



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

NEWS

ROD R. BLAGOJEVICH – GOVERNOR

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Blagojevich Administration celebrates a new “Home for the Holiday” with a Springfield family, 100th recipient of Governor’s HOME American Dream Downpayment Initiative

SPRINGFIELD – On behalf of Governor Rod R. Blagojevich, Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) Executive Director DeShana L. Forney, today joined Illinois Assistive Technology Program’s (IATP) Homeownership Coalition for People with Disabilities Program Manager Robin Benson, community leaders, neighborhood residents and representatives from Town & Country and National City banks to welcome DeShawn Brady and her children into their new home. Brady is the 100th recipient of Governor’s HOME American Dream Downpayment Initiative (ADDI).

“Through our HOME American Dream Downpayment Initiative, we’re making great strides toward creating new opportunities for homeowners with disabilities and their families to own safe, affordable homes and achieve the social and financial benefits of homeownership,” said Governor Blagojevich.

“I finally live in a real community where my children can play outside and my neighbors actually care about us,” said first-time homebuyer, Brady, a CNA, whose son has a learning disability. “I feel so blessed to be a homeowner. This is a dream come true for working families who want a piece of the American Dream without compromising the needs of a family member with disabilities. I am grateful to everyone, especially the Governor, for making it possible for me, to purchase my first home.”

The Governor’s HOME American Dream Downpayment Initiative was created in 2003 as an incentive to help low-income, first-time homebuyers with disabilities and their families own safe, affordable homes and achieve the social and financial benefits of homeownership.

“IHDA is proud to have invested \$10,000 to help DeShawn Brady and her family afford the down payment for their home,” said IHDA Executive Director DeShana L. Forney. “Gov. Blagojevich has made affordable housing a top priority for first-time homebuyers and their

families, and this initiative is another step in making homes affordable to hard working Illinois residents.”

Last year, IHDA allocated \$410,000 to IATP to help at least 40 low-income families with special needs buy their first homes in Sangamon, Christian, Logan, Macoupin, Menard, and Montgomery counties. The funds come from the federal grant allocations that total \$993,000 for the state. The ADDI program helps first-time homebuyers meet downpayment and closing costs.

The incentive offers a five-year forgivable loan of up to \$10,000 to low-income first-time homebuyers with disabilities and their families who purchase a home in the Sangamon, Christian, Logan, Macoupin, Menard, and Montgomery counties housing market. In addition, applicants must be a first-time homebuyer or have not owned a home within the past 3 years, contribute at least \$500 of their own money towards the purchase and earn less than 80% of the area median income for their county. For a family of six in Sangamon County, the limit is set at \$37,650. At least one member of the family must be living with a disability.

“This initiative has provided affordable housing options to families with disabled members, who have not been given the same opportunity to purchase their first homes,” said Robin Benson, IATP Program Manager, who provided homebuyer education and counseling to DeShawn. The Illinois Assistive Technology Program, a non-profit organization, has helped people with disabilities and their families achieve greater levels of independence through home ownership.

The Governor’s HOME American Dream Downpayment Initiative increases opportunities for safe and affordable homeownership opportunities among Illinois families. In 2003, the Governor established the first statewide Affordable Housing Task Force to help develop a coordinated approach to finance and develop affordable housing. In 2005, the Task Force created the landmark *Building for Success: Illinois’ Comprehensive Housing Plan* which identified statewide housing needs and established tangible targets to meet the needs of six priority populations: very low income families; low income seniors; low income people with disabilities; homeless people and those at risk of becoming homeless; low and moderate income families and people unable to find affordable housing near jobs or transportation; and low income families and people living in existing affordable housing in danger of becoming unaffordable. The *2007 Illinois Comprehensive Housing Plan: Affordable Housing Dimensions* continues to build on the coordinated success of the prior year plans.

For more information about the Governor’s HOME American Dream Downpayment Initiative, contact the Illinois Housing Development Authority at 312-836-6000 or visit www.ihda.org. For more information about the Illinois Assistive Technology Program’s Homeownership Coalition for People with Disabilities, call Robin Benson at 217-522-7985 (voice), 217-522-9966 (TTY) or visit <http://www.iltech.org>.