Extending the Ladder:
Building a Career Path in Property Management
by Joyce Grangent and John Rio

The Illinois Office of the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH), through its Stepping Up project is proposing a career ladder in property management and a sequenced certification program offered at the Chicago Community Colleges. A career ladder pathway would prepare individuals as qualified workers for the entry-level jobs or initial “rungs of the ladder” in property management. Developing the knowledge and skills as a Property Management Clerk is the first rung, followed by a series of courses to prepare people for jobs as Occupancy and Leasing Specialists, the second rung. From field research in supportive housing, affordable housing and commercial property management conducted by the University of Illinois, CSH learned that there are upper rungs of a career ladder, but no pathway for tenants or other interested candidates to enter a career in affordable housing property management.

Opportunities for Tenants of Affordable Housing

Tenants living in affordable housing, including supportive housing and public housing projects, are often recruited for work in their buildings and many more consider work in the housing field as a career option.

(Continued on page 4)

Analysis of McKinney-Vento Bills

The National Alliance to End Homelessness has produced a comprehensive summary of two recent bills that would restructure the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) homeless assistance programs. Both the Community Partnership to End Homelessness Act (S. 1801) and the Homeless Assistance Consolidation Act (H. R. 5041) would consolidate HUD’s three competitive homeless programs into one competitive program. They would also add prevention as an eligible activity. Additionally, both would shift much of the responsibility for overseeing grants from HUD to communities. The bills, however, have different approaches to services. S. 1801 would allow HUD to reduce the types of services that are eligible for funding if the Government Accountability Office (GAO) found that other federal funding for those services was increasing. H. R. 5041, on the other hand, would give HUD broad discretion in determining which services could be funded.

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**Using HOME in Homeless Projects**

CSH is presenting a training on Using HOME in Homeless Projects on June 20th in Springfield, Illinois. This training focuses on introducing the HUD HOME program to nonprofits that are new to housing development and are interested in serving tenants who have been homeless. The training will include an overview of the HOME program, CHDO eligibility requirements and the application process and a basic introduction to the permanent supportive housing development process. This training may interest non-profit supportive service providers and developers who want to develop permanent supportive housing for people who are homeless, non-profits that want to become CHDOs and other non-profits who want to explore the possibility of doing this work, HOME departments and Continuum of Care members.

Date: June 20th 10am to 3pm

Location:
Training Room
Illinois Community Action Association,
3435 Liberty Drive,
Springfield, IL 62704

This training is free. However, you must reserve a space. To register, please contact Janis York at (312) 588-1236 x16.

CSH is a HUD CHDO Technical Assistance provider and HUD is sponsoring this training. Thanks to the generosity of Regions Bank, lunch will be provided to all attendees.

This training will be repeated at locations in Chicago and Southern Illinois later this summer.

**Rural Appropriations Bill**

On May 12, the House Appropriations Committee filed its FY 07 Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA and Related Agencies Bill. HR 5384 contains a number of important provisions for rural housing and increases two important accounts: Self Help Housing Grants (+4 million) and Farm Labor Housing loans and grants (+17 million). If the House bill is approved, the total available for farm labor housing for FY 07 will be $50 million in loans and $23 million in grants.

The total for Self Help is the greatest in the history of program. The total for farm labor is the largest in more than 10 years. The Congressional Hispanic Caucus has worked with NRHC to increase funding for sections 514/516.

Most rural housing loan programs are continued at the current rate. This includes section 502 direct and guaranteed loans and home repair loans.

The Committee again restored section 515 to the FY 06 rate — $99 million. The bill achieves some savings by reducing the total on rural rental assistance to $311 million and the term on expiring contracts to one year.

The bill follows the same path as FY 06 on multi-family restoration including $16 million for vouchers, $3 million for preservation revolving fund, $9 million for the preservation demonstration and $990,000 for technical support.

The bill ignores proposals to consolidate community development spending at Commerce. Funding for business loans and grants are set a freeze. RCDI is left on the cutting room floor.

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Earning and Living Opportunities Act

On April 6, Representative Nydia Velazquez (D-NY) introduced H. R. 5164, the “Earning and Living Opportunities Act,” to improve HUD’s Section 3 program. Representatives Charles Rangel (D-NY), Luis Gutierrez (D-IL), Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) and Gregory Meeks (D-NY) are co-sponsors of the bill.

Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 requires agencies receiving federal housing and community development funds to provide, to the greatest extent feasible, employment, contracting, and training opportunities for low income people. When Section 3 is properly implemented, the result is jobs and training for low income individuals and contracts with businesses owned by low income individuals. Few public housing authorities (PHAs) and other recipients of HUD funds, however, have met their obligations under Section 3. H. R. 5164 seeks to strengthen both the obligations and the reporting requirements toward meeting the obligations.

