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## Disaster Housing Recovery

### Senators Introduce Bill to Activate Disaster Housing Assistance Program

Eight senators introduced the “[Housing Victims of Major Disasters Act of 2018](#)” on May 31. The bill would require FEMA to enter into an interagency agreement with the HUD to implement the Disaster Housing Assistance Program (DHAP), which would provide temporary rental assistance and wrap-around services to those displaced by Hurricane Maria and future disasters. Ensuring disaster victims in need are able to receive DHAP vouchers has been a top priority of NLIHC’s Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition. The bill’s introduction comes in response to FEMA’s May 15 denial of Puerto Rico Governor Ricardo Rossello’s request for DHAP five months earlier.

The bill was introduced by Senators Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Edward Markey (D-MA), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Dick Durbin (D-IL), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), and Kamala Harris (D-CA).

In a [press release](#) from Senators Warren, NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel offered strong support for the bill on behalf of the NLIHC-led Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition and its more than 700 member organizations. “By rejecting Puerto Rico Governor Rossello’s call for assistance more than five months ago,” she stated, “FEMA has chosen to deny vulnerable survivors, including the lowest income seniors, people with disabilities, and families with children, the stable homes they need to get back on their feet. It is vital that Congress enact Senator Warren’s bill immediately, before the new hurricane season threatens to put even more families at risk of evictions and, in worst cases, homelessness.”

Senators Markey and Warren emphasized the need for congressional action on DHAP in an [op-ed](#): “If the Trump Administration continues to turn its back on these U.S. citizens in need, it’s time for Congress to act.” The proposed bill would require FEMA to provide DHAP for Hurricane Maria survivors within 15 days of the bill’s enactment.

Read the press release at: <https://bit.ly/2squSyE>

Read the text of the bill at: <https://bit.ly/2sjYnC6>

Read the op-ed at: <https://bit.ly/2La2SGr>

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### Representative Maloney Responds to FEMA’s Rejection of Disaster Housing Assistance Program for Puerto Rico

Representative Sean Maloney (D-NY) issued a [letter](#) to FEMA Administrator Brock Long urging him to reconsider FEMA’s May 15 denial of Puerto Rico Governor Rossello’s request that the Disaster Housing Assistance Program (DHAP) be activated for survivors of Hurricane Maria. DHAP, funded by FEMA and administered by HUD, provides longer-term housing assistance and wrap-around services to help low income disaster survivors rebuild their lives.

“Puerto Rico is home to over three million Americans who contribute to our national economy and have family members across the continental United States, many of whom are in New York’s 18<sup>th</sup> district,” Mr. Maloney

stated. “No American should have to struggle to find housing, especially after a disaster—and especially when there are programs that were created specifically to alleviate suffering in such situations.”

A [press release](#) from Representative Maloney’s office noted the swifter provision of disaster relief by FEMA in Texas and Florida compared to Puerto Rico. FEMA’s denial of the Governor’s DHAP request came five months after the request was made.

Mr. Maloney quoted NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel in his press release: “It is unacceptable that FEMA continues to refuse to address the housing needs of vulnerable disaster survivors, including the lowest income seniors, people with disabilities, and families with children. We appreciate Rep. Maloney’s leadership in helping to hold FEMA accountable.”

Read Mr. Maloney’s letter and press release at: <https://bit.ly/2LcTVwm>

Learn more about DHAP at: <https://bit.ly/2LJdAot>

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## **Representative Hoyer Condemns Federal Disaster Response in Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands, Cites Report of High Death Toll**

House Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer (D-MD) released a [statement](#) on May 29 condemning the inadequate emergency and recovery resources provided to Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands after Hurricane Maria. The statement comes in response to a [study](#) published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* that estimated there were 4,645 deaths in Puerto Rico as a result of Hurricane Maria—a dramatically higher estimate than the Trump administration’s official count of 64 deaths.

“We must do everything we can to help Puerto Ricans and U.S. Virgin Islanders rebuild, just as we assisted Floridians and Texans who were impacted by the storms,” Mr. Hoyer stated. “With the next storm season on our doorstep, we must ensure that all resources are in place to respond to the next disaster appropriately.”

Read Mr. Hoyer’s statement at: <https://bit.ly/2LLJAbH>

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## **Additional Updates on Disaster Housing Recovery – June 4**

The following is a review of additional housing recovery developments related to Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria, and the California wildfires since last week’s *Memo to Members and Partners* (for the article in last week’s *Memo*, see [5/29](#)). NLIHC also posts this information at our [On the Home Front](#) blog.

