



Memo TO Members

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NLIHC 2016 Housing Policy Forum

February 5 is Deadline for Annual Organizing Award Nominations

The February 5 nomination deadline for NLIHC's Annual Organizing Award is quickly approaching. Please nominate an outstanding local or statewide organizing effort. The 2016 Organizing Award recognizes outstanding achievement during 2015 in state or local organizing activity that furthers NLIHC's mission of achieving socially just public policy that assures people with the lowest incomes in the United States have affordable and decent homes. Special consideration will be given to Organizing Award nominations that incorporate tenant organizing.

The 2016 Organizing Award will be presented at the *NLIHC 2016 Policy Forum: Overcoming Housing Poverty, Achieving Housing Justice*, held April 3-5, 2016 at the Washington Court Hotel in Washington, DC. A representative of the winning organization will be asked to make brief remarks.

An Award Committee composed of NLIHC board members and previous award winners will select this year's honoree. Two representatives of the honored organization will receive complimentary Forum registrations, hotel accommodations, and transportation to Washington, D.C. to accept the award.

To be eligible, nominated organizations must be current NLIHC members. Organizations may self-nominate. NLIHC board members and Award Committee members may not nominate an organization with which they are employed or affiliated.

Nominations are due by 5pm ET on Friday, February 5, 2016. Please submit your nomination online at <http://www.nlihcforum.org/#!/awards/gm8p2>.

Nominations should contain the following information:

- Name and contact information of the nominated organization,
- Name and contact information of the nominator,
- Description of the organization's achievement in the area of state and local organizing or resident organizing in 2015, and how that achievement has assisted in furthering NLIHC's mission (800-word maximum), and
- Supporting materials that describe the activity or impact, such as press clips or campaign materials.

For more information, contact our Field Team at outreach@nlihc.org.

Register Today for 2016 Housing Forum April 3-5

Register today for **NLIHC's 2016 Policy Forum: *Overcoming Housing Poverty, Achieving Housing Justice*** taking place in Washington D.C. on April 3-5, 2016. The Forum will convene housing and homeless advocates and policy experts to discuss preparations for implementing the National Housing Trust Fund and Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing, housing and services for the homeless and those in extreme poverty, housing in the elections and in the media, and much more. The Forum will also offer participants an opportunity to bid a fond farewell to retiring **NLIHC President and CEO Sheila Crowley** and to welcome the new NLIHC CEO. The NLIHC Board of Directors expects to be able to introduce the new NLIHC President at the Forum.

Confirmed speakers include:

- **Barney Frank**, former U.S. Congressman, Chairman of the House Financial Services Committee, and author of *Frank. A Life in Politics from the Great Society to Same-Sex Marriage*;

- **Kathryn Edin**, co-author of *\$2 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America* <http://hub.jhu.edu/2015/11/10/kathryn-edin-2-a-day-reading>;
- **Mary Beth Shinn**, lead researcher on the *Family Options Study: Short-Term Impacts of Housing and Services Interventions for Homeless Families* https://www.huduser.gov/portal/family_options_study.html;
- **Pamela Patenaude**, President of the J. Ronald Terwilliger Foundation for Housing America's Families;
- **Emily Badger**, *Washington Post* writer on housing and urban issues;
- **Barbara Sard**, Vice President for Housing Policy, the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities;
- **Sharon McDonald**, Director for Families and Youth, National Alliance to End Homelessness;
- **Nancy Rase**, retired CEO, Homes for America; and
- **Greg Payne**, Development Officer, Avesta Housing, and Director, Maine Affordable Housing Coalition.

Invited speakers include:

- **HUD Secretary Julián Castro** and
- **Senator Tim Kaine** (D-VA).

Special Session for Low Income Residents: This year's Forum will feature a special three-hour session for low income residents that will cover Section 3, RAD, and the preservation vs. mobility debate on Sunday, April 3 from 9 am to 12 noon. If you are a low income resident who is attending the Forum, please plan on arriving no later than 9am on Sunday, April 3 to take advantage of this session!

