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Letter from the Director

Dear Friends, Colleagues and Partners,

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I'm so pleased to bring you my first "HUD News New Jersey" as the Field Office Director of the HUD Newark Office.

I began my appointment at HUD in June, and I've already gotten a real education on how things work "from the other side". As you may know, I worked for many years on the development and management of affordable housing as Executive Director of the Jersey City Housing Authority. In the six months since my appointment at HUD, I've almost become comfortable using the Department's many internal systems (ALMOST!!).

I am looking forward to the challenges at HUD, and to working with all of you to improve the quality of life in the Garden State. HUD Secretary Julián Castro has called HUD the "Department of Opportunity", and I see my role as helping to create opportunity for the residents of New Jersey. To accomplish this, we must take advantage of all opportunities to communicate with each other, and I see this newsletter as one such tool. In that light, I wanted to let you know that my new email address is maria.t.maio-messano@hud.gov, and my phone number is 973-776-7201. I'll be in touch, through this newsletter and other means, and I urge you to be in touch.

"Let's move forward together to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes in New Jersey."

We have exciting and impactful initiatives to work with at HUD, ranging from the Mayors Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness, to My Brother's Keeper Community Challenge, to the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD), to Rebuild by Design. I believe by working together, we can use these and other programs to make a real difference here in the Garden State. We have a strong Management Team in the HUD Newark Office, including some new faces, and the article on pages 4 and 5 of this newsletter tells you a little bit more about us.

I'm pleased to devote much of this issue to our efforts to end homelessness, and particularly the tragedy of veteran homelessness. We thank all veterans for their service to our country. No veteran should be sleeping in our streets, and every veteran should have access to quality permanent housing.

So let's move forward together to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes in New Jersey. We wish you and your family a happy and healthy New Year.

Sincerely,

Maria T. Maio-Messano
Director, HUD Newark Field Office



Ending Veterans Homelessness in New Jersey

On June 4, 2014, First Lady Michelle Obama launched the Mayors Challenge to End Veterans Homelessness, calling upon local leaders nationwide to commit to securing permanent supportive housing for all U.S. veterans by the end of 2015. Since then, more than 300 mayors, governors, and county executives have signed on, including 25 in New Jersey.

The 25 New Jersey officials who have joined the Mayors Challenge are committed to identifying and tracking their homeless veterans by name. They are committed to working with local organizations to strategically target state, local and federal resources dedicated to fighting this problem. They are committed to finding innovative and individually-tailored solutions that place homeless veterans in permanent homes and on the path to self-sufficiency. And they are committed to ensuring those veterans receive the crucial supportive services necessary for long-term success, from basic necessities and medical care, to job training and financial assistance for housing.

We know from experience that following through on these commitments reduces and eventually can eliminate veterans' homelessness. In New Jersey, there's been a 15 percent decline in veterans' homelessness since 2010. Yet despite this progress, there remain nearly 2,400 homeless veterans in New Jersey – so much work remains to be done.



At the recent NJ Supportive Housing Conference, two mayors who signed on to the Mayors Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness were recognized. Picture from left are Kingwood Township Mayor Phillip Lubitz; HUD Regional Homeless Coordinator Samuel Miller; Robert Asaro-Angelo, Northeast Regional Representative for the U.S. Department of Labor; Brick Mayor John Ducey; and HUD Newark Field Office Director Maria Maio-Messano.

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Ending Veterans Homelessness in New Jersey (Continued)

The federal government is dedicated to working across agencies to support local leaders who have signed onto the Challenge. The HUD-VASH Program, jointly administered by HUD and the Veterans Administration (VA), provides housing vouchers to currently homeless veterans to rent apartments of their choice. The VA pairs these vouchers with individual case management and clinical services for all HUD-VASH recipients. In October, New Jersey received 75 HUD-VASH vouchers on top of 1,015 previously provided to the state. Under the successful “Housing First” approach, communities are implementing innovative programs to provide permanent and supportive housing for homeless veterans.

We thank all 25 New Jersey local leaders who have committed to ending veterans homelessness in their communities by the end of 2015, and reiterate our support for your efforts. At the HUD Newark Office, we’re ready to offer technical assistance, guidance and feedback. And we encourage more New Jersey leaders to join the Mayors Challenge. Just click [here](#) to find out how to sign on to the Mayor’s Challenge.

Ending veterans’ homelessness is proving to be an achievable goal, city by city – and it is the least we can do to show our gratitude for the sacrifices these brave men and women have made for all of us.

