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IL NAHRO HOUSING FOCUS

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National Black History Month has its origins in 1915, when historian and author Dr. Carter G. Woodson founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. This organization is now known as the Association for the Study of African American Life and History External (ASALH). Through this organization, Dr. Woodson initiated the first Negro History Week in February 1926. Dr. Woodson selected the week in February that included the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, two key figures in the history of Black Americans.

In 1975, President Ford issued a Message on the Observance of Black History Week External urging all Americans to "recognize the important contribution made to our nation's life and culture by black citizens." In 1976, ASALH expanded this commemoration of Black history in the United States from a week-long observance to Black History Month, which also has been known as African American History Month. In the same year, President Ford issued a Message on the Observance of Black History Month External. In subsequent years, presidents continued to issue messages External honoring Black History Month.

In 1986, Congress passed Public Law 99-244, which designated February 1986 as "National Black (Afro-American) History Month." This law noted that February 1, 1986 would "mark the beginning of the sixtieth annual public and private salute to Black History." The law further directed the president to issue a proclamation calling on the people of the United States to observe February 1986 as Black History Month with the appropriate ceremonies and activities. President Reagan issued Presidential Proclamation 5443 External, which proclaimed that "the foremost purpose of Black History Month is to make all Americans aware of this struggle for freedom and equal opportunity." This proclamation stated further that this month was a time "to celebrate the many achievements of African Americans in every field from science and the arts to politics and religion."

Since 1996, presidents have issued annual proclamations for National Black History Month. In January 1996, President Clinton issued Presidential Proclamation 6863 External for "National African American History Month." The proclamation emphasized the theme for that year, the achievements of Black women from Sojourner Truth to Mary McLeod Bethune and Toni Morrison. Since 1996, Congress has regularly passed resolutions honoring Black History Month. In February 1996, the Senate passed Senate Resolution 229 commemorating Black History Month and the contributions of Black American U.S. Senators.

From The President



Dr. Jackie Newman
President

Hello, ILNAHRO members and friends!! As we continue embarking on “Growing Illinois through Engagement”, we are excited to introduce you to ILNAHRO’s VP of Legislative Affairs, Daniel Cruz. Dan Cruz is the Chief of Staff of the Chicago Housing Authority, a role he has held since 2021. He assists the Executive Office in overall agency operations and planning, focusing on intergovernmental affairs and community relations. Before joining CHA, he ran his own public affairs consulting practice (Cruz Communications), working on civil rights and philanthropic issues. His background also includes senior public relations roles at Ligado Networks, the U.S. Treasury Department, the General Services Administration, and the Massachusetts state government. He has worked on high-profile federal and local policy and regulatory issues throughout his career. He received a bachelor’s degree in Political Science from Northeastern University in Boston and was a University of Chicago Civic Leadership Academy Fellow.

**HELP ME WELCOME
OUR NEW VP OF
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS!**



**ILNAHRO’s VP of
Legislative Affairs,**

**Daniel Cruz,
Chief of Staff of the
Chicago Housing
Authority,**

Already this year, Dan and I have engaged with some of our elected State Senators through an initial meeting. Our goal is for ILNAHRO to serve as one of the primary resources for our elected State Senators and Representatives in the affordable housing space ensuring we provide information and context of public housing authority operations, federal mandates, guidelines, etc. that govern and guide public housing authority operations. A few of the state legislative items for consideration this year include working with our elected officials on the impact and regulatory conflict of SB 1367 on housing authorities. Additionally, we are considering working on support for extending a state tax credit for property owners participating in the HCV program; without an extension, the tax benefit is scheduled to sunset in 2025. We will be meeting with our elected State officials on a periodic basis throughout the coming year. ILNAHRO looks forward to continuing its partnership with Illinois Association of Housing Authorities (IAHA) and Housing Action Illinois (HAI) advocating on behalf of affordable housing providers throughout the State of Illinois.

ILNAHRO will collaborate with our National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) to co-host its Summer Symposium scheduled for July 10-12, 2024 at the Sheraton Grand Riverwalk Hotel in Chicago, Illinois. We are looking forward to collaborating with NAHRO on symposium subject-matters that will benefit all housing authorities (small, medium and large). Registration and hotel information will be forthcoming in early April. Please mark your calendars now and plan to join us in Chicago.

Finally, in this issue we are remembering the life a giant in the public housing space, Bob Lane. Bob had a heart for people and a passion for affordable housing. I met Bob over 20 years ago as a new CEO. He extended himself to me and served as a listening ear and mentor. If you had opportunity to interact with Bob, then you know how much better off you were as a result of your interactions with him. His personality, smile and sense of humor were larger than life! Farewell my friend and thank you for your contribution to affordable housing on a state, regional and national level.

