



Housing and
Community Development
Network of New Jersey



Newsletter

January 2012

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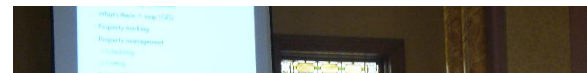
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Network Advances Problem Properties Agenda

We are pleased to report that that the land banking bill has been introduced in the new legislative session! It is bill [S583](#), sponsored by Senator Ruiz and [A1648](#) sponsored by Assemblyman Coutinho. These bills will allow the state's municipalities to designate certain existing entities to act as land banks to repurpose abandoned properties and reduce blight. Learn more about land banks by reading "[Land Banks as a Redevelopment Tool](#)" by Dan Kildee, co-founder and president of the Center for Community Progress.

Now



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Housing Fact of the Month

About 17,460 properties in New Jersey and 1.9 million properties in the U.S. had foreclosure filings last year according to RealtyTrac. Foreclosures in New Jersey took an average 964 days, or more than 2 1/2 years. That was second only to New York, where the process averages 1,019 days.

2012 Redevelopment Forum



NJ Future's Redevelopment Forum will be held on Friday, March 9 at the Hyatt Hotel and Conference Center in New Brunswick. For more information, contact NJ Future at (609) 393-0008 or njfuture@njfuture.org. You can also visit [click here](#) to learn more.

we
need
to
work



Jersey City land banking session last Oct.

together to get this proposal passed, so we are developing materials for Network members and allies to use to help create momentum. We will soon have available a sample resolution you can use with local and Contact you state legislators and ask them to co-sponsor and support the bill. We will keep you up to date will any developments as the bills move through the legislative process. Read more about the efforts to introduce land bank legislation in the legislature from [this NLIHC memo](#).

Over the last year, the Network has engaged with numerous municipal partners, member organizations and community stakeholders to help promote local solutions to abandoned and problem properties. We are pleased to have expanded this work to another area, as a

convener of the Trenton Problem Property Group. With the support of the Princeton Area Community Foundation (PACF), we have begun working with an array of strategic partners in the Capitol City to develop a problem property strategy with us. Like many member organizations in other parts of the state, Mercer area members are working hard with local officials to gain more community control over underutilized areas as a way to make them vibrant places. Passage of the land banking bill will be a huge benefit to all of these efforts.

President Obama Addresses Foreclosure Crisis in State of the Union Address

In his State of the Union address on Jan. 24, President Obama announced proposals to reduce foreclosures and prosecute abusive lending practices. In response to the address, Enterprise President and CEO Terri Ludwig wrote a [letter to the editor of the Washington Post](#) stressing the importance of a balanced

housing policy that promotes both rental and ownership options. [More Information from the State of the Union Address.](#)

Network Urges Court to Invalidate Christie's COAH Plan, Opposes new rules that silence public input

The Network, the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH), and the Mercer Alliance to End Homelessness (the Alliance) has filed an amicus brief with the Appellate Division requesting that the Court invalidate Governor Christie's Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) reorganization plan.

Last June, Gov. Christie issued an executive order that transferred the functions and duties of COAH to the Department of Community Affairs (DCA). The Executive Order has already been challenged in court by Fair Share Housing Center. The amicus brief is the latest action by nonprofit developers, who argue that shifting COAH from an independent agency to one controlled by the executive branch "unconstitutionally consolidates power.

"Unfortunately, not every community is interested in assuring fair access to housing for all segments of the population in all stages of life," said Raymond Ocasio, President of HCDNNJ's Board of Directors and Director of La Casa de Don Pedro, a community development corporation in Newark. "COAH has significance to all residents throughout New Jersey; consequently it should ensure that fairness and accessibility are enjoyed by all of us. Only an independent and diverse representative body making informed decisions that are not subject to either political winds or narrowly defined local interests can do this."

Since 1986, COAH has been charged with the implementation and oversight of the constitutionally mandated requirement of every municipality in this State when exercising the zoning power. Up

until the governor's reorganization, there were a total of twelve seats on the COAH board, two of those represented the needs of low and moderate income housing.

