



Agency Happenings

Two Community Action Agencies Receive Director's Awards for Excellence in Housing and Community Development

On July 25, the Ohio Department of Development presented their 2012 Director's Awards for Excellence in Housing and Community Development during the Ohio Conference of Community Development's annual summer meeting. Four awards were given in the categories of Affordable Housing, Community and Economic Development, Homelessness and Supportive Housing, and Innovation in Housing and Community Development.

WSOS Community Action Commission received a joint award with Coleman Professional Services in the category of Affordable Housing for their Haller-Norval Apartments project. The project utilized Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP2) funds to construct eight new housing units for clientele of the Mental Health and Recovery Services Board of Allen, Auglaize and Hardin Counties.



WSOS Executive Director Neil McCabe speaks in front of the Haller-Norval apartments during the ribbon cutting ceremony

WSOS was a sub-recipient of the NSP2 grant from the Ohio Department of Development, Office of Community Development, and it was their job to identify potential projects in a seven county area that targeted neighborhoods affected by foreclosures. Some projects WSOS completed in-house and some were assigned to partners, such as the Haller-Norval project. Don Corley, housing development coordinator for



Pictured left to right: Don Corley, William Murdock, Alice Giesken, Jodi Helper, and Pete White

WSOS believes that it was the collaboration and partnerships for the project that led to them receiving the award. For this particular project they not only worked with Coleman Professional Services and the Mental Health and Recovery Services

Board, but they also worked with the City of Lima. "The lots where the units were constructed had already been cleared by the City and placed into its land bank, so it met the city's needs and the mental health services, making it a win, win," Corley explained. "The units also look great on the outside and have a practical interior design." They are Energy Star and Enterprise Green Communities compliant.

Lancaster-Fairfield Community Action Agency received the Homelessness and Supportive Housing category award for their

Emergency Homeless Shelter for Families in Fairfield County. The project utilized Emergency Shelter Grant Discretionary funds to renovate and expand the capacity of this temporary housing complex that offers other emergency services to homeless families in Fairfield County. The renovations



Emergency Homeless Shelter for Families in Fairfield County after renovations

made each unit self-contained and expanded the shelter from three units to four. Lancaster-Fairfield Community Action Agency Executive Director Kellie Ailes also believes it was their collaborative efforts on the project that led to them receiving the award. She explained that the Lancaster Rotary Club and Grace Fellowship Church of Pickerington donated money for the project. The Rotary Club also built a playground at the facility. Local stores even pitched in



Pictured left to right: Carol Wagner, William Murdock, and Kellie Ailes

donating necessary items, such as bedding and pots and pans. "We believe this project was recognized largely due to the representation of so many individuals and organizations within our community," Ailes said.

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The Director's Awards for Excellence in Housing and Community Development recognize communities that have made significant differences with projects that impact the quality of life for low- and moderate-income residents in their areas. It is administered by the Office of Community Development. This year, 14 nominations were received and WSOS and Lancaster-Fairfield Community Action Agency were both one of only four to receive the award. Congratulations to both of them!