Please contact me and let me know what I can do to represent you/your housing authority/your voice!!

Sincerely,

Jackie L. Newman
Dr. Jackie L. Newman
ILNAHRO President



Mission Statement

NAHRO makes available resources for its members and others who provide decent, safe, affordable housing, and viable communities that enhance the quality of life for all Americans, especially those of low- and moderate-income by:

- Ensuring that housing and community development professionals have the leadership skills, education, information and tools to serve communities in a rapidly changing environment;
- Advocating for appropriate laws, adequate funding levels and responsible public policies that address the needs of the people served; are financially and programmatically viable for our industry; are flexible, reduce regulatory burdens and promote local decision-making.
- Fostering the highest standards of ethical behavior, service and accountability to ensure public trust

NAHRO enhances the professional development and effectiveness of its members and the industry through its comprehensive professional development curriculum, including certifications; conferences; and publications. These efforts work to equip NAHRO's members with the skills, knowledge and resources necessary to succeed and prosper in a changing environment.

UNCOMMONLY STRONG
FOR 30 YEARS

Thank you for being a valued partner in our mission to protect, preserve, and promote the sustainability of affordable housing.
We're stronger together.

INSURANCE | RISK MANAGEMENT | TRAINING | RESEARCH

 **HAI Group.** www.housingcenter.com

HAI Group is a marketing name used to refer to insurers, a producer, and related service providers affiliated through a common mission, management, and governance. Property-casualty insurance and related services are written or provided by Housing Authority Risk Retention Group, Inc.; Housing Authority Property Insurance, A Mutual Company; Housing Enterprises Insurance Company, Inc.; Housing Specialty Insurance Company, Inc.; Innovative Housing Insurance Company, Inc.; Housing Investment Group, Inc.; and Housing Insurance Services, Inc. (DBA Housing Insurance Agency Services, Inc. in NY and MI). Members of HAI Group provide commercial property and casualty insurance to affordable housing organizations, public housing authorities, and related entities. Not all products are available in all states. Coverage is subject to the terms of the policies actually issued. A risk retention group or surplus lines insurer may provide certain coverages. Risk retention groups and surplus lines insurers do not participate in state guaranty funds, and insureds are therefore not protected by such funds if insured by such entities. For a complete list of companies in the HAI Group family, visit www.housingcenter.com.



2024 Strategic Repositioning Spring Retreat

March 18-21
Renaissance Atlanta Waverly Hotel & Convention Center
Atlanta, GA

2024 Washington Conference

April 8-10
Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill
Washington, DC

2024 ILNAHRO Summer Symposium

July 10-12
Chicago, IL

2024 National Conference & Exhibition

September 26-28
Marriott Orlando World Center Hotel
Orlando, FL



Success Stories

Here's what Workforce Connections has to say ...

Sonya Blan enrolled in our employment and training program and was looking for office experience. Her Business Specialist helped set her up with a paid internship position with NiReach and she did an amazing job! Sonya helped organize and run the on-site coffee shop and the food pantry. Her supervisor stated she kept the best records. Since her successful completion of her internship, Sonya has signed up for IT classes and is achieving her goals—to gain a certification in Web design. The Workforce Connection really motivated her to reach her goals!

We are so proud of you Sonya!



Sonya Blan



Congratulations! From the Northern Illinois ReACH...

As a ConnectHome VISTA, Sonya works to decrease the digital divide with our WCHA community by connecting our residents with affordable internet options through the Affordable Connectivity program. She is currently working with Verizon to coordinate site visits to our apartment complexes. We were awarded a community grant through Community Foundation of Northern Illinois to build a Telehealth Room in our complex in Rockton and Sonya will be the lead on that project.

There has been a positive change in Sonya since she began her work as an Intern. Sonya has become a leader in the community which makes her proud of the work that she is doing and the ability to help her neighbors stay connected. She has enjoyed visiting the other apartment complexes to meeting new community members. This new role has given Sonya a newfound purpose and can see the impact she is making with the important work she is doing in our community.

This past fall, Michael Reese Health Trust Foundation presented the John F. Benjamin Exceptional Service Award to Chief Homelessness Officer, Christine Haley. She is the third recipient of this award that was established in memory of John F. Benjamin in 2021.

Chief Haley was selected to receive this annual award serving as an example of the philanthropic qualities that John F. Benjamin exemplified throughout his sixty years of service as an accomplished and devoted member of Michael Reese Hospital and Michael Reese Health Trust.

Throughout her leadership and dedication in the field of health, Chief Haley has shown generosity towards others, taken creative approaches to solving problems, and pursued her passion to ensure that all Illinoisians have a safe place to call home, and a better quality of life will leave a lifelong impact in all communities.

