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BUILDING A BETTER TOMORROW

JANUARY 2000

<http://www.hud.gov.bestpractices.html>

ISSUE 2

HUD's First Best Practices & Technical Assistance Symposium A Success!

There was an air of excitement! It was July 20-24, 1999, and thousands of people had gathered from across the country in Kansas City, Missouri to participate in this outstanding occasion! What was going on? The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) was proud to convene its first ever Departmental Best Practices and Technical Assistance Symposium to recognize the most notable and innovative work of industry leaders!

This was the first time that a gathering of this magnitude had assembled in one place for this purpose. At the Symposium, one could rub shoulders with leaders in their field to learn about successful business models from organizations performing similar activities; step-by-step technical assistance was available to allow community leaders to design or improve on their own local programs; participants were also able to obtain valuable management tools and techniques on the latest innovative business practices being used by this gathering of notable leaders and service providers. The Department received over 3,000 nominations for Best Practices awards from around the country, thus demonstrating the enthusiasm of HUD's partners to work together to empower communities.

(Continued on page 6)

Planning for Best Practices 2000!

"These programs should be recognized as good, not because HUD says so, but because you, those working in the communities, have worked with these programs and recognize what works."

Cardell Cooper, Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development

Members of the Best Practices Board of Directors listen attentively to recommendations



The planning for Best Practices 2000 is off to a running start as some of the 1999 Best Practices winners and community partners came together at the Department of Housing and Urban Development

on December 15, 1999 for a day-long Best Practices 2000 Planning Session. The participants came with great anticipation because they were excited about being involved in the initial planning stages of Best Practices 2000!



Some members of the Board of Directors exchange ideas for Best Practices 2000

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is changing, — no longer is it business as usual! The participants who came today were members of the newly formed Board of Directors for Best Practices 2000. They are the ones who will make major decisions that affect the people they serve in

their communities. The Board not only includes the participants at this planning session, it also includes all of the 1999 Top 100, national and regional Best Practices award winners and our community partners.

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Secretary Andrew Cuomo

The first-ever Departmental Best Practices and Technical Assistance Symposium was remarkably successful. This unprecedented gathering of HUD's component parts represented a milestone on our journey to create "One HUD," a department that works together, learns from each other and our partners, and shares what we know to make America's communities stronger and better than ever.

The first step on the road to Kansas City began two years ago, when we launched a sweeping internal reinvention of HUD, a reform effort designed to make the Department a better partner with America's communities. We cracked down on waste, fraud, and abuse that had for too long plagued us. We sought to provide faster, higher-quality customer service. We moved to modernize HUD for a new century.

Our hard work is not only about making HUD work better - it is also about making HUD work better where you live,

providing the right tools to support the innovative work you do in your neighborhoods. I am pleased to say that we have created a HUD you can be proud of - a HUD that is working for the communities it serves.

Yet, our State of the Cities and other reports have also found that a prosperity gap divides the majority of communities that are doing well from those that are struggling and have been left behind. Too many cities have had minimal or non-existent job growth, suffer from persistent poverty, and actually lost population, especially middle-class families, while the rest of the nation was growing. Some older suburbs are experiencing problems that once only affected urban areas - including job loss, population decline, crime and disinvestment. Simultaneously, many newer suburbs are straining under sprawling growth that leads to traffic congestion, overcrowded schools, and the loss of open space.

Some of the solutions to these problems were born in Kansas City at the Best Practices and Technical Assistance Symposium. You - America's best minds on building livable communities and sparking sustainable economic development - have the creativity and leadership America needs to solve its problems. By sharing your best practices, by lifting them up for all to see and emulate, leaders across the country learned about exciting new models of community success: Local initiatives that have brought new jobs and hope to struggling neighborhoods, new homes for families moving from welfare to work, and opportunities for homeownership for young couples, women and minorities.

At the Department of Housing and Urban Development we are pleased to be a partner with America's communities. Working smarter, working better, working together, this is how we are "Building a Better Tomorrow". ♦

What is a Best Practice?

A HUD Best Practice is defined as a program or project, management tool, or technique that fulfills at least two of the following characteristics.

- Generates a significant positive impact on those it is intended to serve or manage.
- Can be replicated in other areas of the country, region, or local jurisdiction.
- Demonstrates the effective use of partnerships among government agencies, non-profit organizations, or private businesses; and
- Displays creativity in addressing a problem, and demonstrates effective leveraging of resources. ◆

A Risk Youth Rebuild Lives by Rebuilding Neighborhoods (Austin, TX)

Through the Casa Verde Builders Program, the youth have constructed over 30 homes for low-income families, developed transitional housing for the homeless, rehabilitated a community center, weatherized over 120 homes, and developed a shop where cabinetry skills are taught.

