

# NCSHA 2016 Annual Awards Entry Form

(Complete one form for each entry)

**Deadline: Wednesday, June 15, 2016**

Visit [ncsha.org/awards](http://ncsha.org/awards) to view the Annual Awards Call for Entries.

**Instructions:** Type entry information into the form and save it as a PDF. Do not write on or scan the form. If you have any questions contact [awards@ncsha.org](mailto:awards@ncsha.org) or 202-624-7710.

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

**Entry Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**HFA:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Submission Contact:** (Must be HFA Staff Member) \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide a 15-word (maximum) description of your nomination to appear on the NCSHA website.

\_\_\_\_\_

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

**HFA:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Entry Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Select the appropriate subcategory of your entry and indicate if you are providing visual aids.**

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

**MassHousing  
Special Achievement  
The Mel King Institute**

Mel King has been an activist, organizer, legislator and educator for over 50 years in the City of Boston. In 1983, when he won the primary race for Mayor of Boston, his win was viewed as momentous for a divided city. Mel King has helped to make the Massachusetts community development field what it is today. He is “doer” in the truest sense of that word. In fact, he has often remarked, “We complain about the dirt, and we have the broom in our hands.” When the idea surfaced to establish a training institute for community-based organizations and community development corporations, the person after whom it should be named was clear. It would be named for the man who not only had the broom in his hands but also knew how to use it.

Real change happens at the grass-roots level. This has always been true and MassHousing has long recognized that non-profits and Community Development Corporations (CDCs) represent a strategically important constituency in the development and preservation of affordable housing communities with a high mission value. CDCs are the grass-roots – and in fact – have developed (along with other non-profit sponsors) about 13% of MassHousing’s rental debt portfolio.

In 2006, the Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations (MACDC) and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) launched a Community Development Innovation Forum as a sector-wide, public discussion about how the field needed to adapt to the changing context in which it worked. The subsequent “Great Recession” added urgency to the need for community developers to “elevate their game”. One of the key initiatives to emerge from this process was the idea of creating a “community development institute.” Public, private and non-profit leaders agreed that there was a need for an organization to focus on the educational and training needs of the community development field in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in order to move the work of CDCs forward. A “business plan” was developed over two years to evaluate the feasibility of creating an institute for this purpose. In the fall 2008, MACDC and LISC started to share the business plan with local funders about their interest to help capitalize the “institute.”

At this time, MassHousing was looking for community partnerships and was asked to be a contributor. MassHousing was intrigued by this proposal for several reasons: 1) it provided an opportunity to invest in a ‘start-up’ that intended to improve the field of community development; 2) it advocated for education and training (a corporate core value of MassHousing); and 3) it intended to leverage a significant range of resources and services for the affordable housing community and non-profit, community-based organizations in particular.

In an effort to make this concept a reality, MassHousing awarded The Mel King Institute \$150,000 for its first two years of operation in 2009. Led by MassHousing, the Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations (MACDC), Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), and community development leaders in Massachusetts joined with the Agency to form The Mel King Institute. Based on its success, MassHousing has continued to invest \$75,000 per year for the operations of the Institute for a total of **\$450,000** to date. Each dollar in funding from MassHousing is now leveraging nearly **\$4** in support from other sources.

This institute is designed to provide an organized structure for professional education that ensures that practitioners in this field stayed on the cutting edge of new information and best practices. At the same time, The Mel King Institute is designed to provide thought leadership as the field continues to adapt to the changing context for its work. The Institute enables Community Development Corporations and other non-profit organizations and their partners to work more effectively. This means that they build more homes, create more jobs, grow more businesses, nurture more community leaders, and pursue more comprehensive community building strategies while at the same time addressing issues like transportation, public safety, green space development, financial capacity, workforce development and youth development.

The Mel King Institute for Community Building fosters vibrant and thriving Massachusetts communities by advancing the skills, knowledge and leadership ability of professional practitioners and volunteer leaders in the community development field. It leverages collaborative educational partnerships that increase access, encourage innovation, and promote and institutionalize systemic success. Through the ongoing dialogue the Institute facilitates, organizations align their work towards the field's common vision, and adapt to the changing world.

