

## PAHRA PRESENTS ANNUAL BELLAMY & BEST PRACTICES AWARDS FOR 2018

This year PAHRA received 14 excellent entries to participate in our Best Practices Showcase. 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.

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.

It is difficult to judge these entries, as they all are outstanding projects or programs. In fact, this year the scoring was extremely tight with *only three tenths of a point separating several of our winners!* Feel free to contact any of the participating agencies if you are interested in obtaining more information or replicating one of these award-winning activities within your own organization.

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The Bellamy Award is PAHRA's highest recognition of achievement. PAHRA was pleased to present the **Bellamy Award for a Housing Related Project or Program** to the **Clarion County Housing Authority, Penny Campbell, Executive Director**, for the **Northwest 9 Program**.

Northwest 9 was a unique voucher-like rental subsidy program for special populations in 9 rural northwestern counties. The program served those who for some reason or other were ineligible for federal housing subsidies. The program was highly successful and also included a self-sufficiency component.

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The **Bellamy Award for Redevelopment or Community Development Programs** was awarded to the **Housing Authority of the County of Chester, Dale Gravett, Executive Director**, for the **Whitehall Apartments**.

This project involved renovation of and an addition to the historic Whitehall Inn using energy efficient Passive House design to provide 48 permanent supportive housing apartments for veterans in need.

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Earning the **Best Practices Award for Housing** was the **Housing Authority of the City of Erie, Mike Fraley, Executive Director**, for their **Lethality Assessment Program**.

This program literally saves lives – by assessing risk factors and imminent danger to victims of domestic violence and connecting them immediately to protective services.

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The 2018 **Best Practices Award for Redevelopment or Community Development Programs** was presented to the **Redevelopment Authority of the County of Fayette, Andrew French, Executive Director**, for the **Snowden Square Park project**.

This project consisted of comprehensive redevelopment of a neighborhood including demo of blighted structures, creation of a new “town square”, green space, and development of a new 24-unit affordable housing complex.

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Each of the agencies who submitted entries and participated in our 2018 Best Practices Showcase was recognized with a **Certificate of Merit** for their accomplishments. In alphabetical order, they are:

1) **Allegheny County Housing Authority, Frank Aggazio, Executive Director** – ACHA submitted three excellent entries:

- **Cash for Kids Movie Nights** – family-oriented activities featuring inspirational movies and snacks that promote parenting skills and encourage a sense of community
- **The Fraud Squad** – designed to uncover fraud & recover funds through detection and investigation, the Fraud Squad recouped over \$100,000 in 2017 alone
- **Stories Alive!** – interactive program to encourage collaboration, imagination, and mentoring between young children and teens as they develop reading skills and creativity.

2) **Housing Authority of the County of Beaver, Brian Yaworsky, Executive Director** – **Crestview Village Exterior Renovations** – a complete cosmetic overhaul of a 1950's era, 24-building, 103-unit development to increase marketability, energy efficiency, and compliment the surrounding neighborhood.

3) **Chester City Housing Authority, Steve Fischer, Executive Director** – **Resident Training Academy** – a program focused on addressing the emotional, educational and behavioral challenges that often prevent housing residents from obtaining employment.

4) **Meadville Housing Authority, Bill Thomas, Executive Director** – **STEM Connection Program** – an after-school connection program to address the achievement gap that exists for rural, low-income children in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM).

5) **Philadelphia Housing Authority, Kelvin Jeremiah, Executive Director** – PHA submitted two projects that reflect their ongoing transformation of Philadelphia neighborhoods:

- **Blumberg Phase 1** – Initial phase of the housing authority's Transformation Plan for comprehensive revitalization of the Sharswood neighborhood in North Philly. Acquisition of 1300 properties covering one-quarter square mile, demolition of existing units and development of affordable townhomes.
- **Strawberry Mansion** – Development of 55 affordable housing units replacing blighted areas in the historic Strawberry Mansion neighborhood near Center City, Philadelphia.

6) **Westmoreland County Housing Authority, Mike Washowich, Executive Director** – The WCHA team also operates two great programs:

- **Building Your Financial House** – a program designed to help HUD-assisted families increase their earned income and reduce dependency on welfare assistance and rental subsidies
- **Nothing Old About this New Senior Initiative** – a three-pronged initiative to help senior residents lead healthier, happier and longer lives through nutrition, exercise and social stimulation

**Congratulations** to our Showcase participants and to all of our member agencies who are putting forth their best efforts each and every day to provide award winning services!