



PHFA Executive Director's achievements honored

At its 2005 *Homes Within Reach* conference held in Harrisburg on December 1 and 2, the Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania honored PHFA Executive Director and CEO Brian A. Hudson, Sr., by presenting him with the Leadership Award. The Housing Alliance recognized his efforts to increase funding for affordable homes and apartments, his achievements in bringing those with divergent views to cooperate in enhancing the housing stock of the Commonwealth, and his cogent message to public and private decision makers of the need for decent places to live to help all Pennsylvanians.

2006 Board meetings, holidays scheduled

PHFA's Board typically holds meetings on the second Thursday of each month. The schedule for 2006 is: February 9; March 9; April 12; May 11; June 8; July 13; August 10; September 14; October 12; November 9; and, December 14. No meeting is planned for January. PHFA offices will be closed on the following days in 2006: January 2; January 16; February 20; May 29; July 4; September 4; November 23; and, December 25.

Tax credit, bond caps, set

For 2006, Pennsylvania will be able to allocate housing tax credits at the rate of \$1.90 per capita. The private activity bond cap per capita amount (part of which goes for mortgage revenue bonds to finance homeownership loans) is \$80. With a population of about twelve million, approximately \$22,800,000 of tax credits and \$960,000,000 of private activity bonds will be available for the Commonwealth.

Agency names Homeownership Director

Kathryn Newton is the new PHFA Director of Homeownership Programs. She previously had served as the Programs' Manager of Operations. Kate has been with the Agency for six years. The Penn State grad also holds an MBA from Lebanon Valley College.

\$24,000,000 set-aside for programs in 2006

Each year, PHFA provides money from its general reserves for various programs. The general fund set-asides for 2006 will total \$24,000,000, and have been allotted in the following amounts: *PennHOMES Program*—\$9,750,000; *Supportive Services*—\$250,000; *Homeownership Choice Programs*—\$10,000,000; *Homeownership Demonstration Programs* (three)—\$1,000,000; "*Volume Cap*" (tax exempt bond-offering) *Leveraging*—\$1,000,000; *Counseling and Closing Cost Assistance*—\$1,000,000; and, *Affordable Housing Preservation*—\$1,000,000. These figures do not include allocation of rental housing tax credits, expected to be around \$22,800,000 in 2006, or mortgage revenue bond offerings, which normally amount to hundreds of millions of dollars.

HUD 2006 grant announcement to be posted early in year

Prospective applicants for 2006 HUD funding should register at www.grants.gov now in order to receive grants information in a timely manner. HUD's process relies on three data bases and a separate E-business point of contact to complete authorization, so early registration is advisable.

PennHOMES, Tax Credit workshops planned

Watch for notice of a day-long workshop on 2006 PennHOMES and rental housing tax credit procedures to be held in the Harrisburg area in late January or early February on www.phfa.org.

Latino homebuying numbers growing

The National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals estimates that Latinos will account for 40 percent of all first-time American homebuyers by 2012, despite language issues that hamper understanding of the mortgage lending process, non-traditional credit and other obstacles that they must overcome to be successful. In 2005, PHFA added five Spanish speaking agencies to its Comprehensive Housing Counseling Initiative network to help meet this increasing demand.

Utilities offer heating assistance

Utility companies in Pennsylvania offer assistance paying bills to customers who qualify. Use the list below, or call StayWarmPA at 1.866.550.4355 for information.

Allegheny Power 1.800.207.1250; *Duquesne* 1.888.393.7600; *Met-Ed* 1.800.207.9276; *PECO* 1.800.774.7040; *Penelec* 1.800.207.9276; *Penn Power* 1.800.207.9276; *PPL* 1.800.358.6623; *UGI Electric* 1.800.340.5394; *Columbia* 1.800.537.7431; *Dominion Peoples* 1.800.400.9276; *Equitable* (Allegheny County) 412.395.3050 or (outside of Allegheny County) 1.800.654.6335; *NFG* 1.800.365.3234; *PG Energy* 1.800.490.8605; *PGW* 215.235.1000; *PPL Gas* 1.800.652.0550; *TW Phillips* 1.866.276.4055; *UGI Gas* 1.800.340.5394; *Valley Energy* 570.888.9664.

Affordable Apartment Locator available

PHFA is requesting public housing authorities, rural housing developers, and other affordable rental housing providers to list their development information on the Pennsylvania Affordable Apartment Locator, www.phfa.org/pal. The service is free, and is a good way to reach prospective renters.

E-mail addresses, corrections requested

Please check the mailing label on this issue and contact Paula Brightbill at pbrightbill@phfa.org, or call 717.780.3915, if corrections are needed. Also, please send her your e-mail address (even if the printed address is correct) so that the newsletter can be sent electronically at a later date.

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www.phfa.org

Harrisburg Pennsylvania 17101

211 North Front Street

PENNSYLVANIA HOUSING FINANCE AGENCY