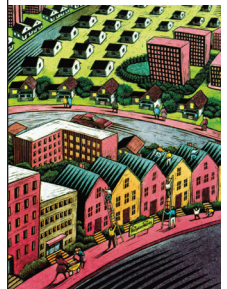




2007 NeighborWorks® Awards

March 20, 2007

"The core of the NeighborWorks® system is the partnership between residents, government and the private sector, co-operating to revitalize America's communities and serve our country's low- and moderate-income residents."



Honoring Our Heritage

NeighborWorks® America annually celebrates the accomplishments of resident leaders, public officials and business leaders who have made outstanding contributions to their communities. The awards honor the heritage of the NeighborWorks® system, which was founded as a result of the efforts of a Pittsburgh housewife named Dorothy Richardson who rallied her neighbors to save their inner-city Northside neighborhood from being razed in the name of urban renewal.

Richardson founded the first Neighborhood Housing Services, which became a model for the creation of NeighborWorks® organizations throughout the nation. Every Thursday morning for many years Richardson had a breakfast meeting with a representative of the mayor's office and a prominent city banker to discuss how investment could safely be made in the homes and businesses of lower-income communities. This led to the resident/public/private partnership foundation that continues to be the heart of the NeighborWorks® model and the reason for its successes.

Residents bring years of experience and a deep understanding of what is needed to revitalize their communities. They know their communities well, and they know what their neighbors want and need. They volunteer their time, and they are active and outspoken advocates.

Contributions by public officials are often overlooked, though they provide much-needed dollars, programs, and services to people and communities in need. We rely on public officials to be responsive to their diverse constituents to create and support important programs and policies that strengthen and revitalize communities.

Business leaders, too, often go unheralded as they participate in the work of NeighborWorks® organizations. We acknowledge and celebrate the vital role they play in strengthening America's communities.

For their devotion, their support, and their persistence in the face of challenges, we salute the 2007 NeighborWorks® award winners. They help make possible a better future for all and bring us closer to achieving our vision that through NeighborWorks® and its partnerships, America is a nation of vibrant communities all are proud to call home.

Kenneth D. Wade
Chief Executive Officer
NeighborWorks® America

Agenda

- 5:30 pm Opening reception and hors d'oeuvres
- 6:00 pm Awards program begins:
Kenneth D. Wade, CEO, NeighborWorks® America,
Master of Ceremonies:
Thomas J. Curry, Director, Federal Deposit Insurance
Corporation and Chairman, NeighborWorks® America
- 6:45 pm Awards program ends
- 7:30 pm Reception concludes

Awards Ceremony Held at the Library of Congress

The setting for the NeighborWorks® Awards is the Montpelier Room in the James Madison Memorial Building of the Library of Congress. Located at 101 Independence Avenue, S.E., just across from the United States Capitol, the James Madison Memorial Building is a national monument to the fourth U.S. president, James Madison. The building is one of two (the other is a monument to Thomas Jefferson) comprising the Library of Congress. The Montpelier Room is a penthouse-style room on the Madison Building's sixth floor.

The Library of Congress is the nation's oldest federal cultural institution and the largest library in the world. Its mission is to make its resources available and useful to Congress and the American people, and to sustain and preserve a universal collection of knowledge and creativity for future generations. The Library contains more than 130 million items on approximately 530 miles of bookshelves. Its collections include more than 29 million books and other printed materials, 2.7 million recordings, 12 million photographs, 4.8 million maps, and 58 million manuscripts.

2007 NeighborWorks® Awards Recipients

16th Annual Dorothy Richardson Awards for Resident Leadership

Gary Eckenberg

Neighborhood Housing Services of Duluth, Inc.
Duluth, Minnesota

Richard A. Hamilton Sr.