"It is not surprising that Gov. Christie wants to eliminate the voices of the nonprofit builders from being heard," said the Rev. Dr. Elizabeth S. Hall, president of Homeless Solutions, Inc. and Network executive board member. "He is unable, or unwilling, to see the expertise, holistic approach and the great homes that nonprofit developers bring to the low, moderate and special needs communities in New Jersey."

DCA has released its [proposed rules](#) for the reorganization which the Network has filed its comments on. The deadline to submit public comments has passed but it is not too late to have your voice heard. Check our website next week to learn what you can do to make sure nonprofit and special needs developers are given a voice in under the reorganization. To read the amicus brief in its entirety, [click here](#).

Network Website



You may have noticed our website has undergone a few changes. We've not only updated our look, but we're making things easier to find. Under the "about us" tab, you'll find our [organizational calendar](#). The calendar features not only Network events, but events hosted by member organizations as well. If you have an event you'd like for us to post on our site, please contact Nina Arce at narce@hcdmnj.org with all your event information.

Federal Policy Watch

Federal Reserve Submits Housing Policy White Paper to Congress

Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke submitted a white paper to Congressional committee

leadership which explores a potential national "REO to Rental" program, and contemplates policy options for stabilizing the housing market. [More Information on the Federal Reserve's Housing Policy White Paper.](#)

HUD Releases Proposed HOME Program Rule

HUD has published a new proposed rule for the HOME Investment Partnership Program intended to amend program regulations, address operational challenges, update program property standards, clarify existing requirements and establish new requirements to improve program accountability. The deadline for public comment on the rule [HOME Investment Partnerships Program: Improving Performance Accountability and Updating Property Standards](#) (24 CFR Parts 91 and 92) is Feb. 14.

FY 2012, 2013 Appropriations Update

On Dec. 23, President Obama signed the [Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2012](#) (Public Law Number: 112-74) into law, finalizing all fiscal year (FY) 2012 appropriations. The President delivered his State of the Union address on Jan. 24 and will submit to Congress his FY 2013 budget request on Feb. 7. For complete information on FY 2012 appropriations for certain HUD, Department of Agriculture, Department of Energy and Department of Treasury programs, view the updated [Enterprise's Budget Chart](#).

Bills Seek to Set LIHTC Rate

Affordable Rental Housing A.C.T.I.O.N. Legislation to permanently establish fixed 9% and 4% low-income housing tax credit (LIHTC) rates has been introduced in both the Senate and the House. Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.) and Rep. Pat Tiberi (R-Ohio) introduced their bills Dec. 14. Senator Menendez and Congressman Pascrell are co-sponsors.

Establishing a credit floor has been a key goal for many in the industry. The Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 created a temporary 9% credit floor for projects placed in service through 2013. This has allowed developers to receive additional credits during the economic downturn. The new bills would make permanent the HERA provision for a 9% credit

and would establish a 4% rate for acquisition credit calculations (but not 4% LIHTCs generated by bonds).

"Without the provisions, affordable housing developments could experience a reduction of 15 to 20% in essential private equity," said Ron Terwilliger, chairman of Enterprise Community Partners, Inc. This would likely have a negative impact on the number and types of families served, as many of the proposed affordable housing projects will no longer be financially feasible."

Membership Notes

Member Spotlights

Congratulations to **Morris Habitat for Humanity** on the dedication of six new homes in Summit. Approximately 4,400 volunteers contributed over 33,000 hours of their time and now six families have an affordable home they can call their own. Nice work! **New Jersey Community Capital** will be able to expand their neighborhood revitalization efforts in Newark after being awarded a large grant from Chase. See photos of their announcement event [here](#). Finally, congratulations to **WomenRising** which has been awarded a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) through its New Jersey Health Initiatives (NJHI) program. With the support of RWJF, WomenRising will be able to continue to assist women and their families achieve self-sufficiency and live safe, fulfilling and productive lives.

If you have a project or accomplishment you would like to share with the Network and you're a member in good standing, please contact Nina Arce at narce@hcdnj.org to be featured in our next newsletter.

