



President's Corner

Alan Zais, President

NCRC History

The NAHRO International Research and Global Exchange (IRGE) Committee has quite a few members who have served on the committee for over ten years (I'm on year 15) and as members began to retire or move to other areas of NAHRO, we realized we were losing much of the committee's history. In 2016 I was tasked with assembling the committee's history and we gained quite a bit of information that included photos and articles dating back to the committee's 1953 formation—all of that information was on the verge of being lost. I'm so grateful to Jeff du Manoir for completing the process to archive on the IRGE website. NAHRO President Wells and Immediate Past President Shaw plan to review the completed IRGE archive to replicate in creating a complete NAHRO archive.

Our history is important to us. Last year I presented the Alvira B. Long Memorial Award and wanted to preface it with how the award was created and why Alvira's story brings the same important recognition to the awardee, but I was unable to find anything except that Alvira may have lived in Michigan. It made me realize that it was time to capture and save our organization's history to create our archives. In the coming months we will be looking for your help on collecting past articles, publications and other historical material that we can archive for the membership. Our stories as housers are important. And we will look to rediscover, share and save Alvira's important story along the way.

What Home Means to Me

And speaking of stories, no one tells our stories better than our own residents, especially by the children. The What Home Means to Me calendar has been a great way for children to tell their story dramatically with a pic-

2022 Calendar

March 28-30, 2022
NAHRO Online
Washington
Conference

May 24, 2022
NCRC NAHRO
Board Meeting
St. Paul, MN

May 24-26, 2022
NCRC NAHRO
Conference hosted by
MN NAHRO
St. Paul, MN

September 22, 2022
NCRC NAHRO
Board Meeting
San Diego, CA

September 22-24, 2022
NAHRO 2022 National
Conference &
Exhibition
San Diego, CA

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ture, and a great way for us to share their story through the calendars for our staff, our local leaders, our state and national congresspeople, and that makes it another tool of our advocacy for our housing programs. What Home Means to a child is a clear and powerful message for anyone to see and understand.



We very much appreciate Anna Judge for her care in always made this such a great program for NCRC, and she will be reaching out to everyone for the

poster entries due April 1, 2022—in less than three months. The time is now for us to plan these programs for our agencies and be ready for Anna.

Moving Ahead

Our challenges this term will align very much with national NAHRO and President Shaw's focus, which will make the work of NCRC a strong profile within the NAHRO governance. President Shaw's stated challenges are:

- 1) Increasing access to NAHRO Professional Development and advocacy products for all members, using modern technology,
- 2) Strengthening the continuity between National, Regional, State and Chapter advocacy, focus and leadership preparation,
- 3) Advocating to extend and/or make permanent the funding, waivers and flexibilities proven to strengthen our programs and serve more families, and
- 4) Advancing the Board of Governors' approved DEI Framework to provide equitable access to NAHRO and PHA programs and opportunities.

This translates well into the work for NCRC. In just one example, we are looking to how we can share professional development revenue with the states, in turn increasing marketing opportunities and critical savings to our small PHA members, value to the State Chapters that they can bring to their membership, and a development of PHA

staff creating Emerging Leaders which impact DEI, all of this bringing a positive recruitment opportunity for membership. In other words, a change in professional development revenue sharing would impact and benefit all of us, at all committees, and at the national, regional and state levels. All of our work can be found to both connect and be dependent on the four areas above, leveraging them as we move forward this term.

Beyond the Bear

For months I have been hearing industry colleagues both across our region and nationally share with me their feelings of being overwhelmed, isolated, out of touch, overworked, depressed, and tired. They've had the same experiences with their staff and residents.

This is how I developed the idea of having Dan Bigley speak at our retreat. His story is very powerful. Terribly disfigured and blinded, he suffered through many surgeries, infection relapses, his entire life upended in just a few moments and then changed forever. He faced incredible challenges of depression, isolated and overwhelmed, but decided the experience would not leave him bitter. He writes how unpredictable life is, its potential to end without notice, and how there's only so much time to put it to good use I wanted to use my time on this planet to do something meaningful and lasting, to leave my imprint in the sand. We can find this to translate into the experience of bringing our agencies, the families we serve and ourselves through the sudden, upending change created by the pandemic. I very much wanted to bring this positive message for us, and even further to our whole membership. I appreciate Cheryl Anne's work to make that membership outreach possible, Jennifer Keough for her great ideas in how to finance the message, and Ron Clewer for generously providing sponsorship through Gorman and Company.

Thank you...

...everyone, for choosing to serve on the NCRC board and bring your knowledge, skills, time and talents to always make our programs better for the many lives we serve. I am truly honored to serve with you, and look forward to all we will accomplish this term.

Senior Vice President Report

Sharon Carlson, SVP



I am honored to hold the position of Vice-President for our region for the 2021-2023 term and sincerely thank the members of NCRC NAHRO for entrusting me with the responsibility. Since the new leadership term began in October, the NCRC board has been extremely busy organizing to prepare for meeting goals and objectives important to NCRC. We look forward to working as a team, both with and for members, to strengthen and expand opportunities for the organization, our agencies, our communities, and the residents we serve.

Alan Zais, our newly elected President, has outlined major initiatives for his term. I wholeheartedly support the goals for inclusive communication, to increase and encourage advocacy efforts, to promote and provide professional development opportunities, to embrace emerging leaders, and to empower small agencies through engagement and responsiveness. These initiatives stem from our national leadership, who recognize the importance of engaging and supporting all members of the organization. These efforts are vital in the interest of maintaining organizational viability as well as the viability of the agencies we serve within our communities.

With the addition of several new board members,

those NCRC members who have served in various capacities within the NAHRO family at state, regional and national levels will serve as mentors, to help support and expand the number of essential professionals for the future of the industry. Mentoring, networking and educational opportunities will provide a platform for any who wish to become actively involved in the important work we do to support the business we all call housing. We all benefit when we learn, share and support.

NCRC will soon provide information about the Annual Conference, which is scheduled for May 23 – 25 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. We are hopeful of an in-person conference this coming year, but rest assured of our team's ability to pivot to an online platform if necessary. Regardless of the setting in which the conference will occur, I look forward to meeting and working with all of you. Thank you, and please visit ncrcnahro.org for information about our region and the eight great states we represent.

Best wishes for 2022,

scarlson@beldinghousing.org



2022 WASHINGTON CONFERENCE
NAHRO Together: Raising Our Voices

MARCH 28-30

Grand Hyatt Washington Hotel • Washington, D.C.





Housing Committee

Jim Dewey, Vice President of Housing

First, as your new VP of Housing, I would like to take a moment to introduce myself to those who do not

know me. I have served in various positions with both the Michigan Chapter of NAHRO, NCRC NAHRO and National NAHRO since 2009. The last four years I served as NCRC Legislative Task force chair while serving on the National Legnet Leadership team. Prior I served NCRC as an at large member, Michigan NAHRO as an at large member, VP of Member Services, Legislative VP and senior VP before serving as Michigan NAHRO's President. I am excited to take on this role so I can continue to grow with this great industry, and I only hope to be able to provide you with current and relevant information as my predecessor Lee Talmage has done for the last many years.

Recent Housing News:

CARES Act Waivers Expire

Many CARES ACT Waivers expired as of December 31st, 2021. HUD has provided two separate notices on the submission of waivers and closeout procedures for PHA's that took advantage of the waivers.

PHAS and SEMAP High Performer Bonus

On December 21st 2021 HUD provide a PIH Notice that states "For any PHAs with a fiscal year end on or before December 31, 2021, HUD will not issue a new PHAS score unless the PHA requests that a new PHAS score be issued."

HUD awards over 1 million for FYI HCV's

On December 16th, HUD announced that it was awarding over 1 million to 26 PHS's in 20 states for its Foster Youth to Independence Initiative. Congrats to those who were awarded!

HUD provides new guidance on Asset-Repositioning Fee Eligibility

This guidance covers all PHA's that are demolishing or disposing of public housing units.

HCV Landlord Strategy Guidebook revisions

A new chapter has been published titled "Landlord-Focused Customer Service" where it discusses landlord responsiveness, creating landlord single point of contact and creating a call center.

