also includes programming space for Beyond New Beginnings staff and residents.

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Family Housing Expansion Project

This project brings 26 two- and 58 three-bedroom units in fourplexes and sixplexes to 16 sites throughout Minneapolis. All units are available to households at or below 30% of the Area Median Income. Minneapolis Public Housing Authority, the developer, owner and property manager of the project, estimates these 84 new homes will serve approximately 420 families over the next 30 years.

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J.J. Henderson Senior Campus

Originally constructed by the Durham Housing Authority in 1979, J.J. Henderson Senior Apartments has provided affordable housing designated for seniors, 62-years or older, and disabled community members. The agency created plans to subdivide and transform the site into a community campus including the renovation of J.J. Henderson, additional senior housing, and a recreation area.

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AI Education and Enlightenment Series

The Opportunity Home Innovative Technology team created a three-part AI Literacy Series to educate and enlighten staff about the nuances of AI. By enlightening staff and demonstrating how AI tools can help them work more efficiently, the agency can direct more focus on delivering excellent customer service to the people they serve.

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A Ride Can Change A Life

The Housing Authority of Newport is part of an innovative pilot program with Age Friendly RI, an initiative of Rhode Island College, and a local nonprofit, Looking Upwards, to address the unmet transportation needs of historically underserved communities. This program has enhanced the lives of public housing residents through dedicated transportation services that provide basic needs such as trips to Walmart and the supermarket as well as leisure activities that combat social isolation.

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Safety by Choice, Not by Chance!

The North Providence Housing Authority received a Loss Prevention Fund Grant from HAI Insurance Group. The Housing Authority installed a state-of-the-art security camera system on all properties including the housing authority office. Mandatory staff training included de-escalation and active shooter skills which was not only effective in the workplace but is applicable to all aspects of everyday life.

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The Residences at North Hill

This property is part of a plan to create a multimodal future for the area, also offering 175 market-rate townhomes, a 12-acre park, and access to transit. Many innovative financing mechanisms were implemented, including using public land as a housing resource; funding from multiple partners; four ground leases; and Moving To Work flexibilities.

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