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

Entry Name	Department of Community Affairs Leadership Development Program

Fill out the entry name *exactly* as you want it listed in the awards program.

HFA	Georgia Department of Community Affairs/Georgia Housing and Finance Authority
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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: Georgia Department of Community Affairs/Georgia Housing Finance Authority

Entry Name: DCA Leadership Development Program

Communications	Homeownership	Legislative Advocacy	Management Innovation
☐ Annual Report ☐ Promotional Materials and Newsletters ☐ Creative Media	☐ Empowering New Buyers ☐ Home Improvement and Rehabilitation ☐ Encouraging New Production	☐ Federal Advocacy ☐ State Advocacy	☐ Financial **X Human Resources** ☐ Operations ☐ Technology
Rental Housing	**Special Needs Housing**	**Special Achievement**	**Are you providing visual aids?**
☐ Multifamily Management ☐ Preservation and Rehabilitation ☐ Encouraging New Production	☐ Combating Homelessness ☐ Housing for Persons with Special Needs	☐ Special Achievement	☐ YES ☐ NO

INTRODUCTION:

According to Peter Drucker, organizations measure innovation not by their scientific or technological importance, but by what they contribute to the organization and its customers. In other words, a program, project, or practice is innovative only if it creates value for the organization and its customers. If this standard is not met, the program, project, or practice would be considered a novelty rather than innovative. Based upon this standard, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' entry for the 2013 Annual Awards for Program Excellence represents a significant innovation in human resources management. The Department of Community Affairs Leadership Development Program has added value to Agency operations by developing an internal pipeline of promising and promotable leaders and providing a laboratory for the practice of innovative business initiatives.

SUMMARY:

In 2010, 21% of the Agency's management staff – manager of others, manager of managers, and executive managers – was eligible to retire within the next five years. Although this was a troublesome finding, the most noticeable was that 40% of our manager of managers was eligible to retire during this period.   At that time, no effort was being made to develop an internal pipeline of promising and promotable leaders. Thus, it was apparent that unless the Agency took action, it may not have an adequate pool of qualified internal candidates to address future changes in leadership. In order to avoid this potential leadership crisis, the Agency decided to create a program that would cultivate and develop future leaders.

Therefore, in June 2010, the Agency formed a cross-divisional leadership development design team consisting of non-supervisory and supervisory staff.   The fifteen (15) member design team was led by the Assistant Commissioner, Administration and Finance, and the Human Resources Director. The team was charged with delivering an innovative leadership development program based upon the following objectives:

- Focus on developing a pool of potential leadership candidates at the manager of others level;
- Provide instruction on basic leadership concepts, skills, and abilities;
- Enhance the visibility of program participants through internal network opportunities; and
- Provide opportunities to learn by doing through challenge projects.

After extensive work, the design team created a program for leadership potentials that included the following components:

- One cohort of seven (7) to ten (10) leadership potentials per year.
    - Candidates self-nominate during an annual application process.
    - Program participants are selected based upon scores from an assessment center which included an interview, cognitive ability test, and writing sample.

- Course of study that combines learn by doing challenge projects with limited classroom instruction and network opportunities.
    - Each participant is required to lead a cross-functional team to tackle a major challenge project. The project addresses an actual business problem or issue that has been identified by senior management. This experience requires participants to collaborate across functional areas to address a major business

challenge. It also provides participants the opportunity to apply recently learned leadership skills.

- o A rigorous curriculum is offered during the program to develop each participant's leadership skills. The courses include: Introduction to Leadership, Developing People, Ethics and Accountability, DCA 101, and The Three P's: Policies, Procedures, and Performance Management. Three of the courses are led by an instructor from the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government. The remaining courses are taught by internal staff.
- o Three network luncheons are offered during the program. At each luncheon, participants are partnered with a different member of the senior management team. This experience gives participants the opportunity to network with key decision makers and to gain additional insight about Agency operations and issues. In addition, each participant is introduced to the Department of Community Affairs Board of Directors and required to present an elevator speech to the Board about their challenge project.