NJ Voices Blog

NJ Voices is a website brought to you by the Star Ledger. It is home for opinion writing, featuring editorials, columns and commentary from the state's leading newspapers, along with letters from readers and blogs from N.J. experts on the issues of the day. Network Executive Director Diane

Sterner is an NJ Voices blogger and would like to offer the opportunity to members in good standing to be guest contributors to the blog. If you are interested in providing original, engaging content between 200 and 500 words, please send an e-mail to Nina Arce at narce@hcdnnj.org with the subject line, "NJ Voices Blog" to learn more. Access Diane's NJ Voices blog by [clicking here](#).

New Jersey Future 2012 Smart Growth Awards

Do you know of an innovative project, plan or initiative that deserves to be honored for bringing smart growth ideals to light? Is your project or plan a winner? Consider nominating it for a 2012 Smart Growth Award. Winners will be selected by jury and recognized at New Jersey Future's annual Smart Growth Awards celebration on June 7, 2012. **Nomination deadline is Friday, February 3, 2012.** [Click here](#) for more information.

Housing in the News

Where Does Crime Go After Public Housing Projects Are Demolished?

(The Atlantic Cities, January, 11, 2012)

As critics have lamented for years, the mega American public housing projects built during the 1960s and '70s were often so flawed in their design as to harm residents - and the neighborhoods around them - more than they helped anyone. They were designed on super blocks that cut residents off from the surrounding community and that kept police from easily accessing the grounds. They were built in shoddy barracks and imposing towers, neither of which gave residents any control over the safety of their communal outdoor spaces. They were, in a sense, dangerous by design (although no one thought of it that way at the time). <http://bit.ly/ykBB13>

Chaos in New Jersey

(Affordable Housing Finance, January/February 2012)

Plans to turn an old factory here into homes for disabled war veterans collapsed into acrimony and a string of lawsuits over the past 12 months. There may be many more lawsuits to come,

according to New Jersey housing advocates-both over the project in Carneys Point and throughout the rest of the state as developers, administrators, and the courts argue about the constitutional obligation of New Jersey towns to provide affordable housing. <http://bit.ly/A7c7cr>

Renter Nation Rages On As New Reality

(CNBC, January, 5, 2012)

Despite record low mortgage rates reported today and rising affordability in most U.S. housing markets, rent is the new reality for former home owners and new households alike. For some it is post-traumatic stress from the housing crash, for others it is the inability to get financing to buy a home. Either way, the rental market continues on its tear. <http://www.cnbc.com/id/45887201>

Funding/Award Opportunities

Make sure to follow us on twitter at www.twitter.com/hcdnnj, to get all the latest funding opportunities!

Federal Grants:

[Asset Building Initiatives Serving Disadvantaged Populations Supported](#)

Department of Health and Human Services

The Assets for Independence Demonstration Program provides support for community-based organizations to offer Individual Development Accounts (matched savings accounts), financial education, and related services to low-income individuals and families, in order for them to accumulate savings and invest in appreciating assets such as a first home, small business, or higher education or training. Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate close collaboration with entities that are serving families with young children, families in the child support system, children and families in the foster care system, people with disabilities, refugees, Native Americans, and survivors of domestic or intimate violence. **Deadline: January 25, 2012.**

[Improvement of Housing-Related Health and Safety Hazard Control Methods Funded](#)

Department of Housing and Urban Development

The Healthy Homes Technical Studies Program provides support for investigations designed to advance the recognition and control of residential health and safety hazards and more closely examine the link between housing and health. Of particular interest are activities within the following topical areas: improving or assessing the efficacy of current residential integrated pest management methods; developing easily replicable, cost-effective methods for preventing and controlling excess moisture and mold in residential buildings; improving indoor air quality through cost-effective approaches; evaluating the effectiveness of residential health hazard reduction and outreach methods that educate at-risk families regarding the adoption of self-protective behaviors; conducting cost-benefit or cost-effectiveness studies on the health benefits of healthy homes interventions in high-risk populations; and demonstrating the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of incorporating injury prevention measures into residential programs. **Deadline: January 31, 2012.**

[FY 2012 Housing Counseling Training Program](#)

Department of Housing and Urban Development

Funds are available to provide, under cooperative agreements with HUD, training activities designed to improve and standardize the quality of counseling provided by housing counselors employed by "participating agencies." Participating agencies are all housing counseling and intermediary organizations participating in HUD's Housing Counseling Program, including HUD-approved agencies, and affiliates and branches of HUD-approved intermediaries, HUD-approved multi-state organizations, and state housing finance agencies. **Deadline: February 7, 2012**