We thank the following New Jersey local leaders for joining the Mayors Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness in 2015:

Atlantic City Mayor Don Guardian	Bayonne Mayor James Davis
Brick Mayor John Ducey	Carteret Mayor Daniel Reiman
Clinton Mayor Janice Kovach	Denville Mayor Thomas Andes
Edison Mayor Thomas Lankey	Elizabeth Mayor Chris Bollwage
Harrison Town Mayor James Fife	Harrison Township Mayor Louis Manzo
Highland Park Mayor Gayle Brill Mittler	Hoboken Mayor Dawn Zimmer
Jersey City Mayor Steven Fulop	Kingwood Township Mayor Phillip Lubitz
Maplewood Mayor Victor DeLuca	Middle Township Mayor Tim Donohue
Middlesex Co Freeholder Director Ronald Rios	Newark Mayor Ras Baraka
Palmyra Mayor Karen Scheffler	Paterson Mayor Jose Torres
Riverton Mayor William Brown, Jr.	South Orange Village President Alex Torpey
Westampton Mayor Carolyn Chang	West Orange Mayor Robert Parisi
Woodbridge Mayor John McCormac	

Newark Office Management Team

The HUD Newark Office Management Team includes some new faces, along with some folks who have been here for a while, so we'd like to reintroduce ourselves.

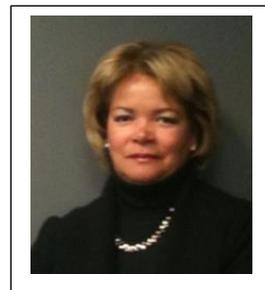
Maria Maio-Messano is the Field Office Director for the HUD Newark Office. She is responsible for overseeing HUD programs and activities throughout the State of New Jersey, as well as working with mayors, city managers, and Congressional members to ensure that the Department's policies and programs are creating more economically competitive, environmentally sustainable, and socially inclusive communities. Maria has over forty years of professional experience in planning, developing, financing, administering, and managing assisted housing in Jersey City. Her immediate Field Policy & Management staff includes Senior Management Analysts Alan Gelfand and Carleton Lewis, and Customer Service Representative Youlanda Tart.



Annemarie Uebbing has been Community Planning & Development Director since 2011. She is responsible for working with 55 entitlement communities for programs including Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnership Program, Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA), Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG), Continuum of Care funds, and Disaster Recovery Funds. Annemarie was NJ Regional Director for The Community Preservation Corporation from 2003 to 2011. Her early career was based in Jersey City, where she held several positions including Director of the Department of Housing, Economic Development & Commerce (HEDC).



Sonia Burgos was selected as the Public Housing Director in 2011. Sonia has 30 years of service at the Federal and City levels. She previously served as Acting Director, Planning and Analysis Division and the Special Assistant to the Director in the New York Public Housing HUB Office, where she was responsible for supporting the Department's policies and coordinating the Department's efforts and National Goals. As Newark Public Housing Director, she is responsible for working with New Jersey's 106 public housing authorities, that administer the Housing Choice Voucher program, Public Housing, and the HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program.



Dean Santa began his appointment as Director of the Newark Multifamily Program Center in July 2014. He worked in the Asset Management Branch of Multifamily Housing as a Senior Asset Manager for 17 years. Dean has been the point of contact for many complex programs during his tenure at HUD. He has worked in Real Estate for the last 26 years, and managed his own appraisal company and real estate sales office before joining HUD in 1997.



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Since 2011, **Wanda Nieves** has served as Newark Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO) Center Director, covering the state of New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. She is responsible for administering the Department's programs and responsibilities in connection with equal opportunity and civil rights, and also manages the education and outreach responsibilities within that area of Region II. Prior to joining Region II, Wanda was the HUD FHEO Regional Director for the Mid-Atlantic Region III. Wanda previously worked for the Municipal Government of San Juan, and held various positions including Equal Employment Opportunity Officer and Deputy Director for the Federal Affairs Department.



Shie-Fong Sun is the Associate Regional Counsel for the Region in charge of the legal operation in New Jersey. She joined HUD in 1988 as an attorney-adviser in the Newark Field Counsel's Office, and became the Chief Counsel in 2003. Her office provides full legal services for the major program areas in Public Housing, Community Planning & Development, and FHA multifamily and healthcare facilities, as well as coordination with the Regional Counsel's office on litigation matters as delegated. Shie-Fong received her J.D. from Rutgers University Law School (Camden Campus), and is admitted to practice in the states of New Jersey and Pennsylvania.



Stuart Mindes is a Housing Program Specialist for HUD's Office of Housing Counseling (OHC). The OHC provides support to a nationwide network of Housing Counseling Agencies and counselors who are trained and approved to provide tools to current and prospective homeowners and renters, so that they can make responsible choices to address their housing needs in light of their financial situations.