Pending Congressional Bills:

H.R. 3685 "Fair Chance at Housing Act of 2021" was introduced by Rep Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of NY

This bill is to reform the screening and eviction policies for Federal Housing assistance in order to provide fair access to housing, and for other purposes. This bill was previously introduced in 2018 as well. This bill limits the authority of public housing agencies (PHAs) to deny or terminate federally assisted housing based on criminal conduct by the applicant or tenant. It is also being called "Last Chance at Housing Act"

H.R. 5828 "Pets Belong With Families Act" was introduced by Rep. Adam Schiff of CA

This bill is to prohibit public housing agencies from imposing breed restrictions on household pets owned by residents of the dwelling units in public housing, and for other purposes.

H.R 1904 "Broadband Justice Act of 2021" introduced by Rep. Jamaal Bowman of NY

To include broadband as a utility that tenants residing in federally assisted housing can have subsidized by the Federal Government, and for other purposes.

These bills along with all bills can be found at the following link: <https://www.congress.gov>

Once you have read through these bills and create your own opinions, please feel free to pass them along to me as I will forward those to the National Housing Committee and NAHRO staff for consideration of taking a stance on these bills.

Last Quarter PIH Notices (October 6, 2021 to December 21, 2021):

PIH 2021-38 COVID-19 Statutory and Regulatory Amendment to PIH Notice 2021-14 (HA), Providing for the Release of Public Housing Assessment System Scores for Federal Fiscal Year 2019

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act (Public Law 116-136) provides the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development with broad authority to waive or establish alternative requirements for numerous statutory and regulatory requirements for the Public Housing program.

PIH 2021-37 Guidance on Eligibility for Asset-Repositioning Fee (ARF)

This notice applies to all public housing agencies and authorities (PHAs) administering Public Housing, including Moving to Work (MTW) PHAs with Alternative Operating Subsidy (AOS) formulas that allow for the receipt of transition funding.

PIH 2021-36 CARES Act Supplemental Operating Fund Close-Out Procedures

This Notice provides information on the following topics related to the end of the period of performance of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) (Public Law 116-136).

PIH 2021-35 Guidance on Inventory Management System/PIH Information Center (IMS-PIC) Sub-Module Reporting and Validation

The purpose of the guidance in this notice is to ensure that Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) maintain and submit accurate, timely, and reliable unit designations in the IMS-PIC Development Sub-Module.

PIH2021-34 Expedited Regulatory Waivers for the Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher (including Mainstream and Mod Rehab) Programs

This Notice advises PHAs that they may apply for certain regulatory waivers that were originally offered as part of the CARES Act waivers in Notice PIH 2021-14 to provide continued flexibility during the pandemic and pandemic recovery.

PIH 2021-33 Submitting CARES Act Waiver Adoption Information to HUD by December 20, 2021

This guidance provides directions to Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) on the required reporting in the CARES Act Waiver Reporting Tool (CAWRT)

PIH 2021-32 EXTENSION of American Rescue Plan Act – Adjustment Funding for Calendar Year 2021 Housing Choice Voucher Program and Mainstream Vouchers Renewal Funding Applications

This notice announces that HUD is extending the application deadline for CY 2021 renewal adjustment funding for PHAs that experienced a significant increase in voucher per-unit costs (PUC) due to extraordinary circumstances from the previous due date of August 10, 2021, to the new due date of 5 p.m., per the PHA's time zone, Wednesday, December 21, 2021.

PIH 2021-31 Public Housing Operating Subsidy Grant Eligibility Calculations and Processing for Calendar Year (CY) 2022

This notice provides public housing agencies (PHAs) with instructions for calculating Operating Subsidy grants for CY 2022 and establishes submission deadlines.

PIH 2021-30 Revision of Application Process for the Small-Rural Frozen Rolling Base Program

This Notice provides updated guidance to Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) on the implementation of Section 209 (b) of the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act (Economic Growth Act), Public Law No: 115-174.

PIH 2021-29 Supplemental Guidance to the Interim Final Rule “Extension of Time and Required Disclosures for Notification of Nonpayment of Rent”

This Notice's purpose is to provide supplemental guidance to implement the requirements included in the Interim Final Rule titled “Extension of Time and Required Disclosures for Notification of Nonpayment

of Rent.” This notice also serves as the required determination by the Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development that the existence of a national emergency necessitates the activation of the required minimum 30-day notification period and other required actions to support families at-risk of eviction for non-payment of rent.

PIH 2021-28 Providing Interim Funding to Recipients of Indian Housing Block Grants

This notice supersedes PIH Notice 2013-29. This notice provides updated information to Indian tribes and tribally designated housing entities (TDHEs) on the process for requesting an advance on Indian Housing Block Grant (IHBG) formula funds, or interim funding, while under a Continuing Resolution (CR).

PIH 2021-27 Updates to Flat Rent Submission Requirements

This Notice supersedes and replaces the guidance provided in Notice PIH 2017-23, clarifies HUD’s interpretation of the statutory amendment related to flat rents, and updates flat rent exception and extension request requirements, including review criteria for HUD Form 5880.

All notices can be found at the following link: https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/publications/notices

Professional Development Committee

Kimberly Townsend, Vice President of Professional Development



We have had a tremendous response for our upcoming training sessions: **“Implicit Bias: What is it and Why does it Matter?”**, February 17, 2022, from 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. (EST). Also, **“Privilege, Bias, and Debiasing Systems”**, March 3, 2022, from 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. (EST). This is a two-day event that will be held virtually. The cost is \$250.00 for NAHRO members, and \$350.00 for non-NAHRO members for both sessions, or \$125.00 each for NAHRO members, and \$175.00 each for non-NAHRO members. ***It is recommended you consider taking both trainings for greater impact.** This training will help you gain a personal understanding of how these cognitive biases create biased systems. We have had such a tremendous response, that we will be accepting registrations until three days before the class start date.

Access to PD Committee NAHRO Webpage: <https://www.nahro.org/about/nahro-leadership/national-standing-committees/professional-development-committee/pd->



19-21-correspondence-and-meeting-summaries/

Access to PD committee workplan: <https://nahro.sharepoint.com/:x:/s/ProfessionalDevelopment/EdSZ4NoEOVFHoNTLYWowvaoB36CcaGEzL4JvluC-bTkVAQ?e=ExV2yt>

e-Learning Library: <https://nahro.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/ProfessionalDevelopment/EgIMZPYNshZAq1HI5PBII30BIJIfvK-WuFDmPnlotwJ3ig?e=VF1x>



Community Revitalization & Development Report (CR&D)

Taryl Bonds, Vice President of CR&D

2021 NAHRO Online National Conference & Exhibition

The NAHRO Online National Conference & Exhibition took place October 7th and 8th of 2021. The Plenary Session was addressed by HUD Secretary Marcia L. Fudge. Although we very much would have loved to come out and spend time with our fellow housing and redevelopment colleagues in person, it was in the best interest of everyone's health and safety to meet virtually due to the pandemic. Hopefully, things will get better and turnaround in 2022 and allow us to finally meet in person for the [2022 National Conference & Exhibition, September 22-24 in San Diego, CA](#) and maybe even the [2022 Washington Conference, March 28-30 in Washington, DC](#). The sessions topics included dedicated tracks for:

- ❖ Public housing
- ❖ Community development
- ❖ The Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program
- ❖ Organizational management; and
- ❖ Commissioners

Reducing Land Use & Zoning Restrictions

On Friday, October 29th, the White House invited the public to attend a virtual webinar, a first in a series, on overcoming supply constraints in the housing market. This first event focused on how reducing land use and zoning restrictions can help to expand housing supply. Shortages in housing stock and their associated social and economic consequences have been an increasing issue for quite some time and many of the regulations that artificially limit housing supply exist at the state and

local levels. President Biden's Build Back Better Act proposed critical investments that would produce or preserve millions of affordable housing units. Let's see what 2022 holds for the future of this Act in the Senate, but let's all tell Congress to support the \$150 billion in housing in the Build Back Better Act.

HUD Publishes Expedited Waiver Notice for Public Housing and Voucher Programs

On Dec. 9, HUD published a notice titled ["Expedited Regulatory Waivers for the Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher \(including Mainstream and Mod Rehab\) Programs"](#) (Notice PIH 2021-34). The COVID-19 waivers for the public housing and voucher programs were published because of authority given to HUD through the passage of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Additional information on the expiration of these waivers can be found in [HUD's guidance for winding down CARES Act waivers: PIH 2021-14](#) (providing revised waivers for public housing and the HCV program); PIH 2020-20 (providing waivers for the Mod. Rehab. program); and PIH 2020-22 (providing waivers for Mainstream vouchers).

