

NAHMA News

PROTECTING THE INTERESTS OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROPERTY MANAGERS AND OWNERS

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President Signs Bills for HUD and RHS Funding

On December 16, 2009, President Obama signed the FY 2010 Consolidated Appropriations Act (Public Law No: 111-117), making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year that runs through September 30, 2010. The President also signed the Agricultural Appropriations Act into law on October 16, 2009 (P.L. 111-80). This funds Rural Housing Service (RHS) multifamily housing.

The House also passed HR 2847, the Jobs for Main Street Act of 2010, on December 16, 2009, which provides \$1 billion for the National Housing Trust Fund. The fund would provide communities with money to build, preserve, and rehabilitate rental homes that are affordable for extremely and very low-income households. The legislation also sets aside \$65 million for project-based vouchers to support units built by the fund. At press time, action on the legislation was stalled in the Senate.

HUD GETS INCREASED FUNDING

Overall, HUD programs received considerable increases in funding, while rural programs were a mixed bag.

Regarding HUD 2010 funding, tenant-based Section 8 vouchers received large increases above the FY 2009 appropriation and budget request levels. Project-based Section 8 funding received a large boost and an advanced appropriation for FY 2011 to help cover the program shortfalls between fiscal years.

NAHMA is also pleased to report that Congress has once again appropriated \$500,000 for limited English proficiency (LEP) translations. This fund-

continued on page 4





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Communities of Quality® Get Boost from Maps Program

IN THIS ISSUE OF NAHMA NEWS we once again showcase the winners of our annual Communities of Quality® (COQ) Awards program. For the 17th consecutive year, this program highlights NAHMA members' outstanding efforts to provide high-quality, safe and secure affordable housing that adds value to their larger communities.

Now this effort has a new ally: the new NAHMA Maps program, located at <http://nahma.apartmentsmart.com>.

NAHMA Maps allows members to provide visual and statistical information to their congressional representatives on the affordable housing portfolio...

Begun in November 2009 in partnership with ApartmentSmart.com, this innovative program works as an advocacy and marketing tool, providing the most comprehensive and up-to-date listing of affordable housing properties nationwide.

It also provides increased visibility for the COQ program, by posting COQ sites online in a mainstream marketplace through this popular rental housing search portal.

The NAHMA Maps program provides an affordable housing overview for each state and Congressional district and helps affordable housing providers show the impact of affordable multifamily rental programs in a particular area.

NAHMA Maps allows members to provide visual and statistical information to their congressional representatives on the affordable housing portfolio, including NAHMA properties, in their congressional district or state. It highlights the importance of the work NAHMA

members have done to improve the quality of life for low-income residents and demonstrates how well the affordable housing programs are working.

This goes hand-in-hand with our annual Communities of Quality® Awards program and the COQ National Recognition program.

It is to our advantage as an industry to have members whose properties have achieved excellence in property management. Especially as the need for affordable

housing becomes more acute with the downturn in the economy, we need all the tools at our disposal for convincing federal, state and local officials that funds and investments need to be made in order to create more Communities of Quality.

We hope that all of this year's COQ Awards program entrants—and those who have achieved National Recognition—will continue to advocate on behalf of affordable housing by using all the tools we have available. If you haven't checked out our website lately, we urge you to do so. You will find many interconnected tools for you to use in making a strong case for affordable housing in your communities.

On a separate note of celebration, NAHMA will observe its 20th anniversary in 2010. We could not have reached this successful milestone without the participation of our members over the years. Thank you all! **NN**
Kris Cook is Executive Director of NAHMA.

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ing represents significant continued progress in NAHMA's efforts to offset the costs to housing providers associated with HUD's LEP guidance, while at the same time ensuring that those with limited English proficiency have access to low-income housing.



programs were flat-funded for FY 2010. Rental assistance received an \$80 million increase over FY 2009 levels. The Multifamily Housing Revitalization Program saw a \$15 million increase to the account for FY 2010.

For details on each of the HUD and USDA-RHS appropriations, NAHMA members can see the NAHMA analysis on its webpage at www.nahma.org.

POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THIS LEGISLATION

On the whole, NAHMA is pleased with the HUD funding levels. The \$1 billion increase in the project-based Section 8 account will help ensure that all contracts are funded for the full 12 months at renewal. Nevertheless, NAHMA will stay vigilant and ensure that Congress provides enough appropriations to fully fund all HUD

NAHMA is also pleased to see that HOPE VI funding has been increased and that the program has been extended through the end of the fiscal year, giving Congress time to reconsider HOPE VI reauthorization legislation. NAHMA is interested in the Choice Neighborhoods program and looks forward to seeing how it will extend additional funding to revitalize communities and privately-owned affordable housing in distressed areas.

NAHMA is also supportive of the ideals behind the Energy Innovation Fund's Multifamily Housing Energy Pilot program to improve energy efficiency in the multifamily housing portfolio. NAHMA is interested in seeing how HUD will develop the pilot and will keep members informed of developments in the program as they arise.

NAHMA agrees with the overall goals of HUD's Transformation Initia-

The multifamily rural housing portfolio is in **DESPERATE NEED** of rehabilitation, and the demonstration program will help RHS determine the **best course of action** for preserving rural units.

Hope VI received an \$80 million increase over FY 2009 levels.

CDBG received a significant boost, while HOME remained flat-funded when compared to FY 2009 appropriations.

Three of the President's proposed programs also received funding. The Choice Neighborhoods Initiative received \$65 million, while the Energy Innovation Fund received \$50 million for two pilot programs, one of which would improve energy efficiency in multifamily housing. Finally, Congress authorized the Transformation Initiative, which would allow HUD to transfer up to 1 percent of all accounts for information technology improvements and technical assistance.

Except for Sec. 521 for Rental Assistance and the Multifamily Housing Revitalization Program, USDA-RHS

multifamily housing programs.

NAHMA was instrumental in procuring LEP translation funding for FY 2010. However, this was done as an unauthorized appropriation. Because of the tight budget environment, unauthorized appropriations for these services cannot be guaranteed in the future. Authorizing funding for LEP translations and interpretation services would provide greater assurance that a reliable stream of funding will be available to provide persons with LEP a consistent level of service and quality translations in future years. It would also guide HUD in the use of authorized LEP appropriations. Therefore, NAHMA will continue working with Congress to move forward with the authorization language, either through SEVRA or stand-alone legislation.

Congress has approved funding for a number of multifamily housing programs that need technical updates, including REAC within the Public Housing Capital Fund, HOPE VI, the Energy Innovation Fund, CDBG, HOME, Section 202, Section 811, Lead Hazard Reduction, Rental Housing Assistance and Fair Housing Activities. NAHMA will work to ensure that the programs which affect our members receive the necessary funding to update and streamline their operations.

Finally, NAHMA supports the additional funding Congress provided in the RHS Multifamily Housing Revitalization Program. The multifamily rural housing portfolio is in desperate need of rehabilitation, and the demonstration program should help RHS determine the best course of action for preserving rural units.

ISSUES OF CONCERN TO NAHMA

NAHMA remains concerned about the continued delays in completing the appropriations process. While this past year presented a unique situation with a late budget request from the new president, Congress did set a schedule that would allow them to complete the FY 2010 appropriations by the September 30, 2009 deadline.

Unfortunately, Congress did not stick to its schedule. Delayed appropriations followed by temporary continuing resolutions have been on-going problems for a number of years. Funding the federal government at the previous fiscal year's level for extended periods denies federal government programs crucial funding increases. Also, each time Congress approves a continuing resolution, funding can be delayed due to the number of financial controls and the time it takes to process the funding through the Administration, then HUD, and, finally, to the owners and agents.

For NAHMA members, whose properties have monthly bills and expenses, these delays and initial lower funding levels can cause problems for effective and efficient operations. NAHMA will continue to strongly urge Congress to complete the process before the new fiscal year begins.

Although Congress increased total funding for the Section 202 program, it did cut the funding available for new construction and rental assistance. The elderly population is increasing at a high rate, and many elderly properties have long waiting lists. New construction funding is critical to increasing the number of units available to this growing demographic. NAHMA will work to restore these cuts in FY 2011.

NAHMA was disappointed with the flat-funding of the Section 515 and Section 538 RHS programs. With increased operating costs and rising inflation, there is less and less money available for new construction when these programs are flat-funded. Providing additional

appropriations for rural housing will produce new affordable housing units in rural markets and will provide much needed jobs and investment opportunities in these areas. Increased rural rental assistance is not a substitute for these loan programs. NAHMA will continue to advocate for higher funding for the Section 515 and Section 538 programs in the FY 2011 budget and appropriations processes.

GRASSROOTS ACTION NEEDED

NAHMA urges its members to continue their grassroots efforts to show how low-income housing programs benefit the residents as well as the community. To that end, NAHMA encourages its members to take advantage of the new NAHMA Maps program, located at <http://nahma.apartmentsmart.com>. The NAHMA Maps program provides an affordable housing overview for each

state and Congressional district and helps affordable housing providers show the impact that affordable multifamily rental programs are having in a particular area. This information can be shared with Congressional representatives and their staff when discussing affordable housing issues.

NAHMA remains pleased that Congress continues to take action to ensure that HAP contracts are fully funded and is continuing its oversight of project-based Section 8 payments. Nevertheless, members should inform NAHMA of disruptions in the HAP payment process or other ongoing problems. NAHMA also recommends that members promptly communicate HAP payment problems to their Congressional delegations. NAHMA will work to ensure the necessary appropriations to fully fund all affordable housing programs for the FY 2011. **NN**



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2010

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A Blueprint for Results in 2010!