The bill would require that, among other things: contractors awarded funds from HUD submit evidence showing that a minimum of 20% of all hours worked in connection with the contract will be performed by low or very low income people; PHAs and other recipients of HUD funds establish a Section 3 committee, composed of at least one affected resident, to oversee all aspects of compliance with Section 3; and that contractors awarded funds ensure that skilled, eligible low income persons are provided a priority in hiring and are provided on the job training. The bill would also require that all PHAs report quarterly to the HUD Secretary on the number of hours worked by low income people on contracts awarded to them. In turn, the HUD Secretary would report annually to Congress a summary of the quarterly reports. The summary report would include information on the number of jobs and training opportunities generated by Section 3 and the number of hours worked by low and very low income persons on contracts awarded by HUD, as well as the number and amount of contracts and percentage of total contracts awarded to Section 3 businesses.

H. R. 5164 has been referred to the House Committee on Financial Services.

For further information, contact the National Low-Income Housing Coalition at the address in Headlines Directory.

Making the Connection

Homeless Clients: Mailing Addresses, and Public Benefits

Contributor: DuPage Federation on Human Services Reform

While the DuPage Federation was conducting the Making the Connection training throughout the state, many of you said that some of your homeless clients were unable to receive essential benefits due to not having a permanent address. I want to use today’s column to discuss this issue and how it impacts receipt of Food Stamps, Medicaid and state cash benefits. (The state policy reference is entered in the parentheses.)

A permanent or fixed address is not required in order for a person to receive cash, medical or Food Stamps. IDHS policy instructs staff not to require proof of residence from homeless persons (PM 06-04-03). The homeless individual is required, however, to establish that s/he is an Illinois resident, which is simple since IDHS policy permits staff to “accept the client’s statement claiming residence in Illinois” (PM and WAG 03-02-00).

Individuals applying for benefits must cooperate and provide a mailing address or contact person so IDHS staff can locate them (PM 01-02-01). When an individual states s/he does not have a mailing address, and often this can be the case, the IDHS caseworker can suggest to the client that s/he could provide an address of a friend, community agency, church, mission, etc. In instances the individual is still not able to get a mailing address; s/he can use the local IDHS office address. If the client chooses to use the IDHS office as his mailing address, IDHS staff is to stress to the client that it is important to regularly pick up mail, since failure to pick up mail could cause him or her to miss an important notice that affects eligibility (PM 02-07-03-d).

When clients who are already receiving benefits become homeless, often we are not sure which state office we are to send our client’s forms and documents: the office in the area in which they used to live or the office in the area in which they are temporarily staying. State policy instructs IDHS staff to change the address on their

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Extending the Ladder
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However, there is little, if any, formal training at the entry level for people with limited education and experience in the property management field, especially for people with complex needs—such as formerly homeless people with disabilities. Nor is there a standard or expected skill set for job candidates, or consistent salary structure for entry level jobs in this field. In essence, each community housing organization is left up to its own devices.

There are a number of organizations offering certifications in the housing field. These include the Institute for Real Estate Management (IREM), Consortium for Housing and Asset Management (CHAM), National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) and National Association of Residential Property Managers (NARPM).

“Certification by these organizations is targeted at the upper levels of property management. There is no entry pathway of education and field training for aspiring property management candidates seeking certification,” according to CSH’s Joyce Grangent, Director of the Stepping Up project.

Win-Win for Housing Agencies and Tenants

Organizing this sector of the housing industry helps strengthen its workforce.

A curriculum based at the community college is being proposed to the Illinois Board of Community Colleges, which would establish a credible entry-level occupational category in the industry. The training and certification will support a consistent level of property management staff, quality, skills and expertise across the industry and determined by the industry itself. “We think this proposed career training in property management will benefit the Community College, the housing industry and help people with special needs enter a career through course work on our campus. It’s a win-win situation” says Cynthia Cordes, Dean of Instruction at Wilbur Wright Community College.

Impact on the Industry

The supportive housing and affordable housing property management field can improve and strengthen efforts to meet its own workforce needs. Building a property management career ladder in the industry will require housing agencies to look at its workforce and determine how Property Management Clerks and Occupancy/Leasing Specialists fit within their organization. This means looking at how these functions are presently assigned and the salaries associated with the work. It may mean consolidating or establishing new job titles and descriptions based on the career ladder. In the end, the industry and its organizations need to determine if the benefits of building a career ladder and making operational changes will result in improvements to how they manage properties.