Finally, I would like to wish all of the members of NCRC a happy, prosperous, healthy and safe New Year and continued success as we journey forward into 2022!



Commissioners Committee

Joe Grisson, Vice President of Commissioners

As the newly elected VP of Commissioners, I plan to adopt and build upon the goals of my predecessor, Renee Smith. Additionally,

I commit to open and frequent communication within our committee and throughout the organization. Committee focus will be

- Enhanced Communications & Collaboration at the Regional and National Levels
- Emphasis on Commissioner Engagement & Retention
- Commissioner Training and Professional Development

Enhanced Communications & Collaboration at the Regional and National Levels:

Goal - To create a Regional Commissioner Committee

Status - Ongoing

"Collaborative work has begun in this area, with Commissioners communicating with other Commissioners within their region and on the national level. I am pleased to announce that NCRC Commissioners/ representatives (Valentine and Smith) submitted proposals for sessions at the upcoming National Conference; and have convened a panel consisting of Commissioners from the Midwest, Southwest, West and Eastern regions." ~Renee Smith.

Emphasis on Commissioner Engagement & Retention:

Goals - Encouraging our counterparts to become and remain involved in NAHRO's activities by serving as mentors to Commissioners at conferences. This goal is ongoing and will include monthly communications with Commissioners. Additionally, we will create and maintain a database of active commissioners throughout the country.

Status - Ongoing

Mentor Booth- 2022 & 2023 National Conferences. We will be actively involved in the planning and development of new commissioner training and development at the regional and national levels, in an effort to engage and retain commissioners.

Measurable Outcome(s): Compare collected inquiries received from Commissioner Information Booth to gauge outreach efforts. We will continue to track Commissioner attendance at in person and virtual events.

2019 National Conference Data: 44

2020 Goal: 70 (No in-person conferences held)

2021 Goal: 50 (No in-person conferences held)

Virtual data will be provided in next report.

Commissioner Training and Professional Development:

Goal - Commissioners shall continue obtain pertinent NAHRO certifications and other professional developmental and continual education to further enhance our leadership skills.

To meet training and developmental goals, the NCRC and NAHRO have and will offer in person, hybrid, and virtual training sessions for Commissioners.

"Commissioners Fundamentals and Ethics trainings continue to be offered on a limited basis as well as other trainings that Commissioners could benefit from, like Commissioners Guide to Monitoring and Oversight; now offered at least on a quarterly basis." ~Renee Smith.

Status - Ongoing

Measurable Outcome: Compare how many Commissioners obtained Certification in 2019 to those certified in 2020 & 2021.

2020 Goal: **20% increase

2021 Goal: Projected 25% increase

2020 goal achieved.

2021 goal to be reported soon



Member Services Committee

Aaron Cooper, Vice President of Member Services

As of the national NAHRO Transition Report from 2019-2021 membership consisted of almost 2,700 agencies, community development agencies, non and for profit organization of which per the most recent NCRC membership report, 991 were from our region roughly 37%.

At the national level the Member Services Committee has been involved in a number of strategic initiatives to include:

- Membership Dues
- Strategic Planning
- Awards
- Recruitment, retention, and advocacy

For the Regional level, as I understand it there is not an “active” committee, however this would be one of my main initial goals I would suggest to the President

and Board, to start and create an active committee, to move forward local, regional, and national goals.

Secondly, engaging the current membership to ensure we retain current membership, while determining the reasons for non renewal in order to strategically ensure we engage our current members and bring new membership at the Regional level.

In closing, as a high representative number of membership in the NCRC level within NAHRO, the NCRC Member Services Committee, should continue to represent this region at the National level, but should also establish at the Regional level, a viable and meaningful committee, work with the President and board to establish some goals, while engaging current membership.



Small Agency Task Force

Ashley Spencer, SATF Chair

I am grateful for the opportunity to be serving as the NCRC Small Agency Advisory Committee Chair for the 2021-2023 term and excited to connect with others who share the same dedication. NAHRO's Small Agency Advisory Committee met on January 15th to listen and discuss issues of concern to small agencies. Attendees were joined by NAHRO President Patricia Wells and Senior Vice President George Guy, along with NAHRO Staff who discussed HUD updates, Capitol Hill, Small Agencies Resource Library and 2021-2023 Term Goals.

NAHRO Chairman of the Small Agency Advisory Committee, David Gates discussed the importance of networking and connecting with colleagues at the local level and how that can be best accomplished. Our agencies may be small, but we represent a large segment of NAHRO, and we need to get our voices and

concerns addressed. The 2021-2023 Term Goals will be focused on Member Experience, Preparing New Leadership, Fee Structuring, Advocacy and Small Agency Involvement.

Marty Ryan discussed the proposed small agency resource library. Agencies would have access to forms, policies etc. that have been shared. Current list of items that will be included in the resource library are available, if you are interested in that list or if you would like to suggest additional categories to be included, please contact Marty Ryan or myself. Further updates will be provided when this resource is live and available for agencies.

Interim Director of Policy & Program Development, Eric Oberdorfer, discussed the CARES Act Waiver Reporting Tool (CAWRT) [CARES Act Waiver Reporting Tool \(CAWRT\) \(Page 1 of 10\) \(office.](#)

[com](#)). All PHAs are required to enter information into the CAWRT, including those that did not adopt discretionary COVID-19 waivers. This information is being gathered so that HUD may determine which waivers were beneficial and which may be utilized to relieve administrative and regulatory burdens in the future.

Additionally, HUD [Notice PIH 2021-34](#) advises PHAs that they may apply for certain regulatory waivers that were originally offered as part of the CARES Act waivers in Notice PIH 2021-14 to provide continued flexibility during the pandemic and pandemic recovery. The requests must be received by HUD before March 1, 2022, to receive expedited processing. In requesting one of these waivers for expedited processing, a PHA must show "good cause." Regulatory waivers eligible for expedited review include: Increase in Payment Standard During HAP Contract Term, SEMAP Score, Term of Voucher, Homeownership: Maximum Term of Assistance and Voucher Tenancy: New Payment Standard Amount.

On Jan. 18, HUD sent a letter to PHA Executive Directors titled "[CY 2022 Housing Choice Voucher Program \(HCV\) Renewal Awards](#)." The letter provides information on current and future prorations of voucher accounts to help HCV program administrators in planning their program. The letter notes that the federal government is operating under a continuing resolution (CR), which will fund federal programs (including the HCV program) at the same rate as last year until Feb. 18, 2022. Under this CR, the HCV housing assistance payment (HAP) proration will be 98.5% for Jan. and Feb. Similarly, under this CR, the HCV administrative fee proration will be 84% for Jan. and Feb. Mainstream vouchers will receive the same prorations for its HAP and administrative fee accounts respectively. At this time, PHAs may anticipate HAP and administrative payments for Feb. Draft appropriations bill for CY 2022. The estimate for the House bill is 90% for the administrative fee and full funding for HAP. The

estimate for the Senate bill is 93% for administrative fee and full funding for HAP.

Director of Congressional Relations Tess Hembree provided an update regarding the current concerns with affordable housing being included in the Build Back Better Act. Housing affordability is a crisis right now and it needs to be addressed. Advocacy continues to play an important role to ensure affordable housing is included in the bill. Please take the time to join and support to the Build Back Better Act: Housing Sign-On Letter at [Build Back Better Act: Housing Sign-On Letter \(google.com\)](#).

The NCRC Small Agency Advisory Committee met on February 3, 2022, via zoom, it was very nice to meet everyone. Some of the items we discussed included HCV landlord retention and recruitment, lack of resources available to smaller agencies, especially in support of mental health and elderly resident needs. Please reach out to your state representatives for more information.

Please continue to reach out to your local networks and pass this information along to all colleagues who may not be connected. The next NCRC Small Agency Advisory Committee will be held via zoom date to be determined, anyone interested in attending future meetings are welcome. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me at aspencer@greenvillehousing.org if you wish to receive or share information.



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Legislative Report

Chris Lamberty, NCRC Legislative Chair

The Legislative Network Committee (LegNet) convened on December 15, 2021, to discuss the status of Build Back Better, FY22 funding and next steps. Jennifer Keogh, Chair, and Tess Hembre, NAHRO staff, provide the organization excellent leadership.