Marshall Heights Community Development Organization, Inc.
Washington, District of Columbia

Doris A. Jackson

Kalamazoo Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc.
Kalamazoo, Michigan

Larry Lauritzen

NeighborWorks® of Grays Harbor County
Aberdeen, Washington

Lois Phillips

Neighborhood Housing Services of New York City, Inc.
New York, New York

Marta I. Rentes

Lawrence Community Works, Inc.
Lawrence, Massachusetts

Dona Stebbins

Neighborhood Housing Services Inc. of Great Falls
Great Falls, Montana

Andrew Wise

Neighborhood Housing & Development Corporation
HomeOwnership Center
Gainesville, Florida

Business Leadership Award

Daniel Abrego, Jr.

Abrego Ventures Inc.
Tejano Center for Community Concerns
Houston, Texas

Government Service Awards

Federal Government Service Award

The Honorable Jack Reed

Member, U.S. Senate
State of Rhode Island

State Government Service Award

Steven L. Antonakes

Commissioner of Banks, Division of Banks
Office of Consumer Affairs & Business Regulation
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Local Government Service Award

Jim Rokakis

Treasurer, Cuyahoga County (Cleveland)
State of Ohio

Lifetime Achievement Award

Roni Atkins

Rural Housing Director
USDA Rural Development Idaho

NeighborWorks® Resident Leadership Award Winners

The Dorothy Richardson Awards were created in 1992, shortly after the death of Dorothy Richardson, to honor and acknowledge outstanding achievers in the field of affordable housing and community-based development. First and foremost, this award recognizes resident leaders whose energy, commitment and concern for their communities are vital to the success of the NeighborWorks® system locally and nationally.

Gary Eckenberg is a founding member and long-time leader of Neighborhood Housing Services of Duluth, Minnesota. He has been a strong advocate of its early involvement in NeighborWorks® community leadership initiatives, supporting the organization's efforts to reach out and involve new residents. In a lifetime of helping to form neighborhood-based organizations, Eckenberg has been a long-term leader in the Lincoln Park Planning District, a founding member and early leader in Lincoln Park's Neighbors with Hope, and an early organizer of resident efforts in support of reconstructing Piedmont Avenue, the scene of a number of traffic and pedestrian fatalities. He also recruited residents to work with the local Parks and Recreation Board to renovate the dilapidated Harrison Park. For hundreds of residents, Eckenberg's work has been an avenue for community involvement.

Richard A. Hamilton Sr., a co-founder and long-time board chair of Washington, D.C.'s, Marshall Heights Community Development Organization (MHCDO), has maintained MHCDO's focus on resident involvement even as the organization has become a major player in the revitalization of Ward 7, a predominantly African-American community defined by its rich history, abundant natural beauty, and hardworking and caring residents. Physically separated from downtown Washington by the Anacostia River, Ward 7 contains four major commercial areas and 29 distinct neighborhoods. Hamilton has been a continuous leader in engaging residents where they live and cul-

tivating their participation and opportunities for leadership. He has emphasized board development with 99 percent of board members living in Ward 7. Hamilton and his fellow board members serve as ambassadors of MHCDO at area community meetings, and often are called to testify before government agencies on policies that impact organizational and ward operations.

Doris A. Jackson, a board member of Kalamazoo (Michigan) Neighborhood Housing Services (KNHS), leads by example. A graduate of KNHS's inaugural Community Builders Leadership Program, she volunteers for most neighborhood-related projects and generally ends up directing them! Jackson has been without peer in stimulating new program elements into KNHS, whether starting a neighborhood tool library, organizing a Neighborhood Watch program, or working with the city on recommending the distribution of CDBG funds. Her reputation as an involved community organizer and grassroots leader has particularly helped KNHS attract new board members, thus increasing again the number of resident leaders.

Larry Lauritzen is a board member of NeighborWorks® of Grays Harbor County in Aberdeen, Washington, who has spearheaded the organization's signature housing construction-training partnership with the Grays Harbor College Carpentry Program. Students, who range from 18 to 75 and include all races and genders, experience two years of on-site training in building new homes. In the process, they learn how to utilize specific skills and trades, how to be passionate about their work, how to function as a team, and how to be leaders. They also gain the confidence needed to involve others in their projects and to add a stabilizing dimension to the community as a whole. Lauritzen has played a key supportive role in developing the partnership and also provided the final prints required for each of the first four projects.