Special Hotel Scholarships Available: A limited number of shared-lodging hotel scholarships (covering 3-4 nights at the Washington Court Hotel) are available for NLIHC low income members who are self-paying. They will be offered on a first-come, first serve basis. Contact Renee Willis 202-662-1530 x247 or rwillis@nlihc.org.

For more information about the Forum, go to <http://www.nlihcforum.org/>

Registration for the Forum is available at: <http://www.nlihcforum.org/#!/register/mainPage>

Federal Budget

President to Request Funding for Mobility Counseling and Choice Neighborhood Initiative Expansion

President Barack Obama did not mention housing in his State of the Union address on January 12, but Office of Management and Budget Director Shaun Donovan later provided a preview of some items that will appear in President Barack Obama's February 9 FY17 HUD budget request, including funding for a mobility counseling pilot and for expansion of the Choice Neighborhood Initiative.

In one of the Administration's State of the Union follow-up events, Mr. Donovan participated in a conversation on January 13 with Johns Hopkins University sociologist and author of the book *\$2 A Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America*, Dr. Kathryn Edin. The topic was the "geography of poverty." (Dr. Edin is speaking at [NLIHC's Policy Forum](#) on April 3.)

Mr. Donovan reported that the President's FY17 request will include a \$15 million mobility counseling pilot program for about ten regional housing authorities over a three-year period. The funds will be used to help HUD-assisted families move to and stay in safer neighborhoods with stronger schools and better access to jobs. A portion of this funding would be allocated to evaluate the program.

Also to be included in the FY17 proposed budget will be \$200 million for HUD's Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI) program. CNI was funded at \$125 million for FY16, an increase of \$45 million over FY15. The program provides resources to public housing agencies, owners of assisted housing, nonprofits, and local governments seeking to transform entire neighborhoods. At a \$200 million funding level, the program could provide about six new CNI implementation grants.

Read OMB's blog on Mr. Donovan's announcement at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2016/01/13/fact-sheet-promoting-economic-mobility-opportunity-and-community-revitalization>

View the conversation between Dr. Edin and Director Donovan at <http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/81391146>.

HUD

HUD Offers Expanded AFFH FAQs and Webcast on Fair Housing Planning Process

In addition to numerous other materials on the new Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) rule that HUD released on December 31 (see *Memo*, 1/8), a greatly expanded set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) was posted on HUD's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) website on the same day. A fifth AFFH training webcast, "The Fair Housing Planning Process Under the AFFH Rule," was made available on January 11.

HUD has modified the shorter AHFH FAQs posted in July, substantially rewriting one and adding seven new ones. The new FAQs are:

- How does the Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH) compare to the Analysis of Impediments (AI)? The first FAQ reminds readers that AFFH is a legal requirement that has existed since the passage of the 1968 Fair Housing Act. The final AFFH rule provides a planning approach to help program participants (cities and counties required to submit a Consolidated Plan [ConPlan], states, and public housing agencies) to take meaningful actions to overcome historic patterns of segregation, promote fair housing choice, and foster inclusive communities.
- What is the AFH Assessment Tool, who is required to use it, and where can I find it? The second FAQ explains that the AFH is a standardized form intended to help program participants analyze fair housing issues and set priorities and goals to establish strategies and actions in their ConPlans and Public Housing Agency Plans. It describes the six key requirements of the AFH process.
- What is the AFFH Rule Guidebook?
- What is the User Interface and how do I access it?
- What is the AFFH Data and Mapping Tool and what is it for?
- When is local data and local knowledge required as part of the AFH? This FAQ gives examples of local knowledge that program participants may consider when preparing an AFH. This FAQ stresses that local knowledge includes information obtained through the required community participation process.
- Where can I find additional information?

The final FAQ in the December 31 iteration rewrites and augments the previous guidance regarding community revitalization. HUD stresses that "the duty to affirmatively further fair housing does not dictate or preclude particular investments or strategies as a matter of law" and that program participants have latitude in prioritizing fair housing goals and strategies. The FAQ states: "HUD's rule recognizes the role of place-based strategies, including economic development to improve conditions in high poverty neighborhoods, as well as preservation of the existing affordable housing stock, including HUD-assisted housing, to help respond to the overwhelming need for affordable housing. Examples of such strategies include investments that will improve conditions and thereby reduce disparities in access to opportunity between impacted neighborhoods and the rest of the city or

efforts to maintain and preserve the existing affordable rental housing stock, including HUD-assisted housing, to address a jurisdiction's fair housing issues.”