1. Build Back Better. The House passed a BBB bill in November with \$150 billion in additional housing funding, including a substantial infusion to the Capital Fund. The Senate democrats have been unable to agree on a way forward and have not yet voted on the House version or any other version. Going into the holidays they did not have the votes to advance a bill and the prospects looked grim. It is unclear at this point if they will attempt to break it up into smaller funding pieces or continue negotiating for a reduced BBB bill. The housing funding does not appear to be one of the controversial or problem areas in the bill, but it could still get lost in any repackaging of the funding bill or bills. It is imperative for NAHRO members to continue to contact their congressional representatives and make sure they know that housing funding is a priority. It is easy to send letters through NAHRO's Action Alert Center at www.NAHRO.org. NAHRO staff will continue to push information out as the Senate comes back in the new year. Be prepared to act fast.

2. Fiscal Year 2022 Funding. With all the attention on Build Back Better, there has been little movement on FY22 funding appropriations. The federal government is currently operating at last year's funding levels under a Continuing Resolution through February 18, 2022. Congress will need to pass final appropriations or another Continuing Resolution by then. At this point there is a realistic possibility that we could see a CR for the full year. NAHRO members will need to advocate for covering increased voucher program costs if that is the way Congress is headed.

3. Congressional District Contacts. NAHRO has been building a network of contacts in every Congressional District in the country and will be looking to fill or replace CD Contacts in the new year. The ask is simple: Pledge to send action alerts to your members of Congress, and NAHRO will directly alert you to new letters in the Action Alert Center. Your participation will help us target Congress members who can support vital housing and community development legislation. Your NCRC LegNet representatives will be working to recruit you to help in our region. Save us time by volunteering now! If you are interested send me an email at Chris@L-housing.com.

Happy New Year!

Housing America Task Force Report

Anna Judge, Housing America Poster Contest Chair



Welcome to all new members of the NCRC Board. I look forward to working together during this next term. I have been given the pleasure to Chair the national Housing America Advisory Committee this next term and look forward to new ideas on how the committee can gain more momentum, while continuing to showcase the youth that reside in our housing developments throughout the country through the What Home Means to Me poster contest and the National NAHRO/LDG Scholarship program.

“What Home Means to Me” Poster Contest



Since 2008, this contest has recognized the amazing, poignant art of children who live in affordable housing across the country. Each piece of art visually shares the child's thoughts on what their home means to them. Each year, hundreds of children, ages 5-18, participate in the contest. Their heartfelt messages about their homes underscore the importance of the work that housers and community development professionals do.

The following two talented youth from the NCRC region will be showcased in the 2022 “What Home Means to Me” calendar that you can purchase from NAHRO at www.nahro.org.

nahro.org under the “News & Publication” section.

Congratulations to **Summer and TayShauna**! They won \$100 VISA gift cards from NAHRO in addition to the prizes they won from their state and the regional contests.

**Middle School
Summer Thomas**



Illinois

**High School
TayShauna Keiler**



Indiana



NCRC's Ernest J. Bohn Winner also wins NAHRO Merit Scholarship and LDG Scholarship!

Deschalyn Riase from the Port Huron Housing Commission, in Michigan, was our regional winner for the 2021 Ernest J. Bohn Scholarship. Deschalyn's application and essay won her a \$1,000 scholarship from NCRC and was recently sent on to NAHRO to compete in the 2021 NAHRO Merit College Scholarship where I am pleased to announce that she won the NAHRO Merit Scholarship for \$1,000! In addition, she was one of the three applicants who were also chosen for the LDG Scholarship. Under the LDG Scholarship, Deschalyn will receive a \$12,000 scholarship distributed over four years to assist her with tuition and fees; a \$3,000 a year for up to 3 years summer internship stipend; and networking opportunities with business and community leaders.

Deschalyn is attending her second year at Central Michigan University in Michigan and is looking into careers as a social and community service manager, teacher, or lawyer. Please join me in congratulating Deschalyn!

2022 Ernest J. Bohn Regional Scholarship

Within the next couple of weeks NCRC's annual Ernest J. Bohn Education Scholarship will be available online. Two successful candidates are eligible for scholarships in the amount of \$1000 or \$500.00 respectively. Scholarship funds may be used for any expenses directly related to post-secondary education (tuition, room/board, books, etc.). Application must be submitted to NCRC NAHRO by April 1, 2022. It is never too early to start marketing this opportunity to your youth! The 2022 applications will be located on our website at www.ncrcnahro.org under the “About” section.



IRGE Committee

Joaquin Cintron Vega,
Vice President of IRGE

I am pleased to report the progress that NAHRO has achieved pertaining to the International Research & Global Exchange efforts.

Irma Gorham, PHM Executive Director of the Housing Authority of the City of Paterson is the Chair of the National Standing Committee that includes active participation from the North Central Region Council.

On a meeting held on December 10, 2021, the different sub-committees have been established:

Research: This sub-committee is tasked with the development and investigation of selected topic(s) as described in the plan. The committee would determine appropriate methods of research and investigation using a variety of tools and engaging with stakeholders, key informants, and partners. The committee would also oversee research projects and then work with NAHRO to disseminate the results of that research to the membership through presentations and articles.

Communications: This sub-committee is tasked with the development of communication materials and marketing efforts that are consistent with the NAHRO brand but distinguishes the work of IRGE. This includes brochures, webpage design, exhibits, business cards, etc. This also includes ensuring an ongoing presence in The Journal and other NAHRO publications. Further the committee seeks to ensure

open lines of communication with other NAHRO standing committees.

Exchange: This sub-committee is tasked with augmenting the value of our existing MOUs by organizing study and travel exchanges. This committee also ensures that research topic(s) are incorporated into the focus areas and outcomes of study exchanges. The committee is also tasked with bringing back best practices and presenting the findings of their exchanges to the committee and the NAHRO membership. This committee would also oversee and manage travel protocol.

Partnership: This sub-committee is tasked with managing the existing MOUs and other partnerships that IRGE is engaged with. This also includes ensuring that MOUs are enforced. Further this committee is tasked with ensuring the NAHRO's NGO status is maximized including an ongoing presence and role with WUF, preparing the Quadrennial Report, and monitoring the actions of UN ECOSOC. This also includes establishing partnerships with universities and other institutions engaged in research, international issues, and social policy.

NCRC will be acting in three of those sub-committees: Research, Exchange and Communications.

I am very respectfully submitting this written report for consideration and approval of the Board of Directors.

Regional Service Officer Report

Cheryl Anne Farmer, RSO

Ernest J. Bohn Education Scholarship

NCRC NAHRO is pleased to announce the availability of its annual Ernest J. Bohn Education Scholarship. Two successful candidates are eligible for scholarships in the amount of \$1000 or \$500.00 respectively. . Scholarship funds may be used for any expenses directly related to post-secondary education (tuition, room/board, books, etc.). Application must be submitted to NCRC NAHRO by **April 1, 2022**. [Download Application](#)

Charles A. Thompson Memorial Award for Distinguished Service

The Charles A. Thompson Memorial Award for Distinguished Service recognizes an individual who has exhibited outstanding leadership qualities, involvement in his/her community and sincere interest in the citizens served. Application must be received by **April 1, 2022**. [Download Application](#)

Alvira B. Long Memorial Award

The Alvira B. Long Memorial Award honors a current commissioner, or one who has served within the past 12 months, who has demonstrated excellence in advocating for and developing the financial, political, and community support necessary to ensure the continuation and expansion of housing or community development programs. The award was established in the name of Alvira B. Long to provide a living acknowledgment of the outstanding contributions she made to the housing field. Each nominee must be an individual or associate member of NCRC and National NAHRO and have contributed in the areas of community leadership, advocacy, and public relations as well as to the activities of NAHRO. Application must be received by **April 1, 2022**. [Download Application](#)

Rising Star Award

The Rising Star Award recognizes an individual at the regional level, who has been involved at the NCRC or National NAHRO level for 4 years or less and has distinguished themselves as an emerging leader. Nominations must be submitted by someone other than themselves and award winners can only receive the award one time in their career. Application must be received by **April 1, 2022**. [Download Application](#)



2022 NCRC Conference Scholarship

The NCRC Board of Directors has approved a scholarship opportunity for one attendee for the upcoming 2022 Annual NCRC NAHRO Conference hosted by MN NAHRO which will take place in St. Paul, Minnesota on May 24-26, 2022

Scholarship will include full conference fees plus two nights free lodging at the Convention Hotel.

