

Entering the Frontier of Brand Storytelling

Illinois Housing Development Authority

Communications: Promotional Materials and Newsletters

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Overview

At the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA), our mission is to finance the creation and preservation of affordable housing in Illinois. To best achieve this mission, we recognized that there was a need to do more to create greater brand awareness of IHDA and the programs and services that we offer. These promotional marketing efforts needed to be relevant and timely. When done right, digital media storytelling has incredible power to create conversations between IHDA's brand and our consumers. Over the past eighteen months, IHDA has entered the frontier of brand storytelling, and the results have not only breathed life into our brand, but have built trust in our organization and believability in our programs. By transforming the way we create and deliver content both internally and externally, increasing our network on social media, and driving potential customers to take the proactive steps to reach out to IHDA, we have seen a tremendous spike in our homeownership production.

Reaching Our Audience

Through local outreach, survey generation, and feedback collection, we connected with individuals across the state to learn the impact of IHDA's programs. Our communications team went to the drawing board and launched a filming campaign to document individuals and families willing to share their IHDA story – ultimately, publishing this content on all of IHDA's social pages.

While we anticipated a few roadblocks and assumed not every individual would be eager to participate on camera, we were pleasantly surprised to learn these households had one thing in common – they wanted to help spread the word about IHDA programs to other residents. These stories don't scream about the benefits; they subtly illustrate them, allowing other viewers to draw their own conclusion and potentially relate to the subject(s). We wanted the videos to speak for themselves; explaining real life circumstances that could translate to individuals across Illinois.

At the end of the day, storytelling is not about the sell; it's about resonating with our audience; allowing our consumers to see how our products solve problems. There is no denying, some content needs to be purely information, and storytelling isn't solely about IHDA, our brand, or our products. It's about emotions, experiences, needs and the written and unwritten images associated with these emotions and needs, in a relationship that our brand invokes.

Effective Use of Resources

IHDA's Communication team filmed, edited and produced each video in-house, which meant the design and development costs were minimal. Our estimation is that if we used an outside vendor to produce the video content that we have created it would cost approximately \$250,000. We were able to purchase or rent equipment and create this content for just over \$35,000.

Results

As of May 2019 IHDA has 5,828 Facebook followers. That is a 27% increase/growth since our first story was posted a year ago. On Twitter IHDA has 2,005 followers, which is up 19% in that same period of

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time. IHDA's YouTube content has a view count of 58,222, and we have seen a 29% jump in job applicants who directly referenced watching the IHDA Culture video prior to applying.

Conclusion:

The response to IHDA's digital content has been all positive. With a spike in social media interaction (see detailed numbers above) and a 15% growth in homeownership production, the model for bringing IHDA's content creation was not only economically effective from a cost savings standpoint, but it also resulted in a tangible return on investment.

Visual Aids and Videos:



Hope Manor Joliet - [Watch Here](#)

Meet the residents of Hope Manor Joliet: Bobby Mister, Latondra Green, and Jeanie DeLascasas. The Illinois Housing Development Authority is proud to share these unique impact stories of Veteran residents of Hope Manor Joliet, the first large-scale, campus-style supportive development in Will County specifically designed to provide low income housing for veterans struggling with homelessness. In partnership with the VOA of Illinois, LIHTC, HOME Funds, Rental Support, developers and local resources, the Illinois Housing Development Authority was able to provide financing for three phases of the Hope Manor initiative, with locations in Humboldt Park, Englewood, and Joliet. Hope Manor Joliet's high quality housing and intensive supportive services are providing the change and opportunity to improve lives and long-term housing stability.



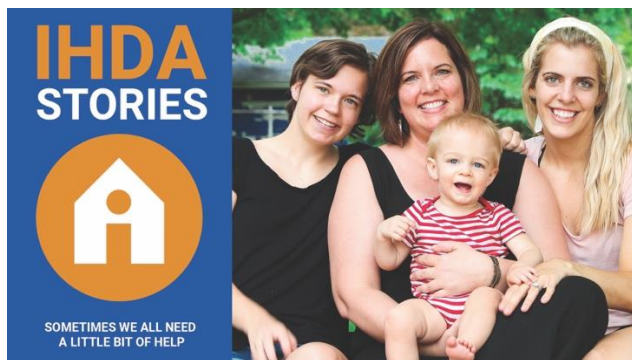
IHDA Culture - [Watch Here](#)

At IHDA, we believe success starts with our people— no matter the position, your work with IHDA means that you'll be helping to change lives, build stronger communities, and create a better Illinois. See how the employees of IHDA help fulfill our mission on a daily basis to finance the creation and preservation of affordable housing in Illinois.



IHDA Welcome New Hires - [Watch Here](#)

At IHDA, we want to ensure all employees are aware of the great experiences and benefits we have to offer in addition to our amazing people. The Welcome New Hire video was created as a way to welcome new hires to the team prior to their first day; we hope to ease “new hire jitters” and encourage employees to take the time to get to know their new colleagues.