The FAQ goes on, however, to warn that there could be issues with strategies that rely solely on investment in areas with high racial or ethnic concentrations of low-income residents to the exclusion of providing access to affordable housing outside of those areas. For example, in areas with a history of segregation, if a program participant has the ability to create opportunities outside of the segregated, low-income areas but declines to do so in favor of place-based strategies, there could be a legitimate claim that HUD and its program participants are acting to preclude a choice of neighborhoods to historically segregated groups and failing to affirmatively further fair housing as required by the Fair Housing Act.

HUD concludes that place-based and mobility strategies need not be mutually exclusive and that a balanced approach is welcome.

On January 11, HUD released the fifth in a series of webcasts on the new AFFH rule. This latest webcast, “The Fair Housing Planning Process Under the AFFH Rule,” discusses the relationship between the assessment of fair housing issues, the identification of factors that contribute to those issues, and the establishment of fair housing goals. It also provides examples that link fair housing issues to contributing factors and goals.

The new FAQs are at <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/4514/affirmatively-furthering-fair-housing-faqs/>.

The new webcast is at <https://www.hudexchange.info/training-events/courses/the-fair-housing-planning-process-under-the-affh-rule-webcast/>.

Housing and the Elections

NLIHC Voterization Webinar, February 17

NLIHC kicks off its 2016 Voterization campaign with a series of webinars to train advocates and service providers on how to carry out effective voter engagement efforts. Strong participation by low income residents in the high-stakes 2016 presidential election is essential to make affordable housing a priority. Voterization refers to non-partisan voter registration, voter education, and get-out-the-vote activities carried out by housing and homeless service providers to engage their residents and clients in the democratic process.

The first webinar in the series, “Understanding and Overcoming the Challenges of Voter Registration,” will be presented on Wednesday, February 17, at 2:00 pm ET.

The presentation will provide background information on the importance of voting and discuss the rules governing voter registration efforts of 501(c)(3) organizations. The webinar will review the NLIHC Voterization plan and provide tips, best practices, and resources available for voter registration drives. The session will also explore some of the challenges presented by recent voter suppression efforts.

RSVP at: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4025136519191807745>

For questions, contact: outreach@nlihc.org

From The Field

Governor Cuomo Commits to Creating 20,000 New Units of Supportive Housing

During his annual State of the State address on January 13, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo (D) announced a new commitment to build or rehabilitate 20,000 supportive housing units statewide over the next fifteen years. This pledge follows New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio's (D) announcement of the largest commitment to supportive housing creation in the city's history on November 18, when he promised to create 15,000 units over the next fifteen years (See [*Memo 1/11/2016*](#)). With these commitments from Mr. Cuomo and Mr. de Blasio, the Campaign 4 NY/NY Housing has met its goal of convincing leaders to produce 35,000 new units statewide.

Mr. Cuomo's pledge for new supportive housing came in the context of a broader commitment of \$20 billion to produce 100,000 new affordable rental homes throughout the state. This \$20 billion includes support for 1,000 new emergency shelter beds to help the rapidly growing population of people who are homeless and without any shelter.

The Supportive Housing Network of New York (The Network) and the Coalition for the Homeless, both NLIHC State Coalition Partners, worked with the Corporation for Supportive Housing, Enterprise Community Partners, and others to launch the Campaign 4 NY/NY Housing in May of 2014. The campaign was supported by more than 300 organizations and 280 leaders of the faith community that advocated aggressively on its behalf. Advocates are thrilled by Mr. Cuomo's announcement but will continue to be vigilant in the coming years to ensure that the city and state honor their new commitments.

