

SERCulator

October 2026

Uncertainty **TO** Stability

Official publication of
SERC-NAHRO
Southeastern Regional Council



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Governors Event
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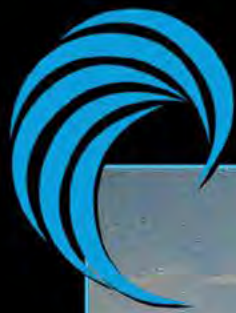


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On the Cover

Each year, young artists from across the SERC-NAHRO region submit artwork for the What Home Means to Me Poster Contest. Join us in celebrating these young artists and their artwork, a full recap of this year's competition is included on pages 4 and 5.

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* IFC = Inside Front Cover

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The SERCulator is the official quarterly publication of the Southeastern Regional Council of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (SERC-NAHRO).

Comments, suggestions, articles, features and photographs are solicited in interest of the members of SERC-NAHRO. Although all submissions are subject to approval and editing, every effort will be made to publish submissions based on available space. Photos cannot be returned.

Send Submissions Via:
SERCulator.com | 800.506.8064



SERCulator



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Sign up Staff to receive each issue – text or email – link here: SERCulator.com/sign-up

President's Message

Michael Wong | SERC-NAHRO President



Dear SERC-NAHRO Members, Supporters, and Friends,

Every family deserves the opportunity to live in a safe, stable, and affordable home. Yet for too many Americans, the cost of housing has become a growing burden—forcing families to make difficult choices between rent, groceries, childcare, healthcare, and other basic needs.

Addressing the housing affordability crisis will require all of us to work together. Government at every level, the private sector, nonprofit organizations, community leaders, and citizens each have an important role to play. We must focus on practical solutions that increase the supply of affordable homes, support responsible homeownership, expand opportunities for

working families, and help ensure that no community is left behind.

There will be differences about how we achieve these goals, but our shared responsibility is greater than our disagreements. We should approach this challenge with a spirit of cooperation, listen to communities, and build partnerships that deliver meaningful results.

Housing affordability is not simply an economic issue—it is about opportunity, dignity, and the strength of our communities. When families can afford to live where they work, children have greater stability, employers can attract and retain workers, and communities become stronger.

Housing advocacy month has ended, yet we need to put solutions ahead of division and make housing affordability a shared priority.

By working together, we can build a future where every American has a fair opportunity to find a home they can afford and a community, they are proud to call home.

Michael Wong,
SERC-NAHRO President

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2026 SERC-NAHRO Poster Contest Winners

Since 2008, the NAHRO What Home Means to Me Poster Contest has recognized the amazing art of children who live in affordable housing communities across the country.

Each piece of art visually shares the child's thoughts on what their home means to them. Each state association within the

SERC-NAHRO region has the opportunity to provide submissions from its member agencies. A state contest is held in each participating state, winners are selected, and then forwarded onto SERC-NAHRO for regional consideration. At the SERC-NAHRO Annual Conference, NAHRO Fellows review all submissions and select a first,

second, and third place for each age category to be forwarded on for consideration in the national contest. Included below are the 2026 winners selected at the SERC-NAHRO Annual Conference in Orlando.

Elementary School Winners

1st Place



Rylan Bowman

Madisonville, KY (National Winner)

2nd Place



Tahir Giles

Winder, GA

3rd Place



Heaven Gordon

Spartanburg, SC

Middle School Winners

1st Place



Nakayle Giles

Winder, GA

2nd Place



Madison Carson

Greensboro, NC

3rd Place

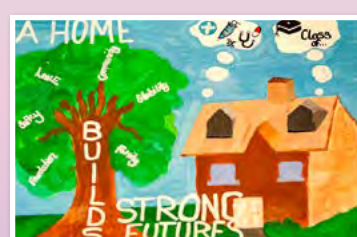


Teanna McFadden

Sumter, SC

High School Winners

1st Place



Kloe Moreland

Winder, GA

2nd Place



Marie Davidson

Bessemer, AL

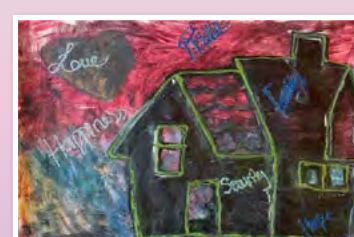
3rd Place



Charlina Sclyers

Haysi, VA

3rd Place



T'Raya Dove

Kinston, NC

Thank You To All "What Home Means To Me" Participants!

2026 WHAT HOME MEANS TO ME POSTER CONTEST WINNERS



Gracelynn Jennings
Lawrenceburg, TN
Elementary



Ryan Stevens
Fairmont, WV
Elementary



Kingston Spinks
Greensboro, NC
Elementary



Andrew Williams
Prichard, HA
Elementary



Ashley D.
Cumberland, TN
Elementary



Jayden Gore
Newport News, VA
Middle School



Iyonni Nixon
Bessemer, AL
Middle School



Mylee Jimenez
Maysville, KY
Middle School



Emmilynn Lemay
Lawrenceburg, TN
Middle School



Nathalia Albino-Majill
Clarksburg, WV
High School



Hunter Robertson
Lawrenceburg, TN
High School



Triton Townsel
Wheeling, WV
Middle School



Jayanti Page
Darlington, SC
High School



T'Raya Dove
Kinston, NC
High School



Laryn Boyd
Maysville, KY
High School

STATE REPRESENTATIVES

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FL	Becky-Sue Mercer	SC	Shaunté Evans
GA	Douglas Freeman	TN	Mark Reid
KY	Dione Kinmon	VA	Keith Viers
MS	Chris McKissick	WV	Bonnie Hawley

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Third PP	Mark Taylor	WV

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	Tom Wachs (Chair)	AL
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MEMBER SERVICES

Kerry Smith (Chair) GA

SCHOLARSHIP

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VP COMMISSIONERS' PORTFOLIO - Johnny Johnson

COMMISSIONERS

Harry Howe (Chair) VA

What's NEW In Your STATE?

Articles • Awards • Announcements • New/Retiring Staff • Partnerships • Resident Services

Submit NEWS for your state's BITS & PIECES section of the next issue of SERCulator

How to Submit:

Visit SERCulator.com and click the link: "Submit STATE Bits & Pieces News".

There, you can upload photos, documents and text for your State's Bits & Pieces News.

**January Issue
Materials Deadline:**

**NOV
20
2026**

For Full Details, Visit
SERCulator.com



Join Us for The 2026 SERC-NAHRO Fall Workshop

875 Beach Blvd., Biloxi MS 39530 | Sun-Tues, Nov. 8-10, 2026



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2026 SERC-NAHRO Fall Workshop!

serc-nahro.org/2026-fall-workshop/

Who:

Bringing together housing professionals, industry leaders, and community partners from across the states for an engaging and impactful event focused on learning, collaboration, and connection.

When:

Sunday - Tuesday, November 8-10, 2026

Where:

Beau Rivage Resort & Casino
875 Beach Blvd. • Biloxi MS 39530

Additional information, including hotel booking instructions, registration fees, and the preliminary schedule—will be available on the SERC website and in the full registration packet.



Thank you for your dedication to serving our communities — we hope to see you in BILOXI!

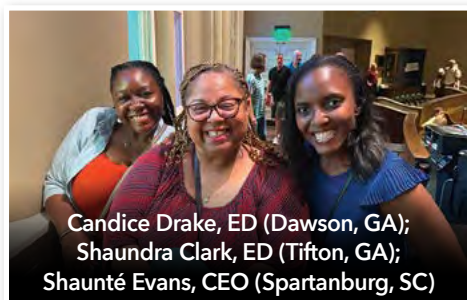
SERC-NAHRO Board of Governors Event

Prior to the NAHRO Summer Symposium in Nashville, Tennessee, SERC Hosted the NAHRO Board of Governors and the SERC Executive Committee at the Historic Ryman Auditorium.

The group attended Springer Mountain Farms Bluegrass Nights. The Infamous Stringdusters headlined the evening with The Last Revel opening the show.



Prior to the concert attendees were treated to live bluegrass music as they entered the Ryman Auditorium.



