

**OKLAHOMA HOUSING FINANCE AGENCY**  
***“I AM OHFA” – 2009 ANNUAL REPORT***

**Purpose**

As Oklahoma’s only statewide housing organization, the Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency’s **mission** is “helping place people in homes.” This mission is achieved through diverse programs that finance the building, renting and purchasing of homes across the state. One of OHFA’s **business goals** is to provide **customer education**. One way this goal has been traditionally achieved is through its annual report. OHFA utilizes this piece to communicate financial standings and achievements of the past year. In addition, the report is used throughout the year as an informational piece. The annual report must effectively communicate to **primary audiences** including housing investors, partner agencies, board of trustees and staff. Though elected officials do not dictate our budget, we utilize our annual reports as a way to inform them of ways OHFA programs benefit constituents and communities across the state. While OHFA does not receive state money for its programs, communications and executive staff are cognizant of public relations materials that may seem too costly, especially in a lagging economy. All things considered, the overall purpose of this project is to provide a creative annual report that shares meaningful information in a cost effective manner.

**Planning/Research**

Surveys of OHFA’s annual report recipients have consistently revealed that success stories of individuals who participate in OHFA’s programs are extremely popular with readers. As one reader said, “OHFA’s development of affordable housing is great, but it is the people who live in the affordable housing that matter.” Internally, during the past year, OHFA has placed greater emphasis on its workplace culture and on its **mission and core values (Fun, Integrity, Teamwork and Customer Service)**. OHFA’s Denison Workplace Culture Surveys, completed in 2008 and 2010, benchmarked the agency against companies of all types. Results showed that OHFA employees overwhelmingly believe “there is a clear mission that gives meaning and direction to our work.” Likewise, our employees are our greatest strength. These factors helped us determine that this year’s annual report would also be an ideal place to showcase and reinforce the value employees have for their workplace and for the people they serve.

**Primary objectives:**

1. Meet the expectations of readers by showcasing programs through features and photos that tell OHFA’s 2009 story. Objective will be met if at least 75 percent of the book is comprised of these features.
2. Reinforce OHFA’s mission and core values. Objective will be met if each employee feature story mentions or alludes to one of these.

**Secondary objectives:**

1. Utilize the annual report as a way to showcase OHFA’s commitment to equal opportunity. Objective will be met if those featured show diversity in work function, family composition, location, physical ability, and/or ethnic background.
2. Relay financial information in an easy to read, concise format. Objective will be met if a snapshot of financial information is given with instructions on how to get in-depth information.

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**Implementation**

The OHFA Annual Report Committee chose the theme “I Am OHFA” because it embodies the ideology that employees and customers share in OHFA’s culture. To achieve the design of this theme, OHFA selected Brian Winkeler of Robot House Creative. Because we wanted to showcase the strong emphasis on personalities, we hired freelancer Zach Nash for photography and photo editing services. Winkeler and Nash worked with OHFA communications staff to create a piece that allowed unique personalities to come to life through the book’s pages. Instead of using a traditional saddle stitch, small screws hold the book together. This allows the book’s pages to be taken apart and used as individual portrait cards if desired.

Each feature is told primarily in first person through quotes about hobbies, jobs, family, and how OHFA relates to them personally. Four feature stories of program recipients are followed by features of the staff and trustees who work behind the scenes to make the programs possible. A candid photo of Oklahoma’s governor with an OHFA program beneficiary is also included. Employees who were featured were selected based on the recommendation of fellow employees. We selected employees with a variety of job functions and program expertise. Despite the challenge of historic snowfall that hindered travel during photo and interview collection, we were successful in including customer profiles from a small town and a mid-size town.

This year’s annual report provided the opportunity to highlight the \$8,000 Federal Homebuyer Tax Credit. We featured a family who had benefited from both the Tax Credit and the OHFA Advantage (mortgage revenue bond) program. As a side note, the family was recommended to us for inclusion in the annual report following our request to our Facebook fans for input.

While programs and personalities will vary, any HFA could implement a similar concept. In today’s tough economic times it only makes sense to salute the employees who are working behind the scenes to ensure that low and moderate income families receive the affordable housing opportunities they so desperately need.

**Budget**

Project Expenditures: Photography - \$2,500  
Design - \$4,500  
Printing - \$5,000 (1,500 copies)

This met the budget set forth at the beginning of the project.

The photographer also shot individual photos of board members and senior leadership. This eliminates the cost of a separate photo shoot on another occasion, helping to maximize the overall OHFA communications budget.

Staff salaries, time and mileage costs were also budget considerations, but not line-items.

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**Evaluation**

We achieved each of our primary and secondary objectives in the following manner:

- Of the 22 pages of content, 18 include features and photos for 81%, meeting expectations of readers who enjoy reading firsthand accounts.
- Each employee's first person narrative includes a reference to the mission and/or core values.
- With employees we sought diversity in both demographics and work function. OHFA's workforce includes people from various generations and ethnic backgrounds. We were successful in showing that mix. The featured program recipients include a single disabled woman, a widow living in a rural town, a three-generation immigrant family, and a young family living in a mid-size city. Each represents a different OHFA-funded housing program.
- We included one page of financial information in a graphically pleasing format. Readers were instructed to visit our website for more comprehensive information. Past annual reports included pages of financial information – an unnecessary cost when readers prefer to download them from our website.

We were pleased with the feedback we received. Upon receiving their reports, employees and recipients featured were eager to share their OHFA story with loved ones. One of our core audiences, our Board of Trustees, got on board with the theme. Each of them submitted their own answers as to why "I Am OHFA." This helped them become more active participants in the everyday work we do.

This was the first year we hired a photographer rather than communications staff taking the photos. The result was a more professional and cohesive look throughout the entire annual report. In a budget conscious time, our executive director was pleased with the overall product that came from a rather limited budget.