Mr. Cuomo also used his State of the State address to assure municipalities that humane treatment of homeless people was a priority and that dangerous or unsanitary emergency shelters would be shut down. This came just days after an executive order by the governor that all homeless people throughout the state must be directed into shelters when temperatures are below freezing, stating that homeless people are at great risk when sleeping outside in such conditions. Mr. Cuomo's staff later acknowledged that fully competent individuals cannot be forced into shelters against their will. The announcement of the executive order led many advocates to counter that New York City and most other jurisdictions already have cold-temperature plans in place but what was needed were more investments for long-term solutions. Mr. Cuomo responded by announcing his commitment to produce more supportive and other affordable housing.

"This is an extraordinary moment for the supportive housing community," said Laura Mascuch, Executive for The Network. "We are deeply grateful to the Governor and our state partners for this incredible commitment. Thanks to Governor Cuomo's pledge we have a real chance to actually end homelessness among the most vulnerable New Yorkers in the next fifteen years."

For more information about campaign efforts to expand supportive housing in New York, contact Steve Piasecki at spiasecki@shnny.org.

Research

How Households in the Moving To Opportunity Demonstration Fared after Leaving Housing Assistance

A study recently published in *Cityscape* explores how households in the Moving to Opportunity (MTO) demonstration fared after leaving housing assistance. The authors of the article titled “What Happens to Housing Assistance Leavers?” are Robin Smith, Sue Popkin, Taz George, and Jennifer Comey.

The study found that participants who left housing assistance for positive reasons fared better in terms of income growth and neighborhood quality than those who remained assisted. However, those who left assistance for negative reasons fared worse than households who remained in public housing or used a voucher to move.

The study analyzed data from HUD’s MTO demonstration, which tracked a sample of 4,600 households living in public housing or utilizing Housing Choice Vouchers in five cities over a 10 to 15 year period. The MTO demonstration was designed to test the effect of giving residents of distressed public housing the opportunity to move to low-poverty neighborhoods using vouchers. The study found that 35% of MTO participants were no longer receiving housing assistance by the end of the demonstration.

Households that left MTO were placed into two comparison groups: households that left assistance for positive reasons (positive leavers) and households that left for negative reasons (negative leavers). Positive leavers were those who left assistance due to having too much income (“incoming out”) or becoming homeowners. Negative leavers were those who left for reasons such as lease violations, evictions, or an inability to lease up within the time limits of the voucher program. The study found that 52% of unassisted households were positive leavers and 48% were negative leavers.

The findings indicate markedly different outcomes for positive and negative leavers. This was especially clear in terms of income. Households that left for positive reasons reported a median income of \$37,865 compared to just \$13,950 for households leaving for negative reasons. Positive leavers were also more likely than negative leavers to have better physical and mental health and greater satisfaction with their housing and neighborhood.