Pilot Course in Property Management

CSH, Wright Community College and Thresholds (a rehabilitation and recovery agency in Chicago that provides critical vocational services to the project) are piloting an Introduction to Property Management course starting on June 7, 2006 and ending July 27, 2006 (8 weeks). Classes will meet on Mondays and Wednesdays from (9:25am to 12:05pm). Students are being recruited for the class and enrollment will be limited. Pat Tucker, formerly of Lakefront Supportive Housing and Mercy Housing will be the course instructor. Pat has spent more than 15 years working in all levels of the supportive and affordable housing industry and was instrumental in developing programs and taking the “blended management” model to an operational level. Pat advises “this is a great starting point for people who want to get into a career in managing buildings for low-income residents.”

“We think that it is in the best interest of an expanding industry to organize career opportunities for entry into the property management field...” Joyce Grangent

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Extending the Ladder (Continued from page 4)

The pilot course provides an overview of the different types of multi-family affordable and supportive housing, including housing linked with social services. It introduces students to the different populations living in affordable and supportive housing and describes the role of supportive service personnel in aiding at-risk tenants. This course also explores the different housing programs that pay for construction, rehabilitation and operating subsidies at the federal, state, and local levels. It covers applicable legal concerns, such as the Fair Housing Law. It also introduces the major functions of property management including specific responsibilities, usual practices, legal functions and issues, and confidentiality and other ethical concerns.

Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration as a Special Demonstration Project, Stepping Up is a partnership that also includes the Illinois Division of Rehabilitation Services, the Mayor’s Office of Workforce Development, the Chicago Workforce Board, the Illinois Department of Mental Health and housing agencies in the City. Bank One is contributing to the development of the courses. If you have questions or comments about establishing a career ladder in the supportive/affordable housing industry, or if you want information about the Introduction to Property Management course, please contact:

Joyce Grangent, Program Manager
Corporation for Supportive Housing
20 East Jackson, Suites 1500
Chicago, IL 60604
312-588-1236X12
Joyce.grangent@csf.org

Homeless Clients (Continued from page 3)

computer records when a client with an active case moves into a public or privately operated shelter in another local office area. Staff, however, are not to transfer the case to the new office until a.) the client has been living in the shelter for at least 90 days and indicates s/he has no immediate plan to move, b.) the client lives in a transitional living arrangement, and c.) the client finds permanent housing (PM 06-04-06). Based on this, you and your client will be working with the office that handled the person’s case prior to her becoming homeless, unless she needs to apply for additional benefits.

State policy requires that individuals apply for benefits based on the address where they live. Therefore, an individual who is homeless needs to apply for benefits at the office that serves the area where the shelter is located, or the geographic area which he frequents. This also includes situations when an individual is already receiving a benefit such as All Kids (aka Kidcare) or Food Stamps and now needs to request cash assistance (this is called a SWAP request), or needs to complete a Food Stamp redetermination application in order to keep receiving benefits. The office which serves the shelter is to accept the application and then request the case be transferred from the other office (PM 06-04-06).

Rural (Continued from page 2)

Finally, the bill restores the proposed reduction in rural water sewer grants.

HR 5384 goes to the House floor the week of May 15. The bill and accompanying legislative report will be available on thomas.loc.gov.

For further information, contact the National Rural Housing Coalition at the address in Headlines Directory.

Transportation is often a problem for a client who lives in a homeless or domestic violence shelter in another local office area. IDHS staff is instructed not to schedule the client for office visits or activities that create a hardship for the client. If transportation is not available, IDHS is to make the required client contacts by telephone or mail (PM 06-04-06).

There are times the homeless client previously lived with her family and was receiving public benefits with them and now she needs to apply for her own benefits. State policy mandates that a person cannot receive benefits in more than one case during a month. This means that if your client was included in her mother’s benefits in April, moves in April and now wants her own Food Stamps, she is not able to get the Food Stamps until she is removed from her mother’s case. The one exception to this rule applies to persons living in a shelter for battered women and children. She can receive separate benefits if she is included in a case with the person who abused her (PM 03-02-03).

Many advocacy opportunities can arise regarding situations similar to the ones

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McKinney-Vento (Continued from page 1)

Both bills continue to emphasize permanent housing. H. R. 5041 proposes to continue the Samaritan Housing Initiative much as it is practiced now and require that each Continuum of Care set aside 30 percent of funding for permanent housing (new and renewal). S. 1801 would provide bonuses for new construction and rehabilitation while setting aside 30 percent of funds for new permanent housing.