IT'S A NEW YEAR, WITH NEW opportunities as well as old challenges. So, what do we want to achieve in 2010?

A strong budget for affordable multifamily housing programs. We will continue advocating for full funding of 12 month, project-based Section 8 contracts at the time of renewal. We have made tremendous strides on this issue, but there are still some problems with the timeliness of HAPs when contracts are funded through stop-gap spending bills, rather than through the final Transportation-HUD appropriations bill. Increases for the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program, and multifamily production programs such as Section 202, are also high priorities.

Legislation to stimulate investment in the LIHTC program. NAHMA is a member of the A.C.T.I.O.N. (A Call To Invest in Our Neighborhoods) coalition, which has called on Congress to:

- Increase the Housing Tax Credit carry-back for up to five years;
- Extend Treasury's Housing Credit cash-exchange program (Section 1602) for an additional year; and
- Expand the LIHTC potential investor base to certain LLCs, Subchapter S corporations and closely held corporations.

A workable Section 8 reform bill. NAHMA supports the Section 8 Voucher Reform Act (SEVRA, HR 3045). Highlights of this bill would:

- Stabilize funding for the voucher program;
- Simplify the rules for determining rent, recertifying income and inspecting housing units; and
- Authorize appropriations for new incremental vouchers.

Once this bill is brought to the House

floor, we expect an amendment will be offered and approved to formally authorize a limited English proficiency technical assistance program at HUD. A similar program, funded through the appropriations bills, has allowed HUD to translate a number of important documents used to support multifamily programs. These translations are available on HUD's FHEO webpage, <http://www.hud.gov/offices/fheo/promotingfh/lep.cfm>.

Preservation of affordable properties. Both HUD and key members of Congress are interested in preserving affordable rental housing. NAHMA will continue to advocate for regulatory policies and legislation that promote voluntary participation by owners, as well as long-term sustainability of the properties.

The biggest challenges we face to achieve these goals are a lack of time and money. Because it's an election year, Congress will operate on a tighter schedule so that members can campaign. Likewise, the mid-term congressional elections will be treated as a referendum on the Obama Administration. As a result, White House priorities such as health care reform, economic stimulus and a renewed interest in national security and counterterrorism efforts will dominate the agenda. The cost of these initiatives, combined with the already substantial deficit spending, will squeeze the budget.

So how can we make sure affordable multifamily housing programs get the resources and attention they deserve in 2010?

Let your members of Congress know that affordable housing programs are important to you. Find out which U.S. senators and representatives correspond

to the properties in your portfolio. Build relationships with the congressional staff. Find out who the housing policy staff are in each office and share your concerns about affordable housing with them through e-mail and phone conversations. NAHMA's grassroots advocacy webpage, www.nahma.org/content/grassroots.html, is your source for the latest talking points on key housing policy issues.

Help your senators and representatives understand why quality rental housing should be important to them.

All politics is local. When you talk with members of Congress and their staff, be sure to let them know that federally-assisted affordable properties are home to low-income families in the districts they represent. It is important to make the connections between federal programs, the affordable property, and quality of life for their constituents.

In addition, the new NAHMA Maps Affordable Housing Search Engine (see <http://nahma.apartmentsmart.com>) provides visual and statistical information about the number of affordable properties in a given location or congressional district. The program also includes a list of properties below the map that will link to additional information about the property, such as location, contact information, management company, number of units, types of federal subsidies, income limits and rents, amenities, pictures, etc. Please check out this new feature, and contact Lauren.Eardensohn@nahma.org to make sure the information about your properties is up to date. **NN**

Michelle Kitchen is Director, Government Affairs, for NAHMA.

In Case of an Audit, Be Prepared!

IF, AFTER SUBMITTING THE TAX FORMS NECESSARY to claim credit for Low Income Housing Credit (LIHC) projects, the IRS determines that an audit is to be conducted, owners will be notified by a letter that will include a request for information and documents to be made available for the audit. This list of items is provided on Form 4564, Information Document Request, or in IRS jargon, the “IDR.”

Since it’s that time of year when lists are made and checked twice, here’s what you might expect to see on the first IDR for the audit of a taxpayer owning IRC §42 property, which is almost always a partnership.

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Partnership Agreement
2. Prospectus/Offering Memorandum related to the organization or syndication of the partnership
3. Documentation for the partners’ capital contributions and current balance
4. Credit Allocation Application
5. Market Study
6. Credit Allocation Award or Carryover Allocation
7. Extended Use Agreement
8. All Forms 8609 issued to the taxpayer
9. Internal audit reports

TAX RETURNS

1. Copies of tax returns for the tax year prior to the earliest year under audit, and all tax returns for years subsequent to the tax years under audit.
2. Trial balance and any work papers used to prepare the tax return under audit
3. Depreciation schedules

ELIGIBLE BASIS

1. Final cost certification submitted to the state agency with supporting documentation
2. Documentation of all financing sources

3. Development contracts or agreements
4. Documentation of cost allocations between land, non-qualifying land improvements and depreciable residential rental property included in eligible basis

LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS

1. For the years under audit, rent rolls identifying the households and family size for each low-income unit
2. Documentation of internal controls in place to ensure that income-qualified households occupy the low-income units

FIRST AND 11TH YEAR OF THE COMPLIANCE PERIOD

If the first year of the compliance period is audited, the special rule for computing the Applicable Fraction under IRC §42(f)(2) is used. The taxpayer should provide:

1. Certificates of Occupancy
2. A schedule indicating when each low-income unit was first occupied by an income-qualified household
3. Computation of First Year Applicable Fraction, including the computation of the Applicable Fraction on a monthly basis

If the 11th year of the compliance period is audited and the taxpayer has claimed credit, the taxpayer should provide the information identified above as well as a copy of the tax return for the first year of the credit period.

ADDITIONS TO QUALIFIED BASIS

1. Provide a list of units first occupied by qualifying tenants after the end of the first year of the credit period and identify when a qualifying household first occupied the unit, or
2. Confirm that all units were occupied by qualifying household by the end of the first year of the credit period

RENTS & OTHER SOURCES OF INCOME OR FUNDS

1. Description of residential rental units, including total number of units, total number of low-income units, size (bedrooms) and rents charged for low-income and market units
2. Documentation that rents are correctly restricted
3. Sources of rent subsidies
4. Documentation for computation of any utility allowances
5. Fees for services provided to tenants in addition to housing
6. Other income from related activities, i.e., vending machines, laundry facilities, etc.
7. Other income from sources such as commercial use of a portion of the property
8. Documentation of funds received from other sources--e.g., federal grants or subsidies received during the year, additional capital contributions, or loan proceeds

NONCOMPLIANCE

If the audit resulted from the filing of Forms 8823 by the state agency, the taxpayer should provide documentation for corrective actions taken to restore the project to compliance.

DISPOSITIONS

If the property was sold, documentation regarding the sale should be requested. Particularly, the sales contract and settlement documents, computation of the capital gain/loss, how the gain/loss was distributed among the partners, and whether the sale required the new owner to operate property as a qualified low-income project for the remainder of the 15-year compliance period.

CONCLUSION: RECORDKEEPING AND RECORD RETENTION

Take a deep breath. This is the all-inclusive, master wish list for the first IDR. Examiners will tailor the request to fit the facts of the case, but also remember that there may be follow-up IDRs later on.

Can't remember where you stashed this stuff? No excuses! In addition to the general recordkeeping requirements under IRC §6001, owners of IRC §42 projects are subject to specific recordkeeping (it's another long list) and record retention requirements under Treas. Reg. 1.42-5(b). These records must be retained for at least six years after the due date (with extensions) for filing the federal income tax return for that year, and the records for the first year of the credit period must be retained for at least six years beyond the due date (with extensions) for filing the federal income tax return for the last year of the 15-year compliance period of the building. **NN**

Grace Robertson is a Program Analyst, Examination Specialization & Technical Guidance, for the Internal Revenue Service.

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HUD Includes Industry Stakeholders in Strategic Planning Process

Under the leadership of Secretary Shaun Donovan, the Department of Housing and Urban Development has undertaken a unique strategic planning process that affords organizations and individuals interactive ways to participate in the process. NAHMA is one of the stakeholder organizations that was asked to take part in meetings to develop the strategic plan's draft mission statement, draft vision statement and draft goals and sub-goals. Both Executive Director Kris Cook and Director of Government Affairs Michelle Kitchen attended planning sessions.

The new strategic plan will replace the one created in March of 2006.

At press time, the strategic planning effort included a unique website called *HUD Ideas in Action* (<http://hudideasinaction.uservoice.com>) which enables organizations, residents, partners and the general public to submit ideas, rate and comment on the ideas of others, and get feedback from HUD management on their suggestions.

WHY THE STRATEGIC PLAN?

The current Administration says that it views the FY 2010-2015 plan as "the guiding light" for HUD and that it will help determine every action the Department takes in the upcoming years. HUD is asking for public comment through the *HUD Ideas in Action* website on the following:

■ **HUD's Draft Mission Statement**, which is to *Invest in quality, affordable homes and build strong, safe healthy communities for all.*

■ **HUD's Draft Vision Statement**, which reads: *Our vision is to improve lives and strengthen communities to deliver on America's Dreams:*

For Residents: We will improve lives

by creating affordable homes in safe, healthy communities and by protecting the rights and affirming the values of a diverse society.

For Partners: We will be a flexible, reliable problem solver and a valued source of information.