One Conference Scholarships will be awarded.

To qualify for a future Conference Scholarship:

- Your agency must administer a Public Housing, Section 8, Community Development, HOME or Homeless Program.
- Your agency must be current with their NCRC membership dues.
- You must not have attended a NCRC conference outside of your residing state for the past three years.

Scholarship will be randomly drawn from the pool of qualifying applicants. [Download Application](#)

How to Improve Your Housing Organization's Online Reputation [90-Day Action Plan]

Author: Steve Burlingame, [HAI Group](#) Regional Manager, Sales and Account Services

Online reputation management is more crucial than ever in maintaining a successful multifamily operation. In terms of attracting potential residents, building a positive online reputation can be a gamechanger because most consumers search online to find local businesses and services.

That hasn't always been the case, said Lia Smith, senior vice president of [ApartmentRatings](#) and [SatisFacts](#).

Until 2019, regular surveys conducted by SatisFacts—a provider of resident surveys focusing on multifamily retention and reputation management—showed that referrals from family and friends were the most crucial step in the renting process. But in 2019, online reviews took over. Then the pandemic took hold in 2020, pushing the online trend even further.

"Everyone's jumping behind their computers," Smith said, noting that the trend isn't exclusive to the multifamily industry. "You're getting behind the computer and trying to gather as much information as you possibly can, which is what's happening when someone is looking for an apartment."

The four-step apartment search cycle

Let's say you attract new renters online; in the future, they may leave a review about their experience in your community, potentially attracting (or scaring away) prospects. Here's the apartment search cycle breakdown:

- *Stimulus: The point at which renters know you exist*

In this phase, prospects are using generic search terms to find living arrangements (e.g., apartments in Louisville; two-bedroom apartments in Louisville; apartments in Louisville close to school).

"Very rarely is someone going to get behind their computer and type in a specific community's name," Smith said.

It's similar to how most of us search for a car, she explained. First, you search for the model you like;

then, you find a dealer.

- *Zero Moment of Truth (ZMOT): The initial research phase*

The options are now narrowed down based on generic search results. Smith said that prospects are looking at a specific community's website or apartment listing. They're looking at photos, checking out social media pages, and reading online ratings and reviews.

- *First Moment of Truth (FMOT): Validating research results*

At this point, prospects are now looking to visit specific communities virtually or in-person to verify whether the information they found online is accurate.

"We call this living up to the online hype," Smith said.

When the amenities prospects see during their online search align with what they see in person, "that's when people feel confident to say yes," she noted.

- *Second Moment of Truth (SMOT): Sharing the overall experience*

In the final stage, the prospect has become a resident. They now have regular interactions with staff and neighbors, for example.

They now have something to say about your community, whether positive or negative. When they post that experience online, the review directly impacts a prospect's ZMOT phase.

"It all works in a big cycle," Smith said.

Social proof and wisdom of the crowd are vital for reputation

Ratings and reviews serve as *social proof* during the ZMOT phase. *Social proof* is like a collective thumbs up or thumbs down.

"It acts like adult peer pressure," Smith said of *social proof*. "If enough people are talking about it, the *social proof* pushes someone in a certain direction."

Wisdom of the crowd isn't as broad as *social proof*;

it applies to the actual feedback (what's written in the review) and is more critical during the SMOT phase. A review with a 1-star rating that says a rental application was denied is subjective and doesn't apply to every prospect. The community's *social proof* might still be overwhelmingly positive.

Wisdom of the crowd doesn't always have the power to sway prospects unless multiple reviews portray the same sentiment.

"If there are resounding echoes, over and over again, that's how you know that it's not just about the star rating," Smith said. "The *wisdom of the crowd* is saying something else."

When considering a community's reputation, you have to look at *social proof* and *wisdom of the crowd* as bookends, Smith added.

Data says review star ratings and legitimacy matter most to rental prospects

Quantity doesn't mean quality when it comes to reviews. A [recent consumer study](#) from BrightLocal found star ratings are the most important factor for consumers when considering a business or service.

You might think a perfect 5-star rating is a driving force behind a positive reputation, but [the study](#) found that 88 percent of consumers don't need a 5-star rating to buy from or work with a company. A 5-star rating can come across as insincere to prospects, Smith said. A star rating between 4 and 4.5 "gets the most action in terms of generating leads," she added, citing the BrightLocal study and internal metrics from ApartmentRatings.

Not surprisingly, a star rating below 4 isn't ideal. The BrightLocal study found only 48 percent of consumers would consider a business with fewer than 4 stars—that's half of the potential customers searching online.

Behind star ratings, legitimacy is the most critical factor in a review. Prospects prefer honest, authentic reviews from someone with first-hand knowledge of the property.

"A bunch of dishonest 5-star reviews from employees and management can work against you," Smith said.

More credibility is given to recent reviews. Prospects want to know what residents are thinking about the current state of the community, Smith said.

The [BrightLocal study](#) found 86 percent of consumers say they only look at reviews from the past three

months, while 73 percent say reviews must be from the last month to influence their choice.

"In this business, there's so much change that happens," Smith said. "The person who wrote review six months ago might not live in the community. You want to capture new content and new reviews."

Review sentiment (a prospect's reading of *wisdom of the crowd*) is the fourth most important aspect of reviews, followed by the quantity, according to the BrightLocal study. Smith advises that communities and management companies focus on soliciting quality, first-hand reviews from current residents rather than getting as many reviews as possible.

Avoid incentivized and deceptive reviews

Incentivized and deceptive reviews can hurt a community's reputation and wallet. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) protects consumers from shady business practices. Deceptive and fake reviews can lead to consumer complaints and FTC enforcement against a business. If a business is using misleading and fake reviews, the FTC can levy fines, and the agency can place it under close monitoring for up to 20 years, Smith said.

• Incentivized reviews

Incentivized reviews are allowed by the FTC (e.g., residents rewarded with prizes, gift cards, rent credits, apartment upgrades, etc.), but the incentive must be disclosed inside the body of the review. For example, if a resident is asked to leave a review in return for \$50, they must disclose the compensation they received in the review. According to Smith, the disclosure of an incentive may cause prospects to write off the review as disingenuous.

"Especially if the review is positive," she said. "Because what are the chances someone is going to leave you a 1-star review if they think it's going to jeopardize their opportunity to get a gift card, or reward points, or rent credit?"

If a resident forgets to disclose the incentive, the responsibility falls back on the community or management company to act or risk FTC enforcement. A response must be posted to the review that clarifies that it was published as part of an incentive program.

"But once that's exposed, it's going to negate the credibility of that review," Smith said. "And that review could be 100 percent honest. We recommend no incentives—none whatsoever."

• Deceptive reviews

It's not illegal for a property's employee or contractor to leave a review, but they must disclose their relationship to the property, similar to incentivized reviews. If not, it's considered deceptive by regulators.

Another deceptive practice in the eyes of the FTC is review gating, Smith said. An example of review gating would be if you leave a 5-star review for a business and you're asked via a follow-up email to leave comments. The positive comment is automatically posted as an online review on a company site or rating page.

If you left a 1-star review, you would receive the same follow-up email asking for your thoughts. But instead of posting a negative comment as an online review, you're redirected to the company's support team to attempt to fix the issue.

"You're never given a chance to write a negative review," Smith said of review gating. "If negative comments don't immediately get turned into an online review as with the positive, that's review gating, and you want to run away from that. It's a big no-no in the eyes of the FTC."

Suppose a deceptive or improperly incentivized review is found on a company page. In that case, the responsibility falls on the company to remove the review or include a consumer alert that discloses the violation.

Adhere to the Consumer Review Fairness Act

The [Consumer Review Fairness Act](#), signed into law in 2016, bans gag clauses to prevent negative reviews.

"You cannot prevent someone from writing a negative review, and you can't retaliate against someone who writes a negative review," Smith said of the law.

Businesses are not allowed to include standardized provisions that threaten or penalize people for posting honest reviews.

"You can't fine or charge someone for posting a negative review," she added.

The law doesn't mean communities and property managers are powerless in dealing with negative reviews posted out of retaliation.

Smith said that retaliatory reviews are reportable. Most review sites provide options to report or flag retaliatory reviews, especially if the same review is posted on multiple websites.