Full Analysis (PDF) - www.endhomelessness.org/pol/McKinney_Alternatives.pdf
The Ford Foundation
320 E. 43rd St.
New York, NY 10017
Telephone: (212) 573-5000
FAX: (212) 351-3677
E-mail: office-secretary@fordfound.org
URL: www.fordfound.org

Contact: Secy.

Program Areas: Community & resource development, economic development, education, governance & civil society, & human rights.

Specific Areas of Interest: Housing/shelter, development; Community development; Economically disadvantaged; Human services; Immigrants/refugees; Minorities/immigrants, centers/services; Urban/community development; women; Women, centers/services; and Youth development.

Types of Support: Conferences/seminars, Consulting services, Continuing support, Curriculum development, Employee matching gifts, Endowments, Fellowships, Film/video/radio, General/operating support, Grants to individuals, Income development, Management development/capacity building, Matching/challenge support, Program development, Program evaluation, Program-related investments/loans, Publication, Research, Seed money, Technical assistance.

Limitations: Giving on an international basis, including the U.S. No support for programs for which substantial support from government or other sources is readily available, or for religious sectarian activities. No grants for routine operating costs, construction or maintenance of buildings.

Application Information: Prospective applicants are advised to review the foundation’s Web site for information or current funding guidelines. Foreign applicants should contact foundation for addresses of its overseas offices, through which they must apply. Application form not required. Applicants should submit:

1) Timetable for implementation and evaluation of project
2) Qualifications of key personnel
3) Statement of problem project will address
4) Brief history of organization and description of its mission
5) Detailed description of project and amount of funding requested

The initial approach should be a brief letter of inquiry. There is no deadline, but take into consideration that the board meets three times a year in January, May & September. Only one copy of proposal is required. Initial indication as to whether proposal falls within program interests takes approximately 6 weeks.

The Rockefeller Foundation
420 5th Ave.
New York, NY 10018-2702
Telephone: (212) 869-8500
URL: www.rockfound.org

Contact: Lynda Mullen, Corp. Secy.

Program Areas (select): Health Equity: Improving the Health of Poor and Marginalized People; Regional Program-North America: Focusing on Transnational Communities; Working Communities: Improving Employment, Education and Housing.

Interest: Community development; Education; Employment; Health care; Housing/shelter; Humanities.

Types of Support: Conferences/seminars, Continuing support, Curriculum development, Employee matching gifts, Fellowships, General/operating support, Program development, Program-related investments/loans, Publication, Research, Scholarships—to individuals, Seed money, Technical assistance.

Geographic Focus: National & international.

Application Information: The foundation seeks opportunities that will advance its long-term goals of improving the lives of poor and excluded people and the communities in which they live. To determine if your organization’s project aligns with the foundation’s goals, please visit the foundation’s Web site. Applicants may then want to send a brief letter of inquiry addressed to the director of the subject area of interest, at the foundation’s address. Inquiries can also be sent electronically to the E-mail addresses on each program description page on the foundation’s Web site. Organizations submitting inquiries that foundation staff thinks might contribute to a defined area of work will be asked to submit a full proposal. Application form not required. Applicants should submit:

1) Timetable for implementation and evaluation of project
2) Qualifications of key personnel
3) Brief history of organization and description of its mission
4) Detailed description of project and amount of funding requested

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Homeless Headlines

Protecting Families on TANF

The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (DRA) reauthorized the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program. DRA significantly restricts state flexibility designing their TANF program, including how Maintenance of Effort (MOE) funds can be used. As states modify their programs to comply with the new legislation, advocates are concerned that positive policies and programs used to help families will be lost and many families, particularly those with significant barriers to employment, will lose cash assistance. “Implementing the TANF Changes in the Deficit Reduction Act: ‘Win-Win’ Solutions for Families and States,” a new report issued by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) and the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), examines the changes to TANF and actions states can take to facilitate positive employment outcomes and minimize the risk that families will lose critically needed income and support services.

To see an executive summary or the full version of the report, go to www.cbpp.org/5-9-06tanf.htm.

For further information, contact the National Alliance To End Homelessness at the address in Headlines Directory.

Grants for Domestic Violence Shelters

In an effort to forward their goal of eliminating domestic violence, The Mary Kay Ash Charitable Foundation is currently accepting applications for grants for women’s shelters. Awarded funds may be used for all shelter operating costs with the exception of travel expenses. This grant program has existed since 2000, and in 2005, the foundation distributed $20,000 to 150 shelters. The deadline for applications is September 1, 2006.