For Employees: We will be a great place to work where employees are mission-driven, results-oriented, innovative and collaborative.

For the Public: We will be a good

The current Administration says that it views the FY 2010-2015 plan as "the guiding light" for HUD and that it will help determine every action the Department takes in the upcoming years.

neighbor, building sustainable communities that create value and investing public money responsibly to deliver results that matter.

DRAFT GOALS AND SUB-GOALS

The following goals and sub-goals are what HUD is asking for comment on through its website:

GOAL 1: Repair the Nation's Economy and Housing Market

- End the foreclosure crisis
- Protect consumers when they buy a home
- Re-create a strong housing finance system
- Promote affordable, financially sustainable and appropriate housing options, including home ownership

GOAL 2: Promote Affordable Rental Housing

- Expand the supply of quality affordable rental housing
- Preserve the existing supply of federally-assisted, quality affordable rental housing
- Increase rental housing affordability across a broad range of incomes while reducing the number of families and

individuals with severe housing needs

GOAL 3: Utilize Housing as a Platform for Improving Quality of Life

- Improve educational and early childhood development outcomes for those living in HUD-assisted housing
- Improve health outcomes for those living HUD-assisted and HUD-regulated housing
- Increase economic security and self-sufficiency for those living in HUD-assisted housing
- Provide housing and social stability for

the homeless and those at risk of being homeless

GOAL 4: Build Inclusive and Sustainable Communities of Opportunity

- Excel in disaster preparedness, resiliency and recovery
- Improve the health and economic self-sufficiency of all community residents, while reducing the impact of communities on the environment
- Catalyze economic development and job creation, while preserving community assets
- Ensure diverse, equitable and fair communities for all
- Advance strong local and regional public and private organizations

GOAL 5: Transform the Way HUD Does Business

- Improve program effectiveness
- Tie employee accountability to performance that drives/delivers performance
- Create a healthy, open, physical work environment
- Focus on long-term success as well as short-term crises
- Produce customer satisfaction through employee engagement, responsiveness and accountability (to/from customer)

- Develop a mission-driven culture that fosters: accountability, innovation, customer focus, team work, risk-taking and proactive employees
- Effect employee collaboration across silos
- Ensure a highly motivated, skilled and sustainable workforce
- Develop effective, visionary leaders throughout the organization
- Empower HUD to produce results through flexible, modern rules and systems that empower
- Align more distributed decision-making with authority and responsibilities
- Improve transparency throughout the organization.

Each aspect of the FY 2010-2015 Strategic Plan has its own forum that participants can submit their best ideas to and engage in. Through this User-Voice site, HUD is able to:

- Engage stakeholders in an open and transparent process to ensure every stakeholder has a voice in the way the agency and its operations evolve
- Collect constant, innovative input and perspectives on improvements to improve HUD's ability to achieve our mission
- Disseminate information about new and existing programs, initiatives, and policies

By harnessing “the collective wisdom of crowds,” HUD says that the FY2010-2015 Strategic Plan will become the document it needs to provide direction for the next six years.

to field staff and provide a forum for communication across headquarters, regional and field offices, and partners.

By harnessing “the collective wisdom of crowds,” HUD says that the FY2010-2015 Strategic Plan will become the document it needs to provide direction for the next six years.

HUD stresses that it cannot automatically implement whichever idea gets the highest number of votes, and that some ideas may not be able to be implemented, or have to be implemented by someone other than HUD. However, according to the website, staff from HUD will be reading and participating in this forum while it is open,

and really will be looking to implement some of the best ideas and respond to the identified top priorities.

NAHMA will monitor the forums as time goes on to see which ideas are taken under consideration and will participate with HUD as the strategic planning process continues. **NN**

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savings in both human and financial resources,” says Koehler.

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Strengthening Disaster Recovery for the Nation

At the President's request, the Secretaries of Homeland Security and Housing and Urban Development are co-chairing a Long-Term Disaster Recovery Working Group composed of the Secretaries and Administrators of more than 20 departments, agencies and offices. This high-level, strategic initiative will provide operational guidance for recovery organizations as well as make suggestions for future improvement.

An intensive stakeholder outreach effort took place during October and November 2009, involving state, local, and tribal government representatives, as well as a wide array of private organizations and private nonprofit organizations. NAHMA participated in a large forum in New York City which, along with four others—in New Orleans, Los Angeles, Salt Lake City and Memphis—provided raw material for a higher-level discussion of themes, which was held in Washington, D.C.

NAHMA Director of Government Affairs Michelle Kitchen attended both the New York City and the Washington, D.C. meetings. "The forums in the five cities tackled about 16 different questions aimed at getting a real understanding of the concerns and barriers to a successful recovery," she said. "The meeting in Washington took this information and had a higher-level conversation about what emerged from these discussions and how to move forward with this information."

The emerging themes in recovery that resulted from the stakeholder forums include: Defining + Measuring Recovery Success; Recovery Planning; Partnerships + Coordination; Communications; Leadership; Programs + Funding; Accountability + Timeliness + Flexibility; Building Back Safer + Stronger + Smarter; Roles + Responsibilities +

Local Capacity; and Training.

"It's the first time I've known of such a national, organized interagency effort focused on disasters, which of course have the potential to affect every single one of us," Kitchen said.

THE WORKING GROUP'S GOAL

The goal of the Long-Term Disaster Recovery Working Group is to ensure a more resilient nation—one in which individuals, communities and the economy can adapt to changing conditions as well as withstand and rapidly recover from disasters. In order to develop a better national strategy for an effective approach to long-term disaster recovery, the Working Group will:

- Provide operational guidance for federal, state, tribal and local authorities to provide for unified and effective disaster recovery. This includes defining roles and responsibilities, detailing recovery management and operational coordination, articulating communications strategies and establishing measurements for success;
- Review disaster recovery programs and the framework of disaster recovery, and identify gaps as well as overlapping and/or conflicting sources of authority for disaster recovery efforts;
- Examine areas for improved inter-agency planning and collaboration among Federal agencies;
- Examine methods to build capacity within state, local and tribal governments as well as within the nonprofit, faith-based, and private sectors, both in recovery operations and in pre-disaster recovery planning; and
- Examine successful practices and lessons learned during previous disaster recovery efforts, with particular attention to catastrophic disasters such as Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

The Secretaries will provide the Pres-

ident with recommendations to improve long-term catastrophic disaster recovery and will help develop a *National Disaster Recovery Framework* that provides more detailed operational guidance to recovery organizations under existing authorities.

A BOTTOM'S-UP APPROACH

The Working Group is taking a bottom's up approach to implementing this important national initiative and there are multiple opportunities for stakeholder participation.

In addition to the stakeholder forums, a series of 10 regional video teleconferences hosted by HUD and FEMA regional offices were recently completed.

Both series of events provided an opportunity for participants to discuss disaster recovery management issues and opportunities—a discussion that will help shape two important products:

- The *White House Working Group Report to the President*, which will identify opportunities for improving the delivery of recovery assistance in the future, and
- The *National Disaster Recovery Framework*, which will provide guidance for the delivery of recovery assistance using current resources and authorities.

To facilitate further stakeholder input, DHS/FEMA and HUD have also developed a website, www.DisasterRecoveryWorkingGroup.gov, which invites recovery stakeholders to submit comments and to see updates and information regarding this important national initiative.

REPORTS DUE IN APRIL AND JUNE

The *Report to the President* is scheduled for delivery the first of April 2010. A **draft** of the *National Disaster Recovery Framework* is anticipated for comment first quarter of 2010 with a final publication date scheduled for June 1, 2010. **NN**



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NAHMA Names Winners of COQ Competition

FOR THE 17TH YEAR, NAHMA is proud to recognize property owners and/or managers who were the cream of the crop in this year's Communities of Quality® Awards competition.

The awards acknowledge excellence in the physical, financial and social condition of federally subsidized properties. Property owners and managers compete also on the basis of the quality of life they offer to residents; the level of resident involvement in community life; and the nature of collaborations with other organizations and agencies that contribute to the betterment of the lives of residents and the larger community.

The awards are co-sponsored by the HD Multifamily Supply Solutions™, a leading supplier of maintenance and renovation products to the multihousing industry.

Winners were chosen from properties that qualified for the competition after achieving National Recognition from NAHMA as a Community of Quality®. This means that they exceeded the challenging criteria properties must meet to achieve National Recognition by 100 points.

“Achieving the status of being a Community of Quality® Award winner is very significant in our industry,” said Kris Cook, executive director of NAHMA. “Every year we are impressed by the investment and level of care that goes into making affordable housing properties real communities that meet the needs of the residents who live there.”

The 2009 COQ awards will be presented at NAHMA's annual winter meeting, March 14-16, 2010, in Washington, D.C.



EXEMPLARY FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

Westbrook Pointe Apartments, Westbrook, ME

OWNER: Westbrook Pointe Limited Partnership

MANAGEMENT: Spear Management Group, Inc.

AHMA: NEAHMA

Westbrook Pointe Apartments is a 198-unit townhome apartment community built in 1972. It underwent a \$4 million rehab in 2005 and is a mixed-income community with market-rate units as well as tax credit and project-



(Above and top) WESTBROOK POINTE APARTMENTS

based Section 8 rental assistance. Westbrook Pointe is located on 18 acres abutting the Presumpscot River and is only minutes away from the Maine coastline. Nineteen buildings of varying sizes house two-, three- and four-bedroom townhome apartments. It has an excellent reputation in the greater Portland community and is considered to be one of the most desirable affordable housing communities in the region.