Hamilton County Cops Arrest Housing Bias (Cincinnati, OH)

Hamilton County police chiefs are placing their departments on the battlefield against unlawful housing discrimination, and Cincinnati's local cops are learning about the Fair Housing Act and other civil rights laws, by enrolling for an anti-bias training program run by Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME).

Consolidated Program Helps Thousands Buy Homes (Albuquerque, NM)

Affordable homebuyers in New Mexico can now receive a virtually seamless continuum of services to help them reach homeownership...The initiative has enabled Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority to provide more than \$1 billion dollars in affordable housing loans to 25,237 families.

Home Owning Dream Comes True for Low-Income North Carolinians (Lenoir, NC)

The Unifour Consortium, an alliance of Alexander, Burke, Caldwell and Catawba counties and their local governments has devised an innovative "Down Payment Assistance Program" to help low-income families finance their first homes.

“Best of the Best”

Best Practices represent an extraordinary compilation of good work by counties, cities, states, nonprofit organizations, and, in some cases, for-profit housing developers. These flagship performers also represent the nation's best housing and community development practitioners in America's communities across the Country. By emphasizing Best Practices, we are saying that minimum performance is not sufficient. If we are to be the best, we must simply do our best, therefore, we all should be working to meet the highest standard, rather than the bare minimum.

The “Best of the Best” Awards Ceremony was a defining moment of the conference. The top 100 awards were presented on the Saturday morning, the final day, of the Symposium. These top 100 awards represented the “best of the best” from across the Country. The Symposium will annually showcase the best practices identified by the Department throughout the year. Performance leaders were encouraged to take center stage at the Symposium to provide information to other leaders on the processes, techniques and skills that earned them the “best of the best” designation. ◆

Scenes from the Top 100 Awards Ceremony

Family Connection Program- Rainbow Days, Cathy Brown, Dallas, TX, accompanied by Saul Ramirez, Betsy Julian and Bill Apgar



Fair Housing Opportunities Made Equal, Connie Chamberlin, Richmond, Va. accompanied by Saul Ramirez, Karen Miller



Montgomery Townhouses, Jacqueline Jones, Philadelphia, PA, accompanied by Saul Ramirez, Karen Miller and Bill Apgar



NM Homeownership Counseling, Joseph Ortega, Albuquerque, NM, accompanied by Saul Ramirez, William Apgar and Davey Gibson



House Charlette, Stanley Watkins, Charlotte, N.C. accompanied by Saul Ramirez, Davey Gibson and William Apgar



If I Had A Hammer, Charles McConnell, Wise County, VA, accompanied by Saul Ramirez, Karen Miller and Ken Williams

Bay Area Video Coalition, Tamara Gould, San Francisco, CA, accompanied by Saul Ramirez, Art Agnos and Ken Williams





The Gateway at Edgewood Terrace, Albert Browne, Washington, DC accompanied by Saul Ramirez, William Apgar and Karen Miller



NOAH, Kay Absner, Norman, OK, accompanied by Saul Ramirez, William Apgar and Betsy Julian



NM Homeownership Counseling, Joseph Ortega, Albuquerque, NM, accompanied by Saul Ramirez, William Apgar and Betsy Julian



Wellness Access Demonstration Program, Bruce Austin, Houston, TX, accompanied by Saul Ramirez

Congratulations to all of the Best Practices Winners for a job well done!



Vera Court Revitalization, Hicory Hurie, Madison, WI, accompanied by Saul Ramirez, Rosanna Marquez, and William Apgar



Tennessee Fair Housing Council, Charlie Arnold and Michele Gittleman, Nashville TN, accompanied by Saul Ramirez, Davey Gibson and Eva Plaza



Germano-Millgate NNC, Brigitte Robinson, Chicago, IL accompanied by Saul Ramirez, Betsy Julian, and Ken Williams



Asian Americans for Equality, Margaret Chen Flushing, NY, accompanied by Saul Ramirez and Eva Plaza



Welfare-to-Work, Karen Miller, Philadelphia, PA accompanied by Saul Ramirez

(Continued from page 1)

The Symposium showcased over 400 exhibitors, poster presenters, and 160 seminars and numerous technical assistance sessions that covered the universe of HUD programs. The Department's goals were well exceeded.