More Information - /www.mkacf.org/PDF/ShelterGrantApp05.pdf

Private Resources

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5) Copy of current year’s organizational budget and/or project budget

Letters of inquiry should include the information above as well as information about the organization’s experience in the field. No attachments and be addressed to director of subject area of interest. Only one copy of proposal is required. Letters of inquiry are considered throughout the year. The board meets in April, August & December. Final notification takes approximately 6 to 8 weeks.


Guide to Accessing Public Benefits

The DuPage Federation is affiliated with Northern Illinois University, Regional Development Institute. Questions can be directed to knelson@dupagefederation.org or cking@dupagefederation.org.

Youth Resources

Guide Helps Communities Respond to Juvenile Runaways

The U.S. Department of Justice (www.usdoj.gov) Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) has released “Juvenile Runaways.” This 86-page guide describes the problem of juvenile runaways, reviews risk factors, and identifies a series of questions designed to assist communities in analyzing their runaway problem. The guide also reviews responses to the problem from the perspectives of evaluative research and police practice.

Report Recounts Community Efforts To Reconnect Youth Dropouts

The American Youth Policy Forum has published “Whatever It Takes: How Twelve Communities Are Reconnecting Out-of-School Youth.” This 196-page report provides background on the high school dropout problem and describes what twelve communities are doing to reconnect dropouts to education and employment training. It also describes national program models serving out-of-school youth.


Homeless Clients

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discussed throughout the article. When unique situations occur and clients face barriers to obtaining public benefits, consult the local office caseworker and IDHS Policy Manual. Linking homeless clients to the public benefits which they need and are eligible for is an imperative step to self-sufficiency.

The DuPage Federation on Human Services Reform, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization focused on advocacy and planning in DuPage County, Illinois and designer and trainer of Making the Connection: A
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<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illinois Coalition for the Homeless</td>
<td>333 ½ Pennsylvania Avenue, SE</td>
<td>Telephone: (202) 546-1969, Fax: (202) 546-2063, E-mail: <a href="mailto:nchv@nchv.org">nchv@nchv.org</a>, <a href="http://www.nchv.org/home.html">http://www.nchv.org/home.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois Department of Human Services</td>
<td>400 W. Lawrence, 2C</td>
<td>Telephone: (217) 824-6029, <a href="http://www.state.il.us/agency/dhs/">http://www.state.il.us/agency/dhs/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois Coalition to End Homelessness</td>
<td>301 E. Monroe, Suite 100</td>
<td>Telephone: (217) 522-7024, Fax: (217) 522-7016, <a href="http://www.ilw.net/~cedh/">http://www.ilw.net/~cedh/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois Food Bank Association</td>
<td>P.O. Box 829</td>
<td>Telephone: (217) 522-4022, E-mail: <a href="mailto:cifbank@aoil.com">cifbank@aoil.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Alliance to End Homelessness</td>
<td>1518 K Street, NW, Suite 206</td>
<td>Telephone: (202) 638-1526, Fax: (202) 638-4664, E-mail: <a href="mailto:naeh@naeh.org">naeh@naeh.org</a>, <a href="http://www.endhomelessness.org/">http://www.endhomelessness.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Coalition for Homeless Veterans</td>
<td>300 E. Monroe, Suite 100</td>
<td>Telephone: (217) 522-7024, Fax: (217) 522-7016, <a href="http://www.ilw.net/~cedh/">http://www.ilw.net/~cedh/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Community Reinvestment Coalition</td>
<td>727 15th St., NW, N900</td>
<td>Telephone: (202) 628-8866, Fax: (202) 628-9890, <a href="http://nch.ari.net/">http://nch.ari.net/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Rural Housing Coalition</td>
<td>601 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW</td>
<td>Telephone: (202) 393-3229, Fax: (202) 393-3054, <a href="http://www.nrhcweb.org">http://www.nrhcweb.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Supportive Housing Providers Association</td>
<td>3417 North Monticello</td>
<td>Telephone: (773) 388-0827, Fax: (773) 267-1294, <a href="mailto:supportiveheo@aol.com">supportiveheo@aol.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Southern Illinois Coalition for the Homeless</td>
<td>P.O. Box 955</td>
<td>Telephone: (618) 993-0094, Fax: (618) 993-4013, <a href="http://www.sicfh.org">http://www.sicfh.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporation for Supportive Housing</td>
<td>1 N. LaSalle, 12th Floor</td>
<td>Telephone: (773) 388-0827, Fax: (773) 267-1294, <a href="mailto:supportiveheo@aol.com">supportiveheo@aol.com</a></td>
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