Management has a philosophy of service to maintenance needs while assisting residents in a consistent way, whether in planning, in devising day-

to-day activities, or handling emergencies. The eight-person staff includes a senior property manager who has been part of the team for 18 years, and an on-site resident services coordinator. Resident services include a community clubroom that hosts a variety of resident activities. Since 2007, the site has partnered with the local school district as well as PROP, a social service agency, to bring an after-school mentoring program to the community. Residents have access to visiting health care providers, enjoy a variety of social events, participate in charity drives, and in general enjoy a well-managed, well-maintained, service-oriented affordable community.

EXEMPLARY DEVELOPMENT FOR RESIDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Foxwell Memorial Apartments, West Baltimore, MD

OWNER: Homes for America

MANAGEMENT: WinnResidential

AHMA: Mid-Atlantic AHMA

Foxwell Memorial Apartments is both an exemplary development for residents with special needs and a remarkable turnaround of a troubled property. Located on a six-acre wooded hilltop in Baltimore City, Foxwell Memorial is an eight-story high-rise building with 154 one- and two-bedroom units which now serves people with a broad range of disabilities, as well as the elderly. It is home to 212 residents who have a diverse range of disabilities; many residents have multiple disabilities, including physical handicaps, mental illness and/or developmental disabilities. All units have project-based Section 8 subsidy and the residents are typically extremely low income.

Among Foxwell Memorial's ameni-



ties are a private video relay room with two video phones for deaf or hard of hearing residents; a computer room; a community living room furnished with a 40" wide-screen TV and a lending library; a large open community room for events; a fitness room outfitted with a treadmill, recumbent bicycles, weights, and assistive equipment; a wellness suite; and an early-childhood development room. Extensive private and public sector partnerships enable programs such as a full-time interpreter for deaf residents; safety programs; para-transit services; health and wellness programs; literacy programs; weekly food and quarterly clothing distribution; sign language classes; craft classes; religious services; financial fitness services; and social and recreational programs.

EXEMPLARY DEVELOPMENT FOR THE ELDERLY

Whalers Place, New Bedford, MA

OWNER: WinnDevelopment

MANAGEMENT: WinnResidential

AHMA: NEAHMA

Whalers Place is a 75-unit affordable housing property that provides



FOXWELL MEMORIAL APARTMENTS in West Baltimore

LEFT TO RIGHT: Riverside Apartments exterior; Westbrook Pointe afterschool Mentor Program; and a living room of the Whalers Place apartments.



At left, WHALERS PLACE

on-site library, computer learning center, state-of-the-art fitness center, community room and billiards room. Whalers Place is a warm and compassionate community where each member of the management team works with residents so that every person contributes in a positive way to the community as a whole.

OUTSTANDING TURNAROUND OF A TROUBLED PROPERTY

Riverside Apartments, Columbia, SC

OWNER: Creative Management, Inc.

MANAGEMENT: Creative Management, Inc.

AHMA: SAHMA

Riverside Apartments, formerly known as Broad River Terrace, was built in 1973 as a 104-unit, subsidized multi-family facility. In 2003, drugs, theft, gangs and other crime infiltrated the community. Residents were afraid to come out of their homes for fear of having to dodge bullets. It was unsafe for children to play outside. At one point, police made more than 360 arrests in one six-month period. These perilous conditions were exacerbated by roach, rodent and spider infestation both inside and outside the apartments. The grounds were overflowing with trash, old furniture and other debris. About 25 apartments were boarded up due to disrepair.

In the summer of 2003, Elizabeth Whitener purchased the property. After petitioning state senators and representatives, along with the Columbia and Greensboro HUD offices, for assistance, it became possible to renovate the property and restore residents to a comfortable and safe environment. With new staff, the property grounds were immediately cleaned and landscaped. Loan

paperwork was being processed while staff prepared to increase its REAC score, decrease a \$10,000 rent delinquency, restore the vacant apartments, and implement programs to increase the morale of the residents. By 2004, a loan was secured, and by 2005, Broad River Terrace had become Riverside Apartments with a virtually overall renovation. New appliances, flooring, walls, kitchen cabinets, windows, new siding, new roofs, and painted hallways all contributed to the morale and self-esteem of the residents. Riverside was named a HUD-approved Neighborhood Network Center in April 2005. Programs such as employment preparation, computer training, adult education classes, youth programs, personal management counseling and senior activities were instituted. In 2007, Mrs. Whitener established an independent management company so that Riverside could be locally managed and its Project Turn-Around launched full force. The work does not stop, even though Riverside was named Best Turn-Around Property in 2008 by the mayor and city council of Columbia. Riverside's residents and staff are determined to keep improving the site and the services provided to residents.

For more information on the Communities of Quality® Award winners, visit NAHMA's website at www.nahma.org. **NN**



RIVERSIDE APARTMENTS in Columbia, SC

residential living and social programs for people ages 55 and older. The Whalers Place project involved the historic restoration of an old, vacant building called the Whitman Mill, centrally located in the city of New Bedford. The redevelopment preserved the character of a historic property while helping New Bedford revitalize one of its neighborhoods, increase its stock of affordable housing and provide comfortable homes for its residents.

The goal of the Whalers Place management team is to provide superior customer service and to promote and create a sense of community and good will. Staff works extremely closely with social service agencies to ensure residents receive services that contribute to their quality of life and their ability to live independently. Whalers Place residents have access to an

Corporate Support for COQ Awards

NAHMA wishes to thank the following corporate partners for their support of the Communities of Quality Awards program.

- AIMCO**
- First Realty Management**
- Metropolitan Associates**
- PRD Management**
- TESCO**
- Westminster Company**
- Walton Community Services**
- WinnResidential**

NAHMA Proudly Announces Industry Award Winners

NAHMA has named the winners of its Industry Awards for presentation at its March meeting in Washington, D.C. The list includes both individuals and organizations that have worked in innovative ways to improve affordable housing in their communities. Additional background information will be provided on the award winners in the March-April 2010 issue of *NAHMA News*.

NAHMA INDUSTRY STATESMAN

This award goes to an outstanding industry leader whose long-term service to NAHMA and the affordable housing industry has been a constant source of inspiration. This year's recipient is **Bill Kargman**, President, First Realty Management Corp., Boston. Bill Kargman has been at the national forefront of the industry for more than 30 years. He served as NAHMA's first president in 1990 and was the first to propose the Community of Quality® concept as a benchmark of successful management of affordable housing. He continually identifies emerging issues and trends that propel the industry forward.

NAHMA INDUSTRY ACHIEVEMENT

The following awardee is recognized for her ever-increasing level of service, the strategic nature of this service and her commitment to affordable housing. **Karen Newsome**, Vice President, Administration, WinnResidential, Boston. Karen has served NAHMA in numerous capacities while also being extremely supportive of her local AHMA (NEAHMA) and the AHMA's nationally. She has chaired numerous national and local committees, focusing on membership, tax credits, and the development of the nationally respected Specialist in Housing Credit Management credential.

NAHMA INDUSTRY PARTNER

Two awardees so strongly exemplify the value that can result from strong partnerships that this category could only result in a tie:

Scott Hunley—Scott Hunley is the Multifamily Hub Director for the state of Ohio, overseeing the HUD portfolio through offices in Columbus, Cleveland and Cincinnati. He is highly valued for his experience in production and asset management, assisting developers in all aspects of structuring and developing tax credit, mixed-finance and other projects. He excels in partnership management, financial restructurings and the disposition of affordable housing properties.

Marcie LaPorte—As Director of the Denver Multifamily Hub, Marcie LaPorte is responsible for all asset development and asset management programs in a six state area. With a staff of 40, Marcie oversees a portfolio of more than 1,200 properties with rental subsidies valued at \$453 million. For more than 25 years, Marcie's focus has been strengthening the multifamily housing arena through strong partnerships and diligent service.

AHMA OF THE YEAR

Regardless of size, these organizations go all out for their members and serve as role models for other AHMA's around the country:

Large (tie): SAHMA (Southeastern AHMA) and MAHMA (Midwest AHMA)—SAHMA serves a large region that includes eight states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. It more than meets the challenge of providing training and other services across such a large region. MAHMA serves a large six-state area and partners with other industry organizations to provide affordable housing education to a wider scope of individuals. MAHMA is also furthering its use of technology-based training, so that it can reach individuals in remote locations.

Small: JAHMA (New Jersey AHMA)—JAHMA has had success in membership recruitment, education and training course attendance, number of nationally recognized Communities of Quality® properties, financial stability and growth and many new partnerships and programs.

Very Small: Oregon AHMA—Oregon AHMA has increased its diversity of membership, forged successful new partnerships, offered monthly boot camps and networking events and secured funding for development of professional website.

AHMA MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT AWARD

This award is presented to those organizations who achieve outstanding recruitment of members in relation to their size and history.

SAHMA—SAHMA recruited 40 new management-company members in 2009 and sustains high retention rates. In 2009 SAHMA billed 508 members (its highest membership count in its 27-year history) and renewed 424.

AHMA INNOVATION AWARD

Two organizations are recognized for innovative approaches to challenges at their sites and/or in their communities:

Mid-Sized: Rocky AHMA—Rocky AHMA developed from scratch an online training course on HUD's Basic Occupancy Handbook, updating it within two months when Change 3 came along. More than 100 people in Rocky AHMA's huge, mostly rural, mountainous region have taken the course online, and Rocky AHMA is partnering with other AHMA's to offer the course online.