### **Federal Response**

#### **Executive**

President Donald Trump [increased](#) disaster assistance funding to Puerto Rico on May 23. Federal funding for emergency power restoration was extended for 90 days, and the Sheltering and Temporary Essential Power (STEP) program was extended for 120 days. The administration also offered additional disaster assistance to the [US Virgin Islands](#) to allow projects protecting the islands from future storm damage to be entirely federally funded.

#### **FEMA**

The Transitional Shelter Assistance (TSA) deadline for survivors of Hurricane Harvey in Texas has been [extended](#) to June 30 from its previous deadline of May 31.

## **State Action Plans**

NLIHC submitted [comments](#) on Puerto Rico’s Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Action Plan and signed onto a [letter](#) prepared by leaders in Puerto Rico with more than 50 other organizations from the NLIHC-led Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition (DHRC).

## **Local Perspectives**

West Street Recovery, a grassroots mutual aid group that supports Hurricane Harvey recovery efforts, has released [recommendations](#) to improve the Partial Repair and Essential Power for Sheltering (PREPS) program. PREPS aims to provide temporary repairs to owner-occupied, single-family residences, allowing homeowners to live in their homes while completing permanent repairs. The group’s recommendations include improving communications and protocols for repairs, standards for homes and repairs, and home safety.

A U.S. Virgin Islands hurricane recovery [website](#) managed by the Virgin Islands Public Finance Authority has been launched to track the spending of the nearly \$2 billion awarded to the territory.

[Politico](#) details the struggles low-income and minority residents in Houston face navigating the bureaucracy to receive disaster aid. Those who did secure assistance were awarded an average of \$4,300, which fails to cover even minimal repairs. “When it comes to some of the most challenging needs, it’s like no one wants to be stuck holding the hot potato,” Diane Yentel, president and CEO of the National Low Income Housing Coalition, is quoted as saying. “Congress says it’s FEMA’s job. And FEMA says it’s a state’s job. And states are often now saying it’s the local government’s job. No one wants to be left saying we hold the responsibility for making sure the lowest-income people are at least made whole after a disaster.”

A January [census](#) conducted in Houston found that Hurricane Harvey led to an increase in homelessness in the city. About 18% of unsheltered homeless individuals reported that they became homeless due to the disaster.

## **Resource**

NeighborWorks America has updated its “Navigating the Road to Housing Recovery” [guide](#) for individuals and families.

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## **Congress**

### **Senate Begins Process for Setting HUD Funding for FY19**

The Senate Appropriations Committee will begin this week its process for setting FY19 funding levels for affordable housing and community development programs at HUD. The Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) Subcommittee is scheduled to vote on a draft bill on June 5, with a full committee vote on June 7.

When the Senate bill is released, NLIHC will analyze and compare the bill to President Trump’s budget request and the House version, which was approved by the full House Appropriations Committee on May 23.

The House’s proposed bill maintains the 10% increase in HUD funding that advocates and congressional champions secured in FY18, with modest additional increases for FY19. In a clear rejection of the president’s

call to drastically cut housing investments, the House version provides more than \$11 billion above the president's FY19 request. It also rejects the harmful rent increases, rigid work requirements, and de facto time limits proposed by the president in his FY19 budget request and by subsequent legislation. Despite new resources and overall increased funding available to HUD, the amounts provided in the House bill are likely not enough to renew all existing Housing Choice Vouchers and project-based rental assistance contracts. It is critical that the Senate bill further increase funding levels to ensure HUD programs can renew all housing assistance contracts.

Read NLIHC's analysis of the House spending bill at: <https://bit.ly/2rNTArA>

Review NLIHC's budget chart at: <http://bit.ly/1SowzjU>

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## Opportunity Starts at Home

### Subscribe to the *Opportunity Starts at Home* E-Newsletter!

The [\*Opportunity Starts at Home\*](#) campaign's monthly newsletter provides updates about the campaign's progress, interesting and relevant research, current events, featured materials and videos, and much more. You can subscribe to the monthly e-newsletter [here](#). If you missed the first one, you can read it [here](#).

