

# FY 2015 HUD SOUTHEAST REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS



## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

### MESSAGE FROM THE REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR

As we look back at 2015, we are thankful for your support and partnership. Together we build a stronger America.



The highlights below offer a glimpse of the variety of activities that took place in the Southeast, including preserving affordable housing, such as the one announced by Fort Mill Housing Authority in South Carolina; conferences in Puerto Rico seeking a new approach to housing development; and renewed efforts for environmental justice in North Birmingham. We also announced in Miami the National Business Registry that connects low-income workers with contracting opportunities; and one of Secretary Castro's visits to the region was to Gulfport, Mississippi, focusing on the progress made during the past 10 years since Hurricane Katrina.

In 2016 we look enthusiastically to expanding economic opportunity, as together we explore new technologies to improve the quality of life in our communities with ConnectHome. The initiative launched in July helps bridge the digital divide in low income communities and especially in the public housing setting bringing increased hope, and opportunity for economic advancement and academic access 24/7 through high speed internet access. Seven communities in our region were selected to deliver on ConnectHome: Albany, GA; Atlanta, GA; Durham, NC; Macon, GA; Memphis, TN; Nashville, TN; and Tampa, FL.

A challenging area where we made significant progress in 2015 is the fight to end Veteran homelessness. It fell by 36 percent between 2010 and January 2015, including a 47 percent decline in unsheltered veterans. While several communities in the region have been able to house all their homeless veterans, such as Mobile in Alabama, Flagler County in Florida and Louisville in Kentucky, our work is far from finished. While we see progress, we have more work ahead so long as there are Veterans without a home.

Thank you for sharing our journey. Please send your feedback at [GA\\_Webmanager@hud.gov](mailto:GA_Webmanager@hud.gov)

-Ed Jennings, Jr.

### ATLANTA NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP RECOGNIZED WITH VISIONARY AWARD BY THE NATIONAL HOUSING CONFERENCE

ATLANTA, GA—The Piece by Piece Regional Foreclosure Initiative led by the Atlanta Neighborhood Development Partnership, Inc (ANDP) in partnership with HUD and eight other partner organizations recently received the Housing Visionary Award at the National Housing Conference (NHC) 2015 Annual Gala at the National Building Museum in Washington, DC. The highly prestigious award was in recognition of ANDP's innovative and collaborative efforts to coordinate strategies for responding to the foreclosure crisis and its aftermath in the Atlanta Metro area.



[Read the full article](#)

### FORT MILL HOUSING AUTHORITY SUCCESSFULLY CLOSES RENTAL ASSISTANCE DEMONSTRATION DEAL

COLUMBIA, SC—In a 34 year career as a Federal employee, I have learned that faith, determination and hard work go a long way! I say that because as a Senior Project Manager, I have witnessed many individuals encountering immense obstacles, but yet something within inspired them to be optimistically inclined. One such individual I encountered was Ms. Connie Howard, Executive Director, Fort Mill Housing Authority. Ms. Howard and I became very good "working buddies" via our work on HUD's Rental Assistance Demonstration Program, better known by the acronym "RAD." While the effort was challenging it will help the public housing authority and tenants while addressing the growing cost associated with maintaining public housing.



[Read the full article](#)

### MEMPHIS AWARDED \$3.7 MILLION TO PROTECT CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FROM LEAD AND OTHER HOME HAZARDS



MEMPHIS, TN—HUD's Region IV Administrator, Ed Jennings, Jr. and Office of Lead Hazard Reduction/Healthy Homes (OLHCHH) Director Matt Ammon, joined Congressman Steve Cohen (TN-9) and Memphis Mayor A C Wharton to present a symbolic HUD check for over \$3,700,000. This is the City of Memphis's seventh such grant and the presentation Tuesday recognized the success of Memphis's program over the years. The grant will pay for the inspection of over 1200 homes and the removal of lead hazards in about 250 homes.

[Read the full article](#)

### SECRETARY CASTRO VISITS MISSISSIPPI: IN COMMEMORATION OF HURRICANE KATRINA

JACKSON, MS—On Thursday, August 27, 2015 Secretary Julián Castro visited the Mississippi Gulf Coast and acknowledged the loss of life and devastation reaped on the coast by Hurricane Katrina. He reflected on the progress made during the past 10 years since Hurricane Katrina.



