



JANICE K. BREWER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL TRAILOR
DIRECTOR

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Contact: Kristina Fretwell

(602) 771-1008

Kristina.Fretwell@azhousing.gov

Arizona Department of Housing Presents 2009 Housing Hero Awards Governor Brewer among Six Housing Heroes Honored from throughout the State

PHOENIX – The Arizona Department of Housing today announced the winners of its annual Brian Mickelsen Housing Hero Awards, which celebrate the achievements and service of individuals, communities and organizations in supporting affordable housing across the state. Recipients were honored at an awards luncheon held during the 2009 Governor’s Housing Forum.

“While we received many outstanding nominations this year, the selected recipients showed remarkable efforts to further affordable housing during these pivotal economic times,” said Department of Housing Director Michael Traylor. “We are excited about the years ahead with so many dedicated individuals and organizations working to improve the lives of Arizonans.”

Awards were selected in six categories, including:

- **Elected Official:** Governor Janice K. Brewer was honored with the Elected Official award for her dedication to affordable housing during an especially difficult budget year. Facing complete and permanent elimination, the Housing Trust Fund, the only state resource devoted to addressing Arizona’s housing related needs, was all but lost during the most difficult budget negotiations in state history. Governor Brewer came through as a champion for housing when she sought to ensure that Housing Trust Fund resources would continue to be available in the future to address the most critical housing needs in Arizona.
- **Innovative Partnerships:** Barbara Blythe from the Mohave County Community & Economic Development Department was selected for the Innovative Partnerships award for her efforts to engage community partners in the county’s housing rehabilitation

program which primarily assist seniors, disabled families and families with children. One recent example was her work on Helen Lundy's mobile home. In 2007 Ms. Lundy's husband passed away and just months later, their home burned down leaving her homeless. Barbara was able to garner over \$6,000 in local donations to compliment the state-funded rehabilitation project to replace Helen Lundy's mobile home in Mohave County.

- **Tribal Initiatives:** The Hopi Tribal Housing Authority received the Tribal Initiatives award for the Hopi Homes I project, which consisted of housing units up to twenty years old that had fallen into a state of disrepair and was sorely in need of renovation. The Hopi Tribal Housing Authority was successful in securing additional funding through the Department's Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program and coupled with additional financing was able to rehabilitate seven single family homes and twenty units of duplex and triplex homes for families at or below 60 percent of the area median income.
- **Arthur Crozier Partner in Housing Award:** Patricia Garcia Duarte of Neighborhood Housing Services of Phoenix was selected for the Arthur Crozier Partner in Housing Award for her more than 20 years as an advocate on behalf of affordable housing and economic development in Arizona. Some of her accomplishments include implementing and marketing loan programs to low and moderate income families in Arizona and supporting the acquisition and rehabilitation of multi-family developments. Patricia is also an active community member serving on a number of boards and task forces, including Chair of the Arizona Foreclosure Prevention Task Force.
- **Superior Sustainable Design:** The Foundation for Senior Living received the Superior Sustainable Design award for the Havasu Hills In-Fill project in Lake Havasu City. The project was built using Insulated Concrete Forms (ICF) in place of conventional wood framed wall systems, which yield significant benefits including reduced heating and cooling costs, exceptional fire ratings and increased safety from wind and termite damage. The Foundation for Senior Living is currently working to expand energy management at the project by adding over 1,700 solar panels to the buildings and car port roofs of the apartment homes.
- **Local Initiatives:** The Arizona Housing Alliance, a state-wide housing advocacy organization that brings together various sectors of the housing industry to raise awareness about the need for affordable housing, was selected for the Local Initiatives award. Established in early 2008, the Alliance moved quickly to establish a Board of Directors and begin identifying advocacy objectives, establishing relationships and educating the community about the importance of affordable housing.

Hosted by the Arizona Department of Housing, the Governor's Housing Forum is the only annual statewide housing conference in Arizona. This conference provides a venue for elected officials, policy makers, industry professionals, advocates and community leaders from across the nation to explore solutions and policy initiatives that address the significant challenges facing Arizona families at this time.

For more information about the Arizona Department of Housing, please visit www.azhousing.gov.