



# Entry Form 2017 Annual Awards for Program Excellence

**Entry Deadline: Thursday, June 15, 2017, Midnight ET**

Each entry must include a completed entry form. Please complete a form for each entry your HFA is submitting. The completed entry form will become the first page of your entry.

This form is a fillable PDF. Type your information into the entry form and save it as a PDF. Please do not write on or scan the entry form. **Questions: Call 202-624-7710 or email [awards@ncsha.org](mailto:awards@ncsha.org).**

**Entry Title:** Enter your entry's title exactly as you wish it to be published on the NCSHA website and in the awards program.

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**Category:**

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**Subcategory:**

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**Entry Summary:** A 15-word (max) summary of the program, project, or practice you are entering.

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**HFA:**

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**HFA Staff Contact:**

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**Phone:**

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**Email:**

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**Visual Aids:**

Are you mailing to NCSHA 10 copies of any visual aids that cannot be included in your entry PDF?    Yes        No

**Payment:**

My HFA is mailing a check to NCSHA.  
My HFA is emailing the credit card authorization form to [awards@ncsha.org](mailto:awards@ncsha.org).



***Hometown Heroes – Building Our Future. When your hometown needs help, it's time for everyone to step up and become a Hometown Hero.***

### **The Heroes' Backstory**

For the 15<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, the Nebraska Investment Finance Authority (NIFA) hosted its Housing Innovation Marketplace, an annual conference that brings together lenders, developers, real estate professionals, non-profit organizations, and city/community leaders for educational sessions and networking opportunities.

The 2017 conference theme, “**Hometown Heroes: Building Our Future,**” built upon the successful social media marketing campaign deployed for the 2016 conference, further highlighting the views and experiences of conference attendees by participation through various social media sources. NIFA’s strategic objective was to involve conference attendees before, during and after the 2017 conference. The **Hometown Heroes** media campaign achieved that objective and more. Using social media as a tool, NIFA was able to target our communications to particular groups of potential attendees resulting in a fun and interactive way to promote the 2017 conference, its theme, and shine a light on stories about community heroes across the state. This was all done at minimal cost to NIFA.

To engage attendees around the conference theme, we encouraged them to recognize a **Hometown Hero** that had made a difference in providing or promoting the development of affordable housing in their respective community. Upon registration, attendees were asked to submit stories and photos about a “**hometown hero**” through social media using the tag **#NEHometownHero**. These stories and photos were released through our Facebook ([NIFAHousing](#)) and Twitter ([@NIFAHousing](#)) pages to create excitement about the upcoming conference, encourage attendance and provide a preview of the type of affordable housing discussions that might occur at the conference. Attendees who submitted **Hometown Hero** entries prior to the commencement of the conference were provided with a \$25 discount on their registration fee. A slideshow that included a compilation of the stories and photos submitted was shown at the conference during all general sessions and in materials featuring the Heroes which were included as a part of the information provided at the registration table.

### **The Hometown Heroes Materials and Promotion**

NIFA used various materials and mediums in the marketing strategy and promotional efforts for **Hometown Heroes**. Promotion of the conference was entirely paperless through email postcards and social media, enabling NIFA to reach a large and targeted the audience at a fraction of the cost of printed mailings. Themed postcards and flyers were distributed via email and posted on NIFA’s website, Facebook, and Twitter.

To add a bit of fun during the conference, NIFA strategically placed a photo booth in the Exhibitors’ area of the conference hall. Conference attendees could visit the photo booth and dress up as super-heroes to take super-hero themed photos together. These photos were shared online after the conference for everyone to enjoy.

Exhibitors in the conference hall were able to easily engage and interact with attendees as a result of the close proximity to the photo booth. Additionally, conference attendees were encouraged to visit each exhibitor and collect stamps on their “bingo” card. Those collecting stamps from all of the exhibitors were eligible to participate in a drawing for a number of prizes, including two free registrations and hotel stay for NIFA’s 2018 conference.

The submission of **Hometown Hero** stories prior to the conference provided a platform for conference attendees to further share the successes, opportunities and projects in their respective home towns. The **#NEHometownHero** submissions were displayed in a continuous loop slideshow throughout the conference, including during general sessions and all meals, giving conference attendees the opportunity to learn more about the strategies and types of activities taking place to provide affordable housing in our Nebraska communities.

The **Hometown Hero** “mascot” appeared in attendee conference bags in the form of a character “stress doll” to provide a further reminder of the conference theme. In addition to their stress doll, attendees received a flash drive containing the 2017 Nebraska Profile, an annual report commissioned by NIFA that includes demographic, economic, and housing information for the state. Samples of those materials can be found in the attached exhibits.

NIFA staff, adorned in special **Hometown Hero** conference t-shirts, were easily identifiable to conference attendees and provided information and guidance throughout the conference.

### **The Hometown Heroes Conference**

**Hometown Heroes** was held on March 21-22, 2017 at the La Vista – Omaha Conference Center. The conference kicked off with the “Get to Know Your Exhibitors” breakfast where attendees had the chance to visit with exhibitors in our dedicated “Innovator’s Hall.” Courtney Dentlinger, Director of the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, welcomed attendees in the general session breakfast. For the remainder of the morning, attendees could choose from five tracks of break-out sessions: Single Family, Multi-family, Technical Topics, Housing and Homelessness and new this year-- Workforce Housing.

In setting the agenda for the 2017 conference, NIFA not only built upon the feedback received in connection with prior NIFA conferences, but also considered how to best provide additional value to attendees by incorporating new and timely topics. The provision of “workforce housing,” particularly in the non-metropolitan areas of Nebraska, has become a topic of intense discussion. For many conference attendees, the workforce housing track provided a unique opportunity to learn more about the issue and network with others facing the same or similar housing challenges. Additionally, for the third straight year, NIFA featured several sessions focused on topics particularly relevant to the development of housing to better serve the Nebraska’s Native American population.

**Hometown Heroes** were recognized during the conference luncheon with the presentation of NIFA’s Housing Champion Award, Lifetime Achievement Award, and Rural and Urban Realtor Awards. Attendees were then treated to an inspirational speech from documentary filmmaker Brett Culp. Brett showed a short clip from his super-hero themed documentary “*Legends of the Knight*” and then encouraged attendees to step up and become **Hometown Heroes** in their own communities. The afternoon continued with break-out sessions and wrapped up with a Networking Reception, complete with live, local Nebraska entertainment from blues singer, John “Honeyboy” Turner.

Day two of the conference began with the “Sponsor Recognition Breakfast.” The morning continued with break-out sessions. The conference wrapped up with an awards luncheon where two **Hometown Hero**-worthy individuals were inducted into NIFA’s Housing Hall of Fame. Awards were also presented for “Property Manager of the Year,” the “Innovative Project of the Year,” and for the “Making a Difference” partner collaboration award.

### **The Big Results**

The **Hometown Heroes** social media campaign reached across county and state lines resulting in 419 registered attendees from 38 Nebraska communities and 15 other states. A record 34 exhibitors were on hand and a total of 16 sponsorships were obtained, contributing a total of \$37,500. Continuing Education credits were provided to real estate professionals, attorneys, accountants and mental health professionals.