[Funds for Assessment and Cleanup Pilot Projects on Brownfield Sites](#)

Environmental Protection Agency

The Brownfields Multi-Purpose Pilot Grants Program provides support to pilot brownfields projects for both assessment and cleanup work that addresses either hazardous substances or petroleum contamination at a specified site. Proposed pilot projects should be aligned with applicable EPA Strategic Plan goals and objectives and, specifically, should help sustain, clean up, and restore communities and the ecological systems that support them. **Deadline: February 10,**

2012.

[Supportive Services for Veteran Families \(SSVF\) Program](#)

Department of Veterans Affairs

The SSVF Program's purpose is to provide supportive services grants to private nonprofit organizations and consumer cooperatives that will coordinate or provide supportive services to very low-income veteran families who: are residing in permanent housing; are homeless and scheduled to become residents of permanent housing within a specified time period; or after exiting permanent housing within a specified time period, are seeking other housing that is responsive to such very low-income veteran family's needs and preferences. Approximately \$100 million is available for initial and renewal supportive services grants to be funded under this Notice for a one-year period. **Deadline: February 15, 2012.**

[Primary Care Workforce Development Efforts in Rural Areas Supported](#)

Department of Health and Human Services

The Area Health Education Centers Programs provide support for collaborations of academic and community-based leaders that are designed to improve the distribution, diversity, supply, and quality of healthcare personnel, particularly primary care personnel in the healthcare services delivery system and more specifically in delivery sites in rural and other underserved areas. Support is provided in the areas of infrastructure development and point of service maintenance and enhancement. **Deadline: February 15, 2012.**

[Support for Demonstrations to Reduce Recidivism](#)

Department of Justice

The Second Chance Act Demonstration Field Experiment: Fostering Desistance Through Effective Supervision Program provides support for demonstration field experiments designed to improve the offender's motivation to change; address cognitive and behavioral functioning regarding crime-prone thoughts and behaviors; and address core criminogenic needs that affect offender performance while on parole. Proposed model development activities should also work toward building the infrastructure of the reentry process and community-based services to deliver

collaborative and seamless services. **Deadline: February 23, 2012.**

[2012 Our Town Grants](#)

National Endowment for the Arts

The National Endowment for the Arts has posted the guidelines for 2012 Our Town grants. Now in its second year, Our Town supports creative placemaking projects that contribute toward the livability of communities and help transform them into lively, beautiful, and sustainable places with the arts at their core. Our Town will invest in creative and innovative projects in which communities, together with their arts and design organizations and artists, seek to: Improve their quality of life, encourage creative activity, create community identity and a sense of place, revitalize local economies. Pending availability of funding, grants will range from \$25,000 to \$150,000. Projects may include planning, design, and arts engagement activities that reflect a systemic approach to civic development and a persuasive vision for enhanced community vibrancy. **Deadline: March 1, 2012.**

[FY 2011 Planning and Local Technical Assistance Programs Opportunity](#)

Department of Commerce

The Economic Development Administration Planning Program provides assistance to eligible recipients to create regional economic development plans in order to stimulate and guide the economic development efforts of a community or region. Local Technical Assistance Program helps eligible recipients fill the knowledge and information gaps that may prevent leaders in the public and nonprofit sectors in economically distressed regions from making optimal decisions on local economic development issues. Applications are accepted on a continuing basis.

Foundation Grants:

[Support for Sustainable Programs in New Jersey](#)

Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation

The mission of the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation is to support and encourage those educational, cultural, social, and environmental values that contribute to making our society more humane and

our world more livable. The main thrust of the Foundation is to provide support to nonprofit organizations that are working to foster a more creative and sustainable New Jersey. The 2012 grant categories include the Arts, Education, Environment, and Media. Funding priority will be given to applicants who meet multiple criteria, either under a single category or across all of the Foundation's guidelines. **The next deadline for letters of inquiry for new applicants is February 1, 2012; invited proposals will be due March 1, 2012.**