Candice Drake, ED (Dawson, GA);
Shaundra Clark, ED (Tifton, GA);
Shaunté Evans, CEO (Spartanburg, SC)



Ivory Matthews,
NAHRO Senior VP



Dione Kinman, ED (Dry Ridge, KY)
and M. Jason Spencer, ED
(Tennessee Valley Regional, MS)



Steven Burchett, Finance Officer (TN Valley
Housing Services, TN) and his wife



Micheal Wong, SERC President and ED
(Harrisonburg, VA) and his wife Phyllis Wong



Lisa Porter, ED (Bristol, VA)
and her daughter



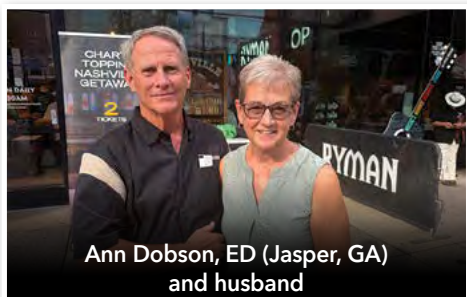
Marylin Medley
(SERC Hospitality) and her Family



Chris McKissick, ED
(Bonneville, MS) and his family



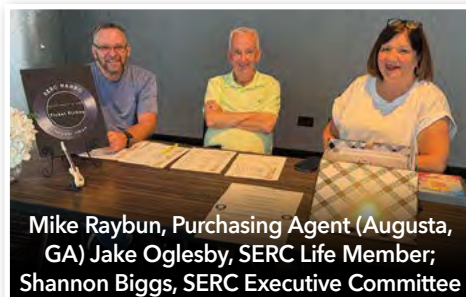
Angela Childers, CEO
(Charleston County, SC) and her daughter



Ann Dobson, ED (Jasper, GA)
and husband



M. Jason Spencer, ED (Tennessee Valley
Regional, MS) and Russel Nast, ED
(Tallapoosa, GA)



Mike Raybun, Purchasing Agent (Augusta,
GA) Jake Oglesby, SERC Life Member;
Shannon Biggs, SERC Executive Committee



Tina Akers Brown 35 Years In Housing

– Elizabeth Little and Joyce Wolen

On June 22, 2025, in Atlanta, Georgia, the SERC-NAHRO History and Archives Committee had the privilege to interview Tina Akers Brown, retired Chief Executive Officer of the Greenville Housing Authority. Elizabeth Little and Joyce Wolen sat with Ms. Brown and talked about her career and insights into the housing industry over her 35-year career. She shared with us her insights and experiences while serving her housing authorities and the SERC-NAHRO organization. Ms. Brown was engaged and engaging with her sage view of the industry. Ms. Brown started her career at the Fairmont Housing Authority in West Virginia in 1985 as the Section 8 Coordinator; she was previously, 1979-1988, with the CETA Programs. Two commissioners, Rosemary and Dixie, were instrumental in helping to move her career to Executive Director in 1988. When the director Jeff Straton moved to work at HUD; they pushed her forward as the choice for Executive Director. She was the first (but not the only) African American in West Virginia to hold this position. At that time, it was just the city of Fairmont; five years later it became Fairmont/Morgantown Housing Authority.

Ms. Brown attributes her early success to mentor Bill Dodson of Charleston; he educated her and became a life-long friend. While in West Virginia, she served as the only African American President of the West Virginia Association of Housing Authorities from 1993 to 1995.

In 1996, she moved to Greensboro, North Carolina, as the Director of Housing Services and in 1998 was named Deputy Director of Operations. In 2001, she was named Chief Executive Officer where she remained until her retirement in 2020. She was the first African American CEO and the longest-serving CEO in Greensboro's history. While at Greensboro, Ms. Akers Brown oversaw a \$22.9 million HOPE VI grant that leveraged an additional \$78 million in funds to complete the project; she was instrumental in acquiring and constructing over 300 additional affordable units; and at the time of her retirement was leading the process of building Greensboro's first affordable housing units to serve veterans and their families. Under her tenure, the housing choice voucher program grew from 1,300 to 3,500 vouchers and she implemented a RAD program to preserve aging communities, completing renovations to over 1,700 units. Ms. Akers Brown fondly remembered a reading program they started while operating a summer nutrition program where they (her included) would read books to the kids they were serving.

Regarding SERC...Ms. Akers Brown shared that she got involved in SERC because of Elaina Stresky, who was very active in promoting women to move forward. Ms. Brown became involved and eventually served as President 2005 to 2007 (Greensboro is the first organization to have 3 past presidents in SERC). While serving, she noticed "a lot of gray-haired people" and realized the organization needed to pay attention to the number of people retiring and begin developing younger people to step into leadership roles. She felt something needed to be done so, in her opinion it was to get young people on board, get them on committees and promote them moving to positions of leadership by leading committee work and eventually moving towards serving on the Board. She started the SERC 40 Under 40 Leadership Initiative. Additionally, she served on the NAHRO Board of Governors from 2003 to 2009 and became a NAHRO Fellow in 2009. She served on many committees.

Ms. Akers Brown was involved in starting and promoting the "What Home Means to Me." She was very successful in entering winning posters and when asked, she relayed the following strategy for that.

"We had art classes that were taught by local artists—it's important to get the community involved and interacting with your community. Greensboro was blessed with families that had artistic talent, and they attended the classes, and the classes were focused on embracing the theme of the contest." Ms. Akers Brown stated she worked hard to make sure SERC was involved and represented on the National level with NAHRO.

According to Ms. Akers Brown, "the biggest change she saw in SERC is more people became interested in SERC-NAHRO and seemed more willing to step up and move forward helping to make it a good organization."

She wanted to remind current members that we need to remember that Past Presidents still have lots of valuable gifts to give the organization, and she is happy to see so many new faces which shows the organization is moving and changing to meet the future.

Her final thoughts included that the best thing about housing is the friends you make for life. Ms. Akers Brown still has active contact and relationships with the friends she made in SERC. It is a good way to get knowledge about how people are doing things. The classes are good, but the networking is invaluable. You have to learn, and you have to share, and you have to talk to people. To young executives, bring people to the conferences and trainings if you can afford it. Get them involved. Help them move forward. There are challenges out there with the workforce but if you are flexible but steady, you will be ok. Also, you have to build everyone up and help them understand their purpose is to help others.

Among her favorite memories was when the housing authority had a United Way event and they pied her. She wore a colorful clown wig. That was fun and it promoted staff working together. It is important to build everyone up to understand what they are there for.

From her point of view, Ms. Akers Brown's legacy is in the number of people she met from all of the states and the passion they had, the children she was able to nurture, and the staff she worked with.



Engaging Homebound ROSS Residents

– Enterprise Housing Authority

ROSS Service Coordinators always strive to support all participants to become successful and self-sufficient through their educational events and activities. Encouraging participation in these activities can be a challenge, but after much encouragement and a few reminders, it is always a joy to see residents attend these beneficial events.

No matter how hard Lenise Curtis, ROSS Coordinator at Enterprise Housing Authority (EHA) tried, several of their ROSS residents would not participate. ROSS staff asked these residents why they would not attend, and many responded their preference of staying home due to age or disability.

So, Lenise thought, instead of asking the residents to come to the events, how can she bring the events to them?

A few ideas came to mind... “Caring Cards” Program. EHA partnered with a local hospice program to start their

“Caring Cards” program. Lenise suggested the idea of her ROSS residents creating “thinking of you” cards with caring messages for the hospice patients.

Within a few hours of delivering an informational “Caring Card” flyer, asking for volunteers, Lenise had ten ROSS resident’s sign-up to take part in this event! She noticed, the majority of those who signed up to volunteer were ROSS residents who had never participated in monthly events due to being homebound or disabled.

The hospice program provided blank cards, pens, crayons, and stickers. Lenise delivered these items to those ROSS residents who wanted to volunteer and returned a few weeks later to pick up the completed Caring Cards.

The cards collected were full of kind messages, scripture, and colorful artwork! Each month their ROSS resident volunteers complete nearly 40 cards that

Lenise forwards to her contact who shared the hospice patients love receiving the caring cards, which delivers a heartfelt smile and hug. “Homebased BINGO”

Even though Lenise provides a community bingo event nearly every month, several of the ROSS residents would not attend. In the spirit of bringing events to her ROSS residents, she developed “Homebased BINGO”. It starts with each senior and disabled ROSS resident receiving a bingo card and their “called” numbers. The weekly delivery of newly called numbers continues until a ROSS resident has “BINGO!” and contacts Lenise to confirm their winning numbers. A prize is delivered to their door, and we start the game process over again with a new bingo card.

Here again, ROSS residents that never participated in monthly events expressed their excitement about being able to play bingo. As Lenise walks the property, she is now greeted with, “I only need one more number!” or “Has anyone got bingo yet? I am so close!”.