Chief Haley joins the company of 2022 honoree Dr. Ngozi Ezike former director of the Illinois Department of Public Health, and now serves as President and CEO of Sinai Chicago.

In response to the Illinois Office To Prevent And End Homelessness staff on being the 2023 recipient of this award, Chief Haley stated with gratitude, “Thanks so much all. I receive this award with all of you and our community of service providers and persons living outside, in shelter and in overcrowded homes. I am so excited that our work is being featured.”



Sally Benjamin Young
(Michael Reese Health
Trust, Board of Directors)
and Chief Homelessness
Officer Christine Haley



2024 ILNAHRO POSTER CONTEST

It's that time to get ready for the Annual Poster Contest: "What home means to me?" We had a drop in last year's submissions. Lets try to hit 50 from our State this year.

The due date is March 18th, 2024 by 5pm.

Please mail your posters to:
Winnebago County Hosing Authority
3617 Delaware Street Rockford, IL 61102

Any other questions please contact me at:
DAfredson@NiReach.org



"What Home Means to Me" Poster Contest Entry Rules

Rules:

- Theme - "What Home Means to Me"
- **Size – All posters must be 22" x 28" and have a LANDSCAPE/HORIZONTAL orientation to be considered for national judging and may be featured in the 2025 "What Home Means to Me" calendar.**
- Media - Contestant may use any art media (marker, crayon, paint, collage, textiles, etc.), but please consider that posters will need to be packaged, mailed and reproduced.
- All entries must be mailed flat.
- All contestants must sign a release making their entry the property of NAHRO and permitting duplication/publication thereof. The release should be secured to the back of the entry.
- **All regional finalists must provide their NAHRO member ID number to be considered for national judging.**
- All regional finalists and national winners must sign a photo release waiver giving NAHRO permission to use their picture for online and print publication.
- All contestants are asked to provide a short narrative on the inspiration, vision, and importance of their poster design. The narrative should be secured on the back of the entry.
- Contestants name, grade level, and housing authority must be **written on the back of each poster entry** in addition to being listed on the release form also attached to the entry.
- NAHRO is only responsible for returning the original poster to the national grand prize winner. NAHRO is not responsible for returning posters except for the grand prize-winning poster.
- National winners will be selected based on how well the artwork uses the "What Home Means to Me" theme.

Eligibility and Selection Categories:

Contest participation is open to all children in grades K-12 residing in affordable housing assisted directly, supported under community development, or participants in affordable housing programs administered by a NAHRO member authority (i.e., public or Section 8-assisted housing CDBG, HOME, LIHTC). Entries must be created by only one person. Entries created by two or more people will not be accepted.



Application

Name of Applicant-artist: _____

Address: _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip code** _____

Housing Agency: _____

Age category: Elementary: K-5th (___) Middle: 6th-8th (___) High: 9th -12th (___)

Applicant's Age: _____

Name of Parent or Guardian: _____

(Required if applicant is under 18 years of age)

Conditions of submission:

Applicant and parent or guardian understand and agree that upon submission of the applicant's poster, the poster will become the sole property of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO). NAHRO shall have exclusive and full rights to copy, reproduce and distribute the poster in connection with its poster calendar and may retain the original of any poster. Applicant, and parent or guardian for and on behalf of applicant, hereby release and discharge NAHRO and any and all Regional Councils, State Chapters or other affiliates of NAHRO from any and all liabilities, claims, suits, or actions, including without limitation any claim to payment of compensation, in connection with NAHRO's possession, use, copying, reproduction, and/or distribution of the applicant's poster.

By signing this application below, applicant, and any parent or legal guardian signing on applicant's behalf, hereby indicate agreement to the conditions stated above. Any person signing as guardian further represents that he or she is fully and lawfully empowered to act as guardian for the applicant.

Signature of Applicant: _____

Signature of Parent Guardian: _____

Local Housing Agency Contest Representative Contact Information
(Local Housing Agency Office Only)

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____





Remembering Our Colleague



It is with heartfelt sympathy that we share the news of the passing of Bob Lane, who was a long time member from the great state of Indiana. NCRC NAHRO sends our thoughts and love to his family and friends.

Robert T. "Bob" Lane, Jr, 71 of New Albany, Indiana, passed away on Friday, January 5, 2024, at Baptist Health Floyd in New Albany, Indiana.

He was born July 4, 1952, in Bedford, Indiana, one of two sons, to the late Robert T. Lane, Sr. and Kathleen M. (Condra) Lane.

Bob was well known around Southern Indiana for his love of umpiring baseball and softball, where he made life-long friends. He was a graduate of Springs Valley High School, Northwood Institute, Indiana University Southeast and Rutgers University.