Small: NEAHMA—Implemented two major initiatives: a thriving charitable program called Team NEAHMA, a joint effort between NEAHMA, its management company members and its vendor members that raises funds to support such education, shelter, advocacy, breast cancer awareness and job placement services; and a full-year, maintenance training calendar to support NAHMA's new maintenance certification programs.

AHMA COMMUNITIES OF QUALITY AWARDS

NAHMA is pleased to acknowledge those organizations with the highest number of COQ properties based on AHMA size. **Large: SAHMA** and **Small: NEAHMA**

NAHMA MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT AWARD

This award goes annually to a NAHMA member who leads in new member recruitment for the previous 12-month period (based on data maintained by NAHMA staff). This year's award is a tie between **Dan Murray**, President, Corcoran Jennison, Inc. and **Scott Reithel**, Vice President of Property Management, Community Housing Partners

NAHMA Communities of Quality® Award

This annual award is given to the NAHMA members with outstanding participation in the NAHMA National Recognition Program COQ Registry (based on data maintained by NAHMA staff). **WinnResidential** (most new properties in 2009 to receive COQ National Recognition)

AIMCO (most properties overall to receive COQ National Recognition)

NAHMA PRESIDENT'S AWARD

This awardee is selected by NAHMA's President and will be announced at NAHMA's winter meeting, March 16-19, 2010. **NN**

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NAHMA Comments on Revisions to PBCA Contracts

On November 12, 2009, NAHMA submitted formal comments to HUD's Office of Housing Assistance Contract Administration Oversight concerning its Draft Framework for the Revised Annual Contributions Contract (ACC) for performance based contract administrators (PBCAs). This was a key topic of conversation at NAHMA's 2009 Fall membership meeting, after which NAHMA asked its members to submit their comments, which were then considered for incorporation into the formal comments. A summary is as follows.

GENERAL COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

NAHMA noted that because its members typically operate in multiple states, these companies interact with a number of different HUBs and PBCAs. Over the years, NAHMA members have observed considerable variation in how PBCAs administer HUD policies. In some cases, members were particularly frustrated by PBCAs that imposed more stringent mandates on properties than what was required by HUD regulations or the HUD handbook. NAHMA suggested that greater consistency would be observed across the PBCA program if HUD clarified that PBCAs are to administer HAP contracts pursuant to HUD's regulatory requirements, and that PBCAs may not impose additional paperwork, policies or procedures on owners/agents.

NAHMA called it "essential" for HUD to ensure consistency in the ways PBCAs implement the policies and procedures they are to use in reviewing and paying HAP vouchers, conducting management reviews and executing their other contractual responsibilities. Current inconsistencies often make it necessary to produce different versions of an owner/agent's policy and procedures

manual in different states. Consistency would also allow for quick resolution, at a national level, of any questions of interpretation or issues that arise.

For these reasons, NAHMA strongly urged HUD to include language in the new ACC to the effect that HUD, not the PBCAs, dictate the process and rules to be followed in executing the various tasks, and PBCAs may not use discretion in areas unless HUD specifically allows the PBCA latitude. Likewise, the ACC should prohibit PBCAs from imposing stricter or more administratively burdensome requirements on owners/agents than what is required by HUD's regulatory policies.

SPECIFIC FEEDBACK ON THE DRAFT FRAMEWORK

Rebidding the ACC

HUD has proposed an ambitious timeframe for rebidding the ACC. NAHMA members are concerned that the proposed 90 day "ramp-up" period for new PBCAs may not provide enough time for a seamless transition. This concern is especially serious in cases where the transition involves a PBCA with no previous experience with the program. In only three months, if all goes as planned, the new PBCA will be responsible for processing vouchers, making HAP payments, renewing contracts, conducting MORs, and other activities which directly impact the owners/agents. NAHMA urged HUD to closely oversee the transition process and to provide as much time as possible to ensure that new PBCAs are well versed in HUD's policies, procedures and information systems.

NAHMA recommended a 120 day "ramp-up" period, which would provide a more realistic timeframe for any necessary transitions.

Selecting the PBCAs

The Draft Framework requires eligible

entities to be a public housing authority (PHA) as defined by the 1937 Housing Act. HUD should take care to ensure that the new PBCAs have demonstrated knowledge of the regulations and policies applicable to the project-based Section 8 portfolio.

Likewise, NAHMA stressed that HUD consider an applicant's history of customer service. As HUD seeks to rebuild a sense of partnership with owners and agents, it should seek contract administrators who share that goal. If an applicant has served as a contract administrator, HUD should consider whether the applicant built a constructive working relationship with the housing operators, or whether the applicant was the subject of frequent, substantiated complaints. If applicants have no history with the contract administration program, HUD should examine their customer service records with comparable industry partners.

NAHMA strongly recommended that HUD establish a formal process through which owners/agents can offer positive recognition and/or discuss problems related to a PBCA's performance. NAHMA suggested that one method for implementing this process could be an anonymous online survey for owners/agents to complete.

Another area of concern is the practice of subcontracting by PBCAs. NAHMA would prefer that the new ACC prohibit subcontracting, which adds an extra layer of bureaucracy to the contract administration system.

Conducting MORs

The Draft Framework requires PBCAs to conduct MORs at each site in their portfolios within 12 months of the last review. NAHMA believes HUD should offer positive reinforcement for properties that receive above average scores on

their management reviews. NAHMA urged HUD to schedule management reviews every three years for affordable properties with “superior” overall ratings on the HUD-9834, every two years for “above average” properties and annually for all others. NAHMA requested that HUD modify the ACC to accommodate incentive-based scheduling.

NAHMA suggested PBCAs also be required to ensure that the 9834 Summary Report reflects HUD’s written rating policy.

NAHMA noted that Chapter 6 of the 4350.1 Asset Management Hand-

sions for rent adjustments is critical. This directly impacts the project’s cash flow, because once the submission is deemed “complete,” the PBCA is required to complete processing within 30 calendar days. The determination of “completeness” is especially important for budget-based rent increases, which are often not retroactive.

Although Handbook 4350.1 defines “completeness” as being a submission that includes a specified set of documents and documentation, the reality is that some offices will stop the clock on processing time whenever they ask

It is essential for HUD to ensure consistency in the application of its voucher review and payment policies through written, transparent guidance to PBCAs, which should also be available for review by owners/agents.

book is expected to include criteria for determining whether a rating will be “superior,” “above average,” “satisfactory,” etc. “A written, transparent policy for determining ratings would represent a step forward from the highly subjective status quo, provided the new system is fair and based on realistic expectations,” NAHMA noted.

HUD might also consider giving PBCAs suggested timeframes for how long they should spend on each section of the MOR, NAHMA suggested. One NAHMA member reported that a PBCA spent nearly two days reviewing four resident files and spent 20 minutes on the physical inspection of the property. A different PBCA spent 15 minutes per file and a couple hours doing the physical inspection.

Rent Adjustments

NAHMA pointed out that the definition of an owner’s “complete” submis-

sions for rent adjustments is critical. This directly impacts the project’s cash flow, because once the submission is deemed “complete,” the PBCA is required to complete processing within 30 calendar days. In other words, the time spent up to the point of asking the question no longer counts as part of their allowed processing time. As a result, the effective date of a rent increase is delayed.

Because of this, NAHMA recommended clarifying the definition of “complete” in the written instructions to PBCAs. HUD should instruct PBCAs that the first thing to do with a rent adjustment is determine if it is “complete,” that is, that all necessary documentation has been provided. Furthermore, NAHMA strongly urged HUD to clarify that the 30 days allowed to process rent increases is intended and designed to provide time for questions and to request clarification of submitted items.

Review and Pay Vouchers

Some specific areas of inconsistency NAHMA members experienced under the current system include decisions about:

- What amount to pay for a unit on a specific voucher;
- When a payment can be withheld on a unit; and
- When, if ever, a payment may be denied on an entire voucher for problems with one or more units, but not all units.

It is essential for HUD to ensure consistency in the application of its voucher review and payment policies through written, transparent guidance to PBCAs, which should also be available for review by owners/agents.

In addition to addressing the problems noted above, the guidance should also clarify expectations for the timeframe and level of detail PBCAs must communicate back to owners/agents about:

- Any problems with certifications received; and
- Which certifications will be paid or rejected.

Contract Renewals

NAHMA noted that over the past several years, there has been a strong correlation between late HAP payments and contract renewals. Insufficient funding undoubtedly played a key role in delaying many of these payments. However, there have also been instances in which processing delays on the contract administrator’s part slowed the contract renewal process. In the interest of preserving affordable housing units, NAHMA urged HUD to simplify and streamline the contract renewal process. **NN**

NAHMA Introduces Vanguard Award™

In late 2009, NAHMA announced its new Affordable Housing Vanguard Award, designed to recognize newly developed affordable multifamily housing communities that showcase quality design and financing through their creation.

The Vanguard Award (www.nahma.org/content/vanguard.html) celebrates success in the multifamily affordable housing industry by recognizing and benchmarking new, quality multifamily affordable housing development. The award will:

- Pay tribute to developers of high-quality affordable housing;
- Demonstrate that exceptional new affordable housing is available across the country, and that it is a positive addition to any neighborhood;
- Demonstrate that the affordable multifamily industry must be creative and innovative to create exceptional properties given the financing and other challenges to development;
- Highlight results of private-public partnerships required to develop today's affordable housing; and
- Share ideas for unique design and financing mechanisms with industry practitioners to further stimulate creative development in the affordable multifamily industry.

