

NCSHA 2016 Annual Awards Entry Form

(Complete one form for each entry)

Deadline: Wednesday, June 15, 2016

Visit 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 or 202-624-7710.

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

Entry Name:

Continually Improving: 2015 MaineHousing Annual Report

HFA: MaineHousing

Submission Contact: (Must be HFA Staff Member) Deborah Turcotte **Email:** dturcotte@mainehousing.org

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

MaineHousing's 2015 Annual Report

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

HFA: MaineHousing

Entry Name: Continually Improving: 2015 MaineHousing Annual Report

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

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

MaineHousing

Continually Improving: 2016 MaineHousing Annual Report

OVERVIEW

“It’s the little details that are vital. Little things make big things happen.” – John Wooden

In the big picture of a public housing authority, the “little things” matter: the extra effort given to a client who is in need of housing; the boost of a couple of thousand dollars to cover partial closing costs on a new home; a new, inviting look to services or programs that encourages participation in them.

The words “continuous improvement” sound too much like bureaucratic speak. But change them to “Continually Improving,” and it’s a positive movement.

In 2015, MaineHousing was faced with big challenges and events. We hosted the bi-annual Maine Affordable Housing Conference. The Maine Legislature instructed us to convene in the fall the Maine Affordable Housing Working Group to examine barriers to affordable housing, and to report back by the end of the year. Affordable senior housing became a hot-button topic that required providing information to politicians and housing advocates, plus the writing of an article on the history of senior housing for the biennial Maine Policy Review at the University of Maine. Also, it became time for our program review with the Maine Legislature, which happens every seven years.

Inside the agency, we began a thorough review of our processes, how effectively they are used to help our clients and partners, and how they could be streamlined. A big component of these evaluations was to look at the numbers. Instead of comparing our annual accomplishments year to previous year, we began looking at the numbers each month in order to address any roadblock or recognize whether a particular change showed promise or results.

All that we faced, externally and internally, could be viewed as “big things.” We approached all by focusing on the “little details.” For example, we finance the construction of hundreds of new affordable housing units each year, and the projects require property managers. Are they properly trained? Now they are thanks to a class we initiated at a southern Maine community college.

Several former schools or businesses that were renovated into affordable housing for seniors and individuals in need of support opened their doors in 2015. The school renovations included details from when the halls were filled with students, and the opening of a new four-unit building that now sits at the site of a former ice cream manufacturer was celebrated with an ice-cream party.

MaineHousing’s 2015 Annual Report – “Continually Improving” – highlights the “little details” in the big picture that create what we believe will bring positive changes to the lives of lower income individuals and families in Maine. It’s not so much a report with graphics. Instead, it’s a picture book of short stories or accounts that will serve as a historical reference to the year in which all that we did, no matter the scale, was important to someone. And that we will continue to improve.

THEME AND DESIGN

The words “continually improving” conjures images of construction and renovations. Our design was to be subtle without being literal. No hammers or tools throughout the pages, but a couple of design elements to make the point. Just like renovating old New England saltbox houses, we chose sandpaper and wood. We spent 2015 peeling away the layers to come up with a fresh approach. The bolts represent tying the old with the new into a tidy package.

The small, picture booklet design represents our “little details” approach in an out-of-the-ordinary size to make it stand out from the traditional 8.5”-by-11” size.

Testimonials can be hard to get. For this report, we found it very easy to get quotes from people who wanted to share their observations or thanks for the partnerships we have created with them.

PRODUCTION

MaineHousing produced its annual report in house. The data, articles, layout and design, and most of the pictures were the work of MaineHousing’s Communications and Planning Department.

The annual report is posted online for easy viewing from our home page at www.mainehousing.org, and is mailed to partners who request hard copies.