He began his career with the Springs Valley Parks Department and delivered newspapers on his "Trusty" bike. In 1974, Bob was hired at IUS to be the intramural, student organization coordinator and coached women's basketball, tennis, and was the assistant men's basketball coach.

In 1985, he became Director of the New Albany Floyd County Parks Department and in 2001, he became Executive Director of the New Albany Housing Authority. He was a National Consultant for Housing Authorities and served on the National NAHRO board.

He was a Kentucky Colonel, member of the New Albany Rotary Club, and a recipient of the Paul Harris Fellow. He was presented the IUS Grenadier Gratitude award, the Distinguished IUS Alumni Award and Man of Distinction for Community Action. He was currently serving as the board chair of the Family Health Centers of Southern Indiana.

Bob's dedication as a member of Trinity United Methodist Church, and commitment to his faith, led him to become an essential part of his congregation. Bob loved people and was dedicated to lifting their spirits and making them smile.

Bob is survived by his loving wife of 35 years, Sue (Stiles) Lane; his daughter, Rebecca Marie Lane of New Albany, Indiana; brother, Jeff Lane of French Lick, Indiana; and many cousins and friends.

Visitation will be from 1:00pm to 7:00pm Thursday, January 11, 2024, at Naville & Seabrook Funeral Home, 1119 East Market Street, New Albany, Indiana. Funeral services will be held at 11:00am Friday, January 12, 2024, at Trinity United Methodist Church, 2796 Charlestown Road, New Albany, Indiana, with prior visitation from 9:00am to 11:00am.

Burial will be held on Saturday, January 13, at Ames Chapel Cemetery, SR 150, Paoli, Indiana with prior visitation at Beechwood Christian Church from 10:00am to 1:00pm, 535 SR 56, French Lick, Indiana.

In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts can be made to Trinity United Methodist Church or the IUS Athletic Scholarship Fund, 4201 Grant Line Road, New Albany, Indiana 47150.

<https://www.nsfuneralhomes.com/obituaries/Robert-T-Bob-Lane-Jr?obId=30286862#/obituaryInfo>





HUD Awards \$25 Million to Public Housing Agencies to Expand More Housing Choices For Families

WASHINGTON - Today, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced \$25 million in Housing Mobility-Related Services awards to 7 Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) across the country. These funds are designed to expand housing choices for Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) families with children by increasing access to opportunity neighborhoods with high-performing schools, access to jobs, low crime rates, parks, and other amenities.

“Every parent knows the value of providing a safe and secure place for their child to call home. Stability at home helps promote their future success – in school and onwards,” **said Secretary Marcia L. Fudge**. “As HUD works to expand affordable housing and ensure economic mobility is possible for all families, these Housing Mobility-Related Services awards will boost access to housing vouchers for families who need them the most.”

The funds for housing mobility-related services, as outlined in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), will enable additional PHAs to administer housing mobility programs. This, in turn, will raise the number of HCV families with children living in neighborhoods characterized by low poverty levels.

Richard J. Monocchio, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing, made the announcement alongside recipient, Housing Authority of Milwaukee County, in Milwaukee County, Wisconsin. Please see the list of awardees here.

“The impact of these funds is tangible – families can more easily move to neighborhoods of their choice and near more opportunity,” **said Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing, Richard J. Monocchio**. “Providing families additional support with their housing search can ultimately lead to better long-term outcomes in employment and education.”

This program is based on HUD's Community Choice Demonstration program that builds upon recent research that shows growing up in neighborhoods with lower poverty levels improves children's academic achievement and long-term chances of success and reduces intergenerational poverty. Children who move to low-poverty neighborhoods have also been shown to experience lower rates of hospitalizations, lower hospital spending, and some changes in mental health over the long-term follow-up. Adults given the chance to move to low-poverty neighborhoods experience reductions in obesity and diabetes.

While the HCV program currently offers families with vouchers the opportunity to live in a neighborhood of their choice (including low-poverty, opportunity neighborhoods), families with HCVs may continue to encounter barriers to using their vouchers in communities with expanded opportunities. Common barriers include the inability to save enough money for a security deposit, inadequate time to find a unit, landlord unwillingness to rent to voucher holders, or limited awareness of neighborhood amenities, such as the location of high-performing schools.

The Housing Choice Voucher Mobility Services Program will support PHAs in addressing barriers to accessing housing choices by offering mobility-related services to increase the number of voucher families with children living in opportunity areas. In addition to offering mobility-related services, PHAs will work together in their regions to adopt administrative policies that further enable housing mobility, increase landlord participation, and reduce barriers for families to move across PHA jurisdictions through portability.



