



Advocacy & Legislative Victories

- **Increased Funding for State Rental Assistance Program:** Helped win significantly increased funding for SRAP, from \$25 million to \$37.5 million and expanded allocation for project based SRAP vouchers to 17%
- **Won Greater Relocation Assistance:** Passed in the Assembly (now part of the redevelopment law package), this bill will increase state relocation assistance payment levels from 1972 levels to current dollars, based on increases in the CPI since 1972. It will raise the payment levels over two years, with annual changes indexed to CPI going forward.
- **Expanded Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit:** Drafted two amendments to NRTC legislation to remove barriers to corporate participation in the program. Amendments introduced in both houses* by year end.
- **Promoted *Homes for New Jersey*:** After helping to launch the Homes for NJ campaign, a broad, non-partisan coalition of business, religious and community leaders advocating for better housing, land use, and community revitalization policies, the Network has continued to incubate and lead the effort. Focused on ensuring Governor follows through on his commitment to 100,000 new or preserved affordable homes in 10 years.

Increasing Networking, Visibility and Public Awareness

- **Launched Advocacy Teams:** Organized, supported and strengthened 11 new “A-Teams” to be the backbone of our expanded advocacy and organizing efforts at the local, state and federal level. A-Team accomplishments include: collecting over 3,000 postcards for the SRAP effort; training 100 A Team members at 3 events about general housing policy, advocacy techniques and voting rights. Scores of A-team members educated dozens of key policymakers about the Network’s policy priorities in Trenton and Washington, DC.
- **Non-Partisan Voter Engagement:** Network Advocacy Teams registered, educated and mobilized over 2,000 voters in advance of the November 7 election. For the first time, surveyed major party candidates for Congress about their positions on housing and community development concerns, and publicized their answers to our members.
- **Media Work:** Increased our reach of housing issues, securing coverage of the Governor’s June membership meeting keynote speech in more than a dozen state and regional news outlets. Release of *Out of Reach* report garnered substantial television, radio and print press coverage, successfully tying NJ’s rising housing costs to the need for increased SRAP funding. *Cities in Transition* press event was covered by state media and local papers.
- **Kept Members Informed and Active:** Published ten newsletters and numerous action alerts to support our advocacy efforts and keep members apprised of funding and resource opportunities, upcoming events, job openings and program and policy changes that affect them.
- **Increased Public and Legislative Awareness:** Helped mobilize 1,500 of our members, allies & constituents around the Governor’s “Budget for a Better New Jersey,” which increased SRAP and augmented state funding for a range of anti-poverty programs; At June Membership Meeting, **Governor Jon S. Corzine** recommitted to his campaign pledge to build or preserve 100,000 units of affordable housing over the next decade.

Capacity Building and Resource Development

- **Housing Production:** Completed the third cycle of our Housing Production Business Planning Course with 8 participants from 6 organizations. Their Business Plans will increase their affordable housing production a combined 380% over the next five years; Housing Production Task Force met twice to share ideas on ways to increase affordable housing production in New Jersey. Hosted first annual Business Planning Alumni meeting in May to discuss ways to improve the program and make regular updates of their business plans.
- **Housing Development Finance Professional Certification Program:** Piloted National Development Council Housing Development Finance Professional Certification Program for the first time in NJ; Participants learn the steps of the housing development process, the techniques used to analyze and structure financing for homeownership and rental housing deals, and the problem solving and negotiations skills needed to make complicated projects feasible. First two courses, Home Ownership Finance and Rental Housing Development Finance, were held in June and October with over 50 participants in each course.

- **Multifamily Preservation & Receivership:** Partnered with DCA and the NJ Institute for Social Justice to prepare pilot under the Multi-family Preservation and Receivership Act; Program will provide \$4 million annually toward capital improvements for receivership projects and \$1 million for capacity building of nonprofits to become receivers; Worked with DCA to establish guidelines for preservation funding to rehab ‘distressed’ properties.
- **Neighborhood Planning:** Supported the creation of 3 new participatory neighborhood plans bringing to 13 the total plans completed in NJ. Of these, 8 have been approved by DCA and 2 more are pending approval, while the other 3 will be submitted to DCA shortly. The Network successfully advocated for the reauthorization of the Neighborhood Planning grant program 6 Network members have received grants while 3 more have applications pending. A total of 9 projects within approved plans have been approved by DCA and 7 have been funded. Two Neighborhood Revitalization Task Force meetings were held for Network members to share information and lessons learned from the planning process; Released *Residents at the Center: A Handbook on Community-Based Planning for Distressed Neighborhoods*, a pragmatic reference tool for practitioners and community leaders interested in creating a truly participatory neighborhood plans for sustainable revitalization.
- **PLAN Fund:** Continued to market the \$10 million predevelopment and acquisition loan fund for NJ CDC’s created in partnership with HMFA and TRF; Approximately \$9 million has been raised to capitalize the fund and 7 loans (569 units) were made totaling \$905,500 and another 8 loans (69 units) were approved totaling \$2,052,000.
- **Community Economic Development (CED):** Continued monitoring existing borrowers and restructured 4 loans including increasing 2; Served on advisory committee to NJRA in the creation and launch of its Economic Development Training Institute (October 2006).
- **Support for Citywide Networks:** Worked with members in Paterson, Newark, Camden and Jersey City to support collective efforts to increase resources, access properties and pursue other common goals. Highlights included the passage of an abandoned property ordinance in Jersey City, a comprehensive housing and economic development policy statement delivered to the City of Newark, and the acquisition by CCDA members of 163 TLFC properties

Participating as Innovators in the Field of Community Development

- **Launched NACEDA:** Partnering with 11 other state CDC associations launched National Association of Community and Economic Development Associations (NACEDA) to pursue a national CED agenda, to strengthen and expand the role of state CED associations in promoting local community development efforts; to build the capacity and reach of the CED field; and to act as the convener of the CED field;
- **Began CDC Research:** Surveyed members on their activities, accomplishments and responses to market, political and social changes; Produced *2006 Membership Directory*; hosted CDC roundtables in Newark, Jersey City, Paterson, Camden, and Cumberland County to discuss new challenges and opportunities
- **Compiled and Released *Cities in Transition: New Jersey’s Urban Paradox*:** Completed and published a statistical analysis of changes in NJ’s 30 most distressed urban areas which found cities to be in better shape than they were 10 years ago, but people living there have not experienced parallel improvements in their quality of life.
- **Implemented State CDC Association Organizational Capacity Assessment Initiative:** Helped train staff members from seven NACEDA members to facilitate the OCA process; Assessments completed in NJ and Connecticut along with actions plans for highest opportunity areas for organizational improvement.
- **Speaker Series:** Hosted Bill Traynor of Lawrence Community Works, Lawrence, MA who shared LCW’s successes in mobilizing neighborhood residents to strengthen and revitalize their community, support sound neighborhood-based planning, and to create a public budget process by which local government is now accountable to its citizenry.

Special Recognition: HCDNNJ founder and Executive Director Diane Sterner won one of four James A. Johnson Fellowships from the Fannie Mae Foundation and used her year-long sabbatical to study emerging trends among CDCs nationwide. She was also the recipient of Greater Newark-LISC’s Inspirational Advocate of the Year award.