It has been a few months since these events started and Lenise has learned a few things. “Our disabled and senior residents are excited to participate! I hear appreciative comments about ‘being part of the community’ and participating in events they can do from home. As the ROSS Service Coordinator, my relationships with homebound and isolated residents are more meaningful and I am earning their trust.” Shared Lenise.

Bringing events to your ROSS residents is added work, but the results are worth it! Besides increased resident engagement and a sense of “belonging”, it provides your agency additional opportunities to “check-in” on your most vulnerable and isolated residents.



ROSS Program participants share their artwork



Enterprise, AL
PH 150 Units
HCV 195 Vouchers
Shana Demby, ED
EnterpriseHousing.org



Award Winning App Connects Agency to Residents

– Fort Payne Housing Authority

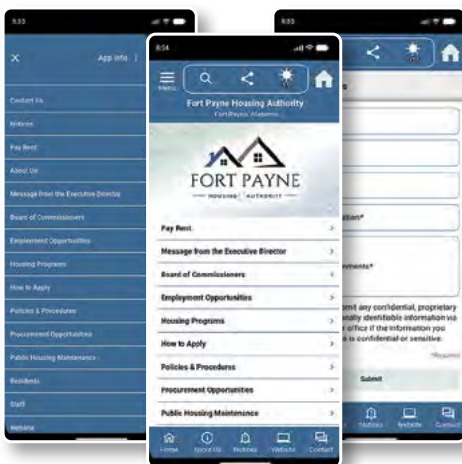
The Fort Payne Housing Authority (FPHA) has launched their new award winning app to better connect with their residents.

Their new app allows FPHA staff to send out push notifications to their residents, limiting the need to mail out communications and allowing residents, staff, and commissioners to be immediately informed.

When information is updated or added on their website, staff now have the option to send out a push notification to all app users which will pop-up on their phone informing them of the new information.

Fort Payne Housing Authority's new app has received a NAHRO Merit Award for Administrative Innovation. Their new app will allow the agency to have more timely and wide reaching communications within their communities.

For more information on Fort Payne Housing Authority or to download their app, please visit their website at FortPayneHA.org



Celebrating a Career of Dedicated Service

– Ozark Housing Community

Dannie Walker has retired from Ozark Housing Community after a career of dedicated service.

Dannie was appointed Executive Director on September 11th, 2011. Bringing with him over 30 years of experience administering federal programs sponsored by HUD. Prior to joining Ozark Housing Community, Dannie served the Vicksburg Housing Authority as Executive Director (2009 – 2011).

Dannie is a native of Alcorn County, Mississippi, and earned a Bachelor's of Business Administration (BBA) in Accounting from Mississippi State University.

Danny is a dedicated Houser, working extensively with AAHRA and SERC-NAHRO throughout his career.

Dannie has been a fixture within AAHRA for many years. He is an AAHRA Past



President and has served the association on a number of committees and as chaplain over the years. Dannie has also served SERC-NAHRO as an officer, committee member, and active volunteer.

In 2024, Dannie was named a NAHRO Fellow in recognition of his dedicated service within the affordable housing industry.

Congratulations to Dannie as he enters this new chapter of life. For more information on Ozark Housing Community, please visit their website at OzarkHousingCommunity.org

Innovative Housing Leader Retires

– Dothan Housing

Samuel Crawford, has retired from Dothan Housing after nearly 20 years of dedicated service.

Crawford oversaw housing services for more than 4,000 residents during his tenure. Before leading the housing authority, he served as Dothan's fire chief, becoming the city's first African American fire chief.

Crawford said the most rewarding aspect of his career has been witnessing residents' progress.

"You always like to do some things where you can actually see that you're having some impact," Crawford said. "We've seen people move from poverty to self-sufficiency. We've seen people move from rental housing to ownership housing. It's been a very, very pleasing experience."



Crawford credits his wife, son, and other family members for their support of his work.

The City of Dothan recognized June 30th as Sam Crawford Day for his dedicated service of both the Housing Authority and city as whole.

For more information on Dothan Housing, please visit their website at DothanHousing.org



2026 FAHRO Annual Conference Recap



Becky-Sue Mercer, ED (Arcadia, FL)
and Significant Other Frank



Dale Jones (Cre8) and
Becky-Sue Mercer, ED (Arcadia, FL)



Mayor Dean Trantalis, City of Ft Lauderdale;
Mark Thiele, NAHRO CEO; Michael Tadros,
ED (Fort Lauderdale, FL); Becky-Sue Mercer,
ED (Arcadia, FL)



The Professor, the Skipper, Gilligan,
and Ginger! Our vendors with Cre8
always go above and beyond!



Micheal Wong, SERC President and ED
(Harrisonburg, VA)



Amanda Fort, PH Manager
(North Central FL Regional)



Neil Brickfield, ED
(Pinellas County, FL)



Sean Gilbert, NAHRO President and ED
(TN Valley Housing Services, TN)



Gail Sansbury, ED (Fort Walton, FL);
Becky-Sue Mercer, ED (Arcadia, FL);
Shannon Young, ED (Seminole County, FL)



Mark Thiele
NAHRO CEO



Ashley Whidby, ED (Boca Raton, FL)
and Bill Mitchell, FAHRO Speaker



Safety and Security Grant Funds Innovation

– Winter Park Housing Authority

Winter Park Housing (WPH) has been awarded a \$250,000 Public Housing Capital Fund Emergency Safety and Security Grant (ESSG) to support improvements to our Public Housing communities.

This funding will help strengthen safety and security for our residents while reinforcing our commitment to serving communities, building legacies, and transforming lives.

“We’re grateful for this investment and look forward to putting these funds to

work for the families we serve” shared Executive Director Tarena Grant

Congratulations to Winter Park Housing on this grant award, we look forward to seeing how the funds are implemented within your agency. To stay up to date with WPH, please visit their website at WinterParkHA.org



Safety and Security Grant Funds Innovation

– Tampa Housing Authority

Tampa Housing Authority's (THA) Youth Employment Summer "YES" Program, is a paid internship program designed to provide career exposure, professional development, and real-world work experience to our resident youth through shadowing and assisting departments with work-tasks throughout Tampa Housing Authority.

Resident youth is able to apply for summer employment through the agency, providing a valuable opportunity to earn money over the summer while developing their professional skills.

Each year the program employs young people from across Tampa Housing

Authority's properties and programs. The YES Program complements the other resident service programs families are welcome to utilize through THA, including the YouthBuild Program.

Congratulations to Tampa Housing Authority on this outstanding resident employment initiative. To learn more about THA, please visit their website at TampaHA.org



New Partnership Brings Development to Life

– Eustis Housing Authority

The Eustis Housing Authority (EHA) has selected a development partner to bring their new affordable housing development to life!

Being a small agency, EHA manages 60 units of public housing and 56 units funded through the USDA, finding the best partner for the project was vital to their success.

EHA has selected the Smith & Henzy Affordable Group as their co-development partner. Smith & Henzy is a real estate development firm devoted to creating affordable housing opportunities across the country. The group has worked with housers across Florida on several affordable housing development projects.

Eustis Housing Authority is proud to have reached this stage of the development process and looks forward to completing this project. For more information on Eustis Housing Authority or to keep up to date with this project, please visit their website at EustisHousingAuthority.com



NORTHWEST GEORGIA
**HOME &
GARDEN
EXPO**

Presented By:



What:

**Northwest Georgia
Home & Garden Expo**
– Presented by the Northwest
Georgia Housing Authority

When:

Saturday, April 24, 2027
10 am - 4 pm

Why:

**Fundraiser for Northwest
Georgia Housing Authority
Homeowners Program**



Where:

Forum River Center
301 Tribune Street • Rome, Georgia



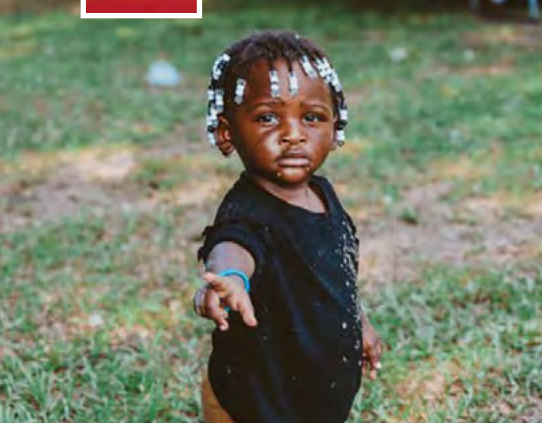
Who:

Guest Speaker: Ty Pennington

Ty Pennington is a television host, designer, master carpenter, and New York Times bestselling author best known for *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* and HGTV's *Rock the Block*. With an energetic, hands-on approach, he has inspired audiences across hit shows like *Trading Spaces* and *Battle on the Beach*. Ty's top-selling product

lines with Sears and AtHome reflect his creative, high-style design sensibility. A longtime advocate for the skilled trades, he also hosts SCC's *Skills Jam* YouTube series. Ty continues to bring heart, humor, and humanity to every project he touches - on screen, in homes, and beyond.