HUD Announces Agreement with Affordable Rental Housing Provider to Increase Housing Opportunity

(The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced today that it has entered a Voluntary Compliance Agreement for Shore Hill Apartments resolving a compliance review concerning non-discrimination in marketing and tenanting procedures. Shore Hill Apartments is a 558-unit multifamily property comprised of studio and one-bedroom units in Brooklyn, New York. The property provides affordable subsidized units through the Section 8 program for families with a member who is 62 or older or has a disability, including otherwise qualified families with children. Read the Agreement.

HUD enforces the Fair Housing Act, which prohibits discrimination because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, and disability. HUD also enforces other federal civil rights laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.

“Restrictive occupancy policies can limit housing opportunities for families in a manner that is discriminatory,” said **Demetria L. McCain, HUD’s Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity**. “HUD is committed to ensuring that every eligible applicant has a meaningful opportunity to participate in HUD funded housing programs.”

This Agreement arises from a compliance review that was conducted by HUD’s Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO) under Title VI and Section 504. FHEO opened the review based on information indicating disproportionately low participation rates of Black and Hispanic residents relative to the housing market area over decades, extending to prior owners of the property. The review sought to ensure eligible persons were not discriminated against in opportunities to learn about, apply to, and

reside in HUD subsidized housing on the basis of race, color or national origin. In particular, the review revealed the property’s occupancy standard restricted occupancy of studio units to a family size of one and one-bedroom units to a family size of two, contributing to denials based on race and deterring families as small as two persons from applying to the property. FHEO expanded the review to include Section 504 when the investigation revealed the property had a practice of denying families with heads of households under 62 years of age, without considering whether the household was otherwise eligible to apply to and reside in the property on the basis of disability.

The Agreement provides a fund in the amount of \$510,000 to compensate individuals who were either denied due to the restrictive occupancy policy, or individuals with disabilities who were improperly denied housing. In addition, the Agreement requires creation of a new waitlist after robust marketing to those least likely to apply, committing a minimum of \$10,000 towards advertising, outreach, and website development; affirmative agreement not to adopt an elderly preference and to consider equally for tenancy otherwise qualified applicants with disabilities and applicants aged 62 or over; and revising the property’s occupancy policy to be no more restrictive than local ordinance. This Agreement does not constitute admissions by the housing providers or evidence of a final determination by HUD of violations of Title VI, Section 504, or any other laws.

Individuals who believe they have experienced discrimination in housing may file a complaint by contacting HUD’s Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity at (800) 669-9777 (voice) or (800) 877-8339 (Federal Relay Service)





What Partnership Look Likes



*Pearl Place Apartments, Belvidere, IL –
Ron Clever, Illinois Market President, Gorman & Company, LLC.*

In 2023, I attended the State of Indiana NAHRO conference and presented, in partnership with our friends at Brinshore Development and D3G Dominion Due Diligence Group. Months later, we did a similar presentation at the Illinois NAHRO conference. In these presentations, we focused on the power of partnerships to convert aging portfolios to high quality affordable housing.

Region V Administrator Diane Shelley, serving Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin attended these sessions as an audience member. It was an honor to hear her praise the partnerships between Brinshore, D3G, Gorman & Co., and the public housing authorities we each work with. She encouraged PHAs to consider the values of public/private partnerships and the capacity and knowledge they can bring to PHAs in order execute on their missions as well as HUD's.

In 2019, Pearl Place Senior Apartments came up for sale and was at risk of moving from affordable senior apartments to market rate, taking valuable affordable homes for seniors out of the market. NAHRO member Gorman & Company placed the development under contract and began to search for a partner to help execute the preservation project. Winnebago Homes Association, an instrumentality of NiReach (formerly Winnebago County Housing Authority) stepped to the plate joining the development team as its non-profit sponsor. The partnerships didn't end there.

Over the coming months through traditional means, the Boone County Housing Authority (BCHA) a member of the NiReach consortium, joined to group by providing project-based vouchers, after competitive RFP. Later in the development process BCHA, again under competitive RFP, made a deeper commitment to the project with a HUD VASH voucher award. HUD-VASH is a collaborative program which pairs HUD's Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) rental assistance with VA case management and supportive services for homeless Veterans.

The project wasn't without challenge, as is the case in almost every affordable housing project, but the power of partnership persevered and brought the project to close in March of 2023 – four years later. As of December 29, 2023, the project has been fully renovated, and is home to 56 senior units, where 52 are again affordable for thirty more years.

Today, Pearl Place is in full lease up for veterans and seniors. Many thanks to the partnerships with the staff and boards of NiReach, Winnebago Homes Association, Boone County Housing Authority, HUD, Illinois Housing Development Authority, the National Park Service, State of Illinois Historic Preservation Office, and so many more! If you'd like to know more about the Pearl Place Senior Apartments preservation, I am sure Alan Zais, ED NiReach or I am happy and proud to tell you more! Many thanks Alan!