Based on the results of an online evaluation survey completed by 79 attendees following the conference, **Hometown Heroes** had an overall average rating of 4.5, with 5 being the highest rating. The success of the 2017 conference has set the bar even higher for 2018. NIFA intends to continue to follow the template that has been so successful for its conferences, incorporating innovative, fun, meaningful and interactive themes that encourage attendees’ participation and draw attention to our annual conference that is focused on the housing needs of Nebraska.

The strategies used by NIFA in connection with its **Hometown Heroes** conference can easily be replicated by other Housing Finance Agencies. The overall theme and encouragement to share **Hometown Hero** stories and events stimulated an energetic, interactive environment that created a vibrant conference. We hope others are inspired to think about their **Hometown Heroes!**

# Nebraska Investment Finance Authority Hometown Heroes – Building Our Future Exhibits

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E-postcards & Social Media Posts



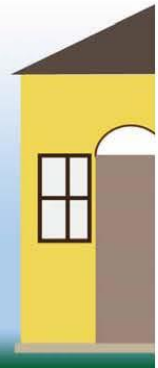
## H O M E T O W N HEROES

Building Our Future

**March 21-22, 2017**  
**La Vista Conference Center**



- Conference brochure and agenda available online at [www.nifa.org](http://www.nifa.org)!
- Continuing education credits available from the Nebraska Board of Mental Health Practice Branch
- Scholarships available - contact Susan Pulec at NIFA (402) 434-0970 or email: [susan.pulec@nifa.org](mailto:susan.pulec@nifa.org)
- Five separate tracts of sessions including Housing the Homeless





# HOMETOWN HEROES

Building Our Future

March 21-22, 2017  
La Vista Conference Center



**Want to save up to \$75?**

**You can if you register before February 16th!**

Your registration for NIFA's 2017 Housing Innovation Marketplace could be as low as \$100 if you register by close of business on Wednesday, February 15th AND nominate a Hometown HERO. Tell us about your Hometown HERO in 150 words or less and include a photo of them or their project on NIFA's Facebook ([NIFAHousing](https://www.facebook.com/NIFAHousing)) or Twitter ([@NIFAHousing](https://twitter.com/NIFAHousing)) page using #NEHometownHERO. If you prefer, you may submit via email to [nifa@nifa.org](mailto:nifa@nifa.org)

After close of business on Wednesday, February 15th the registration fee will be \$150 if you nominate a Hometown HERO and \$175 without a nomination.

Don't miss out!

To register or for more information on this exciting conference visit our website at [www.nifa.org](http://www.nifa.org)

**We look forward to seeing you at the 2017 Housing Innovation Marketplace!**

## EXHIBITORS::

LEA & COMPANY  
*Affordable Housing Valuation & Consulting Solutions*

Bonneville  
*Mortgage Special*

NEBRASKA  
HOUSING BROKERS  
ASSOCIATION

SCHEMMER  
*ARCHITECTS | ENGINEERS | PLANNERS*

SMOKEFREE  
nebraska  
*So long smoke. Hello clean air.*

FEDERAL  
HOME  
LOAN BANK  
OF TOPEKA

WELLS  
FARGO

CDS  
*Inspections & Beyond*

NOVOGRADAC  
& COMPANY, LLC  
*REAL ESTATE ASSOCIATES*

PRAIRIE GOLD  
HOMES

**SPONSOR** opportunities are still available! If you are interested, please contact Elizabeth Fimbres at (402) 898-2501 or [elizabeth.fimbres@nifa.org](mailto:elizabeth.fimbres@nifa.org)



# H O M E T O W N HEROES

Building Our Future

March 21-22, 2017  
La Vista Conference Center



## 2017 Housing Innovation Marketplace conference brochure is NOW available!

The conference brochure is now available for download at our website. [Click here](#) to view it. Check out the agenda for all of our fantastic session topics!

Continuing education credits are pending from the Nebraska Real Estate Commission, the State of Nebraska Board of Public Accountancy, and the Nebraska Judicial Branch. Continuing education credits are available for the Nebraska Board of Mental Health Practice.

[REGISTER](#) before February 15th to get the \$125 registration fee AND don't forget to recognize a Hometown HERO prior to registering on either our Twitter (@NIFAHousing) or Facebook (NIFAHousing) page to receive an additional \$25 discount! If you prefer, you can email your Hometown HERO submission to [nifa@nifa.org](mailto:nifa@nifa.org) to receive the \$25 discount.

[RESERVE](#) your room! NIFA has secured a block of rooms at a discounted rate available until 2/29/17.

To register or for more information on this exciting conference visit our website at [www.nifa.org](http://www.nifa.org)

**We look forward to seeing you at the 2017 Housing Innovation Marketplace!**

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### SPONSORS:



Watch NIFA's website ([www.nifa.org](http://www.nifa.org)), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for more information on the 2017 Housing Innovation Marketplace



# H O M E T O W N HEROES

Building Our Future

March 21-22, 2017

## Last chance to register! Registration closes Friday, March 11th

Don't miss out on the [2017 Housing Innovation Marketplace](#)! This is your chance to participate in one-of-a-kind educational sessions, gather information from state-of-the-art exhibitors and network with more than 400 community leaders and housing partners from across Nebraska and the country.

**Registration** is easy, and don't forget if you nominate a Hometown HERO on either of our social media pages Twitter (@NIFAHousing) or Facebook (NIFAHousing) or email us at [nifa@nifa.org](mailto:nifa@nifa.org) with **#NEHometownHERO** you will receive a discount!

NIFA has secured a block of rooms at the [Marriott Courtyard Omaha La Vista](#) for conference attendees at a special discounted rate that has been extended through the **end of today**. To receive the discounted rate please call 866-634-7155 and tell them you are attending the NIFA conference.

Be a HERO! We are collecting donations for "Bridges to Hope", a non-profit 501©(3) organization in Lincoln, Nebraska that provides services to men and women who will soon be or have been released from incarceration. They are requesting men's and women's socks and deodorant; toothbrushes and toothpaste; disposable razors and shaving cream. There will be a donation bin at the conference registration desk.



Are you reaching your audience? Sponsorship and Exhibitor opportunities are still available!

[2017 Sponsorship Request Form](#)

[2017 Exhibitor Request Form](#)

[2017 Housing Innovation Marketplace brochure](#)

We look forward to seeing you at the 2017 Housing Innovation Marketplace conference!







# H O M E T O W N HEROES

Building Our Future

## Exhibitors Wanted

**LOCATION:** The 2017 conference will be held at the La Vista Hotel and Conference Center.

**EXHIBITOR HALL:** Inside our "Innovation Hall" all of our exhibitors will be provided a 6' table and access to electricity.

**"BINGO" CARD:** All exhibitor logos will be included on a "BINGO" card that attendees will need to have stamped by each exhibitor in order to be eligible for the giveaway prize drawing on Wednesday, March 22, 2017.

**CONFERENCE MARKETING MATERIALS:** We encourage exhibitors to provide NIFA with a logo and brief description of their organization prior to the conference. This information will be included on our website and distributed in conference marketing materials.

**GET TO KNOW YOUR EXHIBITORS BREAKFAST:** Exhibitors are invited to join us at the Tuesday morning breakfast. Exhibitors will be provided with a table in the ballroom and given the opportunity to make a statement about their organization. This is a great opportunity to drive business to your booth!