Portions of the conference were broadcast to all 81 HUD offices beginning with the opening session on Wednesday, July 21, 1999. The final awards ceremony on Saturday, July 24 was Webcast on the HUD Home Page, www.hud.gov.

The Symposium clearly demonstrated how many local governments and groups are successfully using HUD assistance for innovative programs to revitalize communities and bring new opportunities to American families. They are building affordable housing, sparking economic development, creating jobs, expanding homeownership, and helping the homeless become self-sufficient. By recognizing these success stories, HUD is helping communities across the nation learn from each other. This exchange of ideas and practical information shows HUD's commitment to restoring the public's trust by working collaboratively with local governments.

The theme for the Symposium "Building A Better Tomorrow," emphasize Department-wide initiatives and programs that implement the "One HUD" philosophy.

At the Symposium, HUD recognized outstanding community achievements with its Best Practices seal of approval. The Symposium was so successful that it will become an annual event with the next Symposium slated for July 2000. We look forward to continuing our partnerships with our existing partners and establishing new partnerships as we work together in Building A Better Tomorrow. ♦



General Deputy Assistant Secretary Joseph Smith, Project Manager, Terry Nicolosi, Deputy Secretary Saul N. Ramirez, Jr.



Deputy Secretary Ramirez greets Exhibitors



CPD Assistant Secretary Cardell Cooper talks with board members Pat Hale, Wendy McNamara and Gwen Owens

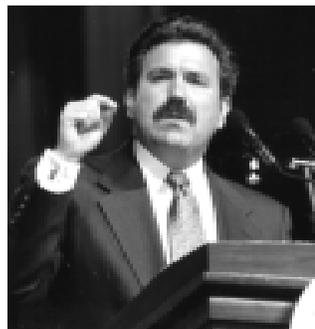


Florida State Community Builder, Jose Cintron greets Ft. Myers Exhibitors



Mayor Kay Barnes receives a Best Practices T-shirt from the Deputy Secretary Ramirez

Deputy Secretary Saul N. Ramirez, Jr. addressed the gathering of more than 3,000 participants at the Opening Plenary session. The gathering left the Plenary Session filled with renewed hope and challenge to translate good ideas into action to make them work for real people in their daily lives.



In the Spotlight - Neighborhood Networks

Welcome to the Neighborhood!

Neighborhood Networks was one of many HUD grantees providing technical assistance to the participants at the 1999 Best Practices and Technical Assistance Symposium. What is it?

Envision a room in a HUD-assisted and/or -insured housing development lined with computer workstations. Add a mix of people to make it work (resident, multifamily housing owners and managers, paid and volunteer staff, and community partners), plus a menu of educational and job training programs. Open the doors - both on-site and via the internet - to microenterprise and telecommuting opportunities for residents. Introduce health care, wellness, community and social service programs. This is a Neighborhood Networks center tailor-made to fit a local community.



Multifamily Housing Director Charlie Famuliner discusses Merits of Neighborhood Networks

What is the Neighborhood Networks initiative?

Neighborhood Networks is a community-based initiative of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that encourages the development of resource and computer learning centers in privately owned HUD-assisted and/or -insured housing. These centers work to build self-reliant neighborhoods that meet the needs of lower-income families and seniors where they live.

Who does it serve?

Neighborhood Networks serve HUD-assisted and/or -insured housing residents, owners, managers, partners and communities.

Neighborhood Networks Facts
*as of 2/99

- More than 460 centers in operation*
- Involves thousands of business, community and government partners
- More than 620 properties with centers in planning*

For more information on Neighborhood Networks contact:
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

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Fairfax, VA 22031-1207
Website: www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org
e-mail: nnetworks@icfkaiser.com

Telephone:
Neighborhood Networks
Information Center
(888) 312-2743

TTY: (703) 934-3230



Karen Jackson, Best Practices Project Manager 2000

The occasion was kicked off by the Associate General Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration, Karen Jackson, who set the tone for the one-day planning session. As she spoke to the participants, she informed them that this forum is a great opportunity “to strut your stuff, because you are the ones that HUD turns to for help in replicating what you have done to make HUD programs work in the various communities around the country.” Mrs. Jackson, who is also the Best Practices 2000 Project Manager, views this gathering as a testimony of the participants’ commitment to build upon the successes of the 1999 Best Practices and Technical Assistance Symposium, held in Kansas City, Missouri. “We accomplished a lot last year and must continue to build upon what we have learned in order to get a good model for Best Practices 2000.” This year the Best Practices 2000 program is an inclusive process and everyone will have an opportunity to contribute.