While Gorman & Company excels in its affordable housing work, we can't do what we do without partnerships and Pearl Place is just one example of what Regional Administrator Shelley was talking about – leveraging the values of a public/private partnership to advance a PHA's mission.



1920's post card of the Belvidere High School





What Partnership look Likes

*Pearl Place Apartments, Belvidere, IL –
Ron Clewer, Illinois Market President, Gorman & Company, LLC.*

About Pearl Place Senior Apartments:

The Pearl Place apartments are named after their location, Pearl Street [Belvidere, IL], but it was the original old Belvidere High School, a complex of four connected buildings that reflect three different architectural styles: Classical Revival, Prairie School, and Art Deco. The first building was the 1893 Garfield School, a powerhouse was added in 1900, the Belvidere High School was added in 1916, and then the 1939 Belvidere High School Auditorium & Gymnasium

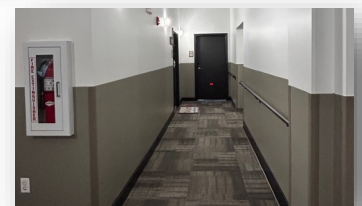
The school was abandoned in 1990 in favor of a newly constructed school, and Pearl School was being considered for demolition. Fortunately, it did not, and on 07/25/97 it was placed on the Register of Historic Places.

From 1997 to 1999 the remaining two school buildings were joined by an annex, renovated, and converted to affordable housing for seniors. Over the coming years, as the land use regulatory agreement expired, the property began to house seniors who could afford market rate rents.

In 2019, Gorman & Company, LLC entered into a purchase and sale agreement with the purpose of renovating the aging property and preserving it once again for seniors in need of affordable homes. The story above gives the abridged version of the 4 years from contract to construction completion. The pictures that follow show the post renovation conditions of Pearl Place Senior Apartments.



Exterior photo of the Annex Building at Pearl Place Apartments



A typical hallway to units in the Pearl Place Senior Apartments



*An example of the living rooms in the Pearl Place Senior Apartments—
with fully restored original historic windows*



*Entrance to the Pearl Place Senior Apartments that shows the rear of the
former Belvidere High School and the power plant with chimney in the
rear of photo*



*The Boone County Housing Authority Board and Veterans
Administration members visit Pearl Place as it neared completion
in December 2023*



*The restored façade and landscaping of the original
Belvidere High School*





Good News! **GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN AVERTED.** For now, services related to agriculture, energy and water, military construction and veterans' programs, transport and housing will be funded until March 1.

THANK YOU HOUSING ADVOCATES - YOUR VOICE MATTERS ❤️ ⚖️

NAHRO Legislative Network Committee cheerleaders will ~ ~

Amplify the voices of those most impacted [#EquitableHousingOptions](#)

Be one of the loudest voices in the room [#AffordableHousingMatters](#)

Motivate our 19,000+ individual members to participate in advocacy efforts [#WeAreHousers](#)

Communicate the benefits of advocacy [#HousingIsAHumanRight](#)

Equip members with a plethora of advocacy tools [#NAHROAdvocacyActionCenter](#)

Partner with other trade organizations where mission and core value legislative agendas are aligned
[#PowerOfPartnerships](#)

Encourage 100% participation from Committee and Board Members [#OurVoiceMatters](#)

Celebrate wins [#HousingPolicyChangesLives](#)

Acknowledge losses as LEARNINGS, reset and get back to work ❤️

Let's Go [#NAHRO.....](#) ❤️

The International Research and Global Exchanges Committee's Whitepaper,

"Embracing Indigenous Wisdom to Build More resilient and Adapted Communities"
was just published in the most recent NAHRO Journal of Housing and Community
Development.

It is also available here on the NAHRO website:

<https://www.nahro.org/about/nahro-leadership/national-standing-committees/international-research-and-global-exchange-committee/>

The Committee is meeting regularly and realigning for the 2023-2026 term with key focus on supporting the membership's International Research Needs, preparing for travel exchanges (details to come on these opportunities) and further building upon the aforementioned Whitepaper. We are in the final stages of establishing three new Memoranda of Understanding with global organizations to further the sharing of best practices from around the world.



Security Under Scrutiny: The Evolving Landscape of Multifamily Premises Liability



In 2015, during a visit to a Kroger grocery store in Atlanta, Georgia, a 26-year-old man was robbed and shot by two assailants, resulting in his paralysis. Four years later, a jury awarded the man nearly \$70 million after his attorneys successfully argued that Kroger was aware of the store's location in an unsafe, high-crime area but failed to deploy security guards in the parking lot where the shooting occurred.

