



2010 Entry Form
(Complete one for each entry.)

Email entry form and three-page description to awards@ncsha.org

Entry Name 2009 LHFA Program Guide

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

HFA Louisiana Housing Finance Agency

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- Be sure to follow all entry guidelines and rules. ([See call for entries](#))
- Entry form with description, check(s), and visual aids (optional) must be received by NCSHA by **Friday, August 13, 2010**.
- Attach a three-page description answering the below two questions, and including other information as you see fit. The description may not exceed three single-spaced, typed pages in length, text only, with one-inch margins and 11-point minimum font.

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

HFA Louisiana Housing Finance Agency_____

Entry Name 2009 LHFA Program Guide_____

1. Provide a brief description of the program, project, or practice; when and why it was undertaken; what it has accomplished; and why it is meritorious.
2. Explain how the entry is responsive to the judging criteria provided in the [2010 Annual Awards Categories and Criteria](#).

Communications	Homeownership	Legislative Campaign	Management Innovation
<input type="checkbox"/> Annual Report <input type="checkbox"/> Promotional Materials and Newsletters <input type="checkbox"/> Creative Media	<input type="checkbox"/> Empowering New Buyers <input type="checkbox"/> Home Improvement and Rehabilitation <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging New Production	<input type="checkbox"/> Federal Campaign <input type="checkbox"/> State Campaign	<input type="checkbox"/> Financial <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Operations <input type="checkbox"/> Technology
Rental Housing	Special Needs Housing	Special Achievement	Are you mailing visual aids?
<input type="checkbox"/> Multifamily Management <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation and Rehabilitation <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging New Production	<input type="checkbox"/> Combating Homelessness <input type="checkbox"/> Housing for Persons With Special Needs	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Achievement	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO



Louisiana Housing Finance Agency

2010 NCSHA Annual Awards for Program Excellence

Entry Description

Entry Name: 2009 LHFA Program Guide
Category and Subcategory: Communication – Promotional Materials & Newsletters
HFA: Louisiana Housing Finance Agency

The mission of the Louisiana Housing Finance Agency is to provide safe, decent, affordable energy-efficient housing to the people of Louisiana. It accomplishes this goal by administering numerous programs that include bond programs aimed at first time homebuyers, low-income housing tax credits, energy assistance programs, HOME-funded programs, and more. And these programs are supported by other in-house agency departments such as human resources, accounting, I/T support, among others. For a person outside of the agency, it can be difficult to grasp and understand the many moving parts that are involved. To help address this issue, the LHFA Public Information has begun publishing an annual Program Guide, and it has been extremely well-received.

Louisiana's statewide elections in the fall of 2007 saw a new governor elected, along with several other new members of the state legislature and new members of the state's congressional delegation. When Governor Bobby Jindal took office in January 2008, he began making appointments to state boards and commissions, among them the LHFA Board of Commissioners. By July of that year, well over half of the LHFA's 15-member board was made up of new faces.

With the agency still very much entrenched in the post-hurricane rebuilding process, with millions of dollars to distribute, award, administer and oversee, it was imperative that the new governor, representatives, and especially new board members be brought up to speed as quickly as possible. With the volume of work to be done, and with deadlines looming, the learning curve was made that much steeper.

This was the genesis behind the publication of the 2008 LHFA Program Guide. The LHFA Senior Staff gathered together to discuss how to introduce the agency to our new board members. It was decided that each department would put together a brief synopsis of their main functions. The Public Information Department volunteered that combining these summaries, and including other pertinent information about the agency, could make for a type of "textbook" that would allow board members, and any other interested individuals, to get a detailed introduction to the agency.

The 2008 LHFA Program Guide was published completely in-house, and was first distributed in mid-July. It was very well-received by the board members, and was soon requested and sent to other state agencies, all statewide elected officials, the entire congressional delegation, and many other interested partners. This popularity prompted the decision that this publication would be updated and distributed on an annual basis.

The 2009 LHFA Program was prepared with more lead-time, thus allowing for a more refined product. Each department updated their section, making sure to include new programs that had been added during the previous year. This was important because the agency had begun to offer several new programs as part of the federal government's stimulus packages. The layout and printing of the 2009 version was contracted out to a recognized local graphic design shop. This provided for a more polished publication, with more durable paper and binding, and higher quality graphics. The LHFA Public Information Department was also able to include even more photos and graphics from events and end users. The 2009 Guide was initially distributed in late summer 2009, and has since gone through several reprints over the last year. The publication has become a staple when agency staff meets with elected officials, potential partners, and when doing promotional appearances. The 2010 edition is currently in the works, and should be released in the next several weeks.

The content and focus of the Program Guide is what differentiates it from the agency's Annual Report. Each year, the LHFA publishes an annual report that details the production of the agency. But the Program Guide does not include this information; rather it gives the details about the individual programs. It includes statutes, requirements, history and contact information for managers and program administrators. Departments are able to more fully explain the purpose behind a program and its function.

In addition to department and program information, the Program Guide includes the bylaws of the Louisiana Housing Finance Agency and its Board of Commissioners and tables showing the updated income and acquisition cost limits for the tax credit and single family homeownership programs. There is also a section detailing the agency's budget for the fiscal year and the combined financial statement schedules. And finally, an updated agency organization chart is supplied by the Human Resources Department. This is especially helpful as board members interact with members of staff, giving them a clear picture of who works where.

While the text of the publication is the most important and informative, the layout was also a major priority. This publication was designed to be an easily read and easily referenced book. Each department follows the same template with a complete table of contents for easy navigation. The color-scheme provides uniformity and the agency's tagline of "American Dream. Louisiana Dream. Our Dream For You." is repeated through out to help raise awareness for readers that are new to the agency. Pictures specific to departments and programs are also included to help provide more visual reinforcement of the work being completed by the LHFA.

"The LHFA Program Guide has proven to be an invaluable resource as we present the agency to our governmental partners, stakeholders and the public," said LHFA President Milton Bailey. "We now have something we can leave with them that they can reference back to and will serve as a reminder of the work we are doing. Our sponsors and stakeholders are now aware of who they can call on when our expertise is needed."

Now that the basic framework for the publication has been put in place, the challenge becomes begin consistent with updates, without becoming stagnant. But the potential uses and upgrades for this book make that challenge an exciting one.

“We are very excited for the future of this publication,” said LHFA Public Information Director Jeff DeGraff. “As we continue to update the existing programs, and add in new programs that come on line, we can become even more efficient in their presentation. We are also looking to develop a digital companion to the hardcopy book, something we could post to our website as an on-line resource that would be searchable and accessible to anyone anywhere.”

“This book also has great value for archival purposes,” continued DeGraff. “Even though we are only working on our third edition, we can already see how some of our programs have evolved over these last few years. The affordable housing landscape is changing rapidly and dramatically, and the Program Guide will allow us to keep a record of those changes.”