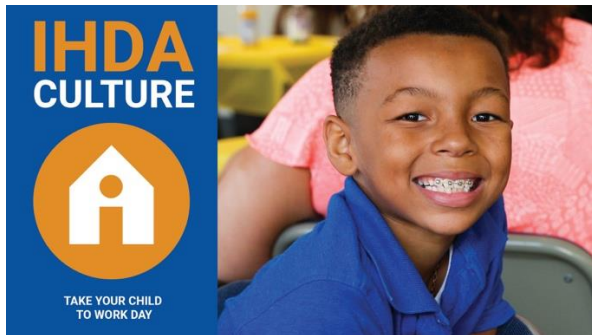
IHDA Single Family Rehabilitation Program - [Watch Here](#)

The Illinois Housing Development Authority’s (IHDA) Single Family Rehabilitation Program helps homeowners improve their properties by making overdue repairs that address health and safety issues. Through SFR, Melissa was able to receive new windows, central air, a new roof and a boiler in her home. “The work I received through the Single Family Rehabilitation Program has made my home more comfortable, safe, and energy efficient. It has taken a load of stress off of my life since I no longer have to worry about going into debt to get the repairs needed on my home. The people that I worked with were absolutely wonderful. I am so blessed to have been able to be a part of this program. Thank you!” A huge thank you to Melissa and her family for sharing their story!



Anthony Place Affordable Housing For Seniors – [Watch Here](#)

Yorkville residents, Geneva and David Fiore Sr., share their experience moving into Anthony Place Senior Apartments, a new two-story building offering 50 one- and two-bedroom units for residents 55 and older. Financed with an IHDA First Mortgage and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, the development brings much-needed senior housing to Kendall County. The property includes high-quality finishes, senior targeted amenities, and is located near a variety of neighborhood services and stores.



IHDA's Take Your Child To Work Day 2018 – [Watch Here](#)

The Communications team at IHDA is so excited to share the behind the scenes footage of Take Your child to Work Day! We had such an amazing day learning about “Agents of Change” and sharing in fun activities throughout the office. A huge thank you to all the wonderful parents, children and staff that were able to participate and ensure this day was a true success. We hope you enjoy and look forward to seeing our IHDA agents next year!



IHDA's 9/11 Remembrance: A Tribute To An American Hero – [Watch Here](#)

The Illinois Housing Development Authority is honored to share the story of Jeffrey Collman, son of Dwayne Collman and stepson of Kay Collman. Jeffrey Collman, 41, was a flight attendant on American Airlines Flight 11, the plane that struck the North Tower of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. We learned about Jeffrey's story on May 30th, 2018 at the Anthony Place Senior Apartments Grand Opening in Yorkville, Illinois. Seventeen years after September 11th, 2001, our team at IHDA sat down with Dwayne and Kay in an exclusive interview to hear their story and pay tribute to all the victims of 9/11, including their son, Jeffrey Collman.



IHDA's Home Accessibility Program (HAP) – [Watch Here](#)

With the help of the Illinois Housing Development Authority's (IHDA) Home Accessibility Program, Eve Salazar was able to install a stair lift in her Chicago home. Special thanks to UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago and Greg Grill, Sr. Director of Programs, for working with IHDA and the HAP program to ensure senior citizens and persons with disabilities are able to remain in their homes through improved accessibility and safety.



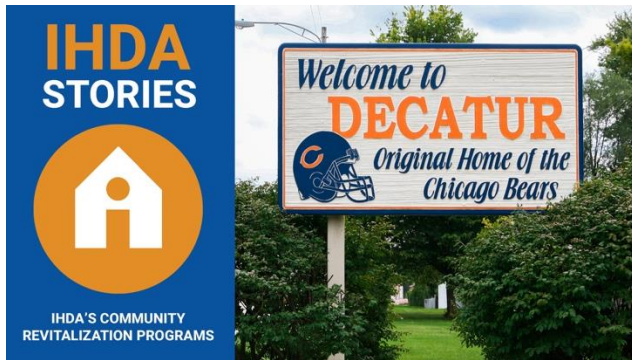
Illinois Hardest Hit Fund – [Watch Here](#)

After being employed by the same company for more than 20 years, Selena was suddenly laid off with a mortgage, an auto loan, medical bills and college tuition for her daughter. Uncertain of her immediate future, Selena found help through the Illinois Hardest Hit Program (HHF). The assistance enabled Selena to look for new job opportunities, without the added worry of paying her mortgage. Thousands of Illinois families have already been helped by this FREE resource. We hope that Selena’s HHF story will reach others in need and allow us to help many more people save their homes and avoid foreclosure.



IHDA’s Access Mortgage Program – [Watch Here](#)

With the help of his loan officer at Oak Leaf Community Mortgage and IHDA’s Access Mortgage Program, Chris Brady found the down payment boost he needed to begin a new chapter as a first-time homebuyer. Chris received \$10,000 in down payment assistance that not only made homeownership a reality, but also ensured he had the financial and educational tools he needed to be successful in his new home.



IHDA's Community Revitalization Programs – [Watch Here](#)

IHDA's stabilization and planning strategies provide guidance and funding to help local governments effectively tackle their most urgent problems and grow their communities. The City of Decatur was awarded grant funding from IHDA in 2018, which allowed them to turn vacant and blighted properties into assets, helping renew their neighborhoods for overall community revitalization and stabilization.