[Read the full article](#)

## FOCUS ON ENDING VETERAN HOMELESSNESS

### LOUISVILLE, KY—Over 170 Local Elected Officials' Commitment to End Veteran Homelessness



Over 170 local elected officials have committed to end veteran homelessness in Kentucky in 2015 through the [Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness](#) initiative. This major milestone is attributable to the hard work and leadership of the HUD Kentucky Field Office team working with committed and dedicated elected officials and partners throughout the state. [Read the full article...](#)

### KNOXVILLE, TN—Helps Tennessee Veterans at the "Services for Those Who"



During the May 8, 2015 Veteran's assistance and outreach event entitled "Services for Those who served" conducted in Johnson City, Tennessee and hosted by Congressman (Dr.) Phil Roe, at the Munsey Memorial United Methodist Church in Johnson City, TN: the Knoxville HUD Office convened a panel discussion designed to help veterans get back on their feet and succeed in the workforce and business. [Read the full article...](#)

### NASHVILLE, TN—Supporting Permanent Affordable Housing for Local Homeless Veterans



"We are honored to have a role in such a wonderful housing development. One of the HUD Secretary's primary goals is leading the Mayors Challenge to End Veterans Homelessness. With the collaboration of our funding partners, Patriot Place is clearly an example of how leveraging public and private funds help honor and house our homeless veterans while also working to end veteran homelessness by the end of 2015." [Read the full article...](#)

### FORMER HOMELESS VETERAN IN JACKSONVILLE: FROM A PARK BENCH TO LOCAL LEADER

JACKSONVILLE, FL—Private First Class Od'Juan Whitfield knows how to reach the homeless in downtown Jacksonville. A few years ago he and his children slept on park benches in Hemming Plaza, just outside the front door of City Hall. Today, Whitfield is a social worker who manages a veteran's resource that is located inside the public library, across the street from Hemming Plaza. His mission is to help other homeless veterans have access to the Internet, find employment coaches and guide them and the public with their perception and reception of veterans re-entering the community.



[Read the full article](#)

### ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE: RENEWED HOPE FOR NORTH BIRMINGHAM

BIRMINGHAM, AL—Years of unmitigated dumping of industrial waste in and around North Birmingham caused environmental contamination with all its health and economic consequences for the community. The tide may finally be turning around with an intergovernmental working group determined to seek solutions for remediating and improving the quality of life for the residents of the area.



[Read the full article](#)

### SOUTHWEST FLORIDA SUMMIT COMMEMORATES FAIR HOUSING MONTH

MIAMI, FL—Over 90 people gathered at the Dr. Carrie Robinson Center in Fort Myers, Florida to commemorate the 47th anniversary of the National Fair Housing Act and Fair Housing Month. HUD Equal Opportunity Specialists Aaron Levine and Henry Whitehead provided training on the Fair Housing Act and other civil rights laws to housing authority staff. Many questions focused on reasonable accommodation obligations regarding service animals.

[Read the full article](#)

### PUERTO RICO DESARROLLA: A NEW APPROACH TO HOUSING DEVELOPMENT



SAN JUAN, PR—"Puerto Rico Develops" or in Spanish Puerto Rico Desarrolla is the result of a multiyear effort to develop a comprehensive housing plan for Puerto Rico.

Announced earlier this month in San Juan, its first tangible product was the presentation of a unified Notice of Funds Available (NOFA) aiming to promote the development of 800 new affordable housing units with an estimated \$200 million dollar investment, including Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) and HUD funds.

[Read the full article](#)



### HUD IS THE DEPARTMENT OF OPPORTUNITY

As HUD approaches its 50th anniversary this year, Secretary Julián Castro is laser focused on advancing policies that create opportunity for all Americans, creating a solid foundation for the next 50 years. [Click here](#) for more information.

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Contact the HUD Southeast Regional Office:

Deputy Regional Administrator: Willie C. Taylor

Five Points Plaza Building  
40 Marietta Street  
Atlanta, GA 30303

Tel: (404) 331-5136  
Fax: (404) 730-2392 TDD: (404) 730-2654  
Email: [GA\\_Webmanager@hud.gov](mailto:GA_Webmanager@hud.gov)

