

# Homes & Communities

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

## Newsroom

[En español](#) | [Text only](#) | [Search/index](#)

### HUD news

- [Newsroom](#)
- [Priorities](#)
- [About HUD](#)

### Homes

- [Buying](#)
- [Owning](#)
- [Selling](#)
- [Renting](#)
- [Homeless](#)
- [Home improvements](#)
- [HUD homes](#)
- [Fair housing](#)
- [FHA refunds](#)
- [Foreclosure](#)
- [Consumer info](#)

### Communities

- [About communities](#)
- [Volunteering](#)
- [Organizing](#)
- [Economic development](#)

### Working with HUD

- [Grants](#)
- [Programs](#)
- [Contracts](#)
- [Work online](#)
- [HUD jobs](#)
- [Complaints](#)

### Resources



- [Library](#)
- [Handbooks/ forms](#)
- [Common questions](#)

### Tools

## The Daily Message

### Friday, March 18, 2005

► [Mapping Neighborhood Success](#)

-  [Information by State](#)
-  [Print version](#)
-  [Email this to a friend](#)

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**Organizations in West Michigan have clearly gotten the message and are continuing to put HUD's mission to work in communities across the Michigan map. At the Grand Rapids Field office's fourth annual Wall of Fame event, there were seven groups in five separate counties that received recognition for supporting all of HUD's national goals.**

With the theme of Mapping Neighborhood Success, the following communities won individual awards and induction onto the Wall of Fame plaque. And the winners are...



Jim Schubiner, Sponsor for The Access Group, LLC (left) accepts the award for Blue Lake Residences in Lakes from

**Increase Homeownership - Promote Participation of Faith-Based and Community Organizations** - One of the leaders in faith-based groups, Inner City Christian Federation (ICCF) that in an eighteen month period of time, concluding in May 2004 transformed a troubled neighborhood through the Franklin Neighborhood Partnership. The partnership consists of eleven churches and two neighborhood associations that contributed financial support and volunteer labor along with publicity and community support, respectively. With the addition of foundation grants, CDBG and

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[Mailing lists](#)  
[Contact us](#)  
[Help](#)



Louis M. Berra, FOD (right) in Grand Rapids.

HOME funding through the City of Grand Rapids and MSHDA, eleven homes were constructed and made available to low-income families under the ICCF home ownership program. As an approved

housing counseling agency, ICCF provides the families with workshops in areas such as budgeting, mortgage readiness and even landscaping and minor electrical and plumbing repair. Location: Kent County, Grand Rapids.

***Promoting Decent Affordable Housing - Ensure Equal Opportunity in Housing - Strengthen Communities*** - Under this area, we saw a variety of groups that serviced several types of persons. Using Supportive Housing Program funds along with HOME funds, tax credits and other loans, Genesis Non-profit Housing Corporation (another faith-based organization), constructed 33 apartments for persons with disabilities with on-site resident support coordinator services provided for at least 15 of the residents. Location: Kent County, Grand Rapids.

A second site involved the renovation of a downtown historical building into a mixed- use development called the Nisbett-Fairman Residences by the Big Rapids Housing Commission. To alleviate the shortage of senior housing, the Commission created a plan to construct 47 apartments on the upper levels while retain commercial space on the street level utilizing historical tax credits, HOME programs through MSHDA and other similar loans. Location: Mecosta County, Big Rapids.

With Operation: It Takes Two, the City of Muskegon Community and Neighborhood Services was a winner in ridding the community of a vacated milk dairy that had become deteriorated over the years and replacing it with a two-story townhouse to help increase the affordable housing stock while contributing to neighborhood revitalization. Location: Muskegon County, Muskegon.

The challenge for this group was to convert a troubled and under-funded cooperative into a traditional, well-capitalized landlord-tenant property under HUD's Multi-family mortgage restructuring through OMHAR. For the first time in 35 years, this property should have the resources to make long overdue capital improvements and pay its ongoing expenses in a timely manner. This

effort is the first of its kind to occur in the country. Location: Muskegon County, Twin Lakes.

**Strengthen Communities - Ending Homelessness**

The office's final two award recipients have significantly impacted their communities in lasting ways. In a collective effort among Catholic Family Services, MRC Industries and Residential Opportunities, Inc., the creation of a Transitional Living Apartment House for Youth bridges the gap for homeless young adults between the ages of 17 to 24 with little or no family support. These individuals will now have a safe affordable house to live in and will receive case management services as well as employment support and training through Continuum of Care funding recently awarded. Location: Kalamazoo County, Kalamazoo.



All seven project award recipients stand with FOD Louis M. Berra (center, holding plaque) as part of their induction into the Grand Rapids Field Office's "2004 Wall of Fame."

Partners Building Community: The Crosstown Project is a model for neighborhood revitalization that was developed by and for the Kalamazoo community with leadership provided by the City of Kalamazoo, Community Planning and Development. This is a pilot program in portions of the Edison and Vine neighborhoods that includes housing improvement, youth development and public art initiatives along with other similar revitalization programs. Location: Kalamazoo County, Kalamazoo.

All of which bring us to - **Embrace High Standards of Ethics, Management and Accountability** that promotes support provided by not only the Grand Rapids Field office but the entire HUD community as a whole and acknowledges the communities that improve the lives of the customers we serve.

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 [Back to Top](#)



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