



**2013 Annual Awards Entry Form**  
(Complete one for each entry.)

Entry Name Homebuyer Month

**Connecticut Housing Finance Authority**

HFA

Submission Contact Eric Chatman

Phone (860) 571-4240

Email Eric.chatman@chfa.org

Program Contact Sherry Lambert

Phone (860) 571-4344

Email Sherry.lambert@chfa.org

Entry form with description, check(s), and visual aids (optional) must be received by NCSHA by **Monday, July 1, 2013.**

Use this header on the upper right corner of each page.

HFA Connecticut Housing Finance Authority

Entry Name Homebuyer Month

Communications	Homeownership	Legislative Advocacy	Management Innovation
<input type="checkbox"/> Annual Report <input type="checkbox"/> Promotional Materials and Newsletters <input type="checkbox"/> Creative Media	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Empowering New Buyers <input type="checkbox"/> Home Improvement and Rehabilitation <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging New Production	<input type="checkbox"/> Federal Advocacy <input type="checkbox"/> State Advocacy	<input type="checkbox"/> Financial <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Operations <input type="checkbox"/> Technology
Rental Housing	Special Needs Housing	Special Achievement	Are you providing visual aids?
<input type="checkbox"/> Multifamily Management <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation and Rehabilitation <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging New Production	<input type="checkbox"/> Combating Homelessness <input type="checkbox"/> Housing for Persons with Special Needs	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Achievement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES (embedded link) <input type="checkbox"/> NO



## NCSHA 2013 Annual Program Awards

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### Homebuyer Month

#### **Background**

In April and May of 2013, the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) conducted an Attitudes and Awareness study that was aimed at determining homebuyer customer and prospect awareness of CHFA, measure customer satisfaction with CHFA programs, and establish benchmarks for future performance. In total, CHFA talked to nearly 1,000 customers and prospects throughout Connecticut. Through this survey CHFA found out two important facts:

1. To know us is to love us
2. Few people knew us

CHFA had very high customer satisfaction ratings among first time homebuyer customers but among renters, who would be future first time home buying customers, we had very low awareness levels. CHFA found from the surveys that most homebuyers thought that our product was good and were very satisfied with the process of buying their first home.

We knew we had a good product and that we were doing a good job of satisfying our customers but we had to get the word out to potential homebuyers. In addition, CHFA was able to learn what current homeowners and prospective home buyers wanted and how to best reach them. We learned what was working and which areas we needed improvement on. Based on this information, CHFA launched a June Homebuyer month campaign to increase awareness of CHFA homebuyer program.

#### **The Plan**

CHFA decided to fill June with a variety of homebuyer activities and marketing opportunities. First, we decided to let people know different facts about home buying throughout the month through a series of press releases to be released once a week. These press releases were designed around factual information from the Attitude and Awareness surveys as well as from statistics from secondary sources. The following subjects were determined to be newsworthy:

1. Two thirds of renters in Connecticut are interested in homeownership
2. Nearly 80% of renters thought it would be very or somewhat difficult to save the funds necessary for a down payment
3. Renters see many benefits in owning a home and owning a home benefits families in Connecticut in many ways
4. Nearly 60% of renters in Connecticut are interested in applying for a mortgage and half of those renters wanted to do so within a year.



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Once CHFA determined these four major themes, press releases were developed and work began on getting interviews and media placements throughout the state.

In addition, CHFA planned a forum for mid-June and invited Lenders and Realtors to come and discuss any issues that they had. This forum was designed to generate interest in CHFA's first time home buyer products as well as provide an important feedback loop for CHFA from key partners.

Throughout the month CHFA placed banner ads on major Connecticut websites including an English language on-line newspaper that was aimed at Latinos throughout the state. Everything that was being done during the month was also heavily promoted on Facebook and Twitter.

Finally, CHFA wanted to provide support to communities throughout Connecticut where our homeowners and renters lived and worked. To that end, CHFA donated \$500 to each of the ten Habitat for Humanity® organizations in Connecticut as well as offered a volunteer day to employees to help build a home for someone in need.

### **The Results**

The press releases generated enough interest among the media to create opportunities for several interviews on television and radio where CHFA's President and Executive Director was able to talk further about CHFA's products and programs. Reaction was very fast, in the first two weeks of the campaign CHFA was mentioned in more than two dozen media outlets. As each new press release was issued, more and more media outlets became interested and Facebook and Twitter began buzzing with activity.

Sample of types of stories generated:

[http://www.ctnewsjunkie.com/ctnj.php/archives/entry/homeownership\\_still\\_the\\_goal\\_of\\_many\\_state\\_looks\\_to\\_help/](http://www.ctnewsjunkie.com/ctnj.php/archives/entry/homeownership_still_the_goal_of_many_state_looks_to_help/)

The Lender Forum as attended by over 70 realtors and lenders and has become the genesis for an on-going ad-hoc advisory group to assist CHFA in the promotion of its homebuyer program and support the efforts for CHFA leaders.

Throughout the entire month of June CHFA made a concentrated and targeted effort to spread the word about its programs and provided more information to empower potential homebuyers with the opportunity to own their first home. By targeting our message to potential homebuyers based on research with that specific segment of the market, CHFA was able to provide



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Name of Entry: Homebuyer Month

Category: Empowering New Buyers

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information that these groups of people needed and reach them through outlets that they would notice.

Through this research-based targeting approach, CHFA was able to impart the knowledge that is most important to new homebuyers in a way that is understandable to them. This information will provide the power that they need to begin the process of realizing their dream of owning their first home.