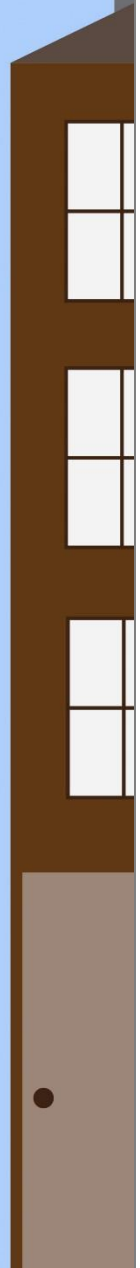
**COST:** \$175 will ensure your exhibitor space at this premier housing conference!

**SESSIONS:** If you would like to attend any of our informative conference sessions or take part in the continuing education credits, the cost to participate is an additional \$125, before February 10th, and \$175 after February 10th, 2017.

**RESERVE** your room! NIFA has secured a block of rooms at the Courtyard Marriott with a discounted rate available until 2/28/17.

**NOTICE:** The Nebraska Housing Developers Association will be responsible for receiving ALL conference funds this year. Please make checks payable to the Nebraska Housing Developers Association and mail to: 3883 Normal Blvd., Suite 102 Lincoln, NE 68506.

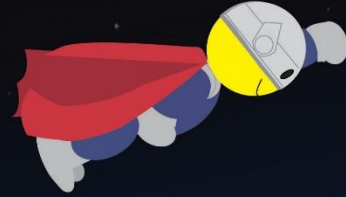
Watch NIFA's website ([www.nifa.org](http://www.nifa.org)), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for more information on the 2017 Housing Innovation Marketplace.





# HOMETOWN HEROES

Building Our Future



## Space is Going Quickly- Reserve Today!

**LOCATION:** The 2017 conference will be held at the La Vista Hotel and Conference Center.

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**COST:** \$175 will ensure your exhibitor space at this premier housing conference - NEW this year [register online](#) for your exhibitor booth!

**SESSIONS:** If you would like to attend any of our informative conference sessions or take part in the continuing education credits, you must [register to attend](#) the conference. The cost to participate is an additional \$125, before February 10th, and \$175 after February 10th, 2017.

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Watch NIFA's website ([www.nifa.org](http://www.nifa.org)), Facebook and Twitter for more information on the 2017 Housing Innovation Marketplace.



# Conference brochure



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# H O M E T O W N

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# HEROES

Building Our Future



March 21 - 22, 2017  
La Vista Conference Center

# HOUSING INNOVATION MARKETPLACE

Join us March 21st & 22nd for the 2017 Housing Innovation Marketplace at the La Vista Conference Center. Our annual conference brings together more than 400 community leaders and housing partners from across Nebraska and the country to discuss affordable housing and community development. This dynamic conference offers educational sessions and networking opportunities with colleagues. Come visit an array of great exhibitors and experience an environment where financial resource providers, community representatives and developers come together to stimulate the creation of affordable housing.

## WHO SHOULD ATTEND

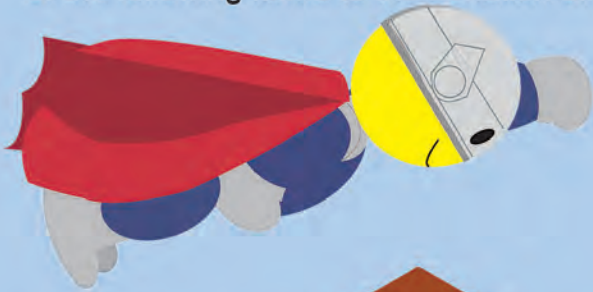
Lenders, real estate agents, developers, non-profit organizations, local governments, housing authorities, chambers of commerce, architects, attorneys, accountants, homebuilders, service providers, investors and planning firms will all be interested in the dynamic Marketplace presentations.

## INNOVATION HALL EXHIBITS

Discover the latest innovations in all areas related to housing through the Innovation Hall Exhibits. A variety of organizations and companies will showcase the latest developments, technologies and programs in housing. Visit all of our exhibitors with your Hometown HEROES BINGO card to become eligible to win great prizes.

## BECOME A HERO

This year we will be collecting donations for “Bridges to Hope”, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization in Lincoln, Nebraska that provides services to men and women who will soon be or have been released from incarceration. If you would like to donate, please bring any of the following items to the donation bin at the conference registration desk:



- Men's or Women's socks
- Shaving cream
- Toothbrushes

- Men's or Women's Deodorant
- Disposable razors
- Toothpaste

# ACCREDITATION

Continuing education credits are pending for the Nebraska Real Estate Commission, the State of Nebraska Board of Public Accountancy, the Nebraska Judicial Branch and the Nebraska Board of Mental Health Practice.

## BRETT CULP, Keynote Speaker



Brett Culp is an acclaimed filmmaker whose work has inspired audiences around the world. He is the personal cinematographer for Hollywood stars, music icons, beloved authors, hall of fame athletes, and royal families. His films have been featured on Netflix, iTunes, Hulu and other top digital platforms.

With his uplifting documentary film *Legends of the Knight*, Brett pioneered a ground-breaking approach to community building and relationship-driven engagement. Rather than launching this feature film through normal distribution channels, he offered anyone in the world the opportunity to screen it in their local movie theater with proceeds benefiting the charity of their choice. This unique plan gave individuals the freedom to use the movie as an open-source tool for bringing people together to make a positive impact.

Without a single dollar spent on marketing or advertising and no paid staff, the feature film successfully screened in theaters in over 100 cities across the globe raising nearly \$100,000 for charity. Each showing was hosted by local volunteers who took the initiative to organize and promote the event. Brett inspired thousands of people, many of whom had never planned a community event, to become leaders engaged in a passionate mission.

Brett's work as a filmmaker has built MORE than a fan base of followers. He empowers people to find their own path to leadership. He has been featured in USA Today, Entertainment Tonight, WIRED, The LA Times, The Hollywood Reporter, Lifetime, WEtv, and many more. He is co-founder of The Rising Heroes Project, a 501(c)(3) that supports charitable organizations and empowers community leaders.



# Hometown HEROES

Throughout the 2017 Housing Innovation Marketplace, your “Hometown HERO” submissions will be highlighted in the main ballroom. Note: when you submit a Hometown HERO you will also receive a discount on your conference registration.

## GET TO KNOW YOUR EXHIBITORS BREAKFAST

The Get to Know Your Exhibitors Breakfast on Tuesday, March 21st at 7:45 a.m. is an opportunity to talk to our Exhibitors over breakfast and a cup of coffee. Each Exhibitor will have a table. This is a great chance to network and learn about their programs and products!

## HOUSING CHAMPION LUNCHEON

Join us Tuesday, March 21st from 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. for our Keynote speaker, Brett Culp, acclaimed filmmaker. We will also recognize the 2017 Housing Champion recipient for their dedication to affordable housing.

## NETWORKING RECEPTION

Join us Tuesday evening, March 21st from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. for an evening of networking, musical entertainment, drinks and hors d'oeuvres. This is a wonderful way to wrap up the first day of the conference!