The Mel King Institute focuses on training community development professionals, volunteers, and board members. Its programs also serve professionals from various public and private sectors including: local municipalities, state government, law firms, commercial realty groups, The Institute provides professionals and volunteers working on community development the skills, information, and innovation they need to be effective in their positions. It focuses both on individual skill and organizational capacity building in order to strengthen the field of community development. This includes:

- **Learning** – Sponsoring learning opportunities to expand access to high quality professional education opportunities, including national programs, and to create programs to meet the specific needs of organizations in Massachusetts;
- **Resources** – Aggregating and curating resources which are then made available to a larger audience through the Institute's newsletter and website;
- **Growth** – Cultivating young emerging leaders and driving talent to the field by advising in the area of professional development;
- **Strength** – Guiding field-building and driving thought leadership by bringing together major movers to discuss how the groups' collective work can be strengthened by synching programs and finding effective ways to adapt to change.

The Mel King Institute is a working model that can be replicated in other localities across the United States. Funding for a "community development institute" may be put together through a combination of sources from local foundations, state or city agencies, businesses, individuals and income generated from fees paid by participants for their educational courses or seminars. Also, funds from HUD's Section 4 (Capacity Building Grants) may be used to leverage additional resource and to provide training, education, support and advice to enhance the technical and administrative capabilities of CDCs and community housing development organizations (CHDOs). LISC is one of the intermediaries that HUD uses to invest Section 4 funds and LISC has been investing some of those funds in The Mel King Institute.

Nationwide, there are approximately \$35,000,000 of HUD Section 4 funds that may be used to spark more community development institutes across the United States. Organizations including the Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations and the Community Economic

Development Association of Michigan (CEDAM) have expressed an interest in The Mel King Institute model and begun to replicate certain elements.

In all, The Mel King Institute for Community Building has exceeded its intended results. From 2009 to June 2016, the Institute has offered a total of **127** courses in a wide variety of topics to **2,538** participants. It is committed to evaluation and continual learning and as such, has developed a theory of change illustrated in a logic model during its first year and has commissioned an evaluation for each of its **six** years of operations.

Most recently, The Mel King Institute has embarked on providing a mentorship program for community development professionals. Through this mentorship program, participants increase their relationships in horizontal networks (i.e. among their peers) as well as vertical networks (i.e. matching them to leaders in the field). This mentoring helps professionals to improve their performance when they are matched with a mentor who may provide wisdom and knowledge in approaching a particular problem.

The Mel King Institute has developed a dynamic website at [www.melkinginstitute.org](http://www.melkinginstitute.org) that provides valuable resources about upcoming courses and seminars as well as relevant research documents.

The Mel King Institute provides significantly more benefits than the costs to operate the program. It has been also been successful in leveraging a range of resources, and now:

- has a diversified funder base from foundations, banks, law firms, public agencies, individual donors and fee income;
- receives has a substantial number of “in-kind” donations, including training facilities, instructors and professionals who share their knowledge and serve on Steering and Curriculum Committees;
- attracts capital from national organizations to provide trainings at no cost or reduced cost (LISC, Neighborworks, CITI/National Development Corporation, and Capital One, among others);
- eliminates travel and lodging costs to attend training and seminars in other states, and;
- fosters a spirit of collaboration among the many participants who have shared their knowledge and experiences in these educational and training courses.

The Mel King Institute operates on a yearly operating budget of approximately **\$290,000** and it is now able to cover all of its out-of-pocket expenses for training courses with tuition and third party payments. However, one of the most important metrics to use in measuring the benefits that the Institute provides benefits and illustrating that these benefits far outweigh the costs comes in the comments from participants who have taken advantage of these educational opportunities:

*About themselves ...”I started the day feeling intimidated and I am leaving feeling confident.”*

*About an instructor ...”Excellent, Knowledgeable, Engaging.”*

*About a course ...”This training strengthened my skills portfolio.”*

*About the Innovation Forum ...”Great panel. Very comprehensive.”*

The Mel King Institute has made a significant contribution in the field of community development and it is highly valued by community development professionals across the state. It seems clear that The Mel King Institute is doing precisely what its namesake would want. It is not only handing out the broom but teaching people how to use it.