

PAHRA PRESENTS 2017 BELLAMY AND BEST PRACTICES AWARDS

Ten excellent entries were submitted to participate in our Best Practices Showcase held on September 19, 2017 during the PAHRA Annual Conference. The Showcase highlights the achievements and extraordinary efforts of our PAHRA member agencies. It also demonstrates the diversity of activities involved in providing affordable housing, improving lives and revitalizing communities throughout Pennsylvania.

Each year, PAHRA recognizes members who have implemented innovative ideas, explored successful entrepreneurial activities, exhibited excellence in design, shown progressive program operations, provided outstanding customer service or supportive services in a unique way, or created a lasting impact on their communities.

The Bellamy Award is PAHRA's highest level recognition of achievement. PAHRA President Senghor Manns was pleased to present the **Bellamy Award for a Housing Related Project or Program** to the **Housing Authority of Northumberland County, Ed Christiano, Executive Director**, for the **Phoenix Court Garden Apartments**.

Like the proverbial phoenix rising from the ashes, this affordable senior housing development, complete with supportive services, was constructed on a site where fire destroyed a number of blighted properties, and is yet another successful example of Northumberland County's proactive strategy to eliminate blighted properties in their communities.

The 2017 PAHRA **Bellamy Award for Redevelopment or Community Development Programs** was presented to **Chester City Housing Authority, Steve Fischer, Executive Director**, for their **Bennett Community Farm**.

This unique and innovative project revolves around a small, urban, organic farm located on vacant land within a public housing development, which also incorporates education on eating healthy, agricultural training and actually provides a revenue stream from the sale of their organic produce and pesticide-free flowers to local retailers.

Earning the **Best Practices Award for Housing** was **Harrisburg Housing Authority, Senghor Manns, President and CEO**, for **Jackson Tower**.

Jackson Tower involves the comprehensive renovation and rehabilitation of a building vacant since 2003, providing ADA accessible, energy efficient, modern living space for 159 low-income senior households utilizing innovative funding solutions and public/private partnerships, as well as intergovernmental and multi-agency involvement.

Allegheny County Housing Authority, Frank Aggazio, Executive Director earned the **Best Practices Award for Redevelopment or Community Development Programs** for their **Section 3 Job Training Program**

A successful job recruitment fair for Section 3 workers at the authority's Orchard Park development resulted in 36 Section 3 workers becoming employed on this project. These employees were subsequently provided with on-site, cross-training in various construction trades. Many of the Section 3 hires are now employed full-time, putting to use the valuable and marketable skills learned through the program.

PAHRA also recognized the following Best Practices participants who received Certificates of Merit for their achievements. In alphabetical order, they are:

1) Allegheny County Housing Authority – 412 Food Rescue – Frank Aggazio, Executive Director, submitted in cooperation with Ms. Erin Hart, Director of American HealthCare Group and a member of the 412 Food Rescue Board of Directors

412 Food Rescue utilizes a wide network of partners collaborating to provide fresh, healthy, viable food that is about to go to waste from distributors to the most vulnerable populations in the 412 area code, including many residents of Allegheny County Housing Authority developments.

2) Mercer County Housing Authority – Social Media Outreach Program - Nannette Livadas, Executive Director

The agency implemented a two-pronged approach using social media to counteract negative public perception of the Housing Authority's programs and services, and create a positive image of the agency by highlighting various activities and services that are provided, and how they impact the community and its residents in a good way.

3) Philadelphia Housing Authority – Kelvin Jeremiah, Executive Director

Two excellent entries were received from this agency:

- **Norris After-School Program** is a resident-owned business that provides a variety of year-round services to students – *and their parents* – who are “at-risk”, living in North Central Philly where the poverty rate is double and the unemployment rate is triple the city's average.
- **Queen Lane Apartments** involved the demolition of an aging and obsolete high-rise and construction of energy efficient townhomes, while maintaining the integrity and incorporating – *in fact, honoring* – a former Potter's Field into the design of the development.

4) Redevelopment Authority of the City of Pittston – Neighborhood Housing Initiative - Joe Chacke, Executive Director

A partnership of the City and the Redevelopment Authority created Pennsylvania's first multi-municipal Land Bank leading to a multi-facet Neighborhood Housing Initiative consisting of revitalization, rehabilitation, blight remediation and construction to improve communities.

5) Union County Housing and Redevelopment Authorities – Justice Bridge Housing Program - Bruce Quigley, Executive Director

In recognition of their Justice Bridge Housing Program, which provides non-violent offenders who are at high-risk of re-incarceration with monthly rental subsidies and supportive services through a cross-collaboration system between housing, criminal justice and human services systems.