Lois Phillips, a 50-year resident of Jamaica, Queens, in New York City, is one of the founding members of Neighborhood Housing Services of Jamaica, the first "neighborhood" of Neighborhood Housing Services of New York City (NHSNYC). Her key concern in creating

resident leaders in her underserved community is the area's youth. She played a key role in organizing a community Youth in Action program that was geared to creating resident leaders out of local teens and youth. Many of her graduates went on to work for city housing agencies and other positions that directly give back to the community. She helped create resident leaders beyond the community's youth as well – through her efforts in housing, parks and recreation, and medical and social services. Further, her major role in developing NHSNYC increased the number of resident leaders yet again because each NHSNYC neighborhood board is comprised of community residents.

Marta I. Rentes is president of Lawrence Community Works (LCW), in Lawrence, Massachusetts, marking the first time a graduate of LCW's PODER (which means "power") resident leadership institute has risen to the top of the organization. She has led LCW in a period of remarkable achievement – winning a Fannie Mae Maxwell Award, gaining national recognition for network organizing, and doubling the size of its youth and adult programs. She personally chaired two of LCW's most important initiatives – the People's Guide to the City Budget Campaign and the Membership Committee, which has grown network membership from 1,200 to more than 2,000 in just 12 months. She brings extraordinary energy to the board, is absolutely tireless, and represents LCW at many community events – all the while teaching full-time, pursuing a college degree, and staying engaged as an active parent and grandparent.

Dona Stebbins, mayor of Great Falls, Montana, since 2005, often credits her long-running involvement with Neighborhood Housing Services of Great Falls for her success as a neighborhood leader. One of the primary ways NHS increases the number of residents involved and expands the role of residents in the neighborhood is supporting the Neighborhood Councils, which are sponsored by the city. Stebbins was president of Neighborhood Council 7, which serves the NHS neighborhood, and she built the reputation of Council 7 into one of the best in the city by having focused meetings and continu-

ally recruiting residents. While many councils have vacancies, Council 7 developed a waiting list of people waiting to serve on it. Stebbins served on the NHS board for 12 years, was board secretary and a member of the executive committee, and for several years was managing editor of NHS's well-read quarterly newsletter, NeighborWorks®.

Andrew Wise, the longest-serving board member of Neighborhood Housing & Development Corporation (NHDC) HomeOwnership Center, in Gainesville, Fla., has combined his passion for NHDC and his networking skills to recruit a remarkable stream of community, business and educational leaders who have become active in the NHDC organization. He has been an eloquent NHDC ambassador to the many church, community and civic organizations to which he belongs. Within NHDC, his board tenure and experience have made him the go-to person for new board members – especially community residents – in understanding the array of NHDC programs and their many and varied funding sources. He has been invaluable in helping new members move past this steep learning curve by getting them to focus on the mission of the organization and how its board and staff are so instrumental in transforming lives and uplifting the community.

NeighborWorks® Business Leadership Award Winner

The NeighborWorks® Business Leadership Award honors private-sector community volunteers. Honorees demonstrate their dedication to the community through their volunteerism of time and talent. They are recognized for contributions to the goals and success of the local NeighborWorks® organization and to the network.

Daniel Abrego, Jr. has been a supporter of the Tejano Center for Community Concerns for 13 years. A respected local business developer with a passion for the East End community of Houston, Abrego's lifelong connection to the Port Houston community served by the Tejano Center links back to his father's local grocery store. As a small businessman from a longstanding community-oriented family, Abrego sees first-hand the value and benefits of service to his community and society as a whole. Abrego has supported the Tejano Center through thick and thin, from donating rent-free space for operations to working to find resources to maintain services. His high energy and natural problem-solving ability enables Abrego to address community issues and find the resources necessary to resolve them. He is a forward thinker who believes in the sustainability of his community by generating opportunities for residents.