According to attorney Carrie Blackburn Riley, the Kroger case is notable for defense attorneys specializing in premises liability and negligent security claims. While not directly involved in the case, her practice, [Blackburn Riley LLC](#), primarily focuses on defending insureds, including affordable rent residential property owners, against premises liability and negligent security claims in Maryland.

"From a legal perspective, what stands out about the Kroger incident is how the plaintiff's attorney leveraged two key concepts—*atmosphere of violence* and *foreseeability*—to construct a compelling negligence case against Kroger," noted Riley.

The size of the jury award is also notable and can be classified as a nuclear verdict, a term generally used to define verdicts exceeding \$10 million. Nuclear verdicts significantly contribute to social inflation, a term used in the insurance industry to describe the rising costs of insurance claims due to changing social attitudes, perceptions, and legal trends.

Janelle Howard, a regional claims manager with HAI Group, an insurer dedicated to the public and affordable housing industry, pointed out that, like any business owner, multifamily property owners, landlords, and

managers are susceptible to similar claims.

"The landscape of premises liability has undergone a seismic shift in the multifamily industry due to the rise of social inflation and the looming specter of nuclear verdicts," Howard said.

This article explores the legal intricacies of negligent security claims in the multifamily industry. It examines how plaintiff attorneys strategically emphasize elements like an atmosphere of violence and foreseeability to build compelling cases that can lead to sizable awards.

Premises liability and negligent security in multifamily settings

In the context of the multifamily housing market, premises liability entails the responsibility of property owners, landlords, and property managers to uphold a secure environment for both tenants and visitors. In cases where individuals suffer injuries or harm due to unsafe property conditions, property stakeholders can be held liable through civil lawsuits.

Negligent security, within the realm of premises liability law, focuses on the obligation of property owners, landlords, and managers to implement reasonable and necessary measures for shielding individuals on their property from foreseeable harm related to security risks.

In the contemporary landscape, there is heightened scrutiny on the adequacy of security measures in multifamily housing, placing property owners, landlords, and managers under increased legal scrutiny.

Establishing the standard of care

Generally, plaintiff attorneys must establish a burden of proof when bringing a premises security case, Riley explained.

Plaintiff attorneys need to demonstrate that property stakeholders had a duty to the victim and that a breach of that duty directly caused the injury. This duty—referred to as the standard of care—varies from state to state, Riley said.

Two legal theories—*foreseeability* and *atmosphere of violence*—are crucial in determining the standard of care that a property's stakeholders must meet in premises security.

"In some states, there is a heightened duty, implying an obligation to provide more security than in other states," Riley noted, emphasizing the variability in legal expectations based on jurisdiction.

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According to Howard, foreseeability refers to the ability to reasonably anticipate or predict certain risks that may occur. States have differing definitions of what a reasonable person in the same circumstances would foresee as potential risks. Howard said the atmosphere of violence refers to the prevailing level of violence or criminal activity in a specific area.

“A plaintiff attorney will often try to establish that the defendant should have foreseen or known they had an atmosphere of violence on or around their property,” Howard said.

Property stakeholders may be held to a higher standard of care in areas with a known atmosphere of violence.

“[Property stakeholders] might be expected to implement more robust security measures than a similar property in a low-crime area to adequately address the foreseeable risks associated with the prevailing atmosphere,” Howard said.

How plaintiff attorneys construct compelling legal cases

Plaintiff attorneys frequently concentrate on the physical security measures of a property when constructing a premises security case against its stakeholders.

For instance, if a property manager receives reports about a door consistently being propped open, allowing access to trespassers, and fails to take immediate action to rectify the issue, plaintiffs can argue foreseeability. In this scenario, if a resident is subsequently robbed by someone who entered the building through the propped door, the plaintiffs can contend that the property manager neglected to address a known risk, establishing a basis for foreseeability in their case.

In addition to scrutinizing the security of common area doors, plaintiff attorneys typically assess

various physical security attributes, including:

- Windows (checking for functional locking mechanisms).
- Overgrown shrubbery and bushes (determining if they provide hiding spots for criminals).
- Lighting (verifying its proper functionality).
- Gates and fences (investigating if they are consistently in a state of disrepair).



Plaintiff attorneys also concentrate on the presence and effectiveness of security measures such as security guards, surveillance cameras, door monitors, and access-controlled doors.

In Riley’s experience, plaintiff attorneys like to tout that a property or surrounding area had a high volume of “calls for service” to police when attempting to establish an atmosphere of violence argument. But this tactic isn’t always a fair gauge, she noted, as calls for police service are just calls, not proven, established events.