Boots on the Ground Family Fun Day

– Tifton Housing Authority

The Tifton Housing Authority (THA) hosted their “Boots on the Ground” Family Fun Day.

The event brought neighbors together for an afternoon of good food, games, music, and time well spent. It was great seeing families kick back, enjoy the day, and make lasting memories.

The event was held in partnership with several community partners including: Coastal Plain Area EOA, PLIGHT, Inc. of Georgia, Divalocity Photography,

South Tifton Learning Center, Tifton Fire Department, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc., Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Inc., Georgia Rule Gaming, South GA Foam Parties, United Way, G-Mann DJ, Tift County Schools, Elevate Church, Oasis Recovery, Ruth’s Cottage and The Patticake House, Exp Realty, Her Village Health and Wellness, Georgia WIC, Tift County Public Health, Coastal Plain Area Economic Opportunity Authority, and the Rockin Roland Express.

The annual event is much loved by the community and THA Staff. It is a fantastic opportunity for the entire community to come together and celebrate the end of the summer season.

Congratulations to THA on your outstanding event! For more information on the Tifton Housing Authority, please visit their website at TiftonHousing.org



Core Cadets Program

– Hinesville Housing Authority

Teenagers that reside with the Hinesville Housing Authority were able to spend a week this summer learning construction, electrical work, and other skilled trades through a five-day camp hosted by the Home Builders Institute.

The camp, made possible by the Hinesville Housing Authority, was designed to expose young people from subsidized

housing units to career opportunities in construction and STEM fields through hands-on instruction.

On Thursday, campers were mentored by active-duty soldiers from Fort Stewart who are enrolled in a program to learn the trades themselves.

Delisa Clift, Interim Executive Director of the Hinesville Housing Authority, said the program was created to introduce young people to opportunities they might not otherwise have considered.

“To know that we’re able to now give those opportunities to young people and see how it can change the trajectory of their lives, it does make me really, really happy,” Clift said. “It does what I think that we are put here on Earth to do, is to expose and give experiences to others that we might not have had ourselves.”

The Home Builders Institute has provided instruction throughout the week. The camp is scheduled to conclude with a

graduation ceremony for all participants and their families.

Hinesville Housing Authority would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to their incredible partners & sponsors—Home Builders Institute, Fort Stewart, The Home Depot Foundation, United Community Bank, MiTek, Global Business Development Strategist, Strategic Biz Solutions Unlimited LLC, JJ’s Bar & Grill, Nelson Financial, and everyone who helped make the CORE Cadet program possible this summer!

What an outstanding way to empower the youth within your community, to learn more about the Hinesville Housing Authority, please visit their website at HinesvilleHousingAuthority.org





Partnering to Make Resident Events Even More Impactful

– Housing Authority of Danville

The Housing Authority of Danville understands that when we lean on our community partners, we are able to make our community events even more impactful.

Recently the agency has partnered with Whitaker Bank to make their Father's Day and 4th of July celebrations even more impactful.

The events included Bingo with fantastic prizes along with refreshments for all those in attendance. Whitaker Bank was able to inform residents about potential scams and fraud while keeping them entertained with Bingo!

What an outstanding partnership that benefits all parties involved. For more

information on the Housing Authority of Danville, please visit their website at DanvilleHousingAgency.com



SERC's Newest Hall of Fame Inductee

– Richmond Section 8 Housing

Susan Lillis, Executive Director for Richmond Section 8 Housing is the newest inductee to the SERC-NAHRO Hall of Fame.

The Hall of Fame award is a prestigious individual honor presented by SERC each year at the annual conference. It recognizes housing and community development professionals who have made a lasting, transformative impact on affordable housing across the southeastern region.

Part of Susan's nomination reads as follows, "For nearly three decades, she has expanded the Family Self-Sufficiency Program, administered the VASH (veterans program) and Emergency Housing program for the Homeless, she also oversees two Scholar Houses and has led her agency as Executive Director, and transformed housing opportunities for hundreds of families. Her service to both the Kentucky Housing Association and SERC has made a lasting impact on affordable housing."

Thank you Susan for representing the City of Richmond, State of Kentucky, and SERC-NAHRO so well.

Congratulations on your well deserved recognition!



L to R Michael Wong, SERC President and ED (Harrisburg, VA); Susan Lillis, ED (Richmond, KY); Susan Christophel, ED (Columbia County, FL)

New Website Connects with Residents

– Housing Authority of Dawson Springs

The Housing Authority of Dawson Springs has launched their new responsive website, which will help connect them with their resident population.

Their new website is built to best address ADA Accessibility success criteria to ensure all site visitors have access to the fantastic information shared on their new site.

In addition to basic agency information, the website includes information on their new Community Room, which is available for rent by residents and community members alike.

Housing Authority staff has the ability to edit website information 24/7, ensuring the content is always up to date and accurate for their residents.

Congratulations Housing Authority of Dawson Springs on the launch of your new website, to check out the website for yourself, please visit them at DSHousingAuthority.com



Navigating Grants. Elevating Communities. Changing Lives.



Integral Grant Writing Services (IGWS)

is a Florida-based grant consulting firm dedicated to helping Public Housing Authorities, nonprofit organizations, municipalities, educational institutions, and community organizations secure funding that creates meaningful and lasting impact.

Since 2020, IGWS has helped clients obtain **more than \$58 million in grant awards**,

providing personalized guidance from concept development through grant implementation.

At IGWS, we believe every organization has a story worth funding. Our mission is to help clients transform their vision into competitive, high-quality grant applications while building their long-term capacity to secure funding independently.

OUR SERVICES

- Grant Research & Funding Identification
- Grant Application Preparation
- Grant Management
- Grant Writing Education
- Grant Writing Apprenticeship Program
- Digital Grant Resource Library

GRANTS WON

- Led-Based Paint
- ROSS (New Applicant and Renewal)
- ESSG
- Housing Counseling Grant
- Jobs Plus
- Capital Fund At Risk/ Receivership/Substandard/ Troubled Program
- FSS (New Applicant and Renewal)
- Radon Testing and Mitigation Grant
- Your Home, Your Internet
- Youthbuild
- Housing-Related Hazards
- Emergency Grant
- SC Public Housing Capital Fund Program
- And more to come!



INTEGRAL GRANT
writing services

Elizabeth Phillips
elizabeth@integralgrantwriting.com

(813) 200-8826
IntegralGrantWriting.com

Laurel Housing Authority Receives \$2.3M HUD Grant For Career Readiness Programs

– Laurel Housing Authority

The Laurel Housing Authority (LHA) recently received a \$2.3 million Fiscal Year 2025 Jobs Plus Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

LHA was one of 10 public housing agencies nationwide to receive the grant, which provides incentives for individuals looking to achieve career readiness.

The Jobs Plus program is a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) initiative that helps public housing residents find jobs, build career skills, and increase their earnings.

The program relies on three main components to empower communities to succeed:

- **Employment-Related Services:** The program is to encourage on-site job training, career coaching, resume help, GED classes, technology skills, and direct job placement. It also helps work to

reduce employment barriers like childcare and reliable transportation.

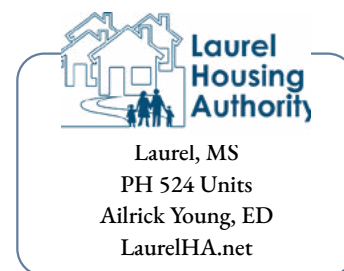
- **Financial Incentives:** The Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard allows tenants to increase their overall income from a new job or promotion without facing an immediate increase in their rent.
- **Community Support for Work:** Empowers a community "culture of work" within the affordable housing neighborhoods through neighbor-to-neighbor outreach and community events.