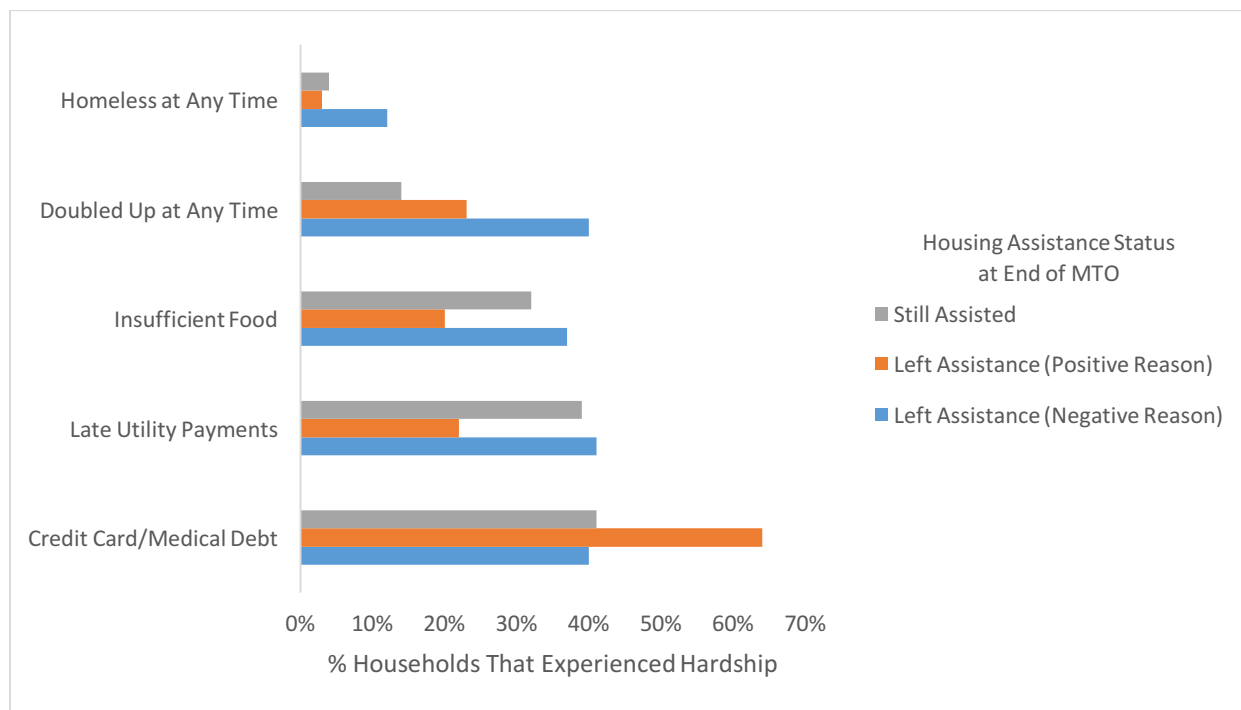
Positive leavers, however, reported significantly higher levels of medical and credit card debt than either negative leavers or still-assisted households, and one in five reported food insecurity and difficulty affording utilities. Qualitative interviews conducted in Boston and Los Angeles also revealed that positive leavers experienced continued income instability and, for those who transitioned to homeownership, difficulty making mortgage payments. Households who transitioned to homeownership appeared vulnerable to high interest loans and underwater mortgages. Based on these findings, the authors urge careful examination of HUD’s homeownership promotion strategies for assisted households.

The study found that almost half of negative leavers reported experiencing homelessness. Negative leavers were also less likely to utilize food stamps or Medicaid than still-assisted households, despite similar levels of income. In short, negative leavers were worse off than their counterparts who remained in public housing or the voucher program and at significantly greater risk for homelessness. As a result, the authors of the study urge Congress to require housing authorities to provide intensive supports to assisted households at risk of lease violations and eviction.

What Happens to Housing Assistance Leavers? is available at <http://bit.ly/1JOQYA2>.

Fact of The Week

Hardships Experienced by Households in Moving to Opportunity Demonstration



Source: Smith, R.E., Popkin, S.J., George, T., & Comey, J. (2015). What Happens to Housing Assistance Leavers? *Cityscape: A Journal of Policy Development and Research*. 17, 3, 159-192.

NLIHC News

NLIHC Welcomes New Members in Fourth Quarter 2015

Welcome to the following individuals and organizations who joined NLIHC in the fourth quarter of 2015:

New Organizational Members

- 4 Feathers Development, Ames, IA
- Adapt of Texas, Austin, TX
- Censeo, Inc., Birmingham, AL
- Community Action North Bay, Fairfield, CA
- Community Wheelhouse, Austin, TX
- Housing Mississippi, Jackson, MS
- KFL Camden Dream Center, Camden, NJ
- National ADAPT - Housing Group, Philadelphia, PA
- Neighbors United For Progress, Austin, TX
- NeighborWorks Association of Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh, PA
- NeighborWorks Great Falls, Great Falls, MT
- Project Mend-A-House, Manassas, VA
- Sisters of Norte Dame De Namur, West Hartford, CT
- Spear Management Group, Auburn, MA
- Utah Nonprofit Housing Corporation, Salt Lake City, UT