The Vanguard Award complements NAHMA's Communities of Quality® (COQ) National Recognition Program (www.nahma.org/content/coq.html), through which multifamily properties are certified as having achieved a high standard of excellence in the way they are managed, the services they provide residents, the experience and training of personnel, and other criteria.

However, newly developed properties are too new to meet the criteria of NAHMA's COQ National Recognition Program (particularly in the inspection and financial audit categories), hence the creation of the Vanguard Award to recognize these properties. As the properties mature, they will become eligible—and will be encouraged—to enter NAHMA's COQ National Recognition Program.

VANGUARD AWARD CATEGORIES

The Vanguard Award will be given annually to NAHMA members in the categories of:

- New Construction
- Major Rehabilitation of an Existing Rental Housing Community
- Major Rehabilitation of a Non-Housing Structure into Affordable Rental

Housing and

- Major Rehabilitation of a Historic Structure into Affordable Rental Housing.

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION BEYOND THE RECOGNITION

In addition to being recognized for outstanding affordable housing development and production, Vanguard Award winners also receive:

- A congratulations letter and certificate
- A draft press release for use with local media
- A draft letter for sending to Congressional representatives
- A free subscription to *NAHMA News* (\$100 value)
- A crystal award
- Inclusion in a press release distributed by NAHMA to national media and trade press
- Inclusion in a detailed article on award winners in *NAHMA News* and on the NAHMA website

APPLYING FOR A VANGUARD AWARD

Affordable multifamily housing communities that are less than three years old (as of May 1, 2010) may apply (based on date of completion of new construction

NAHMA and NAA Co-Locate 2010 National Conferences

For the first time, NAHMA will hold its annual summer meeting in conjunction with the 2010 National Apartment Association (NAA) Education Conference & Exposition, which takes place June 22-26, 2010 in New Orleans.

The 2010 NAA Education Conference & Exposition is the largest event in the multifamily housing industry and includes world-class educators and a star-studded lineup of speakers.

Through this partnership, both conferences will address the critical needs of affordable housing communities and the apartment industry as a whole. Discounts will be available to attendees who regis-

ter for both conferences.

For NAHMA and AHMA members, a special online registration page with the built-in discount appears on NAHMA's webpage. It includes a link to reserve rooms for NAHMA's block of hotel rooms. For more information, go to www.nahma.org/meetings/MeetingInfo.html, under the 2010 Summer Meeting heading. The current pricing structure runs through April 30, 2010, with prices increasing after that date.

At the NAHMA meeting, scheduled for June 23, discussions will focus on public policy related to federal legislative and regulatory initiatives that impact all of the affordable housing programs, including

HUD programs (project-based Section 8, Section 8 tenant vouchers, Section 202 senior housing, and Section 811 special needs housing); the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program; and Rural Housing Service programs (Sections 515, 538 and the revitalization program), among others.

The NAHMA meeting and NAA Conference are essential to smart asset management for owners and managers of LIHTC, Section 8, 202 or 236 properties. Conference sessions will include the latest information on important affordable housing topics such as REAC Inspections, Fair Housing Complaints, Multi-Layered Financing, and Preservation Tools, among others.

or completion of major rehab). Affordable is defined as a property participating in a government funded, insured or otherwise sponsored program that results in rents that are below market rate.

Applications must be submitted in PDF format. For full details on how to apply, go to NAHMA's website at www.nahma.org/content/vanguard.html.

Applications should be submitted to NAHMA by May 1, 2010. Applications (in a PDF format) can be emailed to NAHMA at joe.thomas@nahma.org, or put on a CD and mailed to NAHMA Vanguard Award, 400 N. Columbus St., Suite 203, Alexandria, VA 22314. For more details, contact NAHMA Manager of Member Services Joe Thomas at 703-683-8630, ext. 12.

The entry fee is \$150 per property for members of NAHMA or an AHMA, and \$325 per property for non-members.

JUDGING FOR THE AWARDS

NAHMA will convene a distinguished panel of multifamily affordable housing practitioners in early May 2010 to conduct the judging process.

THE AWARDS CEREMONY:

Winners of the Affordable Housing Vanguard Awards will be recognized at an awards ceremony at the NAHMA Summer Meeting in June 2010 in New Orleans. **NN**

Among the general session speakers at the 2010 NAA Conference is the 43rd U.S. President George W. Bush, as well as the editor of Fast Company magazine, Bill Taylor, who will speak about management trends, and Bruce Kimbrell of the Disney Institute, who will speak about customer service. The conference also features industry-related tracks for all types of apartment professionals from executives to onsite managers to leasing agents to maintenance technicians.

For more details, contact NAHMA meetings manager Joe Thomas at joe.thomas@nahma.org; or 703-683-8630, ext. 12. **NN**

Foundation Scholarship Applications Go Digital

Having awarded more than \$100,000 to more than 100 recipients in its first three years, the NAHMA Educational Foundation is looking forward to another year of growth for its scholarship program. The number of awards has increased steadily over the first three years. This year, the application requirements and format remain the same; however, submissions must be made online and paper copies will no longer be accepted.

“This will streamline the process at both the applicant and evaluator level,” said Wayne Fox, chairman of the Foundation. “Most importantly, this move will result in operating cost savings for the Foundation that will translate directly into additional Foundation funds being available to provide more scholarship money annually.”

Recognizing that not all resident applicants living in affordable housing own a computer, the Foundation is encouraging applicants to make use of HUD-sponsored Neighborhood Networks Computer Centers at housing sites where they are available, computers available at most public libraries and/or computer centers at the applicant's school.

The online application requires filling out an application form, submitting an essay, providing email addresses for references, providing proof of U.S. residency status, and submitting a current official grade transcript. These last two can be emailed or sent via U. S. Mail to Dr. Bruce W. Johnson, Scholarship Program Administrator. Students may want to consider drafting their essays and pasting the final essay into the online application.

Interested students can access the application by going to the NAHMA website at www.nahma.org and clicking on the NAHMA Educational Foundation icon. The entire 2010 Scholarship Information Packet is also available with the application.

“In 2009, scholarships were awarded to residents living in properties affiliated with 10 different AHMAs,” Fox said. “As a result, another of the Foundation's goals for 2010 will be to expand our coverage to additional AHMAs that have not previously received scholarship awards.” The Foundation is soliciting the support of AHMA executive directors, their staffs, management companies, and site personnel in spreading the word to residents about the scholarship program. Deadline for submission of completed applications is 10 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on May 18, 2010.

The Foundation would like to acknowledge and express its sincere gratitude to David Durik, Phil Hawkins and the staff at Planet Telecom for their work in developing the online application.

For additional information about the scholarship program, contact Dr. Bruce W. Johnson, Scholarship Program Administrator, at 215-262-4230 or at bwjec@comcast.net. **NN**

NAHMA Opposes Changes to Hold Harmless Policy

In early November, NAHMA joined eight other industry organizations in submitting written comments to HUD's Office of the General Counsel on a proposed revision that would end the "hold harmless" policy in calculating income limits for Section 8 properties.

The notice of the proposed change was published in the *Federal Register* on September 14, 2009. It explains that for FY 2009, HUD has continued its policy of maintaining Section 8 income limits at the previously published level in cases where HUD's estimate of area median income or housing cost adjustment data, or changes in calculation methodology, would lead to a lower income limit than was previously published.

WHY A HOLD HARMLESS POLICY?

The hold harmless policy was instituted to ensure continued financial feasibility in Low Income Housing Tax Credit and tax-exempt, bond-financed rental properties because their rents are tied to Section 8 income limits. (HUD refers to these projects as Multifamily Tax Subsidy Projects or MTSPs.) The notice further explains that the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 (HERA) statutorily implements a project-level hold harmless provision for existing MTSPs, which eliminates the need for HUD to continue its policy for the benefit of these projects.

HUD requested comment on whether it should discontinue the hold harmless policy with respect to Section 8 income limits such that income limits generally would be allowed to decrease. HUD says that maintaining artificially high income limits has had an adverse effect on other housing programs because higher income limits increase the number of eligible participants, thereby making it harder to target

limited resources to those most in need.

HUD cites a number of housing programs, including those administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Treasury (e.g., tax-exempt mortgage revenue bonds for homeowner-ship financing) that would be affected by discontinuing the hold harmless policy.

HUD also invited comments on whether the hold harmless policy should be maintained with respect to Section 8

...the organizations noted that removing the hold harmless policy would constitute a significant change, one that has the potential to impact a large number of housing programs beyond Section 8.

income limits used for calculating rents in the HOME Investment Partnerships Program, while discontinuing the hold harmless policy with respect to eligibility requirements under the HOME program and other programs. HUD indicated in the notice that it could implement such a policy, which would prevent rents from falling while ensuring that HOME funds are targeted to those most in need.

REASONS FOR OPPOSING CHANGE

In their comments, the organizations noted that removing the hold harmless policy would constitute a significant change, one that has the potential to impact a large number of housing programs beyond Section 8. Signatories to the letter also noted that they believe that neither the intent nor the effect of the hold harmless policy has been to maintain artificially high income limits.

"Rather, the hold harmless policy smoothes a generally upward trend of successive median family income estimates, preventing a pattern of temporary declines followed by large increases. In turn, for some programs, this ensures that rent levels do not fluctuate significantly, either up or down, on a year-to-

year basis," the letter said.