Negative reviews make your positive reviews shine

"Negative reviews, I call them your best friend," Smith said.

Based on her experience, a limited number of negative reviews can increase credibility.

"Readers already know why they want to live in a community based on the photos, floor plans, and pricing," Smith explained. "They're reading the negative reviews for the why not."

The "why not" doesn't apply to every prospect; take a reviewer that complains about children making noise. If you have children, that might not deter you from moving in.

"You can have a couple of negative reviews, and if they're each talking about something different, it's not the *wisdom of the crowd* necessarily, so this won't impact someone else's decision," Smith said. "If all reviews are positive, it brings about skepticism. Negative reviews make your positive reviews shine."

Always respond to reviews (quickly!)

No matter the review's sentiment, prospects want to see [that the business cares](#): 69 percent of consumers are more likely to use a business that responds to their positive reviews, while 70 percent are more likely to use a business that responds to negative reviews.

"Management companies, teams on-site, they do care about their residents," Smith said. "A majority of us aren't just punching the clock—we don't want to sabotage that by not responding to a review."

If a review is in a different language, always translate the response to that language. If the review is anonymous but based on context, it's clear who the resident is, don't call the resident out.

"That's seen as retaliatory," Smith said. "You never know when it can open the door to a fair housing complaint."

Don't use "corporate speak" in response, such as lease language, she added. In terms of timing, Smith advised responding to positive reviews within 48 hours and negative reviews on the same day (within 24 hours).

• Negative review response tips

Show the steps being taken to address the issue(s). Speak to the person reading the review, not the actual review, who has already given their opinion. Based on the response, readers will see that the business

cares about customer service, Smith said. Use singular pronouns such as 'I' and 'me' when responding to negative reviews. This provides a personal touch, she added.

- *Positive review response tips*

Demonstrate gratitude for the positive feedback. Respond directly to the reviewer, not the reader (though the reader is still looking at the response). Use plural pronouns such as 'we' or 'us' when responding to positive reviews.

Keep review vendors on brand

Some businesses outsource review responses and monitoring to a third-party vendor. This can be beneficial to communities short on staff and time, but there are some things to watch.

"Make sure you have full oversight of your content," Smith said. "If a violation occurs, the onus is on your company and not on the review vendor."

Avoid vendors that use templates or bots to respond. Review responses should be custom and personalized. Ensure the provider is responding to reviews promptly, Smith said.

The 90-day reputation management plan

Smith said this simple 90-day plan will help around a community's reputation.

- *Day 1-30*


Search for the community online and see what people are saying. Get a sense of the social proof around the community. Is it positive or negative? Gather feedback from existing residents. Respond to any unanswered reviews.

- *Day 31-60*

Implement new strategies and processes based on the top concerns from residents (e.g., parking, landscaping, rent payment process, etc.). Outline goals and a plan to achieve those goals. Monitor progress and employee performance.

- *Day 61-90*

Now that you've made improvements based on resident suggestions, cultivate gratitude by asking those same residents to provide feedback. If their concerns are being addressed, the feedback will likely be positive. Look at pain points and what's going well, and plan to minimize the negative while amplifying the positive.



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SAVE THE DATE

**Joint NCRC & Minnesota NAHRO
2022 Spring Conference
May 24-26 in St Paul Minnesota**



Mark your calendars for our regional event featuring industry leaders and experts from the Upper Midwest. This conference is unique in that we will host affordable housing professionals from an eight-state region including Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Ohio, and Wisconsin.

Join us as our 2022 Spring Conference will connect industry professionals from across the housing sector to share best practices, lessons learned and provide expertise on the programs and services provided by housing authorities.

CALL FOR PRESENTERS

Do you have a great project to share?

Do you have a lesson learned or best practice?

Do you have an expert who will share their insights?

If you answered yes to any of the above or have another idea for a great session, we want to hear from you! Minnesota NAHRO seeks proposals for our Spring 2022 conference which will be held May 24-26 in St Paul.

Please submit your session proposal no later than January 25, 2022 by 5pm via the online form available by using the link below:

<https://mnnahro.org/event/minnesota-ncrc-nahro-spring-conference/>

If you have questions or need additional information, please email info@mnnahro.org. Thank you for supporting Minnesota NAHRO as we plan for a successful event.

NCRC Regional & Minnesota NAHRO Spring Conference Schedule (TENTATIVE)

MONDAY, May 23, 2022

1:00 pm	Minnesota NAHRO Professional Development Committee Meeting	St Paul Intercontinental, Lower Level
3:00 pm	Minnesota NAHRO Board of Directors Meeting	St Paul Intercontinental, Lower Level
6:00 pm	NAHRO Leaders Event hosted by NCRC & MN BOD	Downtown St Paul

TUESDAY, May 24, 2022

8:30 am	Registration Open until 4:30 pm	
9:00 am	NCRC Board of Directors Meeting (adjourns by 11:30am)	
12:00 pm	Welcome Lunch & Conference Kick Off	All conference sessions & events
1:30 pm	Concurrent Sessions	Located on the Lower Level of
3:00 pm	Break	St Paul Intercontinental
3:15 pm	Concurrent Sessions	Unless otherwise noted
4:45 pm	Product & Service Exhibition Reception	
6:30 pm	Dinner on your own in Downtown St Paul	
8:00 pm	Purple Paisley Dance Party & Scholarship Event - \$25 donation	

WEDNESDAY, May 25, 2022

8:00 am	Registration Open until 4:00 pm	
8:30 am	Concurrent Sessions	
10:00 am	Break	
10:15 am	Concurrent Sessions	All conference sessions & events
12:00 pm	Lunch & 2022 NCRC Annual Meeting \	Located on the Lower Level of
1:30 pm	Concurrent Sessions	St Paul Intercontinental
3:00 pm	Break	Unless otherwise noted
3:15 pm	Concurrent Sessions	
4:45 pm	Product & Services Exhibition Reception	
6:30 pm	Banquet, Awards & Recognition Ceremony	

THURSDAY, May 26, 2022

8:00 am	Registration Open until 10:00 am	All conference sessions & events
8:30 am	Continental Breakfast	Located on the Lower Level of
9:00 am	Concurrent Sessions	St Paul Intercontinental
10:30 am	Closing Plenary	Unless otherwise noted
11:30 am	Spring 2022 Conference Adjourns	



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Free Member Benefit for NCRC Members

Don't forget that you can advertise any job openings on the NCRC Website. Please submit your posting in word format to rso@ncrcnahro.org

Utilize our Member Forums

Have you visited our website, logged in and hopped onto one of our member discussion forums? This is a great way for you to network with colleagues from our 8 states. We currently have the following:

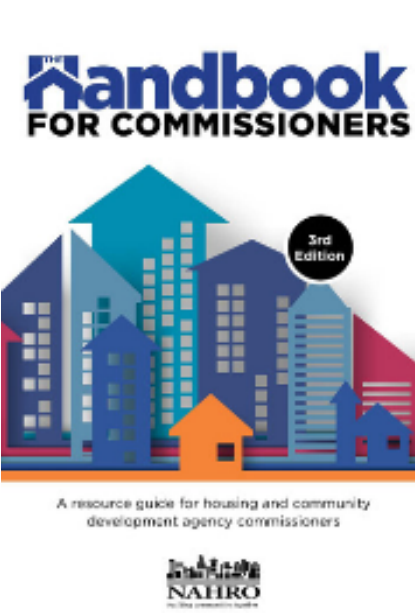
[General Forum](#)

[Small Agency Forum](#)

NAHRO Professional Development Training Calendar

View and register for all NAHRO courses [HERE](#).

- Be sure to get your NCRC Discount and apply the promo code **NCRC2020** to all your national training registrations.



NEW EDITION!

NAHRO's Handbook for Commissioners

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STATE CHAPTER REPORTS

ILLINOIS CHAPTER

Jackie L. Newman, President



2021 In Review

- Members of the ILNAHRO Board are engaged on a State, Regional and National level. Serving in leadership and on NCRC and NAHRO sub-committees as well as NAHRO's Board of Governors.
- ILNAHRO continues to inform, update and engage its membership through monthly newsletters. Discussions on social justice, criminal history legislation, overall legislative issues (including Build Back Better), eviction moratorium and Covid-19 health/well-being matters are highlighted.
- ILNAHRO was pleased to provide a letter of support for the nomination of Adrienne Todman to serve as Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and pleased to witness Ms. Todman being sworn in as the twelfth Deputy Secretary of HUD and the first black woman to serve as Deputy Secretary of HUD.
- ILNAHRO participated in the annual "What Home Means to Me" Poster Contest with amazing participation from across the State of Illinois. HUD Director, William O. Dawson, Directors Eleny Ladas and

Towanda Macon served as Poster Contest Judges for ILNAHRO.