Over the next four years, the grant will bring additional resources and opportunities to approximately 100 families at Triangle Homes and Beacon Homes. Through Jobs Plus, residents will have access to support for career readiness, education, financial literacy, childcare and other services designed to help them work toward their individual goals and greater self-sufficiency.

"Everybody has their own unique goal in what that looks like," Young said. "But, the overall goal is that those persons who participate in our self-sufficiency programs get to a point where they no longer need government assistance."

LHA plans for the program to be fully rolled out within the next six months. Residents and staff members alike are both excited for this new opportunity within LHA.

For more information on Laurel Housing Authority or to keep up with their new Jobs Plus Program, please visit their website at LaurelHA.net



L to R: Felicia Jackson, Deputy Director; Charlotte Williams, Property Manager; Ruby Jones, Property Manager; Alrick Young, ED (Laurel, MS)



Ladies Tea Brings Community Together

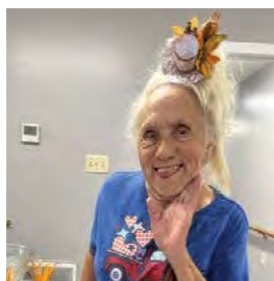
– Picayune Housing Authority

The Picayune Housing Authority (PHA) held their Ladies Tea on Thursday, May 28th in the Pines recreation room.

Prior to the event seven resident volunteers and PHA staff came together to create beautiful hats for all tea attendees. In total they created 40 hats which attendees were invited to take home as a party favor. Additionally, the ladies decorated the room to fit the tea party theme.

Though the 28th turned out to be a rainy day, PHA still had wonderful attendance. As the ladies found their seats, they played an icebreaker game which gave everyone the opportunity to get acquainted. Gloria Lee, PHA Executive Director, said grace over the food and lead the group in an opening prayer.

The food table was beautifully prepared by Ms. Barbara, Ms. Stacy, and Ms. Cathy and served buffet-style. Barbara baked mini muffins and mini brownie bites for the tea, and Cathy made deviled eggs. Ms. Dorothy baked egg bites and



sausage balls to go with the savory items. In addition to the delicious food prepared by PHA Staff, the agency also provided a host of finger sandwiches, cookies, pastries and scones. PHA's newest staff member, Neshia set up the tea table which included several varieties of ices and hot tea.

During the event, attendees played more games, and door prizes were given away. Their game and door prize winners included: Brenda Parker, Penny Richoux, Tanya Bennett, Branda Fortuna, Lynette Penning, Karrie Clark, Christine Necaie, Lori McClure, and Barbara May.

As the party came to a close, the maintenance department joined the party enjoying the remaining snacks, tea, and hats, before assisting in the cleanup.

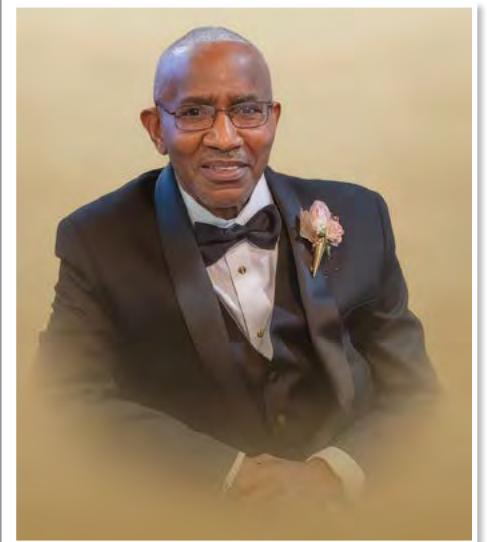
Without the collaboration of residents and staff, this event would not have been possible. Because the community came together, everyone was able to enjoy this fantastic event.

A Houser Remembered

– Yazoo City Housing Authority

George C. Smith departed this life on Saturday, July 4, 2026, at his residence. He was a Native of Utica, MS., and a resident of Gretna, LA.

Dr. Smith dedicated nearly five decades to public service. He served as Coordinator of the Southwest Mississippi Mental Health Complex and as Executive Director of the Housing Authority of Yazoo City before beginning a distinguished career with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. There he rose from Resident Initiatives Program Specialist to Director of Public Housing for the State of Mississippi, overseeing fifty-six housing authorities, and later Senior Public Housing Revitalization Specialist in New Orleans, serving twenty-one housing authorities across the region. He went on to direct Family Services and the Disaster Housing Assistance Program for Jefferson Parish, and through his private consulting firm, Smith & Smith Associates, he provided counsel to housing authorities and community organizations for more than forty years.



Dr. Smith believed deeply in empowering others through education, skill enhancement, and entrepreneurship. As Adjunct Instructor at Jackson State University and Tougaloo College for over two decades, he shaped generations of social workers in values, ethics, and service — teaching not only how to serve, but how to build.

Join us in remembering Dr. Smith's life and legacy of service.

Annual Conference Awards & Scholarships

Poster Contest Winners

NC Elementary School:

1st Place: Kingston Spinks
Greensboro Housing Authority
2nd Place: Makyra McPhaul
Pembroke Housing Authority
2nd Place: Za'nira Carter
HA of the City of Greensboro
3rd Place: Chloe Johnson
HA of the City of Greensboro
3rd Place: Abigail Williams
Fayetteville Metro. Housing Authority

NC Middle School:

1st Place: Madison Carson
Greensboro Housing Authority
1st Place: Hayleigh Watkins
Fayetteville Metro. Housing Authority
2nd Place: Tristian Bell and Messiah Murray
HA of the City of Greensboro
3rd Place: Khaden McGee and Shania Moore
Kinston Housing Authority

NC High School:

1st Place: T'Raya Dove
Kinston Housing Authority
2nd Place: Shakiya Payne
HA of the City of Greensboro
3rd Place: Ca'siyah Thaxton
HA of the City of Greensboro

SC Elementary School:

1st Place: Heaven Gordon
Spartanburg Housing
2nd Place: Rahmyr Thomas
Housing Authority of Florence
2nd Place: Antonio Carmichael
Mullins Housing Authority
3rd Place: Rhyaine Walker
Spartanburg Housing

SC Middle School:

1st Place: Teanna McFadden
HA of the City of Sumter
2nd Place: Prince Francis
Greer Housing Authority
3rd Place: Mari'yah Durant
HA of the City of Sumter
3rd Place: Amaria Robinson
HA of the City of Darlington

SC High School:

1st Place: Jayanti Page
HA of the City of Darlington
2nd Place: Abigail Miles
Greer Housing Authority
3rd Place: Miranda Sterling
Greer Housing Authority

Scholarship Winners

2026 South Carolina Scholarship Recipients

Javion Jefferies
\$1,500 SERC Scholarship
Gaffney HA
University of South Carolina

Tiffany Williams
\$1,000 SERC Scholarship
Mullins HA
Coastal Carolina University

Kamora Good
\$1,000 CCHRCO/Triangle
Community Foundation
Endowment Fund Scholarship
Newberry HA
University of South Carolina

Karina Dorris
\$1,000 CCHRCO/Triangle
Community Foundation
Endowment Fund Scholarship
Columbia HA
University of South Carolina

Kristin Brown
\$1,000 CCHRCO/Triangle
Community Foundation
Endowment Fund Scholarship
Columbia HA
Denmark Technical College

Jamere Crooks
\$1,000 CCHRCO/Triangle
Community Foundation
Endowment Fund Scholarship
Newberry HA
North Carolina Central
University

Shakira Soto
\$1,000 CCHRCO/Triangle
Community Foundation
Endowment Fund Scholarship
Greer HA
Lander University

2026 North Carolina Scholarship Recipients

Jha'AyDAH Davis Hicks
\$1,500 SERC Scholarship
Kinston HA
Morgan State University

Albatoul Alhajkasem
\$1,000 SERC Scholarship
HA of the City of High Point
Guilford Technical
Community College

Tasnim Alaioub
\$1,000 CCHRCO/Triangle
Community Foundation
Endowment Fund Scholarship
HA of the City of High Point
Guilford Technical
Community College

Ty'jurian White
\$1,000 CCHRCO/Triangle
Community Foundation
Endowment Fund Scholarship
Laurinburg HA
Fayetteville State University

Kawthar Allouch
\$1,000 CCHRCO/Triangle
Community Foundation
Endowment Fund Scholarship
HA of the City of High Point
University of North Carolina

Tyrianna Martin
\$1,000 CCHRCO/Triangle
Community Foundation
Endowment Fund Scholarship
Laurinburg HA
University of North Carolina