[Employment Programs for People with Disabilities Funded](#)

Kessler Foundation: Signature Employment Grants Program

The Kessler Foundation is dedicated to improving the lives of people with physical disabilities caused by stroke, multiple sclerosis, injuries to the brain and spinal cord, and other cognitive or neuromuscular disabilities. The Foundation's Signature Employment Grants Program funds cutting-edge, non-traditional solutions that increase employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. These solutions may include new pilot initiatives, demonstration projects, or other social ventures that lead to the generation of new ideas to solve unemployment. Preference will be given to interventions that overcome specific employment barriers related to long-term dependence on public assistance, advance competitive employment, or launch a social enterprise project. Funded projects must be collaborative, serve a large geographic area, and include multiple funding partners and stakeholders. Grants of \$100,000 to \$250,000 per year for up to two years are available to nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, and government agencies throughout the U.S. **Deadline: February 3, 2012.**

[Fellowships for Grassroots Leaders](#)

The Petra Foundation

The Petra Foundation seeks out and champions unsung leaders who are making distinctive contributions to the rights, autonomy, and dignity of millions who are marginalized in America. Each year grassroots leaders selected as Petra Fellows receive a no-strings personal financial award. In addition, the Foundation publicizes their innovative models for change, fosters their collaborations, and welcomes them to a national network of leaders who are working across the divides of age, ethnicity, class, and issue to build a more just society. Nominees should display a

combination of activism and thought, force of character, independence of judgment, and clarity of expression. Nominations should be submitted by those who know the nominees and their work (without the knowledge of the nominees). **Deadline: February 20, 2012.**

[MetLife Foundation Community-Police Partnership Awards Program](#)

MetLife Foundation

MetLife Foundation and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) are partnering for the eleventh year to recognize, sustain and share the work of innovative partnerships between community groups and police to promote neighborhood safety and revitalization. Through this awards program, MetLife Foundation and LISC will identify and honor partnerships that exhibit tangible accomplishments in their efforts to advance the process, outcome, and/or evaluation of potent police-community collaborations. Eligible applicants must be member organizations of partnerships that include, but need not be limited to, community organizations and police. Awardees will receive a monetary grant. **Deadline: March 11, 2012.**

[Support for Social Change Initiatives](#)

Public Welfare Foundation

The Public Welfare Foundation supports efforts to ensure fundamental rights and opportunities for people in need nationwide. The Foundation looks for carefully defined points where funds can make a difference in bringing about systemic changes that can improve lives. The Foundation's current funding priorities include the following issue areas: The Criminal Justice program supports organizations that are seeking to reduce incarceration rates of adult offenders in the U.S. The Juvenile Justice program focuses on organizations working to end the criminalization and over-incarceration of youth. The Workers' Rights program supports organizations that promote policy and system reforms to improve the lives of low-wage working people, with a focus on securing their basic legal rights to safe, healthy, and fair conditions at work. Letters of inquiry should be submitted four to six weeks prior to proposals. **Deadline: March 26, 2012.**

[Health Programs in Company Communities Supported](#)

Walgreens Corporate Contribution Program

The Walgreens Corporate Contribution Program supports nonprofit organizations in local Walgreens communities throughout the United States and Puerto Rico. Walgreens provides grants to organizations that focus on access to health and wellness in their communities, pharmacy education programs and mentoring initiatives, civic and community outreach, and emergency and disaster relief. Health is the company's major area of focus, with priority given to programs that address the health needs of community residents. The company also accepts sponsorship or promotional marketing requests. Online applications may be submitted throughout the year. Visit the company's website for application procedure information.

Support for Social Change Initiatives

Ben & Jerry's Foundation: National Grassroots Grant Program

Through the National Grassroots Grant Program, Ben & Jerry's Foundation provides support to nonprofit community organizations throughout the United States that bring about progressive social change by addressing the underlying conditions of societal and environmental problems. The broad goals of the program are to further social justice, protect the environment, and support sustainable food systems. Grants of up to \$15,000 are provided to grassroots, constituent-led organizations that are using community organizing strategies to accomplish their goals as well as organizations that provide technical support and/or resources to such groups. The Foundation does not make grants to support social service programs. Letters of interest may be submitted at any time. Visit the Foundation's website to review the funding priorities and submit an online letter of interest.