## SPONSOR RECOGNITION BREAKFAST

On Wednesday, March 22nd at 7:45 a.m. NIFA invites you to meet our 2017 sponsors! Join us for breakfast and learn more about our sponsors and why our conference is important to them.

## AWARDS LUNCHEON

The awards luncheon will be held on Wednesday, March 22nd from 12:15 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. During this luncheon, we will recognize individuals whose dedication to affordable housing has truly made a difference.



## Tuesday, March 21, 2017

- 7:00 am - 7:45 am Exhibitor Set Up  
7:45 am - 9:00 am Get to Know Your Exhibitors Breakfast  
8:00 am - 5:00 pm Registration  
8:00 am - 5:00 pm Innovation Hall Exhibits OPEN  
8:30 am - 9:00 am Welcome - Governor Pete Ricketts (Invited)  
9:00 am - 9:15 am Break  
9:15 am - 10:30 am CONCURRENT SESSIONS

### Single Family

#### **Heroes for Homebuyers**

Resource Opportunities for Homebuyers

### Multifamily

#### **Successful Project Showcase**

A showcase of successful multifamily projects

### Technical

#### **Fair Housing Update**

Equal access to housing - final rule discussion

### Housing the Homeless

#### **Coming to the Rescue...**

Challenges of young adult homelessness

### Workforce Housing

#### **Hometown Heroes**

Big things in small towns

10:30 am - 10:45 am Break

10:45 am - 12:00 pm CONCURRENT SESSIONS

### Single Family

#### **Single Family Roundtable**

A guided discussion of the most current issues in single family housing

### Multifamily

#### **LIHTC 101: Roundtable**

A guided discussion of the LIHTC program and application process

### Technical

#### **Economic Update**

Prominent economists will discuss the current state of Nebraska's regional economy for 2017

### Housing the Homeless

#### **Heroes for the Homeless**

Update on the statewide plan to end homelessness

### Workforce Housing

#### **Recruiting Community Heroes**

Making the case for housing in your community

12:00 pm - 1:30 pm Housing Champion Luncheon

1:30 pm - 1:45 pm Break

1:45 pm - 3:00 pm CONCURRENT SESSIONS

### Single Family

#### **New Nebraskans in Today's World**

Providing support and homeownership options to first-generation Nebraskans

### Multifamily

#### **Nebraska Affordable Housing Tax Credits**

An open discussion on the use of Nebraska State Tax Credits

### Technical

#### **2017 Profile of Nebraska Dashboard**

Annual update on the latest demographics and key statistical information for Nebraska and the Dashboard

### Housing the Homeless

#### **Re-Entry Housing**

Housing opportunities for those recently released from correctional facilities

### Workforce Housing

#### **Financial Heroes**

Financing workforce housing - a banker's perspective

3:00 pm - 3:30 pm Break





3:30 pm - 4:45 pm CONCURRENT SESSIONS

**Single Family**

**Heroes in Financial Education**

Educating homebuyers to be prepared borrowers

**Multifamily**

**Heroes Hurdling the Gap**

Multifamily resource providers

**Technical**

**Washington Update - Housing and Legislative Initiatives**

An update from the National Association of Home Builders senior economist

**Housing the Homeless**

**Superhuman Feats**

Challenges for the newly-housed - support and expectations

**Workforce Housing**

**Builders and Workforce Housing**

What does it take to build workforce housing in your community

4:45 pm - 5:00 pm Break

5:00 pm - 7:00 pm Networking Reception

**Wednesday, March 22, 2017**

8:00 am - 12:30 pm Registration Open

8:00 am - 12:30 pm Innovation Hall Exhibits OPEN

8:00 am - 9:15 am Sponsor Recognition Breakfast

8:30 am - 9:15 am Welcome

9:15 am - 9:30 am Break

9:30 am - 10:45 am CONCURRENT SESSIONS

**Single Family**

**Superhero Powers at Work**

Purchase, rehab, resale and owner-occupied rehab opportunities

**Multifamily**

**The Incredibles**

Mixed-use developments

**Technical**

**Place-Based Development**

Creating walkable/usable spaces within your community

**Housing the Homeless**

**The Real Heroes**

Ending veteran homelessness

**Workforce Housing**

**The Employer's Role**

Creating workforce housing for your employees

10:45 am - 11:00 am Break

11:00 am - 12:15 pm CONCURRENT SESSIONS

**Single Family**

**New Construction**

Utilizing and/or creating affordable subdivisions and lots in your community

**Multifamily**

**Qualified Contract Process: Roundtable**

An open discussion on properties reaching year 15 and the qualified contract process

**Technical**

**Neighborhood Heroes**

Strategies for facilitating neighborhood change

**Housing the Homeless**

**Opportunities for the Next Step**

Job training programs for incarcerated persons

**Workforce Housing**

**Best Practices in Workforce Housing**

Learning from other states' workforce housing programs

12:15 pm - 2:00 pm

Awards Luncheon



# Hometown HEROES

This year's conference theme "Hometown HEROES", encourages you to recognize a HERO who has worked hard to make a difference in the affordable housing community of Nebraska. We encourage all attendees to submit to NIFA a "Hometown HERO" – include a brief description (150 words or less) of what makes this person a HERO and a photo of them or a project they have been a part of prior to the conference through either our Facebook (NIFAHousing) or Twitter (@NIFAHousing) using the #NEHometownHero. If you would prefer, you can email your Hometown HERO submission to [nifa@nifa.org](mailto:nifa@nifa.org)

## REGISTRATION

Conference information and online registration can be found at [www.nifa.org](http://www.nifa.org). Don't forget to recognize a Hometown HERO prior to the conference on Facebook (NIFAHousing) or Twitter (@NIFAHousing). If you would prefer, you can email your Hometown HERO submission to [nifa@nifa.org](mailto:nifa@nifa.org) to receive a \$25 discounted rate.

Early registration fee is applicable until close of business on February 15, 2017.

NIFA will accept registrations until the close of business on March 10, 2017.

Refunds of registration fees will not be issued after March 3, 2017.

Attendees submitting a "Hometown HERO" will receive a discount of \$25 on their conference registration fee. Just let us know at the time of registration if you will post your "Hometown HERO" on our social media pages or email the information. Join us and celebrate our hometown HEROES!

## HOTEL INFORMATION

All sessions will be held at the La Vista Conference Center, located at 12560 Westport Parkway, just off I-80 and Giles Road. A block of rooms has been secured for conference attendees at a special discounted rate of \$109 per night for a single or double room. To ensure a room at the discounted conference rate, identify yourself as a Nebraska Investment Finance Authority conference attendee when you call the Courtyard Marriott Reservations at (866) 634-7155 or (402) 339-4900 . The discounted rate will be available until February 28, 2017.



## STAY CONNECTED

Need to check your email or search the web? Don't want to read that large document from your office on your smartphone? Laptops will be available to allow our attendees to stay connected while attending the 2017 Housing Innovation Marketplace. Free wi-fi is available throughout the main conference area of the hotel.

## SPONSORSHIP AND EXHIBITOR SPACE AVAILABLE

Showcase your organization in our Innovation Hall!