NeighborWorks® Government Service Award Winners

NeighborWorks® Government Service Awards honor significant contributions of individuals whose work at the federal, state and local levels improves the lives of those in communities of need. Honorees have achieved substantive accomplishments that include initiating and implementing public policies and programs that strengthen communities or expand the supply of affordable housing. They are in touch with their constituents – listening to their opinions and working with them to implement strategies and policies that succeed. Their demonstrated commitment and dedication make them stand out as leaders in touch with the people they serve.

Senator Jack Reed of Rhode Island is widely acknowledged as that rare political leader who “gets” affordable housing. He is an effective national advocate for it as well as a strong local supporter in Rhode Island. He has led national efforts to preserve and expand the financing and funding tools that are critical to the affordable housing and community development fields – the Low Income Housing Tax Credit, the HOME and CDBG programs, as well as the McKinney Homeless programs. He also has been a leader in creating a National Housing Trust Fund. In Rhode Island, he supported passage of the state’s first affordable housing bond. Polling by a coalition of bond supporters indicated that of all the state’s political leaders, Senator Reed’s endorsement would do most to sway public support. His hard work and political skills – in the best sense of the term – have made it possible for more Americans and more Rhode Islanders to live in affordable homes and better neighborhoods.

Steven L. Antonakes, commissioner of banks in Massachusetts, has taken a lead in coordinating an anti-foreclosure strategy in the state that not only brings the full force of his agency in cracking down on abusive practices but also brings together disparate agencies, community leaders and industries to address the mounting volume of foreclosures in the state. He launched a coordinated attack on

rogue mortgage brokers and lenders that resulted in the shut-down of several of the most abusive predatory lenders. This plan combines enforcement and regulatory initiatives, community and industry partnerships, and outreach. It includes a summit of government, industry and nonprofit organizations to craft a coordinated, statewide foreclosure-prevention strategy.

Roni Atkins, rural housing director for USDA Rural Development Idaho, has brought passion, tenacity and commitment to securing additional allocations of Rural Development funds for rural Idahoans and bringing the Mutual Self-Help Housing Program to the state. Idaho now has four grantees working to assist low- and very-low-income homebuyers build their homes. Together they have produced 263 affordable new homes. She has developed partnerships with local nonprofit agencies and private lenders to make millions of dollars available through the Rural Home Loan Partnership and Community Development Financial Institutions programs. With Roni's assistance, through USDA's multifamily initiatives, Idaho partners have built new developments on Native Trust Land and financed two of the first guaranteed Section 538 multifamily loans in the state.

Jim Rokakis, Cuyahoga County (Cleveland), treasurer, turned a 19-year tenure on the Cleveland City Council into a prelude to moving up to county office and bringing a series of sweeping reforms that included an overhaul of the county's property tax collection system, numerous operational reforms, and a streamlined foreclosure process for abandoned properties. He developed a ground-breaking Home Enhancement Loan Program (HELP) – the first of its kind in the country – that offers home improvement loans at three percentage points below prime. He understood that by partnering with area banks and communities, the county treasurer's office could be used as a catalyst to implement programs that improve homes, neighborhoods and entire communities. His commitment to improving the quality of life for every resident through neighborhood improvements has earned the respect of residents, business, and community leaders throughout the region.

The NeighborWorks® System

NeighborWorks® America

NeighborWorks® America creates opportunities for people to live in affordable homes, improve their lives and strengthen their communities. Established by Congress in 1978, Neighborhood Reinvestment (now doing business as NeighborWorks® America) is the original community/public/private partnership model, with locally-driven, efficient community development and leverage of the public investment as its hallmarks.

NeighborWorks® Network

A national network of 236 community-based organizations that create healthy communities through the work of thousands of residents, business people, government officials and other partners.

Neighborhood Housing Services of America

Provides direct financial services to NeighborWorks® network organizations by serving as a unique secondary market that brings assets to communities suffering from disinvestment and decline.

Through NeighborWorks® and its partnerships,
America is a nation of vibrant communities
all are proud to call home.

NeighborWorks® America

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