This national multi-sector campaign for affordable homes continues to gain momentum. Since its launch in late March, *Opportunity Starts at Home* has been featured and mentioned in various publications, including [The Atlantic's CityLab](#), [The Washington Examiner](#), [Shelterforce](#), [Black Press USA](#), [The Seattle Medium](#), [The Chronicle of Philanthropy](#), [Affordable Housing Finance Magazine](#), and [Houston Style Magazine](#).

Be sure to follow the campaign on social media: [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Facebook](#).

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## Research

### Deaths in Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria Far Higher than Official Count

An article published in *The New England Journal of Medicine* sheds light on the displacement, disruption of services, and fatalities that occurred in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico. The article, "Mortality in Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria," estimates there were more than 4,600 fatalities from the storm, approximately 70 times greater than the official death count of 64.

A randomized survey of 3,299 Puerto Rican households taken in early 2018 collected information about each household member, including those who had moved in or out, died, or were born in 2017. Households were asked questions about members' age, sex, migration due to the hurricane, deaths after the hurricane, neighborhood deaths, and access to services and utilities.

The survey found significant levels of displacement and disruption in services. More than 8% of people in surveyed households were displaced due to the hurricane; either leaving their household (2.8%) or moving in with another household (5.5%) after the hurricane. Fifty-two percent of those who left their households moved elsewhere in Puerto Rico, while 41% left for the U.S. mainland.

On average, households reported 84 days without electricity, 68 days without water, and 41 days without cellular phone coverage between the hurricane's landfall in September, 2017 and the end of December, 2017.

Households in remote regions tended to be without electricity and water for a much longer period, indicating that “households either recovered services relatively quickly or not for several months.” The report notes that many households were still without water and electricity at the time the survey was conducted in January and February of 2018.

The survey also found 31% of households reported disruptions in medical services: 14.4% of households were unable to access medications, 9.5% were unable to access respiratory equipment requiring electricity, 8.6% faced closed medical facilities, and 6.1% reported an absent doctor.

The researchers weighted their survey results based on the total population of Puerto Rico to derive an estimate of total deaths following the hurricane between September 20 and December 31, 2017. This estimate was then compared to the total deaths recorded in Puerto Rico for the same period in 2016. The authors found a 62% increase in the mortality rate, or an excess of 4,645 deaths attributable to the storm and its after-effects. This estimate is more than 70 times greater than the official Hurricane Maria death count of 64 people in Puerto Rico.

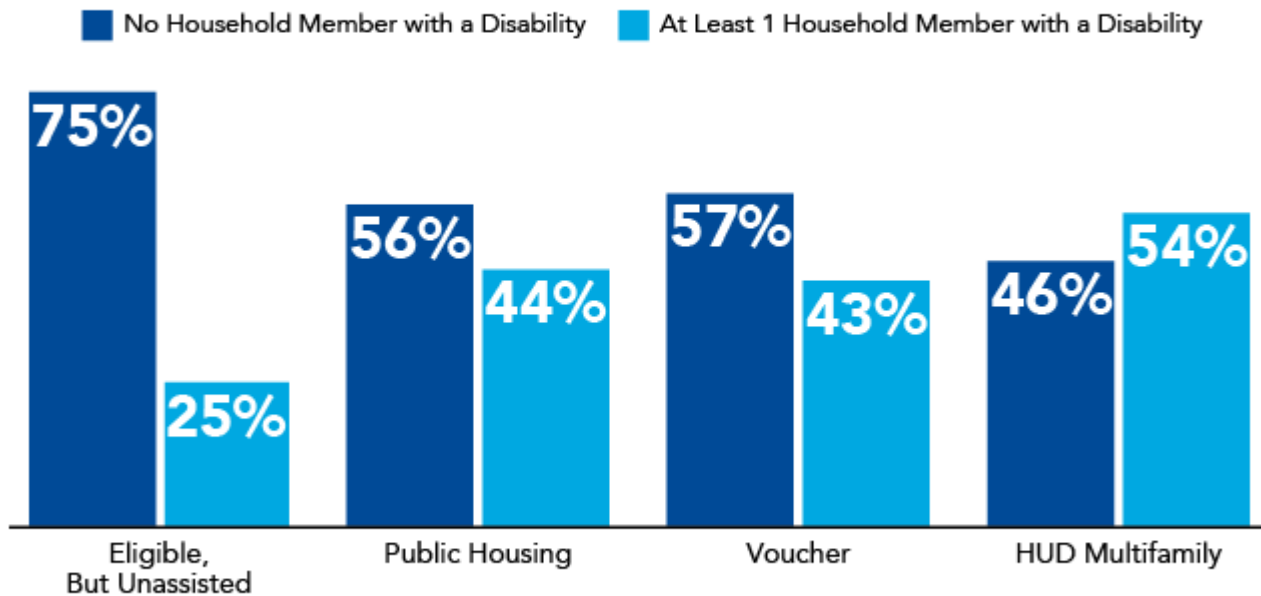
“Mortality in Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria” is available at: <https://bit.ly/2JlyZWE>

