

For Immediate Release
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Illinois Housing Development Authority and LISC Celebrate Second Next Gen Cohort

CHICAGO – The Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) are thrilled to announce the second cohort to complete the Next Generation Capacity Building Initiative (Next Gen), a program designed to strengthen the pipeline of emerging affordable housing developers in the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) industry across Illinois.

“Everyone in Illinois deserves access to affordable housing, and our Next Gen program is providing key assistance for a new, diverse generation of developers across the state,” **said Governor JB Pritzker**. “I’m proud to congratulate this cohort, and I applaud their commitment to creating more affordable and equitable housing opportunities for their communities.”

Fifteen ambitious participants completed a rigorous 160-hour curriculum featuring specialized training, one-on-one technical assistance, and opportunities to engage with seasoned industry professionals. The program concluded with [capstone presentations](#) reviewed by a panel of affordable housing experts, offering constructive feedback to help prepare them for real-world development proposals.

“This year’s cohort brought an impressive range of personal and professional experiences, including a former cardiac surgeon, a former WNBA player, and a recent Emmy winner,” **said IHDA Executive Director Kristin Faust**. “Despite their varied paths, each shared a commitment to public service and a passion for creating more equitable housing opportunities across Illinois. Affordable housing is more than bricks and mortar; it’s the foundation of strong families and thriving communities, and these individuals are ready to open new doors across the state. Congratulations!”

Launched in 2024, [Next Gen](#) equips participants with foundational skills in developmental team building, deal structuring, navigating IHDA programs, property management, and more, supported by dedicated coaching and extensive industry

networking. After program completion, alumni are eligible to apply for a pre-development loan to help cover early-stage costs such as site control and project design, expenses that often pose significant obstacles for new developers.

“Emerging developers often face barriers that have nothing to do with talent or vision, they simply lack access to early capital, networks and guidance,” **said Meghan Harte, Senior Executive Director at LISC Illinois.** “Next Gen is changing that. They are now prepared to enter a challenging field with courage, skill, and a deep commitment to their communities. LISC is proud to support their journey and excited to see the impact they will make statewide.”

To date, Next Gen participants have submitted for review eight affordable housing development proposals utilizing the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit, underscoring the program’s effectiveness in preparing participants to advance real projects.

DEADLINE EXTENDED – Apply Now for Next Gen Third Cohort

IHDA and LISC are currently accepting applications for the third Next Gen cohort set to begin in February 2026. Applications are now due by **11:59 p.m. CST this Monday, December 8, 2025.** Additional program details and the online application are available [here](#).

Next Generation Capacity Building Initiative – [Round Two Cohort](#)

Cohort	Hometown
Amicie Crayton	Chicago
Anuja Gupta	Chicago
Araceli Garza	Chicago
Athena Williams	Chicago
Bonita Harrison	Chicago
Cristian Yugsi	Chicago
Devereaux Peters	Chicago
Johana Casanova	Chicago
Kelli Roberts	Fairview Heights
Lauren Lowery	Chicago
Luis Vazquez	Chicago
Malik Simmons	Springfield
Mike Joudeh	Chicago
Monica Arbuckle	Peoria
Noni Arnold	Chicago

About LISC

With residents and partners, LISC forges resilient and inclusive communities of opportunity across America—great places to live, work, visit, do business and raise families. Since 1979, LISC has invested \$1.54 billion in Illinois to build or rehab 36,700 affordable homes and apartments and develop 5.8 million square feet of retail, community, and educational space. LISC has an office in Chicago and program staff based in Chicago and Peoria. For more information, please visit lisc.org/Chicago and lisc.org/central-il.

About the Illinois Housing Development Authority

IHDA is a self-supporting and mission-driven state agency dedicated to financing the creation and preservation of affordable housing in Illinois. IHDA offers affordable mortgages and down payment assistance for homebuyers, provides financing for the development of affordable rental housing, and manages a variety of assistance programs to create communities where all Illinoisans can live, work, and thrive. Since it was established in 1967, IHDA has delivered more than \$29 billion in state, federal, and leveraged financing to make possible the purchase, development, or rehabilitation of 335,750 homes and apartments for low- and middle-income households. For more information on IHDA programs, visit www.ihda.org.