Exhibitors are provided a table in our "Innovation Hall" and their logo will appear in marketing materials and on the Hometown HEROES BINGO card. Attendees can have the card stamped by exhibitors to be eligible for the NIFA-sponsored prize drawings.

Sponsors receive a choice of sponsorship activity, full conference recognition, signage and company information on distributed marketing materials.

To become an Exhibitor or Sponsor contact Elizabeth Fimbres at 402-898-2501 or Susan Pulec at 402-434-0970 or [nifa@nifa.org](mailto:nifa@nifa.org)

## QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions about the upcoming conference, registration, exhibits or sponsorship, please contact either Elizabeth Fimbres (402) 898-2501 OR Susan Pulec (402) 434-0970 - email: [nifa@nifa.org](mailto:nifa@nifa.org)



# BINGO Card



# BINGO



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## **B.I.N.G.O. Raffle Instructions**

Here's how to enter:

1. Visit ALL exhibitors, and receive an initial at each booth.
2. Have each of the 32 exhibitors initial your entry form, and fill in your name and contact information on the bottom of the card.
3. Return the card to the registration desk where it will be verified (all exhibitor initials have been collected) and become eligible for prize drawings.
4. Are you a WINNER? Be at the Awards Celebration Luncheon on Wednesday, March 22nd to find out! You must be present to win!

### **B.I.N.G.O. Raffle Prizes**

Nike Sport Watch  
Robotic Vacuum Cleaner  
Quadcopter Drone

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

“Credit Card” USB Drive distributed to all attendees



(front of the drive)



(back of the drive)

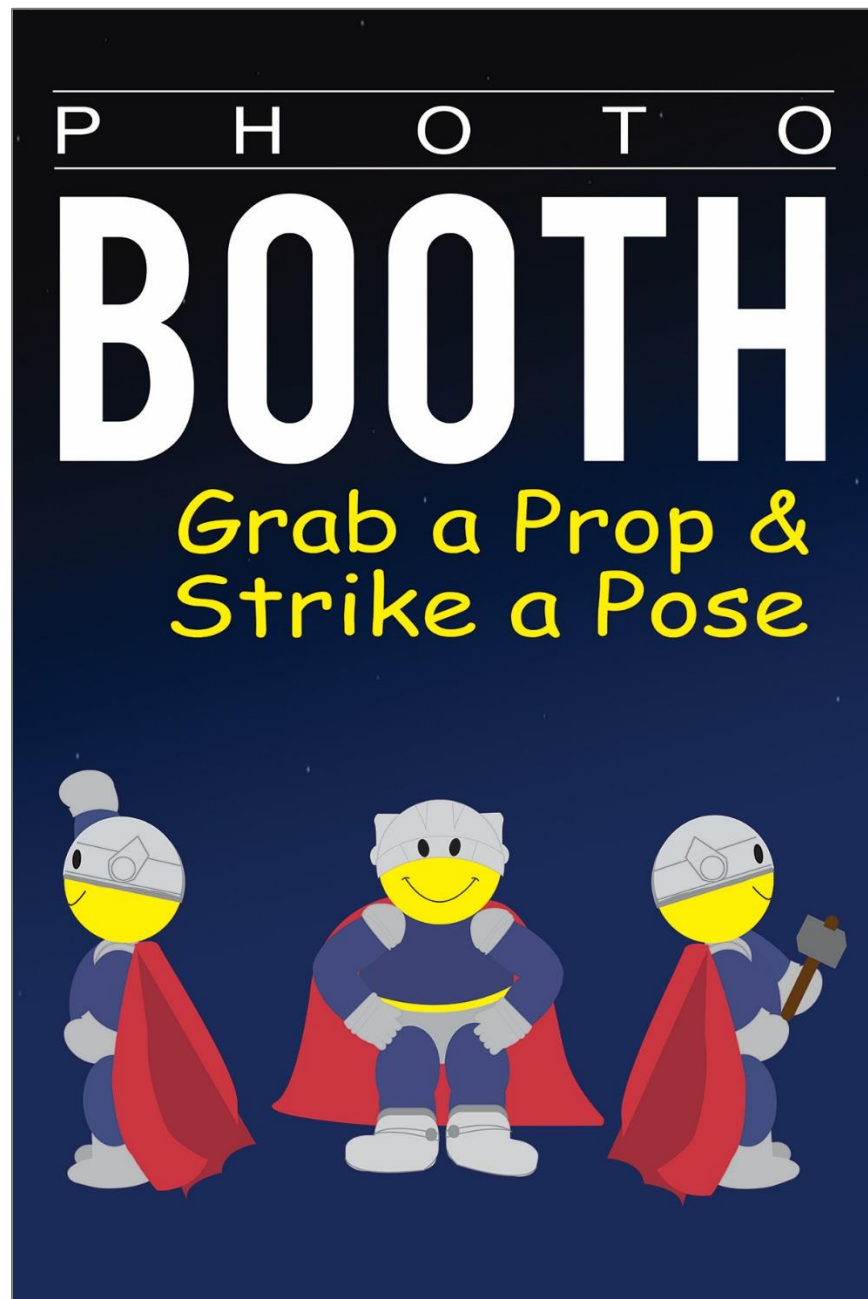
Staff t-shirt Mock ups





NIFA provided a photo booth in the Innovation Hall where attendees could stop by and put on props such as capes, masks or hold up signs and have their photos taken throughout the conference. These signs were meant to bring out the inner Hometown Hero in our attendees and encourage participation.

### Photo Booth Signs



P H O T O

# BOOTH

Grab a Prop &  
Strike a Pose



Sample of some of the Photo Booth images.



# Sponsor Signs

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# Stress doll “giveaway”



Hometown Heroes were recognized by their peers from across the state – these submissions were shown in a slideshow at the general session and provided to them at the registration table.

Hometown Heroes Handout



## 2017 Housing Innovation Marketplace

# HOMETOWN HEROES



### Leigh Alexander



Leigh Alexander, Co-owner of CDS Inspections & Beyond, is a Nebraska Certified Lead Risk Assessor who teaches contractors how to prevent lead poisoning of children through their work in rehabilitating homes in Nebraska. As a home inspector and trainer, she has seen the impact of childhood lead poisoning and has the passion to be an agent of change to prevent lifelong disabilities of children from lead poisoning. The key to fighting this preventable condition is education. Nebraska is a state of do-it-yourselfers in so many ways, and those people who work on their own pre-1978 homes may be putting their families at risk without any awareness of the impact of their actions. Because of this, Leigh is also partnering with housing organizations to educate all homeowners through organized workshops in a variety of communities. We are proud to call Leigh Alexander our Hometown Hero!! Submitted by Judy Petersen

### Sara Arnett

Sara Arnett is a true Hometown Hero! With family roots running through the community of Wood River, Sara is a business leader deeply invested in meeting the housing needs of local residents. Whether it is serving on the community's housing committee, devoting countless hours to gather local information for grants, preparing flyers to advertise meetings and programs, etc., Sara tirelessly gives of herself to promote the City's community and economic development interests. Sara was the driving force behind the City's housing study, the subsequent (successful) owner-occupied rehabilitation grant project and the City's 2016 Leadership designation. She truly desires to see the housing needs of all Wood River residents met in one capacity or another. She demonstrates leadership in many ways and serves as a catalyst for many accomplishments within the community. Submitted by Sharon Hueftle



### Nancy Bentley



My hometown hero would have to be Nancy Bentley. I have worked with Nancy for 11 years and I have learned so much from her. I see Nancy as my mentor, and a great one at that. She is always there to answer any question very openly and honestly. I see her struggle every day against naysayers and not by getting upset but by educating them, which, in my opinion, is one of her most admirable characteristics. I can only hope to attain her knowledge and charisma someday. Submitted by Rita Morales

## Unadilla Bill

Unadilla Bill is our Hometown Hero as he promotes excitement and fun in our small Nebraska community. Governor Ricketts even joined us this year in the parade as well as many exhibits of antique autos, community clubs, boy/girl scouts and the King and Queen that is selected each year. It is a day of fun/town-branding and promotion of our small community which is outside of Lincoln, east on Hwy 2 about 20 minutes. Unadilla Bill loves promoting home ownership through NIFA/ USDA RD helping new homeowners in the village purchase their first home.