- Coordinated oversight and management of the program.
  - o A five member Governing Board was established to oversee and guide the program on a continuous basis. The Board has two standing members, the Deputy Commissioner of Administration and Finance and the Director, Administration Division. The other members rotate on an annual basis and includes representatives from each level of management.

The Department of Community Affairs Leadership Development Program includes other features which help illustrate how it has added value to Agency operations. For example, each program participant is assigned a Project Sponsor. The Project Sponsor is a staff member that has volunteered to help guide the participant through their challenge project. This subject matter expert serves as a sounding board and lends their expertise to the participant. In addition, each participant is assigned a Coach. The Coach is usually a member of senior management that meets regularly with the participant to check on their progress and discuss developmental issues. The use of Project Sponsors and Coaches has helped increase the program's "ripple effect" throughout the Agency.

As stated earlier, the innovative nature of a program, project, or practice is measured by the value it creates for the organization and its customers. The Department of Community Affairs Leadership Development Program has added value to business operations by developing a strong pool of "top talent" leaders and fostering continuous improvement through the implementation of challenge projects. It has also stimulated much debate about the role of managers within the organization and their impact upon employees and operations. What follows is a more detailed outline of how the Leadership Development Program strengthened agency operations and achieved strategic objectives.

Achieved Measurable Improvements in Operations:

- More Innovation: the fourteen (14) challenge projects over the past two years have driven innovation across multiple divisional and functional lines. Some of the issues addressed by the projects included increasing customer satisfaction, streamlining rules and regulations, implementing a wellness program, initiating a social media presence, increasing employee engagement, improving job skills, and using individual development plans to enhance the Agency's performance management process. One challenge project, initiating a community service initiative, resulted in the collection of over 5,700 pounds of canned goods for a local food bank! Another project, creating a social media presence, resulted in the Agency creating its first Facebook page. Overall, the challenge projects are developing a model that others should follow to implement

cross-functional projects. Thus, the program's challenge projects have fed the Agency's innovation pipeline. Another pro

- Strong Leadership Pipeline: to date, fourteen (14) employees have graduated from the program. Of the fourteen graduates, two (2) became managers after completing the program and one (1) graduate was promoted to a position with more responsibility. Other graduates have been asked to serve on cross-functional teams responsible for addressing business issues and problems. By increasing the number of internal promotions, the Leadership Development Program is helping the Department of Community Affairs reduce recruitment costs.

Provide Benefits Beyond Costs:

- Commitment to Collaborate: over 80 employees, including the program participants, participate in the program each year. This includes program speakers, project sponsors, coaches, assessment center volunteers, network luncheon partners, governing board, and other volunteers. This "ripple effect" is one of the program's most significant contributions. It reaches across divisional and functional areas and harnesses the energy of others around a common goal: cultivating and developing future leaders. This creates an excellent environment for internal networking and collaboration.
- Self Growth and Development: the program relies heavily upon internal staff to provide critical administrative and management support. Thus, employees who volunteer to assist with the program gain valuable lessons on how to work on cross-functional teams and what it takes to conceive and launch an agency wide initiative. They also become more knowledgeable of business operations and needs.

Effective use of Resources:

- Inside Perspective: as stated earlier, the program relies heavily upon internal staff to provide critical support and resources. Many employees have served in different roles ranging from project sponsor to assessment center interviewer. In addition, the program was designed and developed by employees and managers. Thus, the limited use of outside consultants and resources has not only reduced costs, but has enhanced the ownership and uniqueness of the program.
- Low Costs: the total cost of the program over the past two years is approximately $18,000. This includes speaker and training fees, DISC profiles, luncheon costs, testing supplies, books, and certificates. Therefore, the cost per graduate is $1,285.00. This amount is significantly less than the cost of advertising for a manager externally. However, due to the extensive use of internal staff, costs have been significantly controlled. This is important for a State agency.

In summary, the ultimate measure of the Leadership Development Program's value to the Department of Community Affairs is reflected in the development of a strong pool of top talent leaders and the innovation and continuous improvement resulting from the program's challenge projects. This low cost, easily replicable leadership development program is building a strong cohort of internal leaders and providing a laboratory for the practice of innovative business initiatives. Therefore, it would definitely meet the innovation requirements established by Mr. Rucker!