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## Fact of the Week

### Large Share of HUD-Assisted Households Have Members with Disabilities

#### Disability Status by HUD Assistance



Source: American Housing Survey, 2015

Source: American Housing Survey, 2015.

## From the Field

### Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker Signs \$1.8 Billion Housing Bond Bill

Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker signed a \$1.8 billion housing bond bill, H. 4536, on May 31 to increase the production and preservation of housing affordable to low and moderate income families and individuals. Citizens' Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA), an NLIHC state partner, led advocacy efforts for the bill's passage.

The law will create more affordable homes for low income residents and fund both permanent and transitional housing for people experiencing homelessness. The bond bill includes \$400 million for the state's Affordable Housing Trust Fund, \$600 million for modernization of public housing, and \$45 million to develop early care and educational programs. The law will also expand housing accessibility, allocating nearly \$125 million for improved housing for individuals with disabilities or mental illnesses. The law also extends and expands the Massachusetts state Low Income Housing Tax Credit.

Representative Kevin Honan (D) and Senator Joseph Boncore (D) led negotiations between the House and Senate to finalize the bill. Governor Baker had proposed a similar bill in 2017, many elements of which are reflected in the final law.

Housing advocates in Massachusetts applauded the efforts of the legislature and the Governor. "As the largest housing bond bill ever passed in Massachusetts, this is a historic achievement that will help so many find safe, healthy, and affordable homes," said Eric Shupin, director of public policy at CHAPA.

For more information, contact Eric Shupin at: [eshupin@chapa.org](mailto:eshupin@chapa.org)

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### Community Land Trust Provides Opportunities after Hurricane Irma

The Florida Keys Community Land Trust (CLT) is turning Hurricane Irma's disastrous impact into opportunities to build new affordable housing. The Florida Keys CLT purchases storm-damaged property and places it into a trust to stabilize real estate values and provide permanently affordable housing. The CLT is also a catalyst for creating Caribbean-style "Florida Keys Cottages" - new affordable units designed for sustainability, storm-resistance, and affordability.

The Florida Keys already had a serious shortage of affordable homes before Hurricane Irma hit the area in 2017. According to NLIHC's [The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes](#) report, 49 % of residents in Monroe County were already cost-burdened, spending more than 30% of their incomes on rent, and 26% were severely cost-burdened, spending more than half of their incomes on rent. The hurricane turned the housing shortage into a crisis for low income families.

The Florida Keys Community Land Trust is reducing the effects of post-storm speculation on real estate values by placing the land in a trust and constructing housing for hospitality workers. Community land trusts' collective land-ownership model ensures that the homes stay below the market rate in perpetuity.

Some of the land the CLT owns is being used to locate Keys Cottages, designed by architect Marianne Cusato after Hurricane Katrina as shelter for displaced families and individuals. The cottages in the Florida Keys are built on stilts to protect from flood damage, and their exteriors are made of structurally insulated panels, which are strong and cost-effective. The CLT seeks to purchase more land for the cottages to provide additional housing options for lower income individuals and families.



“The community land trust is a solution to create affordable housing and keep it affordable forever,” says Gladys Cook from the Florida Housing Coalition, an NLIHC state partner. “They’re replacing lost workforce housing and preventing new developments from being market-rate.”

For more information, please contact Maggie Whitcomb, founder and patron of Florida Keys CLT at: [maggie@affordablekeys.org](mailto:maggie@affordablekeys.org)

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## **NLIHC in the News**

### **NLIHC in the News for the Week of May 27**

The following are some of the news stories that NLIHC contributed to during the week of May 27:

- “Washington fails low-income hurricane victims,” *Politico*, May 29 at: <https://politi.co/2L3oCnn>
  - “Gentrification concerns and troubles with Denver’s homebuyer assistance program spur new discussions about affordable housing,” *The Denver Post*, May 26 at: <https://dpo.st/2xC5wTG>
  - “Why America Needs More Social Housing,” *The American Prospect*, May 26 at: <https://bit.ly/2s7nf06>
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## **Event**

### **HAND’s June 12 Annual Meeting & Housing Expo to Focus on Housing Discrimination and Segregation**

The Housing Association of Nonprofit Developers (HAND) will hold its 27th Annual Meeting & Housing Expo on June 12 at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, DC. This event is the largest convening of real estate and community development professionals in the Washington region, bringing together more than 1,400 practitioners each year. The theme of this year’s meeting and expo is: “Deconstruct Our Past, Redesign Our Future.”