Sa'mani Hoyle
\$1,000 CCHRCO/Triangle
Community Foundation
Endowment Fund Scholarship
HA of the City of High Point
University of North Carolina

Rajaa Alaioub
\$1,000 NCHADA Memorial
Mark Arrowood Scholarship
HA of the City of High Point
Guilford Technical
Community College

ECAHRO

Anthony Goodson Jr. Scholarship Recipients

Taneisha Ranae Johnson
\$1,500 Anthony Goodson Jr.
Scholarship
HA of the City of Goldsboro
Winston-Salem State
University

Charlie Thomas
\$1,500 Anthony Goodson Jr.
Scholarship
HA of the City of Goldsboro
University of North Carolina

Jha'AyDAH Davis Hicks
\$1,500 Anthony Goodson Jr.
Scholarship
Kinston Housing Authority
Morgan State University

Beyond Scholarship Recipients

South Carolina
Javion Jefferies
\$500 Beyond Scholarship
Gaffney Housing Authority
University of South Carolina

North Carolina
Aaden Reynolds
\$500 Beyond Scholarship
Rocky Mount HA
North Carolina A&T

2026 CCHRCO ANNUAL CONFERENCE RECAP

Website Contest Winners

NC Extra Large Agency:



1st Place
Fayetteville Metropolitan HA
FMHANC.org



2nd Place
Kinston HA
KHANC.org



3rd Place
HA City of High Point
HPHA.net

NC Large Agency:



1st Place
Sanford HA
SHA-NC.org



2nd Place
Rocky Mount HA
RM-HA.org

NC Medium Agency:



1st Place
Burlington HA
BurlingtonHA.org



2nd Place
Robeson County HA
RobesonHA.org

NC Small Agency:



1st Place
Smithfield HA
SmithfieldHousingNC.org



2nd Place
Forest City HA
ForestCityHousingAuthority.com



3rd Place
Benson HA
BensonHousing.org

SC Extra Large Agency:



1st Place
Spartanburg HA
SpartanburgHousing.org

SC Large Agency:



1st Place
Newberry HA
NewberryHousing.org

SC Small Agency:



1st Place
Easley HA
EasleyHousing.org

SC Medium Agency:



1st Place
Gaffney HA
GaffneyHA.org



2nd Place
Greer HA
GreerHA.com



3rd Place
York HA
YorkHASC.org

Newsletter Contest Winners

NC Extra Large Agency:



3rd Place
HA City of High Point

NC Large Agency:



1st Place
HA of the City of Goldsboro



2nd Place
Rocky Mount HA



3rd Place
HA of the City of Wilson

SC Extra Large Agency:



1st Place
Spartanburg HA

NC Medium Agency:



1st Place
Burlington HA



2nd Place
Washington HA



2nd Place
Newberry HA



2nd Place
HA of the City of Sumter



3rd Place
Charleston County Housing
and Redevelopment Authority

NC Small Agency:



1st Place
Redevelopment Commission
of the Town of Tarboro



2nd Place
Lenoir HA



3rd Place
Smithfield HA

SC Medium Agency:



1st Place
Gaffney HA



2nd Place
HA of the city of Darlington



West Oak Pocket Park Plants Seeds of Revitalization

– Housing Authority of the City of Goldsboro

Community members, city leaders and housing officials gathered to celebrate the official opening of the West Oak Pocket Park, a new public space designed to serve as a catalyst for neighborhood revitalization in west Goldsboro.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony was held at 103 N. Carolina Street, where the City

of Goldsboro and the Housing Authority of the City of Goldsboro (HACG) unveiled the park as part of the ongoing Choice Neighborhoods Planning Initiative. The West Oak Pocket Park is the initiative's Early Action Project under the HUD Choice Neighborhoods Initiative.

Located directly across from the Goldsboro-Wayne Transportation Authority (GWTa), the park offers easy access for transit riders while providing a welcoming destination for recreation, relaxation and community gatherings.

Designed with inclusivity in mind, the park features shaded seating areas, an oversized swing, a ground-level rock and ropes play area, outdoor musical instruments, landscaped green space and accessible amenities that can be enjoyed by visitors of all ages and abilities.

Congratulations to HACG on reaching this milestone. To keep up to date on their choice neighborhood progress, please visit their website at HACG.org.



NC CCHRCO Beyond Scholarship Winner

A graduate of Rocky Mount High School in Rocky Mount, NC, Aaden Syir Reynolds, was selected as a 2026 Carolinas Council of Housing Redevelopment and Codes Officials (CCHRCO) BEYOND scholarship recipient. Aaden is a resident of the Rocky Mount Housing Authority.

Aaden plans to attend North Carolina A&T in the fall to pursue a degree in Civil Engineering. When sharing what drew him to the field of civil engineering, Aaden shared, "True intelligence is using knowledge to solve problems, uplift others, and improve the world around you. I want to become a civil engineer because I want to build structures and systems that create safer, stronger, and more connected communities."

Through a letter of recommendation, his teacher shared, "He does not seek attention, but instead allows his character and work ethic to speak for him. His steady determination and inner strength always demonstrate a level of maturity that is rare in today's youth."

Each year, two \$500 BEYOND Scholarships are awarded to two residents of CCHRCO member agencies. One NC resident and one SC resident are selected to receive the \$500 BEYOND Scholarship. Brooks Jeffrey Marketing, Inc. sponsors the BEYOND scholarship for CCHRCO. For more information on the BEYOND Scholarship, visit: www.BJMweb.com/beyond

New Agency Website and Branding Launches

– Eastern Carolina Regional Housing Authority

Denise C. Parsons, Executive Director of Eastern Carolina Regional Housing Authority, knew that resident communications would be vital.

Their new website is responsive in nature, empowering residents to use the resources and access the information included on the website on a desktop, laptop, tablet, or their phones. Additionally, the website is programmed to address ADA Accessibility criteria to ensure all residents and applicants can access the vital information included on the site.

Along with their new website, the agency has introduced their new branding. The ECRHA logo features three stylized houses accented by dynamic swooshes, symbolizing their commitment to providing quality housing, fostering community growth, and creating opportunities for residents throughout the region.

For more information on Eastern Carolina Regional Housing Authority, please visit their new website at ECRHA.org





New Affordable Housing Option for Veterans

– Newberry Housing

Newberry Housing is proud to announce that it has been awarded five HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) vouchers.

The award includes \$43,492 in budget authority and will enable Newberry Housing, in partnership with the Columbia Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC), to provide permanent housing assistance and supportive services to eligible veterans experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

“We are honored to receive this award and grateful for the opportunity to further serve the men and women who have served our

country,” said Jessica Holcomb, Executive Director of Newberry Housing. “These vouchers will provide critical housing stability for veterans in our community and strengthen our ongoing commitment to ensuring that every resident has access to safe, decent, and affordable housing.”

The award became effective August 1, 2026, and the vouchers will be administered in accordance with HUD-VASH program requirements and in collaboration with the Columbia VA Medical Center.

Congratulations to Newberry Housing for this new affordable housing option for their community. To keep up to date with their new VASH program, please visit their website at NewberryHousing.org



South Carolina Beyond Scholarship Winner

A graduate of Gaffney High School in Gaffney, SC, Javion Jefferies was selected as a 2026 Carolinas Council of Housing Redevelopment and Codes Officials (CCHRCO) BEYOND scholarship recipient. Javion is a resident of the Gaffney Housing Authority.

Javion plans to attend the University of South Carolina, Columbia, in the fall to pursue a degree in Mechanical Engineering.

When sharing what drew him to pursue a career in engineering, Javion shared, “My long-term dream goes beyond becoming an engineer. One day, I hope to own my own engineering company, one built on innovation, leadership, and purpose. Success, to me, is not only measured by money or status. True success is measured by the positive impact someone leaves on others.”

Through a letter of recommendation, his teacher shared, “Javion has an impressive talent for fostering a positive and supportive learning environment. He leads by example, exhibiting patience, understanding, and a genuine enthusiasm for learning. His empathy allows him to connect with students and help them through their problems in such a way that other students remain open to his input.”

Each year, two \$500 BEYOND Scholarships are awarded to two residents of CCHRCO member agencies. One NC resident and one SC resident are selected to receive the \$500 BEYOND Scholarship. Brooks Jeffrey Marketing, Inc. sponsors the BEYOND scholarship for CCHRCO. For more information on the BEYOND Scholarship, visit: www.BJMweb.com/beyond

YouthBuild Program Coming to Rock Hill

– Rock Hill Housing Authority

The Rock Hill Housing Authority (RHHA) announced it has been awarded a \$1.5 million grant to establish and operate a YouthBuild program serving Rock Hill and the surrounding community.