Thanks for letting Unadilla Bill continue to stand up for our little town and yes that is duct tape holding his feet down... he gets so excited sometimes! Submitted by: Jo Lewis



## Becky Christofferson & Rob Woodling



Please accept this letter in response to this year's conference theme "Hometown HEROS." My choice for such an honor is split between two very special people. They are Becky Christofferson and Rob Woodling. These two individuals have made a profound impact in affordable housing. Both are extremely talented and bright; however, above all that, their character is the reason I have selected them as my "Hometown HEROS."

John Maxwell said it this way, "Talent is a gift, but character is a choice." From my perspective, Becky and Rob exude the highest form of character. The manner in which they serve their profession is humbling and the example they live-out is inspiring. They have touched many lives, including mine, through their selfless humility. I want to publicly express my heartfelt gratitude to both of them for making me a better person. You deserve this recognition. Submitted by Thomas Juds



## Jim Hawks



Jim Hawks, North Platte City Administrator, has consistently supported the work of Lincoln County Community Development Corp (LCCDC) in developing and rehabilitating affordable housing in the community. We consider him a HERO for housing in many ways.

Jim has provided for a portion of operating funds to the LCCDC from the City budget annually since at least the year 2000. The City has also partnered in demolition/new construction projects by providing funds for demolition of condemned structures. This allows the LCCDC or other nonprofit to then buy the property and build affordable new homes to fill those empty lots. Most recently, in 2016, the City of North Platte applied for CDBG funds to support owner-occupied rehabilitation projects. Under Jim's administration, the City staff is willing to provide assistance whenever appropriate...this includes planning and zoning, building inspections and code enforcement.

In addition to the help he has provided to LCCDC, Jim has worked to improve infrastructure in the community to allow for growth. He has also worked tirelessly to revise flood zones in order to facilitate construction and reduce costs to homeowners for flood insurance. Jim has played an integral part in the development of the City's LB840/Quality Growth Fund which was recently used to fund the "Shot in the Arm" housing program. Submitted by: Carol Bodeen



## Gary Hilkemann

Norfolk Housing Agency is Proud to be a Hometown Hero to Norfolk, Nebraska. The Norfolk Housing Agency under the direction of Gary Hilkemann, Executive Director are building homes for Low to Moderate income families. They have just successfully sold their 1<sup>st</sup> home to a young family.

Trades are working in two more homes with the hope to have both available by Early spring, 2017.

The homes are approximately 1,100 square foot ranch homes with 2 bedrooms on main with an open floorplan and utility area in the main floor bathroom. The basement is framed for 2 additional bedrooms with egress windows and large family room. A finished bathroom is included in the initial floor plan. Submitted by: Gary Bretschneider



## Pat Hosick



Pat Hosick, Executive Director of the Cozad Housing Authority, has demonstrated an unflinching dedication to working with other organizations to develop quality housing for low- and moderate-income households and senior populations. She has reached out across local government agencies, administrations, and private businesses to collaborate and push forward an innovative and profoundly

needed new approach to housing development in rural communities. Her work on the Heritage Garden project was essential to the construction of income-restricted duplexes and a single-family home. The Regional Workforce Housing Initiative, construction to begin in 2017, has been a multi-year effort to develop market-rate, senior, and LMI housing in three communities in Dawson County. Pat's leadership at the Housing Authority has been essential, resulting in the contribution of five lots for the project. Pat has worked for the Housing Authority since 1983. Submitted by: Suzanne Brodine

## Starr Lehl

When asked who he would like to nominate for his "HOMETOWN HERO," Rick didn't even miss a beat with his instant response, "My Wife, Starr Lehl!" Not only is she the former Mayor of Gering, an Business Development Western Services Field Representatives for the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, Starr also serves as Governor Rickett's Western Nebraska Representative. Starr is one of the strongest advocates for the great quality of life and opportunities in our State. Submitted by: Rick Lehl



## Ty Lucas



Ty Lucas has been a champion of community development since returning to his hometown of North Platte and joining NebraskaLand National Bank in 2002. In 2015 Ty became a HERO for housing when as Board Chair of the North Platte Chamber & Development Corporation he took on the issue of affordable and desirable housing in the community. Ty recognized that there were good jobs available in North Platte, but that the community lacked the necessary housing inventory to meet the needs of these individuals and families.

Ty worked with the Chamber & Development Corp to develop strategies to

address the issue. The first was to launch a program called a "Shot in the Arm for Housing". This investment was made to increase housing inventory and jump-start local housing construction. The program was a unique partnership that combined Chamber & Development incentive funds with the City of North Platte's LB840-Quality Growth Fund to form a \$344,000 "Incentive Pool". Builders who qualify for the program receive \$8,000 for each dwelling after interior drywall is installed.

Currently there are 48 homes that have either been built or are under construction as a result of this program. This includes two single family homes and two duplexes being built by Lincoln County Community Development Corporation. Over \$7.5 million is projected in new construction, along with \$100,000 generated in city sales taxes and \$250,000 in new real estate taxes.

Ty also serves on the Nebraska Bankers Association Workforce Housing Task Force to develop statewide initiatives addressing affordability and availability of housing in rural Nebraska.

Submitted by: Carol Nelson Bodeen

## John Madsen

John Madsen and his wife, Pat, moved to Stuart in 1975, and since then John has been a Home Town Hero to Stuart through his involvement with the Village of Stuart, the Stuart Development Corporation, the Stuart Village Manor, and the Wm. Krotter Co. Since 1975, Stuart has rehabilitated nearly 60% of their homes through their involvement with the Nebraska Affordable Housing Program, built 12 rental units for low-to-moderate income households through partnerships with USDA and DED, and built 12 affordable spec homes through the Development Corp's investment into housing, as well as DED grant funds. John is a member of Stuart's Business Development Committee, which loans funds for business opportunities in the Village of Stuart. John is also a member of the Nebraska Home Builders Association as the Vice President/Sales Manager for the Wm. Krotter Co., a locally-owned lumber yard with stores in numerous rural communities. Submitted by: Judy Petersen



## Cliff & Kathy Mesner



My nominee for a Hometown HERO would be Cliff and Kathy Mesner, and all of the staff at Mesner Development Company. With their experience, insight and expertise, Schuyler has been able to begin development of two significant housing projects: an eight unit single family workforce housing project and a fourteen unit senior duplex LIHTC project. Mesner has also been instrumental in helping guide the organization of a local home builders group, which was involved in the development and sale of two single family dwellings in 2016.