A hold harmless policy would maintain artificially high income limits only in cases where median family income declines, in nominal terms, year after year. The signatories said they were unaware of an example of such a persistently declining trend in recent times. In contrast, evidence of general upward trends is widespread. The attachments to the *FY2009 HUD Income Limits Briefing Material* indicate that median family

income increased by more than 19 percent in every state between 1999 and 2009, and one-year ACS estimates show median family income increasing every year even in an area like the Detroit-Livonia-Dearborn Metropolitan Division, where the unemployment rate has risen to over 18 percent.

As mentioned in the *Federal Register* notice, the reach of Section 8 income limits is broad, stretching across a number of housing programs and impacting a variety of government agencies and other stakeholders at the federal, state, and local level.

Because the impact of income limits is so broad, the commenting organizations oppose the removal of the hold harmless policy until potential problems for specific programs have been resolved.

The organizations also expressed further concerns about removing hold harmless at this particular time due to the unusual macroeconomic conditions that prevail, which are likely to exacerbate problems for any of the housing programs listed above, especially in the year 2011.

To read the letter in its entirety, in which these issues are discussed in more detail, go to the HUD webpage at www.nahma.org. **NN**

REGULATORY WRAP-UP

ON DECEMBER 11, 2009, HUD ISSUED PIH NOTICE 2009-51, “PHA Determinations of Rent Reasonableness in the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program—Comparable Unassisted Units in the Premises.” The notice provides guidance on rent reasonableness requirements in the HCV program. The notice would not allow owners to offer “owner financial assistance” in the form of rent phase ins, at the owner’s option and cost, to previously assisted tenants in a preservation property without being financially penalized for their actions through reduced rents for units housing enhanced voucher recipients. NAHMA and four other industry groups sent a letter to HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan asking him to reverse this notice. The groups noted allowing this notice to stand will result in the economic displacement of low and moderate income families in “expiring use” projects. A copy of the HUD guidance can be found at the NAHMA HUD webpage under Housing Choice Voucher.

AS PART OF THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION’S EFFORT to promote transparency and openness, HUD recently added the overall REAC Physical Inspection Scores to the HUD USER website, available at <http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/pis.html>. Inspections from 2001 through September 2009 can be downloaded as a data set. Data sets are also available for public housing and for multifamily assisted properties. **NN**

NEW REQUIREMENTS FOR ELEVATOR INSPECTIONS

On November 16, NAHMA received a copy of HUD’s notice on “Property Requirements for the Inspection of Elevator Equipment Rooms,” which was effective January 4, 2010.

Under the policy, inspectors may not enter or inspect areas of HUD-assisted and -insured properties that house only elevator equipment.

However, inspectors will enter and inspect all other elevator equipment rooms that contain inspectable items not associated with elevators (for example, water circulation pumps, compressors and electrical panels) and (2) enter rooms that house elevator equipment when the room provides the only access to another area that the inspector must inspect (for example, the roof).

All properties are required to ensure that UPCS inspectors have access to these elevator equipment rooms. Property managers must have a qualified person present and ensure that no unqualified person has access to the equipment.

If the inspector determines that he or she will not be able to gain access to an elevator equipment room, the inspector will immediately call the REAC Technical Assistance Center (TAC) to report the unsuccessful inspection and end the inspection.

Regardless of whether or not the inspector has to access the elevator equipment room, the inspector will:

1. Review the elevator certificate(s) and record the applicable notation;
2. Inspect the operation of the elevator(s) and record any deficiencies;
3. Record any health and safety violations related to the elevator(s);
4. Record a health and safety deficiency if the door to the elevator room is not locked; and
5. Record any deficiencies that are associated with the elevator room door.

For a copy of the full notice, NAHMA members can visit the REAC section of its HUD webpage at www.nahma.org. **NN**

HUD NEWS

ON DECEMBER 15, 2009, HUD ISSUED PIH NOTICE 2009-52, “PROTECTING TENANTS AT FORECLOSURE ACT—Guidance on New Tenant Protections.” The notice provides guidance on the tenant protection provisions included in HR 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (P.L. 111-5), and HR 1106, Helping Families Save Their Homes Act (P.L. 111-22). The law allows renters whose landlords have lost their properties to foreclosure the right to stay in the home for 90 days after the foreclosure or through the term of their lease, unless the property is sold to someone who will occupy the home. The law also provides protection to housing voucher holders but requires purchasers of foreclosed buildings who receive Section 8 HAPs to honor the existing lease unless they plan to live in the building. If they plan to use the building as primary residence, they must give 90 days notice to the tenant. A copy of the HUD guidance can be found at the NAHMA HUD website at www.nahma.org/member/New%20HUD%20Docs/pih2009-52.pdf.

AS PART OF ITS LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY EFFORTS, HUD HAS POSTED ITS “RESIDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES” BROCHURE translations online, which must be provided to all heads of household at lease renewal or income recertification. A copy of the notice regarding the translations is available at www.nahma.org. Copies of the translated “Resident Rights and Responsibilities” brochure are available at www.hud.gov/offices/fheo/promotingfh/lep.cfm.

HUD HAS RELEASED THE 2010 OPERATING COST ADJUSTMENT FACTORS (OCAFS) used to adjust Section 8 rents renewed under section 524 of the Multifamily Assisted Housing Reform and Affordability Act of 1997 (MAHRA). They are effective February 11, 2010. The specific OCAFs for each state are published in the November 12, 2009 Federal Register (Vol. 74, No. 217). **NN**

LAHMA Makes the Best of a Bad Situation

THE LOUISIANA AFFORDABLE Housing Management Association (LAHMA) is one of the pioneer AHMAs in the nation. According to its executive director, Bill Langkopp, it operated much like all the other AHMAs, collectively representing the concerns of its members to legislators and government agencies, providing training, and hosting meetings and conventions.

All that changed in May 2005 when Hurricane Katrina struck the southern part of the state and Hurricane Rita followed just days later, pummeling the western border.

Langkopp, who has been LAHMA's chief administrator since the mid-1980s, said, "This really changed a lot of our procedures"—an understatement if ever there was one. He went on to explain just how horrific the impact of these natural disasters, and the incredibly slow process of fostering recovery after them, has been to the region and to LAHMA's members.

"If you were an affordable housing property from mid-state north, you sustained some damage and upset, but not a lot," he said. "But every part of southern Louisiana had some type of damage and destruction, and much of it was major. Many of our members never recovered and got out of the business." LAHMA lost "a couple dozen" member-properties. "Some have gradually come back, some never will, and some are still awaiting disposition from a government agency or an insurance company."

A MISSION TO MEET THE NEEDS

LAHMA had to change part of its mission so that it could continue serving those properties in the north that were

operating in a more or less normal state, while also addressing the new and desperate needs of those in the south.

Much of what this has meant is being an advocate for affordable housing to remain in the mix of recovery efforts. "We had to get HUD and FEMA and the other agencies, as well as our Congressional delegation and to some extent our state and local government agencies, to understand what affordable housing is and what it means to our communities," he said.

"There has been a lot of communication needed to make sure they understood the importance of rebuilding affordable housing while rebuilding everything else."

Now that the Louisiana Housing Finance agency is the official administrator for much of the flow of cash in the case of tax credits, LAHMA's focus has shifted to them as "the main agency of dialogue," Langkopp said.

Langkopp and LAHMA's board and members have been making a strong case for the value of affordable housing, "because the various socioeconomic levels and structures are very necessary for the health and growth of the entire community. For example, one of our biggest industries is tourism, and getting those employees back post-storm was a real struggle for that industry. There was no place to house them."

RECOVERY IS PAINFULLY SLOW

Change has been slow to come. "We have some 3,000 affordable units in the greater New Orleans area that are still out of commission, and those may never come back, depending on their location, their



type of construction and the degree of destruction," Langkopp said. "Some will just be demolished.

"In the meantime, we're seeing a shift on the part of the federal government away from HUD-subsidized units and toward tax credit investments.

There are a few thousand new apartment units entering the marketplace under the mixed-use classification. We'll monitor that to see how it works. But after nearly five years, these are just now coming into the marketplace."

LAHMA continues to provide necessary services for the betterment of its members, offering training, education and networking opportunities. They even created unique "club room meetings," which are free, very small, informal sessions hosted by a LAHMA member. "It's just kind of a rap session," Langkopp said, "and it's been very successful for getting people to talk about their problems and how we as an organization can help solve them. Sometimes they even show a need for a more formal training program in a given community."

Right after Katrina, Langkopp and others thought the recovery would all be over in a couple years, "but it is still an evolving rebuilding and reconfiguring model," he said. "Now we're talking 10 years to rebuild. Entire communities were destroyed completely. For example, the parish I live in (Louisiana has parishes instead of counties) had 64,000 residences and every one was damaged or destroyed; none were untouched. Of the state's 64 parishes, 31 were deemed by the federal government to have experienced substantial damage. This is not a recovery that will be complete any time soon." **NN**

EDUCATION CALENDAR

For information on specific classes being offered, please contact the AHMA or organization directly.

All dates and locations are subject to change. For the most up-to-date listings, visit the NAHMA website at www.nahma.org/content/mem_calendar.html.