YouthBuild is a national program that helps young people ages 16 to 24 who have left high school without a diploma gain the skills and credentials they need to succeed in post-secondary education and employment. Through this grant, RHHA will provide participants with a combination of academic instruction toward a high school diploma or equivalency credential, hands-on occupational skills training, leadership development, and comprehensive counseling and support services.

“This grant allows us to invest directly in the future of our community’s young people,” said Dewayne Alford, Executive Director.

Over the 40-month grant period, the program is expected to serve up to 66 participants.

Congratulations to Rock Hill Housing Authority for this new resident service program, to stay up to date with their progress, please visit their website at RHHA.org



New Affordable Housing Coming Soon

– Columbia Housing

Columbia Housing is moving forward with plans to build a new 24-unit affordable housing complex in Columbia’s Edgewood neighborhood.

The new project is designed to modernize the site while keeping the same number of affordable units available to residents.

“It was previously 24 affordable housing units, and we’re trying to come back with 24 modernized living units that are still affordable,” architect Daniel Taylor said.

The project will be funded through the Small Rental Development Program, which uses state and federal funding to support housing rehabilitation and redevelopment efforts across South Carolina.

“It’ll definitely boost the area, boost the community,” shared Resident Jazmin Moore. “I’m looking forward to meeting new people and having more kids around for my kids to play with.”

Congratulations Columbia Housing on this upcoming development, to stay up to date with their progress, please visit their website at ColumbiaHousingSC.org





LIHTC Brings New Affordable Housing Options

– Jackson Housing Authority

This summer the Tennessee Housing Development Agency (THDA) and Jackson Housing Authority (JHA) celebrated the opening of BlueCreek Apartments.

BlueCreek Apartments features 54-units with 2- and -3 bedroom spaces with a community room, computer room, dedicated provider space, and a laundry room. The project was

financed in part through low-income housing tax credits awarded by THDA with an equity investment of \$23 million. THDA says that funding mix, tax credits, equity, and bonds help developments like this get built while keeping rent affordable over time.

A portion of the project is replacing the public housing that served the community for over

80 years. The BlueCreek Apartments will be modern and high-quality affordable homes to better meet the needs of residents in Madison County.

The apartments are one of two BlueCreek developments being funded through LIHTC awards. In July 2025, THDA and Jackson Housing Authority broke ground on The Cottages of BlueCreek.

“The award of the 9% Low-Income Housing Tax Credit from THDA and the opening of BlueCreek Apartments mark a defining moment for the Jackson Housing Authority and the City of Jackson,” said JHA Executive Director Mark Reid. “This investment allows us to expand access to safe, modern, and affordable housing, creating new opportunities for families to thrive.”

Congratulations to Jackson Housing Authority on this wonderful ribbon cutting. For more information on Jackson Housing Authority, please visit their website at JacksonHA.com



The health plan that cares about your coverage as much as you do.



Housing Benefits Plan (HBP) is a SERC-NAHRO sponsored plan offering medical, dental, vision, life, and disability benefits to housing authorities within the region.

For more information about HBP visit the website at www.housingbp.com or contact Jessica Strange at 318-226-1411 option 5 or hbp@callhsa.com.



A Summer of Celebration

– Ripley Housing

Each summer, The Lauderdale County Tomato Festival is one of West Tennessee's signature events, celebrating the area's tomato growers and local agriculture. The event takes place each summer in celebration of tomato season.

This year, the festival took place July 10-11 at Ripley City Park in downtown Ripley. To connect with their residents and give back to the community, Ripley Housing served as a proud sponsor of the 2026 Tomato Festival.

The event is beloved by the community and allows Ripley Housing staff to have a presence at the festival. As housers, we are a vital part of our local communities, and Ripley Housing understands that with that position it is our responsibility to step up and participate in community events whenever possible.

This wasn't all Ripley had to celebrate this summer, as they have recently completed an \$8.8 million renovation to their Chapel Circle and Crescent Drive Apartments.

The Clear Blue Co. (CBC), Ripley Housing's joint-venture partner, have completed comprehensive upgrades at Chapel Circle Apartments and Crescent Drive Apartments.

Built in 1962, Chapel Circle offers studio, one-, two-, three-, and four-bedroom homes, while Crescent Drive provides units ranging from one-to-four bedrooms.

Interior and exterior improvements included new building façades, roofs, windows, and doors, as well as new kitchen cabinetry, interior paint, Energy Star appliances, and flooring.

The project also delivered a new leasing



Deborah Madlin, Property Manager, Kimberly Rogers, COO, Kawanna Lee, Finance Executive, Rena Fitts, Administrative Assistant, Joyce Edwards, CEO, Aylissa Taylor, Housing Operations Manager

office, laundry room, business centers, and playgrounds for residents.

"We are proud to celebrate this important milestone alongside Ripley Housing Authority, our project partners, and the residents of Chapel Circle and Crescent Heights," said Nick Ogden, founder and CEO of CBC, a developer, owner, and operator of workforce and affordable housing properties. "These improvements were designed not only to modernize the homes and amenities within these communities, but also to enhance residents' quality of life and help ensure Chapel Circle and Crescent Heights remain a vital source of affordable housing in Ripley for years to come."

The communities serve households earning between 30% and 60% of the area median income. The project involved a Rental Assistance Demonstration conversion and Housing Assistance Payment contract bifurcation, supported by a 9% low-income housing tax credit allocation and a National Housing Trust Fund award received by Chapel Circle in 2021.

For more information on Ripley Housing, please visit their website at RipleyHousing.org



New Leadership Brings Renewed Vision

– Murfreesboro Housing Authority

Marquisha Griffin has been appointed as the new Chief Executive Officer of the Murfreesboro Housing Authority (MHA). Marquisha brings over 10 years of affordable housing experience to the roll, most recently serving the Cullman Housing Authority as CEO.

This marks a return for Marquisha who previously served the Franklin Housing Authority as the Director of Rental Assistance and the Tennessee Housing Development Agency (THDA) as the Assistant Director of Section 8 Rental Assistance.

This has been a season of development for the Murfreesboro Housing Authority. In late July the agency celebrated the opening of their new Parkside Apartments. The property was developed through low-income housing tax credits (LIHTC) awarded by THDA with an equity investment of \$10.5 million. MHA also received a \$600,000 grant through THDA's Tennessee Housing Trust Fund for this development.

"Parkside represents more than the completion of a construction project, it represents our commitment to preserving affordable housing while creating modern, high-quality homes where families can thrive," said MHA Executive Director Marquisha Griffin. "This redevelopment honors the history of this community while investing in its future."

Congratulations Marquisha on your appointment, we look forward to the continued success for Murfreesboro Housing Authority. To keep up to date with MHA or to learn more about their ongoing development projects, please visit their website at MHA-TN.org



2026 VAHCDO Annual Conference Recap



First place team at the
Top Golf FUNdraising Event.



VAHCDO Conference Attendees pose
for the traditional group photo.



Second place team at the
Top Golf FUNdraising Event.



JaLauna Burton and Donna Mills
VAHCDO Board Members



Michael Wong, VAHCDO Past President
and SERC-NAHRO President speaks with
conference attendees.



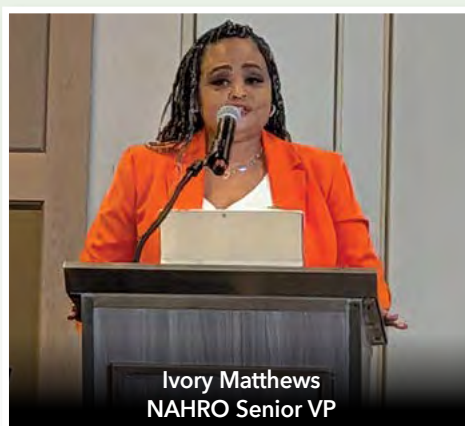
Gavin Norwood and Michael Spero
(Tsunami)



Third place team at the Top Golf
FUNdraising Event



Katie Bibbee, Account Executive
(Brooks Jeffrey Marketing)



Ivory Matthews
NAHRO Senior VP



VAHCDO Scholarship Winners pose
for a photo after speaking at the
conference luncheon.