Support for Social Justice Efforts

Norman Foundation

The Norman Foundation supports efforts throughout the United States that strengthen the ability of communities to determine their own economic, environmental, and social well-being, and that help people control those forces that affect their lives. These efforts may promote economic justice and development through community organizing, coalition building, and policy reform efforts; work to prevent the disposal of toxics in communities and to link environmental issues with economic and social justice; or connect community-based economic and environmental justice organizing to

national and international reform efforts. Programs that promote systemic change and can serve as a model for other organizations and communities are encouraged. In addition, priority is given to organizations with annual budgets of under \$1 million. Letters of inquiry are accepted throughout the year.

Funds for Local Programs in Bank Communities

Wells Fargo Charitable Contributions Program

Wells Fargo is committed to improving the bank's local communities across the country through grants and volunteer activities. The funding priorities of the Wells Fargo Charitable Contributions Program vary from state to state; however, the bank generally supports the following areas of interest: community development, including housing, job training, economic development, and programs for small businesses and farms; education, including K-12 education with an emphasis on math/science and financial literacy programs; human services, including healthcare and basic needs; and arts, culture, and civic projects. Visit the website listed above and click on a state in order to review the local funding guidelines and application procedures.

Click [here](#) for more funding opportunities.

Events/Workshops

Bank of America Presents: Top Four Challenges Facing Nonprofit Boards, January 26, Webinar

Highly effective nonprofit organizations are those that are able to transform the structure and functioning of their boards in ways that embrace this new future vision. In this workshop, we will outline specific (and bold!) steps that organizations need to take in areas of accountability, sustainability, innovation, and strategic composition to thoughtfully position themselves to be successful going forward. [Click here](#) to learn more.

Fire Up Your Board for Fundraising: Turn Their Passion into Action, February 1, Webinar

Wish you could create a fired-up, engaged board excited about possibilities for your organization and eager to play a part in making it happen? Consultant and author Gail Perry CFRE will share her internationally popular Fired Up system of seven steps to ignite your board's passion for fundraising. Learn how to change your board's mindset about fundraising, overcome their fears, and put everyone to work where you need them. Gail will show you how to make the fundraising process less intimidating and how to empower your board to be in action making friends. [Click here](#) to register for this webinar.

Special Needs Housing Trust Fund Strategy Meeting, February 15, Trenton
On Wednesday February 15th from 10 AM to noon, Special Needs Housing Trust Fund Strategy Meeting will be held at the State House, Annex Room 4, Trenton. The Special Needs Housing Trust Fund has run out of money. Join us and find out how we can work together to renew funding for supportive housing. [Click here](#) to learn more.

NLIHC's 2012 Annual Housing Policy Conference and Lobby Day, March 25-28, Washington D.C.

Early registration is now open for NLIHC's 2012 Annual Housing Policy Conference and Lobby Day, which will take place Sunday, March 25 through Wednesday, March 28 in Washington, D.C. The conference will be held at the Omni Shoreham Hotel, at 2500 Calvert Street, N.W. Confirmed keynote speakers are Pulitzer Prize winning columnist Eugene Robinson, AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Arlene Holt-Baker, and Congressman Barney Frank (D-MA). This year's conference, featuring 40 plenary and workshop sessions, resident events, and evening receptions, will bring you the latest developments in housing policy and ways to bring about positive change on the ground, close to home. For more information and to register, go to www.nlihc.org/conference. Or, to download a registration form, go to www.nlihc.org/doc/2012-AC-LR-Registration-Form.pdf. Rates increase on February 16, so register early and save.

The Leadership Conference on Energy & Water Efficiency for Multifamily Housing, April 22-24, Arlington, VA

This is the most practical and complete conference on energy and water efficiency designed for owners and asset managers involved with market-rate apartments, tax credit properties, HUD-assisted rentals and public housing. It cuts through the generalities and wishful thinking to deliver actionable information on innovative financing techniques and low-cost measures you can implement now-as well as case studies with actual data on upfront costs, cost savings and payback periods. To learn more or to register, [click here](#).