Spotlight On: Middlesex County Veterans Services

In each issue of our newsletter, we'd like to spotlight some outstanding work being done in New Jersey to provide affordable housing, revitalize communities, and address the tragedy of homelessness. For this issue, we'd like to highlight Middlesex County's efforts to end veterans' homelessness.

Last July, the Middlesex County Veterans Services Program received a national award for its public-private coordination and leveraging of resources to assist homeless veterans. The County program was awarded the 2014 Meritorious Service Award from the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans (NCHV). The County was the only recipient in 2014 of the award for Outstanding Partner. When the award was announced, the County noted that more than 65 homeless and near-homeless veterans have received assistance with security deposits, rental arrears and rental payments under its Veterans Housing Assistance Program.

Earlier in the summer, a groundbreaking ceremony was held for Kilmer Homes in Edison, NJ, a 120-unit affordable rental housing complex that will include 30 permanent, supportive apartments for homeless persons, including disabled veterans. The project is being developed on vacant land of the former Camp Kilmer military base, which Edison Township is redeveloping into a diverse neighborhood including housing, educational and recreational facilities. Kilmer Homes will be a mixed-income development that promotes community integration of homeless households. The Edison Housing Authority is committing rental vouchers for all 30 homeless units, and lease up of these apartments is expected in January 2015. In her remarks, HUD Newark Field Office Director Maria Maio-Messano noted that Kilmer Homes is a prime example of a public-private partnership providing opportunities for homeless veterans.

Middlesex County has subsequently signed on to the Mayors Challenge to End Veterans Homelessness. At a September 18 Freeholders meeting, the County's official resolution to join First Lady Michelle Obama's initiative was presented to Ms. Maio-Messano, who thanked the County for its efforts and for encouraging others to undertake similar activities. As Freeholder Director Ronald G. Rios said "Our veterans have put themselves into harm's way to preserve our freedom. It is our duty and privilege to help them when they get back home to get them the services they need."

Please let us know about outstanding efforts in your community to preserve and develop affordable housing; revitalize communities; or address homelessness. Send information to Maria.T.Maio-Messano@hud.gov.

HUD News and Funding Opportunities

FY2014 NOFA for Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants Published. HUD has released the FY2014 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants. Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants support the implementation of comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plans that replace distressed public and assisted housing; improve educational outcomes and intergenerational mobility for youth; and create the conditions necessary for public and private reinvestment in distressed neighborhoods. The NOFA makes approximately \$76 million available for Implementation Grants, with additional funds from the FY 2015 budget as appropriate. Individual grant awards may be for up to a maximum of \$30,000,000 and applications are due on Monday, February 9, 2015. The NOFA and application package are available [here](#). The NOFA document (not the application package) is also available [here](#) on the Choice Neighborhoods website.

National Resource Center Offers Assistance to Cities. The National Resource Network partners with American cities to help them identify and implement new and practical solutions to facilitate their path to economic recovery and growth. The Network consortium includes leading experts and practitioners selected by HUD from the private and nonprofit sectors, as well as academia, who work with city leaders every day to address their greatest economic needs. The Network provides three core services: direct assistance to cities; access to peer networks and new ideas; and on-line, on-demand access to expertise. You can access the Network's informative website by clicking [here](#).

Based on several criteria, a number of cities across the country are now eligible to apply for on-the-ground technical assistance from the Network. Seventeen (17) of these eligible municipalities are in New Jersey (Bayonne, Camden, East Orange, Elizabeth, Jersey City, Kearny, Linden, New Brunswick, Newark, Passaic, Paterson, Perth Amboy, Plainfield, Trenton, Union City, Vineland, West New York). With the launch of the on-line Request for Assistance, these cities can submit a short form and be considered for technical assistance in one or more operational, policy and programmatic areas that will be determined in conjunction with city government. An FAQ link to the Request for Assistance can be found [here](#). We understand that the Network will be offering short video tutorials on its services in January of 2015.

Events and Resources

Partners for Places Grants Available. The Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities has announced the opening of Round Six of Partners for Places. Partners for Places is a matching grant program that creates opportunities for cities and counties in the United States and Canada to improve communities by building partnerships between local government sustainability offices and place-based foundations. National funders invest in local projects to promote a healthy environment, a strong economy, and well-being of all residents. The grant program will provide partnership investments between \$25,000 and \$75,000 for one year projects, or \$50,000 and \$150,000 for two year projects, with a 1:1 match required by one or more local foundations. The application deadline for Round Six is January 28, 2015. You can visit the [Partners for Places](#) webpage to download the **Request for Proposals** and the **Proposal Form** to submit a proposal electronically.