FEBRUARY

5 or 12

Roundtable—Dealing with Difficult People

San Diego, CA
Debbie Hawkins, AHMA-PSW
(866) 698-2462

8–11

RAM

Long Beach, CA
Debbie Hawkins, AHMA-PSW
(866) 698-2462

9

Fair Housing Compliance

Boston
Julie Kelliher
(781) 380-4344

9–11

CPO

Atlanta, GA
Daria Jakubowski, SAHMA
(800) 745-4088

16

Arizona State Conference

Phoenix, AZ
Debbie Hawkins, AHMA-PSW
(866) 698-2462

18

Occupancy Course I Maintenance Certification Course I and II

TX
Michael Alexander, AHMA ET
(713) 988-4426

Elderly Housing Symposium

Atlanta, GA
Daria Jakubowski, SAHMA
(800) 745-4088

23

Medical Deductions

Los Angeles, CA
Debbie Hawkins, AHMA-PSW
(866) 698-2462

RI Monthly Meeting

Julie Kelliher
(781) 380-4344

23–25

Certified Professional of Occupancy (CPO)

Boston
Julie Kelliher
(781) 380-4344

24

MA Monthly Meeting

Julie Kelliher
(781) 380-4344

Medical Deductions

Las Vegas, NV
Debbie Hawkins, AHMA-PSW
(866) 698-2462

25

CT Monthly Meeting

Julie Kelliher
(781) 380-4344

MARCH

9

Medical Deductions

Phoenix, AZ
Debbie Hawkins, AHMA-PSW
(866) 698-2462

10

Basic Occupancy Training

Worcester, MA
Julie Kelliher
(781) 380-4344

10–11

SCHM

Los Angeles, CA
Debbie Hawkins, AHMA-PSW
(866) 698-2462

10–12

South Carolina State Meeting

Columbia, SC
Daria Jakubowski, SAHMA
(800) 745-4088

11

LIHTC Determining Income

Boston
Julie Kelliher
(781) 380-4344

15

Medical Discounts

San Diego, CA
Debbie Hawkins, AHMA-PSW
(866) 698-2462

16–18

CPO

Springfield, MA
Julie Kelliher
(781) 380-4344

17–18

FHC

San Diego, CA
Debbie Hawkins, AHMA-PSW
(866) 698-2462

18

REAC Preparation and Update

TX
Michael Alexander, AHMA ET
(713) 988-4426

22

AM Medical Deduction

San Bernardino, CA
Debbie Hawkins, AHMA-PSW
(866) 698-2462

22–24

Alabama State Meeting

Montgomery, AL
Daria Jakubowski, SAHMA
(800) 745-4088

23–24

SHCM 1.5 day Prep Course/SHCM Exam

Boston, MA
Julie Kelliher
(781) 380-4344

24–26

Mississippi State Meeting

Jackson, MS
Daria Jakubowski, SAHMA
(800) 745-4088

29

AM Medical Deduction

Los Angeles, CA
Debbie Hawkins, AHMA-PSW
(866) 698-2462

APRIL

6

LIHTC File Audit

CT
Julie Kelliher
(781) 380-4344

7

Industry Changes/Hot Issues

MA
Julie Kelliher
(781) 380-4344

Preparing for Management & Occupancy Review

Phoenix, AZ
Debbie Hawkins, AHMA-PSW
(866) 698-2462

8

Fair Housing Course (FHC)

Springfield, MA
Julie Kelliher
(781) 380-4344

Preparing for Management & Occupancy Review

Tucson, AZ
Debbie Hawkins, AHMA-PSW
(866) 698-2462

14–16

Georgia State Meeting

Atlanta, GA
Daria Jakubowski, SAHMA
(800) 745-4088

15

Occupancy Course II Maintenance Certification Course III

TX
Michael Alexander, AHMA ET
(713) 988-4426

20

RI Agency Breakfast Meeting

Julie Kelliher
(781) 380-4344

20–22

Florida State Meeting

Jacksonville, FL
Daria Jakubowski, SAHMA
(800) 745-4088

21

MA Monthly Meeting

Julie Kelliher
(781) 380-4344

22

CT Monthly Meeting

Julie Kelliher
(781) 380-4344

ME/NH/VT Agency Breakfast Meeting

Julie Kelliher
(781) 380-4344

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A Career Always on the Move

“AS IS TYPICAL OF A LOT OF people in this business,” said Rusty Fleming, “working in property management was not what I initially set out to do.” But when his first career in the oil and gas industry in western Oklahoma and Texas slowed to a trickle in the mid-1980s, a friend from college, Jimmy Arnold, then with Security Management, Inc., asked if he’d come and run a property for him.

The rest, as they say, is history.

A QUICK LEARNER

Fleming’s first assignment was to manage an apartment complex in Oklahoma City, a Section 8 property for both families and seniors. He then became a troubleshooter for the company before taking on the turnaround of Huntington Forest, a 350-unit, project-based Section 8 property that the local NBC affiliate called one of the worst properties in Houston. “We worked with the residents and the local police and joined the Acres Homes’ neighborhood’s War on Drugs,” Fleming said. So successful was this turnaround in 1989 that the Drug Czar, William Bennett, visited the property to personally congratulate the staff and residents. The Acres Homes War on Drugs was eventually recognized by President George Bush as one of his 1,000 Points of Light.

Fleming then moved to Dallas, where he left Security Management and, after a couple of years at Duddleston Management Co., was offered a position with the National Housing Partnership (NHP) in 1993.

“That’s where I started moving up,” he said. He was hired as the district

manager in NHP’s Denver office, then moved to California to be an area vice president. When NHP was bought by AIMCO in 1997, Fleming was made a regional vice president for the Kansas City/Chicago area.

Fleming worked for AIMCO/NHP for about 10 years, until he moved to Knoxville in 2003 to work for Lawler Wood LLC, where he managed the company’s multifamily division. Lawler Wood was in an acquisition-rehab mode, and “for five years we were aggressively buying existing Section 8 properties, using bonds and tax credits to do the rehab,” Fleming said.

The company grew from about 2,500 units to 7,500 units, but in 2008 the owners entered into an agreement to sell their general partnership interest in its affordable portfolio. “I had to decide whether to stay with the new company or not,” Fleming said.

MOVING ON UP

It just so happened that Patty Ownby, a founder of SAHMA and NAHMA, worked one floor below in the same building, at American Apartment Management (AAMCI). She had been at American for 30 years, wanted to retire, and the company was looking for a replacement. She urged Fleming to apply, and he got the job. He’s been there for about a year and a half and “my intention was to grow the company using the acquisition-rehab tax credit model,” he said.

But when the equity markets dried up in late 2008, the company determined that “its best opportunity for



growth was to take our experience and pursue fee management of properties that had been underperforming.” In the short time since he has taken over for AAMCI he has helped the company grow from 3,700 units to a little over 6,000.

AAMCI’s mission statement is to be the “Affordable Housing Provider of Choice.”

Fleming has found a lot of fulfillment in affordable property management. “It’s not a crime to be poor, people need quality housing, and I wanted that to be my focus,” he said. “I always slept well at night knowing I’d done something really valuable.”

Fleming has also been valuable to SAHMA, for which he served as state director of Tennessee from 2005 to 2009. He now intends to become active with NAHMA, having recently joined the committees on Elderly Services and Rural Housing. Even his volunteer activities center on affordable housing. He serves on the board of Senior Citizens Home Assistance Services (SCHAS.org), a nonprofit based in Knoxville, TN that assists elderly people with activities of daily life so that they can age in place.

AN APPRECIATIVE PARTNER

Fleming is fortunate to be married to a woman who likes moving around. They’ve been married for 17 years, and he has a 26-year-old stepdaughter whom he loves as his own as well as the couple’s 15 year old son. He loves to golf “but am a horrible golfer,” he said. “I have no time to work on my handicap.” **NN**

Special thanks to our members and AHMAs who have supported our mission over the past 20 years

PROTECTING THE INTERESTS OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROPERTY MANAGERS AND OWNERS

thelastword

BY DAN MURRAY, NAHP-e



NAHMA: 20 Years and Going Strong

2010 IS NAHMA'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY year, and while it may be tempting to take a look backward from where we've come, I'm much more excited about where we are now and where we are headed.

Thanks to a huge cadre of volunteers over the years who have served on a long string of NAHMA committees and on its board of directors, our organization has become **the** recognized voice speaking with clarity about affordable housing—recognized by HUD, RHS, the state housing finance agencies, other housing organizations, and members of Congress and their staff.

We should all be proud of what NAHMA is and has become.

In the near future, we will continue our focus on legislative issues with our winter meeting in March, where we will also recognize the site-based Communities of Quality® Award winners and present industry awards to outstanding property owners, industry partners and AHMAs in a variety of categories (see the articles on pages 17 and 20). The

launching of our new Vanguard Awards (see page 24) is another way we are continuing to keep the bar high.

We are also reaching a new milestone by hosting our first joint meeting with the National Apartment Association

I hope you will join me in encouraging a growing number of NAHMA members so that we can expand our reach and deepen our impact.

(NAA) in June in New Orleans (see article on page 24), with our first day devoted to public policy issues.

Twenty years is not a long time for an organization to have accomplished all that NAHMA has accomplished in terms of impact on an industry, impeccable reputation and resource for individuals and organizations all around the country. I know I have met some of the most impressive and committed and interesting people through my association with NAHMA, and I'm sure that holds true for all of us who are members and volunteers.

Let's remember to pass these benefits on to others in our field. It is wonderful to have so many active and innovative AHMAs—and a larger membership in NAHMA would have a continued profound effect on all of us, and open

new doors for those members just getting involved.

I hope you will join me in encouraging a growing number of NAHMA members so that we can expand our reach and deepen our impact. If you haven't encouraged one of your peers to join NAHMA, having them do so and come to the March or June meeting will be a real eye-opener for them.

Congratulations again to NAHMA for a very productive and exciting first 20 years! **NN**

Dan Murray is President of Corcoran Jenkinson, Inc. and President of NAHMA.