

Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PHFA recognizes housing counselors from across Pennsylvania

*Counselors perform vital service by providing consumers
with educational housing and foreclosure information*

HARRISBURG – PHFA honored the work of the state’s private sector housing counselors yesterday at the Hilton. These counseling agencies extend the work of PHFA by helping state residents with questions about homeownership and home foreclosure, working to inform consumers so they make educated housing decisions.

“The work of these counseling agencies is critical because we have found that the best defense against such factors as predatory lending is a well-informed housing consumer,” said PHFA Executive Director and CEO Brian A. Hudson, Sr. “Many of these counseling agencies have worked with us for decades and we felt it was appropriate to salute their efforts and honor those agencies providing the highest level of customer service.”

Housing counselors from across the state attended, with more than 160 people on hand representing nearly 100 counseling agencies. The audience of counselors was thanked in brief remarks by Hudson and by state Banking Secretary and PHFA Board Chairman Steven Kaplan.

The event included recognition of the excellent work being done by housing counselors in Pennsylvania at a time when the housing marketplace is in a state of dramatic change.

Twenty housing counseling agencies were recognized with certificates citing their 27 years of dedicated service to the agency’s Homeowners’ Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program, commonly known as HEMAP. During that time, these counseling agencies have helped more than 190,000 HEMAP applicants.

Awards also were presented to those individuals and counseling agencies exhibiting exemplary service to Pennsylvania residents:

Best Counselor Award

- **Maria Iannarelli**, Esperanza, Philadelphia
- **Maria Carter**, Housing Partnership of Chester County, Downingtown
- **Nikki Holcroft**, Genesis Housing Corporation, Norristown
- **Sheila Mitchell**, Consumer Credit Counseling Services of Western PA - Advantage Credit Counseling Service, Harrisburg

- **David Klitz**, Housing Opportunities of Beaver County, Beaver
- **Veronica Hopkins**, St. Martin Center, Erie

Best Agency Award

- **Consumer Credit Counseling Services of Delaware Valley**, Media
- **Consumer Credit Counseling Services of Northeastern PA**, Stroudsburg
- **Tabor Community Services**, Lancaster
- **NeighborWorks of Western PA**, Pittsburgh
- **Consumer Credit Counseling Services of Western PA**, Pittsburgh
- **Warren-Forest Counties Economic Opportunities Council**, Warren

The top award for the best counseling practice in the state, which took into account such factors as training, skills and an agency's overall efficiency, was presented to **Northwest Counseling Service** of Philadelphia.

About PHFA

The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency works to provide affordable homeownership and rental apartment options for older adults, lower- and middle-income families, and people with special housing needs. Through its carefully managed mortgage programs and investments in multifamily housing developments, PHFA also promotes economic development across the state. Since its creation by the legislature in 1972, it has generated \$9.7 billion of funding for more than 140,000 single-family home mortgage loans and 83,000 rental units, while saving the homes of nearly 44,200 families from foreclosure. PHFA programs and operations are funded primarily by the sale of securities with the exception of its Homeowners' Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program, which it receives a state appropriation to administer. PHFA is governed by a 14-member board of directors.

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