Prior to Mesner Development's involvement, Schuyler's speculative housing lie in the hands of the Schuyler Central High School Construction Class, which has recently partnered with Schuyler Lumber Company to build one house annually. Now with multiple developments occurring, Schuyler is better able to provide a quality supply of housing to meet community demand. Thank you Mesner Development Company for being our Hometown HERO! Submitted by: Brian Bywater, M.B.A.



## Sandra Roemer



Three Rivers HDC proudly nominates, Sandra Roemer as a Home Town Hero. Sandra recently retired from First State Bank and Trust after sixteen years of service in Mortgage Loans. Sandra and FSB&T partnered with Three Rivers Housing in the face to face delivery of REACH Home Buyer Education through the First State Bank and Trust University. She referred qualified customers that were looking for first time homeownership to the HBE Program and the PRR program at Three Rivers HDC. Working together we were able to extend education and affordable housing services to those in need. Sandra currently serves on the advisory board of Three Rivers Housing after nine years as an executive board member.

Sandra's mortgage lending expertise has assisted a host of families reach their dream of homeownership. We commend her service to affordable housing and hope to partner with her as she plans her volunteer service in retirement. Submitted by Pam Thomsen

## Sister Marilyn Ross

Sister Marilyn Ross may be the first nun on a list of iconic developers. Holy Name Housing Corporation, the organization she led for decades before her recent retirement, began as a venture by two young parish priests at Holy Name Church (The Revs. Don Nereuther and Jerry Mullin) who had a social mission and believed the deterioration of the surrounding neighborhood threatened the viability of the church.

They acquired abandoned houses on individual blocks, formed a small construction company to rehabilitate them and sold them to new homeowners. When they left Omaha, Sister Marilyn became HNHC's executive director and took the nonprofit development corporation to new heights, building new single-family homes on vacant sites mostly in north Omaha but also in other areas, developing new projects and subdivisions on vacant sites (the intergenerational center on the St. Richard site, new ownership subdivisions on the old Immanuel Hospital and Fontenelle Home sites), and many other projects that have stabilized large areas of inner-city Omaha. Submitted by: Mike Gawley



## Kevin Spencer & Robert Taylor



Robert Taylor and Kevin Spencer are certainly hometown heroes for the Scottsbluff, Gering, Terrytown area....both have served on the Housing Partners of Western Nebraska Board of Commissioners – Mr. Taylor for 35 years and Mr. Spencer, for over 7 years!

With their vision, HPWN was the Developer, General Partner, and Management Agent in the 2014 special needs development "Monument View Villa." This 10 unit complex of one and two bedroom apartments designed for the person with disabilities, features community gardens supported by the work of Total Quality Maintenance (TQM). The Monument View Villa complex was a 1.7 million dollar deal involving NIFA tax credits, MHEG as Syndicator, NDED HOME funds and AHP / FHLB of Topeka, Kansas.

Mr. Taylor, a local businessman, is a cancer survivor and Mr. Spencer is the Chief of Police for the Scottsbluff Police Department.... Both are HOMETOWN HEROS fighting for good housing/communities in their hometowns!!! Submitted by: Nancy Bentley, CEO



## Rev Harry Waller

I would like to nominate Rev. Harry H. Wallar for the "Home Town Hero" Rev. Wallar is disabled veteran that dedicated his life to serving the homeless and near homeless of our community by founding New Visions Homeless Services. Pastor Wallar was born and raised in Omaha, NE. Under Pastor Wallar's direction and love for serving the less fortunate, New Visions Homeless Services built two campuses in the Omaha Metro Area. One is located in Council Bluffs Iowa serving the homeless and near homeless of our community and our other is in Omaha, Ne that offers 40 apartment to homeless veterans at no cost to the veteran.

In August of 1993 Rev. Harry and Ginny Wallar started a church in the community out of a old catering hall. Soon after, Pastor Wallar began to feed hungry people out of a little white van. The church parishioners would make sack lunches consisting of 2 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, a bag of potato chips, a piece of fruit, and a juice box. He and several committed parishioners would take the van under the viaduct, into tree lines, and on the interstate looking for the hungry and the homeless. They would simply walk up to them and hand them a lunch and walk away.

Approximately six months later during a Sunday afternoon message Pastor Wallar stopped in the middle of his sermon and stated "I am going to buy a bus and we will build a mobile kitchen and feed the homeless and the hungry" and continued his message. Just like he had spoken the next Sunday morning a big yellow school bus was sitting in front of the Church. After several months of hard work the "Mobile Kitchen" was born. The Church began to provide meals to the homeless every night from 5:00 p.m. until 6:30 p.m. the bus would pull under the viaduct in Council Bluffs, Iowa and feed the homeless and the hungry. For two years the bus would be in the same spot every night, seven days a week.

The need was so great that Pastor Wallar soon realized that they needed a building to continue their feeding program. He spotted an old hardware store just a block away from where the bus parked and struck a deal with the owner. Seven months later "MOHM's Place" (Messengers of Hope Ministry) was in operation feeding the hungry men, women, and children, that would come every night to eat. Pastor Wallar began to rally organizations that provided services to this population and soon there were 13 different agencies providing 69 different services all aimed at assisting the homeless and near-homeless of our community. Sensing the need for expanded services Pastor Wallar began to pursue a vision God had given him to build a complex for the homeless in our city. It has been estimated that they served over one million meals in that building.

In September 2008 Pastor Wallar's vision came to pass, with the help of Central States Development Company, New Visions Homeless Services moved into the "New Visions Complex." They literally made history in building the first 62 bed men's shelter, 26 transitional living unit for single men and single women, a meal site that would seat 250, and an administration building for the homeless and near-homeless of Council Bluffs. This complex is the first of its kind in all of Southwest Iowa. It is nearly 26,000 sq. ft. under roof and it is built with excellence. Currently we are sleeping approximately 100 men per night in our shelter, our transitional living unit is full with a waiting list of about 20, and we feed approximately 6,000 meals monthly in our meal site.

New Visions Omaha was built in 2012. This is a complex with 26 Transitional living units for honorably discharged veteran's and 14 permanent supportive housing units for veterans who are homeless. This campus is unique to our community as it provides the veterans their own apartment at no cost to them all while providing life saving wrap around services.

Pastor and Ginny Wallar also operate "MOHM's Place Thrift Warehouse" and a lawn service to supplement the operational funding streams. All of the profits are returned to the ministry to help us feed the homeless and hungry of our community.

The target population for New Visions Homeless Services are those who are homeless or near homeless in

Southwest Iowa and in Sarpy and Douglas Counties in Nebraska. Our programs are individually designed to meet the unique needs of this overall population by serving different groups of homeless or near homeless.