Assistant Secretary Cardell Cooper and Deputy Secretary Ramirez



The gap was bridged between the old and the new as Secretary for Community Planning and Development, Cardell Cooper was acknowledged by Deputy Secretary Saul Ramirez for the important role he has played in the shaping of the Best Practices program in the Department.

“As a Federal agency, HUD has a responsibility to help de-mystify the process. The de-mystification allows everyone to use the programs that are designed to help improve the quality of their lives in the community. HUD is working to make sure that it is a partner on the ground level where work is done so that we are good stewards of the public trust.”

-- Cardell Cooper, Assistant Secretary, CPD

The participants were challenged to not be afraid to document their successes. They must dialog constantly with one another about their programs to better serve the people in their communities. HUD’s top officials emphasized the need to work cooperatively across program lines to help leverage public and private resources to better serve our clients - - “failure is not an option, we have to become more creative in addressing issues in which we are confronted.”

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Presenters and some of the members of the Best Practices Board of Directors

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Eva Plaza, Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity



Jimmy Lacey



Mary Madden, Assistant Secretary for Field Policy and Mgmt.



Terry McArthur



Henry Kraus



Jackie Kramer



Avis Jenkins

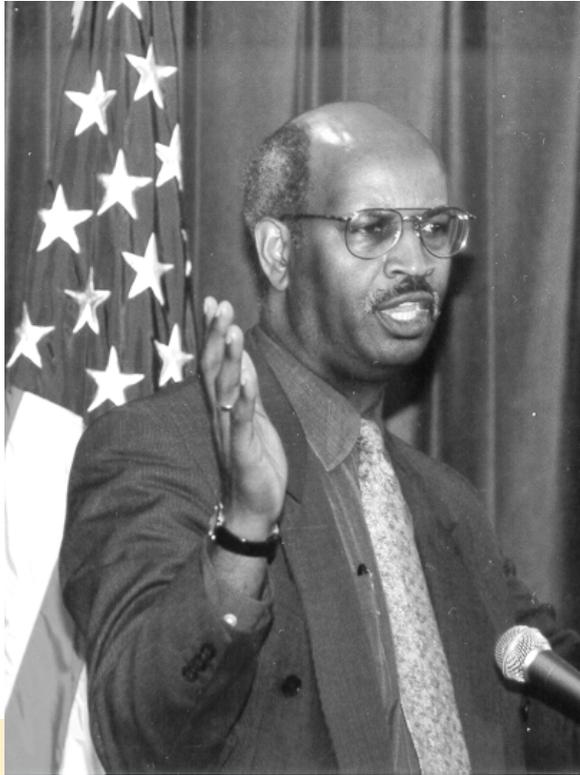


Reba Cook, Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for Multifamily Housing



Xavier Briggs, Deputy Assistant Secretary Office of Policy Development & Research

General Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration, Joseph Smith provided the charge for Best Practices 2000 and challenged the participants to become teachers and ask the hard questions relative to adapting models in our communities. “We need “strategic” partners to help us design the Best Practices 2000 program to enhance the quality and quantity of services we provide to the communities we serve. “This year we will not simply focus on the annual symposium, - - that is a by-product of the best practices effort — technical assistance is the ultimate goal. In 2000, all of us together will organize a national technical assistance approach that produces a conference in July that is a Best Practice.”



In 1999, we defined the standards. The compilation of Best Practices that were disseminated to all participants, is an excellent representation of some of the “best” in our communities, but we must produce more. We should be proud of the successes of the 1999 Best Practices efforts, but we must learn to build upon those achievements and provide instructions to others on how they can replicate the Best Practices.

-- General Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Administration Joseph Smith

We must remove the mindset that best practices is a one time event. It is NOT! It is a process that should occur throughout the year. HUD has already begun that process. Earlier this year, the Department issued the HUD Monitoring Desk Guide. This booklet serves as a tool that should be used throughout the year as an evaluative component to monitor a program’s effectiveness and to identify programs that are at risk.. Risk analysis is a process used to assess the relative risk that program participants pose to the Department, through technical assistance and monitoring.

In year 2000, all eighty-one Field Offices are being asked to identify a minimum of eighteen (18) best practices each, three per strategic objective. HUD is encouraging the use of the HUD Monitoring Desk Guide to assist the field staff in achieving this goal because the process provides staff with: (1) consistent data to develop monitoring strategies to manage the risk, and (2) permits HUD staff to determine the programs that are performing effectively and can be considered best practices.