This year’s HAND convening will feature “Undesign the Redline,” an interactive exhibit that provides a timeline of discrimination, segregation and housing policy in the U.S., connecting the intentional and systematic racial housing segregation of the 1930s to political and social issues of today through the narratives of the people and communities affected by redlining and its legacy. The conference will explore this history, as well as new and equitable policies and practices moving forward. April De Simone, co-founding partner of Undesign the Redline, is a keynote speaker.

The full agenda and registration details are at: <https://bit.ly/2k6X4lz>

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## NLIHC News

### Farewell to Christina Sin

NLIHC bid farewell to Development Manager Christina Sin on May 31. Christina accepted a position with ONE, a campaigning and advocacy organization of more than nine million people around the world acting to end extreme poverty and preventable diseases. She joined NLIHC in July 2012 as an executive assistant and was soon promoted to be the Coalition's development coordinator and then manager.



Christina led all NLIHC's fund development efforts during the past four and a half years, including corporate and foundation grant giving, individual giving, special memberships, and the NLIHC Leadership Awards Reception, among others. Christina played a major role in more than doubling corporate, foundation, and individual giving during her tenure at NLIHC, and she gained the respect, admiration, and friendship of all who interacted with her – donors, staff, partners, and board members. The NLIHC board and staff are grateful for Christina's service to the Coalition and wish her the very best in her new endeavors.

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### NLIHC Seeks Development Coordinator

NLIHC is seeking a development coordinator to manage all NLIHC fund development activities to enable the Coalition to obtain the necessary resources to fulfill its mission of achieving socially just public policy to ensure the lowest income people in the U.S. have decent, affordable homes. The development coordinator researches potential new donors, develops foundation and corporate grant proposals and reports, tracks and fulfills grant requirements, and manages the Coalition's fundraising appeals and events.

#### RESPONSIBILITIES:

##### Foundation and Corporate Grants and Special Members

1. Identify prospective funding sources, including NLIHC special members, conduct research on past funding and foundation priorities, coordinate opportunities for contact, set up meetings and calls, and work with the CEO and COO on project concepts that would appeal to funders.
2. Prepare grant applications and proposals for review by the NLIHC president/CEO and chief operating officer (COO). Work with program staff and COO to determine proposal elements. Submit final proposals for consideration.
3. Maintain hard copy and electronic records of funders solicited, proposals submitted, and grants received. Ensure all contact and follow-up information is up-to-date and accurate in Coalition customer relationship management (CRM) database.
4. Oversee grant report schedules and alert responsible staff at least three-to-four weeks in advance of reporting due dates. Compile and draft funder reports for review and finalization by the COO. Ensure all reporting requirements are met.
5. Monitor NLIHC special member dues, send invoices, and follow up regarding payments.
6. Conduct regular check-ins with foundations, corporate funders, and special members to ensure strong fund stewardship and funder/special member relationships.

##### Annual Forum, Leadership Awards Reception, and other Fundraising Events

1. Plan and fundraise for the annual Policy Forum and Leadership Awards Reception. Coordinate activities of the NLIHC board and Leadership Awards host committee members, reach out to existing sponsors, identify potential sponsors, and produce event materials. Coordinate the Leadership Awards Reception program,

- including agenda, the event program, speaker talking points, honoree videos, and other event logistics in coordination with the COO. Contribute to the achievement of budgeted event-revenue targets.
2. Staff the NLIHC Fund Development and Leadership Awards Reception Host Committees. Help Board and host members send solicitation letters and make follow up phone calls to past and new potential sponsors.
  3. Seek new and repeat corporate sponsorships for Policy Forum and Leadership Awards Reception.
  4. Maintain hard copy and electronic records of Forum and Leadership Reception sponsor contributions, including special members. Ensure all contact information is up-to-date and accurate in the Coalition's CRM database.
  5. Produce regular reports on the status of pledges and receipts and follow up until all pledges are received.
  6. Maintain Policy Forum and Leadership Reception registration through online forms and CRM database.
  7. Coordinate other events and activities for which fundraising is involved like NLIHC's anniversary events.