- ILNAHRO continues to partner with NCRC & NAHRO to ensure our voices are heard by elected officials in Washington, D.C. through the Advocacy Campaign with letters to Congress.
- ILNAHRO hosted its (virtual) Statewide Annual Conference on December 2, 2021 – Moving Forward Together in 2022. Director Will Dawson served as keynote Plenary speaker. Topics included Section 3: Economic Opportunities; Voucher Programs, including Special Purpose Vouchers; RAD-Repositioning and a Case Study of a Successful RAD Project. The conference and workshop sessions are available on the website www.ilnahro.org.

Looking ahead in 2022

- ILNAHRO will host quarterly up-to-date industry lead round-table discussions.
- Additionally, there will be periodic Legislative Updates with Regional and National Congressional Relations Officials.
- ILNAHRO will continue to host COVID-19; Creating and maintaining safe work environments; and Diversity & Inclusion, Zoom sessions.

Overall, it has been a very busy year around the State of Illinois but we are extremely excited about what has been accomplished in 2021 in the midst of the continuation of this unprecedented environment of COVID-19, social and political unrest. We look towards 2022 optimistically.

Best Wishes for a Prosperous 2022!



INDIANA CHAPTER

Michelle Reynolds, President



Season's Greeting! We made it through 2021!

Indiana NAHRO best practice calls continue to be held monthly with many housing authorities attending as well as the field

office participating. These calls will most likely revert back to COVID-19 related challenges but still serve as general resource sharing.

Indiana NAHRO worked to ensure our voices were heard by our elected officials in Washington, D.C. through the Advocacy Campaign with letters to Congress.

HUD's CPD Office launched a Peer Cohorts, a new model of technical assistance. A limited number of communities will be invited to participate in this innovative peer technical assistance program, and HUD identified Lafayette to participate in the Economic Development cohort, based on your program design and nomination

by the CPD INDIANAPOLIS Field Office. These e-conferences and clinics are aimed at advancing CARES Act programs, CPD is launching curated peer groups of similarly situated communities across the United States. The groups, or cohorts, will convene intermittently for short, collaborative -to-peer exchange and networking through facilitated group learning and workshops that promote the sharing and adoption of model practices and program designs.

Indiana was excited to participate with NAHRO's State Basket Auction benefiting its Scholarship program. The Indiana Hoosier Pride basket included St. Elmo Steak House Cocktail Sauce, Bloomington Chocolate Company Truffles 4 pc., DeBrand Chocolate

Race Car, Dudley's Milk Chocolate Toffee, South Bend Choc. Co. LaSalle Mints, Chef Jeff S'mores Balls, Jasper Caramel & Cheddar Popcorn, Tell City Pretzels, Newfangled Confections Frittle, Abbott's Candies Assorted Creams, Dillman Farm Apple Butter, Schakolad 3-pc. Indiana-Shaped Chocolates, The Turtle Lady Chocolate Turtle, Soup of Success Hearty Potato Soup Mix and Simply Jill's Sugared Pecans. What a fun way to support these scholarship programs.

A Challenging 2022 Ahead

- Indiana NAHRO did not have an in-person Spring conference again this year but are hopeful to try at a hybrid conference for the first time.



IOWA CHAPTER
Marty Ryan, President

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year to all of my colleagues. Looking forward to new beginnings in 2022 starting with our board retreat.

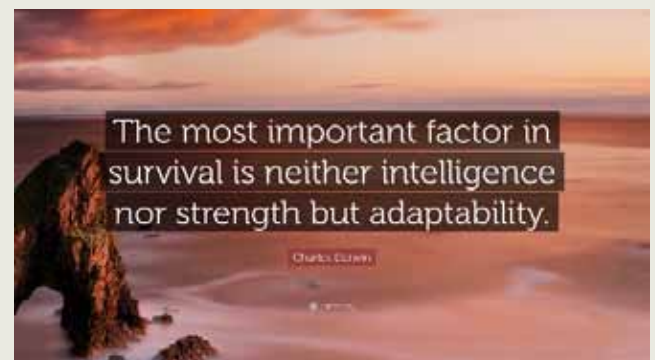
Iowa NAHRO has already secured our 2022 Annual Conference dates for September 14th-15th at the West Des Moines Marriott. Our theme is "Leading with Resilience". With our almost 90 attendees for our 2021 conference, it is evident that my Iowa colleagues are ready to get back to "normal". Definition of normal..... "conforming to a standard; usual, typical, or expected".

With many new Executive Directors in Iowa over the past couple of years, we are looking to do an Executive Director Retreat in early Spring 22'. We are researching curriculum that engages both new and "seasoned" ED's.

For years, Executive Directors in Iowa have had the opportunity to meet in person on the 3rd Friday in West Des Moines for the months of January, March, May, July, September & November and now via Zoom the 3rd Thursday for the months of February, April, June, August, October & December. Both of these opportunities provide a safe zone for no judgement and space to ask the simplest of questions and to seek best practices' I applaud all of our ED's for their willingness to share

ideas and policies within our network.

As Iowa NAHRO President, I have introduced an aspect to our board meeting agenda "Board Professional Development". My vision is to provide a 15-20 minute session to board members during our meetings as a thank you for their service on the board. I ask that if anyone has any session ideas, to please send them to me at albiahousing@iowatelecom.net.





MINNESOTA CHAPTER
Dara Lee, President

We are looking forward to welcoming all of you to St. Paul, Minnesota, May 24-26, 2022, for the NCRC Regional & Minnesota NAHRO Spring Conference! Our

professional development committee is hard at work lining up great trainings and events to help us to re-emerge, reinvigorate, and refocus on helping everyone have a place to call home. The warm sun of late spring in Minnesota is exactly what I am craving as it is -20 degrees outside my window today!

This will be the first Minnesota NAHRO conference in many, many, many years without the involvement and fund-raising finesse of our beloved Carol Schultz who passed away in November. The Minnesota NAHRO Scholarship was named

in her honor last year when she retired after a multi-decade housing career. All of us will be missing her deeply. She was one of the first people who welcomed me to the great houser community at a Minnesota NAHRO conference in 2005. Please join us to raise a glass in her honor at the scholarship event as we make new friends, welcome new housers, and party like it's 1999!

In the meantime, Minnesota NAHRO members are hard at work continuing their federal advocacy efforts and preparing for the Minnesota legislative session that begins at the end of January. We continue to work to keep housing at the forefront of our elected leaders' priorities.

The newly constituted Minnesota NAHRO board of directors met in December and delved into ways the organization will need to evolve to meet the needs of its membership and those we serve in this continuing pandemic/endemic environment. We are fortunate to have the leadership of Shannon Guernsey, our Executive Director, and look forward to hearing the great things the other regional Chapters are undertaking.



MICHIGAN CHAPTER, Sharon Maki, President

Hello NCRC and thank you MI-NAHRO for allowing me to represent Michigan at the State, Regional and National level. I welcome Gary Valentine as MI-NAHRO's Senior Vice President. His willingness to take on the role was exceptionally exciting for me and MI-NAHRO as he was the first Commissioner elected to the role. I would also like to thank all those who have volunteered to serve as Vice Presidents and Committee Chairs on the MI-NAHRO board. In addition, I would like to thank Lorri Brookman for serving as Michigan's NCRC four-year at large member. I look forward to working with this wonderful group of people over the next two years.

Things remained challenging last year with the ongoing effects of Covid. However, we were able to hold two successful conferences. The Spring Conference was held online. We had presenters from around the State presenting on such topics as the HCV two-year tool, emergency management, and financial statements. While it was a challenge to do a presentation without an audience, all of our presenters received great reviews from those that attended. The fall conference was our first in person meeting since the pandemic began in March 2020. The conference was held at Crystal Mountain Resort and was rather well attended. We had great speakers throughout the conference. We were also happy to have

candidates for NAHRO President and Vice President join us both in person and virtually. A special shout out needs go to Cheryl Anne Farmer, our State Service Officer, not only putting the conference together but also taking on challenges during the conference without missing a step.