MOHM's Place Meal Site: Open to the community, serving breakfast, lunch, and dinner to those needing food security. Through this program, along with meals, New Visions offers food pantries, personal care items, access to health screenings through AllCare Community Health Center, and links to community support services such as mainstream benefits, case management, housing programs, and addiction treatment. This is often the entry level of our other program participants, as we work to connect with individuals coming to the meal site for food and offer outreach services. Submitted by: Brandy Waller

## Vanessa Ward



Apostle Vanessa Ward believes you must be able to present people an improved quality of life in order to get their buy in. She feels without accountability our communities tend to become isolated and dormant. Due to Mrs. Ward's achievements in the community she has won the key to the City of Omaha in 2015, the 2015 Dorothy Richardson Resident Leadership Award, and the February 2016 Jefferson Awards to just name a few. Submitted by: Cherie Scott

## Megan Weaver

Megan is the Executive Director of Northeast Housing Initiative in Allen and Wayne Community Housing Development Corporation in Wayne. NEHI, Inc. serves Cedar, Dixon, Knox and Pierce counties. WCHDC serves, Wayne, Thurston, Cuming, Doge, Burt and Washington counties. She is kept very busy splitting her time between the two organizations.

She is also a board member of the Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District in Norfolk and for the Wayne Area Habitat for Humanity, and Board Chair of the Community Redevelopment Authority for the city of Wakefield.

In her "spare time", she is a volunteer youth volleyball and baseball coach for her four children, a Board member of the Wakefield Youth Rec, and on the steering committee for Wakefield Business Development Group.

Anyone that can successfully coordinate this schedule is a "hero" in my book. Submitted by: Donna Roland



Hometown Heroes Presentation in the general session



Welcome

H O M E T O W N

HEROES

Building Our Future



BECKY CHRISTOFFERSON &  
ROB WOODLING

Submitted by: Thomas Judds

John Maxwell said it this way, “Talent is a gift, but character is a choice.” From my perspective, Becky and Rob exude the highest form of character.





CLIFF & KATHY MESNER  
Submitted by: Brian Bywater

Now with multiple developments occurring, Schuyler is better able to provide a quality supply of housing to meet community demand.



GARY HILKEMANN

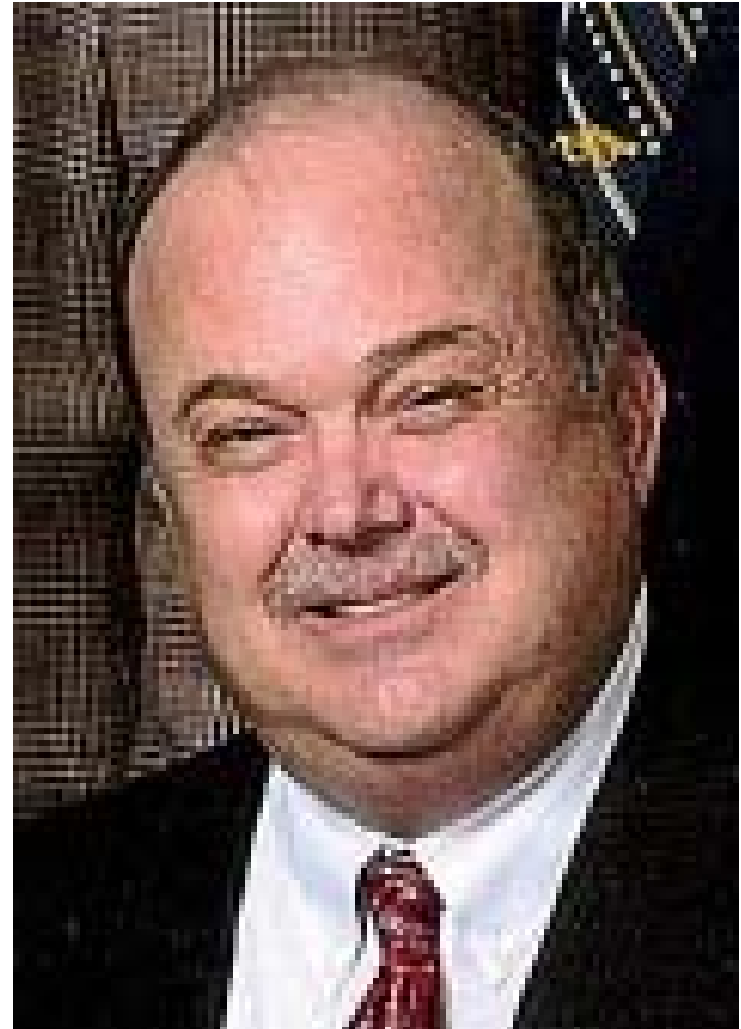
Submitted by: Gary Bretschneider

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JIM HAWKS  
Submitted by:

...has consistently supported the work of Lincoln County Community Development Corp (LCCDC) in developing and rehabilitating affordable housing in the community.





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**MHEG**

Midwest Housing Equity Group

LEIGH ALEXANDER  
Submitted by: Judy Peterson

She has the passion to be an agent of change to prevent lifelong disabilities of children from lead poisoning. The key to fighting this preventable condition is education.



JOHN MADSEN  
Submitted by:

... his involvement with the Village of Stuart, the Stuart Development Corporation, the Stuart Village Manor, and the Wm. Krotter Co.



MEGAN WEAVER  
Submitted by: Donna Roland

Megan is the Executive Director of Northeast Housing Initiative in Allen and Wayne Community Housing Development Corporation in Wayne.



NANCY BENTLEY  
Submitted by:

She is always there to answer any question very openly and honestly. I see her struggle every day against naysayers and not by getting upset but by educating them, which, in my opinion, is one of her most admirable characteristics.







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PAT HOSICK

Submitted by: Suzanne Brodine

She has reached out across local government agencies, administrations, and private businesses to collaborate and push forward an innovative and profoundly needed new approach to housing development in rural communities.



KEVIN SPENCER & ROBERT TAYLOR  
Submitted by: Nancy Bentley

With their vision, HPWN was the Developer, General Partner, and Management Agent in the 2014 special needs development “Monument View Villa.” This 10 unit complex of one and two bedroom apartments designed for the person with disabilities...



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Submitted by: Pam Thomsen

Sandra's mortgage lending expertise has assisted a host of families reach their dream of homeownership. We commend her service to affordable housing and hope to partner with her as she plans her volunteer service in retirement.



SARA ARNETT

Submitted by: Sharon Hueftle

With family roots running through the community of Wood River, Sara is a business leader deeply invested in meeting the housing needs of local residents.





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**BRONZE SPONSORS**



SISTER MARILYN ROSS  
Submitted by: Mike Gawley

She took the nonprofit development corporation to new heights, building new single-family homes on vacant sites mostly in north Omaha but also in other areas...



STARR LEHL  
Submitted by: Rick Lehl

Starr is one of the strongest advocates for the great quality of life and opportunities in our State.





TY LUCAS

Submitted by: Carol Nelson Bodeen

Ty recognized that there were good jobs available in North Platte, but that the community lacked the necessary housing inventory to meet the needs of these individuals and families. Ty worked with the Chamber & Development Corp to develop strategies to address the issue.





# We would like to thank our 2017 Housing Innovation Marketplace EXHIBITORS



VANESSA WARD  
Submitted by: Cherie Scott

Apostle Vanessa Ward believes you must be able to present people an improved quality of life in order to get their buy in.



# Photos from the conference