Lance Allen, VAHCDO Treasurer
(Staunton, VA)



VAHCDO Executive Director's Meeting

PHA and Affordable Housing Program Executive Directors met with the VAHCDO Board at the Virginia Housing Center in Glen Allen on Thursday, August 20th to discuss current issues and solutions in the affordable housing industry.

VAHCDO was honored to be joined by Tammy Neal, Virginia Housing CEO and Virginia Housing staff, Luke Tate, Willie Fobbs, David Glassman, and Madelyn Peay, HUD Richmond Director Kelley Mason, current SERC-NAHRO President, Virginia's own Michael Wong from Harrisonburg, and Isabelle McLain from

Virginia Housing Alliance.

Virginia Housing shared information about grant opportunities and the current status of the PBV overhang pause, while Kelley Mason provided HUD updates and the latest on the "Build American, Buy American" (BABA) efforts. Ms. McLain remarked on the valuable relationship with the Virginia Housing Alliance and Mr. Wong provided regional updates from SERC-NAHRO. VAHCDO President, Keith Viers, Senior Vice President, Lysandra Shaw, and Executive Director, Nancy Tarkenton provided information about new initiatives,

member profiles and one-on-one visits, membership renewal, and the development and expansion of VAHCDO committees, including a bi-monthly Executive Director/Leadership Committee arising from the days' meeting. Legislative Committee members, Ed Ware and John Bohm and Lobbyist Luke Priddy provided information about the VAHCDO legislative plan and activities, including weekly, in-session legislative update calls for membership, and shared a SB-181 Implementation Guide to assist membership with the steps necessary to adopt state legislation on the local level.

This annual event was well-attended, with members unable to attend in person joining on-line. There is much to discuss and information to share about the good work being done in the affordable housing arena and this is just one of the many opportunities VAHCDO provides to encourage participation, engagement and collaboration for the benefit of all.

Please watch for membership renewal notification in September, and plan to join VAHCDO for the 2026 Annual Legal and Policy Seminar at the Richmond Omni December 3-4, 2026.

New VAHCDO Executive Director Appointed

Virginia Association of Housing and Community Development Officials (VAHCDO), the Virginia, state-wide, member organization for public and affordable housing and program providers, and a leading organization in the affordable housing industry, is pleased to announce the appointment of Nancy L. Tarkenton as the new Executive Director. Mrs. Tarkenton will play a pivotal role in driving VAHCDO's strategic initiatives and fostering continued growth. With a proven track record of success in the affordable housing industry, including three decades of service with the Chesapeake Redevelopment and Housing Authority where she retired at the end of 2024 as Deputy Executive Director and voluntary service on the VAHCDO Board as Senior Vice

President, President, and Past President, Mrs. Tarkenton brings a wealth of experience and expertise to VAHCDO.

"Nancy is more than just a familiar face to our industry, she is a proven leader," said Keith L. Viers, President of VAHCDO. "VAHCDO is ecstatic to have her leadership in support of our communities and agencies throughout the Commonwealth. Nancy is dedicated to the mission of service, assisting the nation's most vulnerable population and affordable housing. I am confident Nancy will provide the leadership needed to grow our organization and foster affordable housing growth for many years to come".



For more information about Nancy Tarkenton and VAHCDO, please visit www.VAHCDO.org

**Annual VAHCDO
Legal and Policy Seminar**
Thurs.-Fri., December 3-4, 2026
Omni Richmond Hotel., Richmond, VA
More Info at VAHCDO.org



West Virginia's FSS Programs: Building Success Together

– Fairmont-Morgantown Housing Authority

Across West Virginia, Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Programs are helping families turn personal goals into measurable achievements. Behind those successes are FSS professionals, housing authorities, and community partners working together to help families move forward.

West Virginia is a state made up of many small communities and rural areas where neighbors know one another and community connections matter. Our housing authorities serve families in communities of all sizes, from larger cities to small towns and rural counties where resources can sometimes be harder to reach. That makes collaboration especially important. Across the state, FSS coordinators have found that sharing ideas, resources, and experiences can make a real difference in the families we serve.

The WVAHA FSS Peer Committee brings FSS coordinators from housing authorities across the state together to share ideas, resources, challenges, and successful strategies. The committee meets bimonthly, providing an opportunity for coordinators to learn from one another and strengthen FSS programming in communities throughout West Virginia. Each year, the committee also makes time to meet in person, giving coordinators the opportunity to connect face to face and experience FSS programming in communities across the state. This year, the committee gathered in Mingo County, continuing a tradition of collaboration that has become an important part of West Virginia's FSS network.

That collaboration can be seen in the accomplishments taking place at housing authorities throughout the state.

At the Fairmont Morgantown Housing Authority (FMHA), the FSS Program continues to focus on increasing participation so that more families have the opportunity to benefit from the program. FMHA also established a monthly FSS

Club, giving participants a place to come together for education, networking, resource sharing, and encouragement. FMHA has also celebrated numerous FSS graduates over the past several years who have made significant progress toward greater financial and housing stability.

At the Charleston Kanawha Housing Authority, seven families graduated from the FSS Program, with more than \$61,000 in escrow disbursed as of July. These graduates represent families who set goals, increased their financial independence, and successfully completed their FSS journeys.

The Benwood McMechen Housing Authority continued its commitment to connecting residents with resources by hosting its annual Health and Resource Fair in July. Events such as these provide FSS participants and other residents with direct access to community organizations and services that can support their health, employment, education, and financial goals.

In Mingo County, two FSS success stories demonstrate the powerful individual impact of the program. One participant entered FSS focused on purchasing a dependable vehicle, increasing her employment income, and qualifying for a mortgage. She ultimately purchased a 2022 Toyota Highlander, increased her annual salary from \$21,819 to \$43,262, accumulated \$19,050.16 in escrow savings, and successfully purchased a \$300,000 home.

Another Mingo County participant began her FSS journey with no earned income while receiving Section 8 assistance.

Through employment, financial planning, and goal setting, she obtained a job with an annual salary of \$41,600, increased her credit score from 510 to 705, paid a credit card down to a zero balance, established \$1,000 in personal savings, and reached zero Housing Assistance Payment status. As she prepared to graduate, she had accumulated \$24,951.25 in escrow savings, which she plans to use toward a down payment on a home.

The GOAL SMART program reflects the collaborative spirit of FSS in West Virginia. Housing authorities are finding ways to put available resources back into their programs and create additional opportunities for families working toward self-sufficiency. By reinvesting forfeited escrow funds, these housing authorities are able to further encourage participants as they work toward employment, financial stability, education, homeownership, and other personal goals.

That personal connection is part of what makes FSS so meaningful in West Virginia. In many of our communities, people understand the importance of helping one another. We may live in small towns and rural communities where resources are spread out, but that often makes the relationships between housing authorities, coordinators, community organizations, and families even more important. When one person succeeds, there is often a whole community of people who helped them get there.

Together, West Virginia's FSS Programs are not simply helping families achieve self-sufficiency. They are building a statewide community of support, one family and one community at a time.



From left to right: Aimee Setchell, PH Manager (Fairmont-Morgantown, WV); April Durking, Property Manager/FSS Coordinator (Randolph County, WV); Kaylin Hamilton FSS Coordinator/Administrator First Time Homebuyer Program, (Benwood- McMechen, WV); Jill Slone, FSS Coordinator and Kim Newsome, HCV Manager, (Mingo County, WV)

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Dates to Remember

OCT 04-06	2026 SERC-NAHRO Leadership Workshop	NOV 06-07	2026 SERC-NAHRO Executive Committee Meeting	NOV 08-10	2026 SERC-NAHRO Fall Workshop
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SERC-NAHRO Member Services Update

Membership Dues Increase

We would like to share an important update regarding membership dues. Beginning October 1, 2026, membership dues will increase as follows:

Minimum: \$175.00

Maximum: \$ 675.00

Affiliate: \$ 300.00

Credit card convenience fee will be charged to the PHA and non-refundable.

We understand that any increase in dues is an important consideration for our members. But this adjustment is

necessary to help us manage rising costs while continuing to provide quality training, facilities, and member benefits we all have come to expect.

Your membership plays an essential role in supporting SERC-NAHRO and we will remain committed to providing meaningful value to your PHA. We sincerely appreciate your continued membership and are grateful to have you as part of SERC and look forward to continuing to serve you.

Thank you for your continued support and membership.



— Candice Drake | SERC Vice President, Member Services