Our treasurer, Shanda Johnston has been working diligently on our 501(c)3 designation. Thank you to NCRC and the Board of Governors for approving our bi-law change.

I am looking forward to my next two years as MI-NAHRO President. I have set several goals for myself and our board members. My primary goal is to continue to use the best of what we learned while working in the challenging Covid environment. We were forced to think of new ways to reach our family, friends, co-worker and all others. I would like to continue utilizing these new ways of doing business to reach out to those who have felt disconnected over the years. We can surely engage small agencies, especially those in the Upper Peninsula through video conferences, trainings and meetings.

Additional goals include quarterly zoom meetings for all MI-NAHRO members to learn about legislative changes throughout HUD. I will encourage Regional VPs to hold in person meetings quarterly within their region, and ask all other VPs to set a goal for themselves.

MI-NAHRO has two conferences scheduled in 2022. The spring conference will be held on April 20-22 at the Kensington Hotel in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The fall conference will be held September 7-9 at the Crystal Mountain Resort in Thomasville Michigan. Gary Valentine has been working hard on the agenda for the spring conference since his appointment as First Vice. I am sure we will have a very dynamic and informative conference. I encourage all NCRC

members to join us for the conferences. And remember northern Illinois, Ohio and Indiana members, Ann Arbor is just a short drive from you!



NEBRASKA CHAPTER

Anthony Nussbaum, President

NE-NAHRO is planned to resume in-person meetings beginning in February 2022. Our next scheduled Board Meeting will take place on February 11,

2022. The South Sioux City Housing Agency has graciously accepted to host our NE-NAHRO 2022 Fall Conference scheduled for September 20th-22nd, 2022. Our conference committee is diligently planning the conference as we will be celebrating our 45th anniversary. In addition to our regular meetings and conferences, NE-NAHRO hosts a variety of in-person and webinar trainings through the year including commissioner fundamentals and ethics, rent calculations, fair housing, etc.

The state chapter began its 2022 membership drive. We continue to make a bolstered effort to increase our membership. Being Nebraska has over 100 housing agencies and many executive personnel staffing changes, we plan to begin providing "Welcome Packets" as agencies hire new Executive Directors to provide them support and engage them with our chapter. Approximately 102 housing agencies are currently in our membership!

The state chapter has implemented a scholarship program for graduating seniors and non-traditional students who are preparing to enter college or secondary education as a part-time (less than 12 credit hours) or full-time (12 credit hours or more) student. Students must reside

Finally, I would like to congratulate NCRC's own George Guy for his new position as NAHRO First Vice President. NCRC is thrilled to have you represent us.

at a Nebraska NAHRO member housing agency to be eligible.

The scholarship fund will be administered by the Nebraska NAHRO scholarship committee and will offer a \$1,000.00 (for full-time student) or \$500.00 (for part-time student) scholarship to be paid for the Fall semester. The student will need to reapply each year for a continuation of the scholarship. The funds will go directly to the school that the student will be attending. The school will deposit the funds in the student's account. The funds may only be used to pay for tuition, books, and activities directly related to the student's education.

The second year of the two-year session has started for the Nebraska Legislature. Last year, NE-NAHRO supported LB 412 to expand property tax exemptions to property owned in partnership with PHAs. The Revenue Committee killed that bill. After several conversations with Senator Bostar's office about introducing the bill again, it was determined that the best strategy would be to wait and introduce it next year to a new Revenue Committee.

A priority for the Legislature this year will be to allocate \$1 Billion in new federal funding. Through the first four days of bill introductions, one bill (LB 940) has been introduced to allocate \$200 million of those funds to housing programs - \$50 million to Rural Workforce Housing, \$50 million to Urban Workforce Housing, \$50 million to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, and \$50 million to NIFA programs. More news to come on that front.



OHIO CHAPTER

Ben Jones, President



OHAC continues its efforts to support the mission of fostering and promoting affordable housing in the State of Ohio through: Education and training

of its membership and the public; Exchange of information and concerns; Mutual support; and Collaborative efforts.

The OHAC Conference for Fall 2021 was held in-person on November 8-10, 2021, at the Renaissance Westerville Hotel. It was so nice to see our colleagues in person after 2-years of only virtual meetings and conferences. The agenda included sessions on Finance Nuts & Bolts with Jason Casterline of BDO, NSPIRE with Mike Gnatt of The Inspection Group, Section 3 with Keith Swiney of Motivation Inc., Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing with Dennis Morgan, Procurement with Mike Gifford, Legislative Update with PHADA representatives, HCV Round Table Discussions with Jonathan Zimmerman (virtually), PIC Training from HUD staff (virtually), and Political Subdivision Puzzles (Navigating Ohio Revised and Administrative Codes) with Meghan Poth of Wilson, Shannon & Snow,

and even a software update session for PHA-Web agencies. In addition to great training there was a notable vendor and sponsor presence.

During the conference, \$1,200 was raised for the OHAC "William F. Gandert" Scholarship fund.

Six scholarships of \$1,000 a piece, will be disbursed during our in-person OHAC Spring Conference, May 4 – 6 at the

Sheraton Suites in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio.

The 2021 – 2023 OHAC Officers officially took over their duties during the OHAC Fall Conference. The newly elected officers are as follows; Ben Jones (Butler MHA), President; Judith Carlin (Lorain MHA), Vice President; Anna Schnippel (Allen MHA), Treasurer; Summer Jenkins (Belmont MHA), Secretary.

Sign Up for a Training Today and get a Discount!

Are you or your staff interested in attending a training provided by one of our team of National trainers? What better time than now to invest in yourself and get that certification that you have been putting off.

Please Note: Members will receive a discount of \$10 on NAHRO Distance Learning opportunities and NCRC NAHRO will also receive a revenue share for each participant from our region.

How do you get the discount? When registering, please use promo code **NCRC2020** prior to check-out and your discount will automatically be applied. **It is that simple!**

IMPORTANT NOTE: If the coupon code is NOT greyed out and a discount is NOT shown, the coupon code has NOT been applied. NAHRO will NOT be able to retroactively apply the coupon code. *Not greyed out or not showing a discount? Call 202-580-7211 and register by phone. Please let us know your coupon code as it cannot and will not be applied retroactively.*

The following Virtual Classrooms are coming up between February & March:

- February 14-18: [Rent Calculation Essentials for HCV and PH Staff Virtual Classroom](#)
- February 14-18: [Housing Quality Standards \(HQS\) Virtual Classroom](#)
- February 28 - March 4: [Uniform Physical Condition Standards \(UPCS\) Virtual Classroom](#)
- March 1-4: [Section 3 and Labor Standards: Job Opportunities for Low-Income Persons Virtual Classroom](#)
- March 8-11: [Procurement and Contract Management Virtual Classroom](#)
- March 14-18: [Family Self-Sufficiency Virtual Classroom](#)
- March 15-24: [Public Housing Manager \(PHM\) Virtual Classroom](#)

Also, NCRC NAHRO and National want to better understand the training needs here in our region. Please take a minute to fill out this survey to let us know what you and your staff may be looking for. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NCRCNAHRO>.

We hope you take advantage of this educational opportunity!

Thank you for supporting NCRC NAHRO.



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ADVERTISING RATE SHEET

North Central Regional Council of NAHRO (NCRC NAHRO) is a professional membership association of housing and community development agencies and individuals. Total circulation of the newsletter averages approximately 4,000. All editions will be sent by e-mail link to the entire membership and posted on the website. NCRC NAHRO member agencies administer nearly all of the public housing and Section 8 existing housing in *an eight state region*, including Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Ohio and Wisconsin. In addition, over 800 of our member agencies operate a wide variety of other federal, state and locally funded programs for housing and community development.

The cost of advertising in the newsletter is as follows:

<u>Finished Size of Ad (width x length)</u>	<u>Cost per issue</u>
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Quarter Page 3.5" X 5"	\$235
Medium/Small ad 3.5" X 3.5"	\$204
Business Card 3.5" X 2.5"	\$175

The NCRC NAHRO Newsletter is published four times a year. Advertisements will be accepted on a first come, first serve basis. Limited space allotted.

Submission deadlines are January 15th, April 15th, August 15th and November 1st.

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