ILLINOIS HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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Illinois Housing Development Authority Receives Two National Awards for Practices and Programs

CHICAGO – The Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) was recognized by its national housing peers for strengthening the pipeline of emerging housing developers and its workplace culture on October 5, at the 2026 National Council of State Housing Agencies (NCSHA) Annual Conference in Detroit, Michigan. IHDA received two Annual Awards for Program Excellence:

- Rental Housing: Encouraging New Construction and Promoting Preservation – Next Generation Capacity Building Initiative (Next Gen).
- Management Innovation: Human Resources – IHDA Core Values.

Established in 1984, the NCSHA Annual Awards for Program Excellence identify and elevate industry best practices and encourage continued housing finance agency innovation. Entries are judged on criteria including creativity, replicability, response to state housing needs, and demonstrating benefits that outweigh costs.

"These awards reflect IHDA's commitment to building a stronger, more inclusive housing system and a workplace culture grounded in shared values," **said IHDA Executive Director Kristin Faust**. "By investing in our employees and equipping the next generation of affordable housing developers with the tools and support they need to succeed, we are expanding opportunity and strengthening communities across Illinois. Congratulations to all the staff and stakeholders who helped develop and implement these initiatives."

Preparing the Next Generation of Illinois' Rental-Housing Developers
Launched in 2024, Next Gen equips emerging developers with technical skills, industry access, and hands-on support to not only gain entry into affordable housing development but also compete in the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program, the primary financing tool to build rental housing nationwide. Participants are trained in

developmental team building, deal structuring, navigating IHDA programs, property management, and more, supported by dedicated coaching and industry networking.

To date, seven Next Gen alums have received LIHTC awards from IHDA and Chicago's Department of Housing. These achievements highlight the progress made by Next Gen participants in advancing affordable housing initiatives across Illinois for the communities they call home.

You can read the full submission here.

Innovative at the Core: Redefining Organizational Culture through the Core Values Initiative

Fulfilling IHDA's mission to create and preserve affordable housing depends on more than technical expertise. It requires a strong, value-driven culture. Employees are central to this work, and fostering an environment where they feel supported, connected, and empowered is critical to long-term success. To advance this goal, IHDA formalized its Core Values - People, Teamwork, Equity & Inclusion, Innovation, and Respect - and committed to embedding each of them throughout the employee experience.

IHDA positioned its Core Values to shape workplace culture, strengthen engagement, align behaviors across the organization, and enhance recruitment and retention. Today, IHDA's Core Values establishes a foundation for leadership decisions along with clear expectations for how employees work together and contribute to the Authority's mission, helping to create an environment rooted in trust, inclusion, and shared purpose. Most importantly, IHDA is focused on ensuring these values are not simply communicated, but actively integrated including into annual reviews, the hiring process, and employee recognition.

You can read the full submission here.

All 2026 NCSHA Annual Awards for Program Excellence program submissions and list of winners are available at ncsha.org/awards.

NCSHA is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization created to advance, through advocacy and education, the efforts of the nation's state housing finance agencies (HFAs) and their partners to provide affordable housing to those who need it. NCSHA's vision: An affordably housed nation. Learn more at www.ncsha.org.

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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 $30 billion in state, federal, and leveraged financing to make possible the purchase, development, or rehabilitation of 343,475 homes and apartments for low- and middle-income households. For more information on IHDA programs, visit www.ihda.org.