We can not ensure that HUD has all the answers – that’s why we need your help. Today is the beginning of several days of working cooperatively together to determine what is a best practice and finding means to replicate those identified. ♦

Open Forum for Questions and Answers

General Deputy Assistant Secretary Smith opened the session to questions from the participants. This portion of the one-day planning session provided constructive recommendations for making Best Practices even better. Roy Priest, Director, National Congress for Community Economic Development (NCCED) challenged the Department to take a more comprehensive look at the use of modern technology to share best practices with others around the country. Mr. Priest stated that the 1999 Best Practices and Technical Assistance Symposium was a very powerful experience and provided these recommendations for building upon the accomplishments achieved in 1999.

Roy Priest, Director NCCED suggests expansion of Best Practices effort



Planning for Best Practices 2000 Continues!



- In light of advanced technology, there is a need for HUD to hold a national conference that simulcast segments of different conferences with similar agendas centered on a central theme. For example, “we have various organizations such as the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) who are engaged in the concept of best practices. All of us are doing best practices — we just have to incorporate the concept of best practices which everybody buys into simultaneously.”
- Replication happens best when persons are in a location where they can walk “next door” and find their neighbor doing a similar practice that works. We should not always have to transport someone from across the country to show how something works well. In other words, we need to decentralize the process so that it can be replicated across a wider spectrum.
- We must build a year long initiative, not just one event. We must also show what employees are doing that are best practices. Our best practices primarily focuses on projects – we must also begin to focus on people who are engaging in best practices.

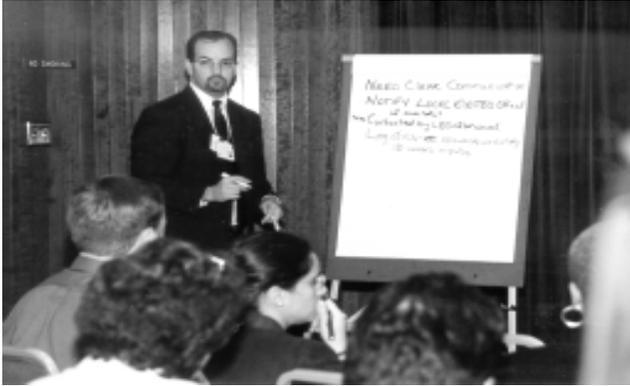
Joseph Smith thanked Roy Priest for his recommendations and stated that they are not outside of HUD’s scope. He also stated that these types of suggestions are ones that are expected from you, the Board of Directors.



Board Member taking notes at planning session



Linda Perkins and Barbara Brown, Board of Directors in Planning Session



Jim Cunningham recording recommendations from 2000 Planning Session

As the morning session continued on into the afternoon, the facilitators directed the participants to separate rooms where discussions centered on the following areas, (1) Replication Tools and (2) 1999 Reflections. Facilitators were provided in each of the break-out sessions to assist in the brainstorming process and to ensure that all recommendations were adequately captured.

At the end of this process, all of the participants reconvened as one body and provided recommendations for Best Practices 2000. Jim Cunningham, Management and Planning Analyst, Office of Administration, served as the facilitator for this enthusiastic exchange of ideas and recommendations for Best Practices 2000. A cascade of ideas were provided in the areas of: models for replication, the nomination process and pre-conference planning. These ideas are shared below:

Creating Models for Replication

- Best Practices should be more problem solving oriented. Establish a meeting room that provides an opportunity for one-on-one questioning so that the most minute detail can be asked of the award winners.
- Use Best Practices award winners as mentors to other program participants. Consider using technical assistance funds to provide travel for the award winners so that they can assist other programs in getting a best practice established.
- Use headquarters and field office staff to disseminate a model web site that would serve as a central repository for best practices.
- Include telling the “why” of the story, not always the “how.”
- Community Builders should play a greater role by widely disseminating best practices information via newspapers, Congress and other media.
- Better utilize corporate partners in various planning capacities.
- Utilize Best Practices winners as facilitators of work shops at the symposium.
- Provide skills development workshops at the symposium.
- Focus on quality versus quantity (fewer workshops) at the symposium.
- Have video tapes of sessions made available for viewing after the symposium.



Some of the Board Members share ideas to strengthen Best Practices in 2000

The Nomination Process

- Provide sub-categories for best practices awards. Do not only use HUD strategic program objectives.
- Award across program areas. If a program has overlapping program components (e.g., housing, homelessness), do not restrict award to one program.
- Provide reviewers more time for internal evaluation of nominations.
- Open nominations to a wider audience.
- Notify nominees in advance of their award. Clarify the process of a winner versus a nominee.
- Establish a process whereby local officials and national officials are notified in advance of the nominee receipt of the award.