“If you have a lawsuit where a plaintiff is seeking damages related to an alleged rape, and police records show a high number of calls for vehicle break-ins and disorderly conduct, the defense can argue that such calls wouldn’t have alerted the landlord or property owner to take different precautions,” Riley said.

The shifting dynamics of premises liability

In the complex world of multifamily housing, the story of premises security claims is an ongoing narrative, with echoes of the past present in today’s conversation.

A study published in 1991 by the **Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice** reviewed 82 premises security claims from 1985 to 1989, including claims against commercial housing providers.

“The judgments and settlements in cases indicate that courts are sending a message to businesses that inadequate or lax security practices will not be tolerated,” notes the study abstract. “These cases revealed blatant security errors and management ignorance.”

The study’s timeless lesson echoes today: the scrutiny of security policies and practices intensifies when a criminal incident occurs, irrespective of the sophistication of



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security systems or the presence of guards.

Fast forward to the present, and the landscape has evolved. While the nature of premises security claims remains familiar, the potential consequences have undergone a seismic shift. Verdicts today have the potential to reach beyond the conventional, with awards surpassing the \$10 million mark, a figure that, in the 1990s, would have been deemed extraordinary.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Institute for Legal Reform **analyzed 1,376 nuclear verdicts** between 2010 and 2019. Half were between \$10 million and \$20 million, and about one-third were between \$20 million and \$50 million. The remaining 16 percent of verdicts exceeded \$50 million (101 ‘thermonuclear’ verdicts exceeded the \$100 million threshold). Notably, the median nuclear verdict increased 27.5 percent over the 10-year study period, outpacing inflation.

A large percentage of these verdicts come from states that the American Tort Reform Foundation labels ‘Judicial Hellholes’ as part of its annual report on the topic. Georgia sits atop the foundation’s ranked list of worst litigation environments in 2023-24. The aforementioned U.S. Chamber of Commerce Institute for Legal Reform study on nuclear verdicts noted that Georgia experienced 53 such judgments between 2010 and 2019, totaling more than \$3 billion. Many of these verdicts result from lawsuits blaming businesses for the criminal conduct of others on or near their property.

Defending against premises liability: A proactive approach

To proactively manage risks and establish a robust defense against potentially ‘nuclear’ lawsuits, property stakeholders must prioritize implementing effective security measures.

J.B. Smith, a senior risk control consultant with HAI Group, recommends adopting the concept of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) as a foundational strategy. CPTED involves deliberately using environmental elements, such as natural access control and territorial reinforcement, to reduce criminal opportunities. Practical applications of CPTED include trimming bushes that could be potential hiding spots for assailants and ensuring adequate lighting on walkways unobstructed by vegetation.

Smith also underscores the importance of having com-

prehensive written policies for staff. There’s a distinction between policies, rules, and guidelines, underscoring the need for staff training to exercise discretion appropriately. “Ensuring that these policies are documented and actively followed is crucial,” he pointed out. For instance, where door propping is prohibited, staff should communicate with residents about the importance of securing doorways and document these conversations

According to Riley, if door propping persists, a property manager may be unable to terminate a lease, but they can demonstrate proactive efforts to address the issue. “Show that you tried to educate and advise residents that their habit of propping open doors can potentially jeopardize neighbors,” she advised.

Howard highlighted the frequent allegations by plaintiff attorneys regarding a failure to train staff in negligent security claims. Documented training sessions can strengthen the defense against such claims.

Riley stressed the importance of transparency regarding features like gates, fences, lights, door monitors, and surveillance cameras. Clear communication about the presence of a broken gate or the purpose and functionality of surveillance cameras can prevent misconceptions that plaintiff attorneys can leverage in court. She emphasized the value of community meetings and resident notices to defend against negligent security claims.

“Always avoid creating a false sense of security,” Riley said. By fostering a genuine understanding of the security measures in place, property stakeholders not only mitigate risks and build a robust defense but also contribute to a safer and more informed community.



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In a time when our agencies face economic challenges, you might wonder, "Why Membership?" Your ILNAHRO membership provides valuable benefits:

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- ◆ Membership Period: October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024

If you're not a member yet, this is your chance to join forces with other PHAs and CD organizations. Please consider becoming a member this fiscal year, as exciting opportunities lie ahead in "Building Communities Together—Through Affordable Housing."

Renew or join today by completing the attached form and sending it with payment to Evonite Smith, Executive Assistant, Springfield Housing Authority, 200 North Eleventh Street, Springfield, Illinois 62703. This ensures your membership benefits start promptly.

Should you have any questions or need assistance, please don't hesitate to reach out. We're here to serve you at any time.

Thank you for your ongoing support, and we look forward to welcoming you as a member or renewing your membership.

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