

NEWS RELEASE

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San Diego Housing Commission wins five national awards

Agency hailed for outstanding affordable housing achievements

SAN DIEGO - The San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) has won five Awards of Merit from the National Association of Housing & Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO). The awards recognize outstanding, innovative achievements in affordable housing and community development.

Of all U.S. housing agencies that received NAHRO awards, SDHC won the highest number in the state, and is one of only eight agencies in the nation to garner as many as it did.

In accepting the awards on behalf of the agency, Elizabeth C. Morris, President & CEO of SDHC, noted, "These five awards showcase the unique range of our agency's work across three roles – as a Traditional Housing Agency that provides rental assistance, public housing and resident services; as a Housing Finance Partner that provides favorable financing and incentives to affordable housing developers; and as a Policy Advisor, advocating for initiatives that advance affordable housing production."

The following Housing Commission programs and projects received NAHRO Awards of Merit:

Aspire – Helping Residents Achieve Economic Independence: SDHC recently developed an ambitious three-year trial program – Aspire – to help public housing residents achieve long-term economic self-sufficiency. The program provides residents with financial literacy training, budget management skills, and resources needed to purchase a home, start a small business or complete their educations. In partnership with US Bank, residents are able to grow their savings accounts through 3:1 dollar matches.

Learning Opportunity Centers – Measuring Youth Achievement: In collaboration with community service providers, SDHC provides quality after-school youth programs, tutoring and homework assistance at seven Learning Opportunity Centers located at the agency's public housing sites. SDHC recently launched a pre- and post-testing program to measure the academic progress being made by public housing youth throughout the school year. The results not only help tutors and teachers identify areas for improvement, but provide program funders with quantifiable proof of the program's success.

Fairbanks Ridge – A Balanced Communities Model: Fairbanks Ridge, a 204-unit affordable rental community in Del Sur, exemplifies the success of the City of San Diego's inclusionary housing program. In 1992, SDHC and the City of San Diego spearheaded a forward-thinking housing policy that would require developers to set

aside 20% of all new units as affordable in the "North City Future Urbanizing Area" (NCFUA). At the time, the NCFUA was a vast expanse of undeveloped open space west of Rancho Penasquitos. Today, the NCFUA program has resulted in the completion of 1,200 affordable homes – such as Fairbanks Ridge – alongside million dollar houses. The environmentally sustainable development was built by Chelsea Investment Corporation with \$27 million in funding from SDHC's tax-exempt bond program, as well as a master developer land contribution by Black Mountain Ranch.

Jean C. McKinney Manor – Providing Seniors with Quality Affordable Housing:

Located in the community of Encanto, this 50-unit rental complex provides housing and supportive services to very-low income seniors. The first new construction apartment property built in its neighborhood in over ten years, the attractively-designed complex is helping stimulate much-needed revitalization in the area. McKinney Manor was developed by St. Stephens Church and The Related Companies with a \$1 million deferred loan from SDHC.

Smart Corner – New Headquarters Models Smart Growth. SDHC's new downtown office building serves as the anchor of a unique, mixed-use project aptly named "Smart Corner." The development embodies all the elements of smart growth, including: mixed-use with retail, offices and residential on one site; affordable interspersed with market-rate housing; transit-oriented (the San Diego Trolley to run between the office building and adjacent condominium tower); high density; environmentally friendly (SDHC's office building is the first in the city to garner LEED silver status); and was produced by a public-private partnership with a number of agencies.

About NAHRO: NAHRO is a 74-year-old, nationally renowned membership organization of 3,200 housing and community development agencies and 19,500 individual members.

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The San Diego Housing Commission is a public agency working to expand affordable housing opportunities in the City of San Diego. Each year, the agency helps 80,000 low-income individuals with affordable housing through award-winning programs that benefit the city's economy and revitalize neighborhoods. The agency also finances affordable housing development and advises the San Diego City Council on housing policy matters.