### **Fundraising Appeals**

1. Plan and implement solicitations of donations from individuals and non-profit organizations, including the end-of-the-year appeal, Giving Tuesday, Leadership Awards Reception appeal, matching-fund challenges, etc. Contribute to the achievement of budgeted revenue targets.
2. Research untapped sources of giving, including individual gifts, online giving, bequeaths, planned giving, etc.
3. Work with communications and outreach teams to research and implement online and social media fundraising. Ensure the Coalition website maximizes fund development potential and lists donors prominently and accurately.
4. Serve as back-up to executive assistant for production of acknowledgment letters.

### **Organizational/Operations Support**

1. Attend and report at all meetings of the NLIHC Board of Directors and before Board committees, as needed.
2. Provide all necessary materials and information for annual state charity registrations as required to third party vendor and ensure that charity registrations are up to date and on time.
3. Participate in staff meetings, retreats, trainings, and all Coalition events and perform other duties as assigned.

**QUALIFICATIONS:** To receive serious consideration for this position, an applicant should have the following attributes and background:

- A bachelor's degree.
- A demonstrated, clear commitment to the alleviation of poverty and social justice (affordable housing knowledge/experience a plus).
- Demonstrated strong organizational skills and attention to detail.
- Excellent communications skills, both orally and in writing.
- Experience successfully building and maintaining professional partnerships and relationships.
- Demonstrated experience in funder research and cultivation, proposal- and report-writing, and fundraising appeals strongly desired.
- Experience in event coordination a plus.
- Experience using Salesforce CRM a plus.
- An ability to work in a diverse, fast-paced environment.

**COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS:** An equal opportunity, affirmative action employer, NLIHC offers a competitive salary and benefits package. This is a full-time position located in Washington, DC.

## **NLIHC Welcomes New Summer Field Intern**

Trey Walk joins NLIHC as its new field intern for the summer. Trey is a rising senior at Duke University, majoring in history with a focus on urban studies and human rights. Originally from South Carolina, Trey is a volunteer advocate and board member at the Community Empowerment Fund, a nonprofit in Durham, NC, that helps individuals at risk of homelessness work towards financial independence. He has conducted research on the history of housing inequality in Durham and is beginning research on community land trusts and permanently affordable housing. He is also involved in several social justice organizations on campus. Trey is pleased to work with NLIHC this summer to advocate for safe, affordable homes for all.

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## **Where to Find Us – June 4**

NLIHC President and CEO Diane Yentel and other NLIHC staff will be speaking at the following events in the coming months:

- Meetings with Oglala Sioux Tribe, Pine Ridge, ND, June 7 - 10
- [NFHA National Conference](#), Washington, DC on June 12
- [Virginia Housing Alliance Annual Luncheon](#), Richmond, VA on June 14
- ACHANGE's convening, Little Rock, AR, June 22-23
- [Florida Housing Coalition Annual Conference](#), Orlando, FL on August 27
- [Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia: Reinventing Our Communities: Investing in Opportunity](#), Baltimore, MD on October 1

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## **NLIHC Staff**

Andrew Aurand, Vice President for Research, x245  
Victoria Bourret, Housing Advocacy Organizer, x244  
Josephine Clarke, Executive Assistant, x226  
Kimberly Curtis, Opportunity Starts at Home Intern, x229  
Dan Emmanuel, Senior Research Analyst, x316  
Ellen Errico, Creative Services Manager, x246  
Ed Gramlich, Senior Advisor, x314  
Paul Kealey, Chief Operating Officer, x232  
Mike Koprowski, Director, Multisector Housing Campaign, x317  
Joseph Lindstrom, Manager, Field Organizing, x222  
Lisa Marlow, Communications Specialist, x239  
Sarah Mickelson, Senior Director of Public Policy, x228  
Khara Norris, Director of Administration, x242  
Dina Rosin, Policy Intern, x241  
Debra Susie, Disaster Housing Recovery Coordinator, x227  
Elayne Weiss, Senior Policy Analyst, x243  
Trey Walk, Field Intern, x252  
Chantelle Wilkinson, Housing Campaign Coordinator, x230  
Renee Willis, Vice President for Field and Communications, x247  
Diane Yentel, President and CEO, x228