Training Opportunities/Resources

The State of Homelessness in America 2012

The State of Homelessness in America 2012 examines homelessness between 2009 and 2011, a period of economic downturn in the nation. The report shows that despite the bad economy, homelessness decreased by 1 percent during this period. The decrease was likely due to a significant investment of federal resources to prevent homelessness and quickly re-house people who did become homeless. The Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP, funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009) was a \$1.5 billion federal effort to prevent a recession-related increase in homelessness. [Click here](#) to access the report.

Vacant Properties Growing Number Increases Communities' Costs and Challenges

Vacant and unattended residential properties can attract crime, cause blight, and pose a threat to public safety. GAO was asked to examine (1) trends in the number of vacant properties and how they relate to the recent increase in foreclosures, (2) the types of costs that vacant properties create and who bears the responsibility for these properties and their costs, and (3) state and local government strategies to address vacant properties and the federal role in assisting these efforts. GAO analyzed Census Bureau vacancy data and data on property maintenance costs from the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and two housing-related government-sponsored enterprises (GSE). GAO conducted case studies in nine cities selected to provide a range of local

economic and housing conditions, rates of foreclosure, and geographic locations. [Click here](#) to read the report.

Report Recommends Improvements to Federal Agencies' Delivery of Affordable Housing

The White House Rental Policy Working Group released its administrative [proposals for alignment of federal rental programs](#). The report recommends measures to reduce costs, improve program efficiency and effectiveness, and better serve low-income renter households through greater alignment of federal affordable housing programs. A number of the recommendations outlined can be implemented without legislation or new funding. Further information and status updates can be found at the [White House Domestic Policy Council](#) and [HUD](#) websites.

NJRA 2012 Project Finance Courses

Looking for CPE or CLE Credits? Take a NJRA RTI Project Finance Course in 2012! Beginner course introduces financing tools and the types of financing available in today's market for residential and commercial development. The advanced course delves deep into financial modeling for various commercial and mixed-use development projects using Excel. Finally, the intermediate course teaches how to build financial models for the acquisition and development of commercial and mixed-use real estate development projects using Excel. Learn more [here](#).

Employment Opportunities

NORWESCAP

Service Coordinator/Family Partner

This individual will be employed by NORWESCAP, a community action agency, but will be part of a team which includes Madison Housing Authority and Summit Housing Authority. This individual needs a comprehensive understanding of resources in Morris and Union counties, the ability to work with individuals living in public housing who need services and assistance and the desire to motivate and support low income individuals. Interested parties should direct a resume

and cover letter to trinkleg@norwescap.org. [Click here](#) to learn more.

Jewish Renaissance Medical Center

Grant Writer

Reporting to the Director of Planning & Development, the Grant Writer identifies, defines, and develops funding sources to support existing and planned program activities and operations, as well as coordinating the development, writing, and submission of grant proposals to third-party entities. More specifically, the Grant Writer is responsible for doing research to identify potential grant funders, writing letters of intent and grant proposals, tracking renewals of support and applications, and assisting in budget development through the use of a grant proposal calendar. The Grant Writer also works with the Director of Planning & Development to collect, analyze, and report data associated with grant-funded program and operational performance.

All interested candidates should send a cover letter, resume, and at least 2 writing samples to Marta Ferreira at mferreira@jrnc.us. Resumes should indicate a recent history of grants procurement, i.e., list of grants secured and for what organizations, amount of individual grants, funding agencies, and other associated factors. No phone calls please. Learn more [here](#).

Network Comings & Goings

Joining the Network's staff is new **Grants Coordinator Janet Hines**. Prior to joining the Network, she worked for four years as a senior grant writer/manager and urban planner at a planning firm in Central Jersey. In that position, she wrote successful grants that resulted in more than \$5 million in funding from federal, state and private funding sources. In addition, Ms. Hines has also worked for NJ Transit as a Senior Press Officer, where she was responsible for the communication planning for several major transportation projects that included the successful implementation of the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail and Newark City Subway extensions. Ms. Hines received her Master in Urban Planning degree from Hunter College, New York; and her Bachelor's degree from Temple University, Philadelphia. Welcome Janet!

Staci Berger
Housing & Community Development Network of NJ

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