



Entry Form 2018 Annual Awards for Program Excellence

Entry Deadline: Friday, June 15, 2018, 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.**

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

Home Accessibility Program

Category: Homeownership

Subcategory: Home Improvement and Rehabilitation

Entry Summary: A 15-word (max) summary of the program, project, or practice you are entering. State funding addresses accessibility and safety needs that allow homeowners to remain in their homes.

HFA: Illinois Housing Development Authority

HFA Staff Contact: Andrew Field

Phone: 312-836-5335

Email: afield@ihda.org

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.

Introduction

As many as 10,000 baby boomers are retiring every single day in the U.S. Many of these seniors, or soon to be seniors, may have the financial means to stay in their current home, but will be forced to relocate due to accessibility-related concerns. For those of us without a physical limitation, living in our homes is not a struggle. Simple daily tasks such as climbing stairs, taking a bath, and entering or exiting our home pose no issue for us. We take for granted the ease with which we move around inside of our home. For persons with special needs and the elderly with physical limitations, mobility is never taken for granted. Here at IHDA we recognize the right of this population to have the same ease of mobility that we all enjoy, and we created a program to address it. IHDA's Home Accessibility Program (HAP) provides up to \$25,000 to help seniors and persons with disabilities make repairs and modifications that improve accessibility and safety. These accessibility modifications prevent premature or unnecessary institutionalization, allowing residents to live and thrive in their own homes, near family and friends, in the communities where they have spent their lives. Most importantly, they create opportunities for a better quality of life, making sure a resident's home still feels like home.

IHDA's Home Accessibility Program (HAP)

Funded by the Illinois Affordable Housing Trust Fund, HAP provides funding to units of local government and non-profit organizations throughout the State to provide home accessibility grants to their local constituency. IHDA does not directly fund homeowners, as the sub-grantees that receive awards administer their own programs locally and manage the homeowner application process from start to finish.

The IHDA Community Affairs Department is responsible for program administration. The program is competitively funded and an RFP is released from time to time. In the current funding round, 15 participating non-profits and units of local government work directly with eligible homeowners. Approximately one half of the proceeds of this \$3 million round are presently committed or disbursed. We expect to release an application for the next funding round later this summer.

Program funds can be used for internal/external chair lifts, exterior wood ramps, external platform lifts, interior thresholds (widening doorways), smoothing floor surfaces, seamless thresholds, bathroom modifications, and other repairs or improvements that improve accessibility within the home. While this work is being done, safety needs are also addressed, including fixing electrical issues and fire hazards, replacing old furnaces and water heaters, and repairing damage floors and ceilings.

Under HAP, we not only provide funding for handicap accessible items, but grantees may also obtain a 5-year warranty on the item, so the client doesn't have to be concerned that their accessibility item will become non-operational after a few years.

Several of IHDA's program partners, including the United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) Seguin of Greater Chicago (covering Cook, DuPage and Will counties), bring additional resources to further leverage the HAP investment. Insurance often doesn't cover the extra items necessary for full mobility and UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago serves to receive donations of good, functioning equipment and supplies and makes it available free of charge to HAP recipients to further improve their mobility and quality of life. Donated items such as hospital beds, canes, walkers, wheelchairs and motorized scooters, are re-gifted in the spirit of reuse and recycling furthering the mobility of the HAP improvements made.

Case in point, Pedro and his wife recently received HAP funding to install an exterior chair lift. (See attached testimonial and photo from Pedro).

In addition to the HAP-funded chair lift, UCP Chicago was able to provide a motorized scooter for Pedro. His quality of life has increased immeasurably, as he was confined to his home; he now has a new lease on life--able to leave his home on his motor scooter and head down the street to attend church services on his own. He has his freedom, lives in his own home and is not in an institutional living environment.

Had Pedro not had the HAP funding as an option, he may have had to face leaving his home and moving to an institutional setting. He would have given up his home and the personal freedoms that come with meal preparations and the other things we all take for granted at home, and also given up perhaps his neighborhood and the accompanying amenities, such as the church he likes to attend.

The benefits of HAP certainly outweigh the costs. For \$20,905.00 we were able to fund mobility for Pedro. IHDA also finances the construction and rehabilitation of multifamily housing including senior housing. Recent costs have shown to be over \$290,000 per unit to create a new unit of senior housing.

Our multifamily financed senior developments often have waiting lists. Programs like HAP help reduce the need for waiting for multifamily housing, and provide seniors with much-needed affordable housing options. For cases like Pedro's, providing he and his wife with the luxury of spending more of their senior years in their own home, in the neighborhood they know and love, we are proud to have played a part to help make their independence accessible.

An improved quality of life can mean a healthy individual and a more healthy community.

The dictionary definition of health is "the state of being free from illness or injury". The World Health Organization takes it a step further, stating health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". Moreover, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services defines a healthy community as "one that continuously creates and improves both its physical and social environments, helping people to support one another in aspects of daily life and to develop their fullest potential".

The next time you see Pedro on the sidewalk of South St. Louis Street motoring on his way to church, remember it was the IHDA Home Accessibility Program that helped create a little more independence for one household, and made one community a little healthier.