Pre-Conference Planning

- Provide a “chat room” whereby specific best practices issues can be posted throughout the year.
- Hold pre-conference roundtable discussions that can be replication across the country on the local level
- Establish a web-site that links to established best practices categories to assist others in replication efforts.
- Move the Awards Banquet closer to the middle of the week. This allows other participants to talk with the award winners about their program.
- More interaction with HUD top officials in a roundtable discussion is needed.

The facilitators for the group sessions (morning and afternoon) included the following: Robert Duncan, Yvette Aidara, Louvenia Eddens, Surrell Seidlitz, Letha Strothers, Katy Worsham, Beverly Miller, Holly Bellino and Jovern James.

Best Practices Board of Directors member making critical contribution to the 2000 planning process



This one-day session was packed with good ideas and recommendations for making Best Practices 2000 an even better symposium than 1999! The participants even had an opportunity to make recommendations regarding the site for Best Practices 2000.

At the close of the day, the Associate General Deputy Assistant Secretary Karen Jackson thanked everyone for their participation and



Board Members
Henry Kraus,
Andrea Anderson

dedicated service in “Building A Better Tomorrow.” Not only did the participants receive Certificates of Appreciation at the end of the day but they came away believing that this was indeed, a day well spent making a real difference working for the communities they serve

We thank you all! ♦

More Highlights from the 1999 Conference

The conference was sprinkled with events designed to showcase examples of HUD “success stories” such as the Bus Tours to Kansas City, Missouri, and Kansas City, Kansas. These tours allowed the participants to view many of the revitalized neighborhoods that use HUD funds to restore a sense of community where families can live, work and play. The mini plenary sessions featured such entertainment as the Fabulous Marching Cougars Drill Team complete with drummers, the Kansas City Boys Choir, Meet and Greet the Assistant Secretaries receptions, a Children’s Symphony from Puerto Rico entertained in the Exhibit Hall and on Friday night, Mayor Kay Barnes hosted a lawn reception in a historic district known for its rich African American heritage and jazz music. ♦



Jazz Reception

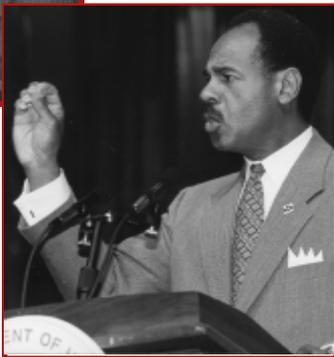


Children's Symphony - Puer to Rico

Mayor Dennis Archer



Mayor Emanuel Cleaver



Bus Tour

Fabulous Marching Cougars Drill Team



Lawn Jazz Reception hosted by Mayor Kay Barnes



Kansas City Boys Choir

more Presenters and Directors from page 9

Deborah Vinson, General Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing



Bruce Alston



Amy Kimball



Michael Hail



Marcia Brathwaite



Sue Heller



Linda Perkins

Jacqueline Jones



Amy Wilkinson, General Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing & Equal Opportunity

I've learned so much more about what is going on across this great nation. I also now have a better feel for what HUD is all about. HUD is moving in the right Direction."

--Symposium Evaluation

"Kudos to the new HUD-- Way to go!"

-- Symposium Evaluation

Yes, I would like to be placed on the Building A Better Tomorrow, HUD's Best Practices and Technical Assistance Forum newsletter mailing list. (Please print)

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Fax _____

E-mail _____



Let Us Hear From You - Please share your experience with us relative to:

- (1) networking at the 1999 Best Practices and Technical Assistance Symposium,
- (2) new partnerships formed as a result of the symposium,
- (3) what you learned,
- (4) how the Office of Management and Planning can make the year 2000 symposium even better,
- (5) what issues you would like to hear more about at HUD,
- (6) suggested topics for inclusion in the next edition of this newsletter, and
- 7) techniques that can be used to effectively replicate best practice models around the country.

The Best Practices Program is managed by the Office of Management and Planning (OMAP) under the Assistant Secretary for Administration. This Office will ensure the integrity of the Best Practices Program by providing a performance-based review and evaluation, compliance and monitoring of information received by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Management and Planning, 409 Third Street, S.W., Suite 310, Washington, DC 20024. Phone: 202/708-1027.

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