New Individual Members

- Orlando Artze, Stafford, VA
- Betty Corbett, Raleigh, NC
- Elizabeth Cornelins, Rapid City, SD
- Roger Cornelius, Rapid City, SD
- Cherisse Dew, Toms River, NJ
- Rita Dongas, Washington, DC
- David Eslinger, Springfield, MO
- Wilma Garren, South Orange, NJ
- Merrit Gillard, Washington, DC
- Karla Graham, Frisco, TX
- Mary Greene, Santa Fe, NM
- Blaire Hoffman, Burtonsville, MD
- Anna Holt-Danau, Washington, DC
- Ann Howard, Austin, TX
- Princella Jamerson, Bronx, NY
- Jeffery Lacey, Atlantic City, NJ
- Robert Laux, Bethel, ME
- Sue Luke, Seattle, WA
- Elaine Matotamahece, Pine Ridge, SD
- Ellen Morris, Cambridge, MA
- Carlisle Morrisette, San Jose, CA
- Marianne Morton, Madison, WI
- Thornevald Nugent, Bronx, NY
- Joe Pitts, Nashville, TN
- Reginald Pope, Roosevelt, NY
- Paula Samuel, Los Angeles, CA
- Erika Schmale, Richmond, VA
- Jesse Sisler, Buffalo Grove, IL
- Rickey Stamps, Lancaster, CA
- Judy Telge, Corpus Christi, TX
- Peter Tousignant, Portland, ME
- Daniel Waldinger, Cambridge, MA

NLIHC Accepting Applications for Summer Interns

NLIHC is accepting resumes for summer 2016 internship positions. Interns are highly valued and fully integrated into our staff work. We seek students passionate about social justice issues, with excellent writing and interpersonal skills.

The available positions are:

Policy Intern. Tracks new legislation, attends and summarizes Congressional hearings for the *Memo to Members* newsletter, participates in visits to Congressional offices, develops materials for use in lobbying the House and Senate to achieve NLIHC's policy agenda, and updates the NLIHC Congressional database.

Organizing Intern. Assists with grassroots organizing efforts for the United for Homes campaign and other legislative efforts. Assists with membership recruitment/retention efforts and internal database upkeep.

Research Intern. Assists in ongoing quantitative and qualitative research projects, writes weekly articles on current research for *Memo to Members*, attends briefings, and responds to research inquiries.

Communications/Media Intern. Prepares and distributes press materials, assists with media research and outreach for publication releases, and works on social media projects. Maintains the media database and tracks press hits.

Graphic Design Intern. Assists with sending out e-communications using MailChimp; revising collateral print material such as brochures, flyers, factsheets; updating content on the NLIHC website; and posting information on the Coalition's social media sites and blog. Must have experience with the Adobe Creative Cloud. *Please provide 3-5 design samples and/or link to online portfolio.*

These positions begin in June and run until August and are at least 20-30 hours a week. Two semester placements are possible. NLIHC provides modest stipends.

A cover letter, resume, and writing sample are required for consideration. In your cover letter, please specify the position(s) for which you are applying and that you are interested in a summer 2016 internship.

Interested students should send their materials to: Paul Kealey, Chief Operating Officer, National Low Income Housing Coalition, 1000 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20005 via email to pkealey@nlihc.org.

NLIHC STAFF

Malik Siraj Akbar, Communications Specialist, x239

Andrew Aurand, Vice President for Research, x245

Linda Couch, Senior Vice President for Policy, x228

Josephine Clarke, Executive Assistant, x226

Sheila Crowley, President and CEO, x226

Dan Emmanuel, Research Analyst, x316

Ellen Errico, Graphic Design and Web Manager, x246

Ed Gramlich, Senior Advisor, x314

Paul Kealey, Chief Operating Officer, x232

Gar Meng Leong, Research Intern, x241

Joseph Lindstrom, Senior Organizer for Housing Advocacy, x222

Khara Norris, Director of Administration, x242

Ikra Rafi, Graphic Design Intern, x250

Kate Rodrigues, Research Intern x229

James Saucedo, Housing Advocacy Organizer, 233

Christina Sin, Development Coordinator, x234

Elayne Weiss, Housing Policy Analyst, x243

Alexandra Williams, MSW Practicum Student, x230

Renee Willis, Vice President for Field and Communications, x247