

HUD COMMUNITY BUILDER PROGRAM IN FLORIDA

The Community Builder Fellowship program of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development is about to enter its second year. The first group of Community Builder Fellows began service in the Fall of 1998, nearly one year ago. Since then, there have been many successes including the addition of a second class of Fellows. The purpose of this article is to provide basic information about HUD's Community Builders in Florida and to describe the Fellowship program. Before doing that, however, the article presents a brief overview of the history and vision of the Community Builder program.

Under the leadership of Secretary Andrew Cuomo, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has launched key organizational initiatives. Over the past three years, the Department has undergone a restructuring in a plan called HUD 2020. This management initiative has increased HUD's effectiveness in conducting its business and looks toward a restoration of the public trust in this agency. The restructuring entailed the reclassification of jobs, merit hiring, and the establishment of product service centers around the country. The last piece to organizational change is the Community Builder Program.

According to the Community Builder Fellowship description, the need to restore trust in government stands at the core of Secretary Cuomo's vision for HUD. It is about rebuilding that trust as we rebuild communities. From 1993 to 1996 Andrew Cuomo served as HUD's Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development. He designed an award-winning program to empower communities through comprehensive planning and outreach. Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government designated his Consolidated Planning approach an Innovations in American Government winner, the most prestigious governmental award in the nation.

Now, in partnership with Harvard University, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development is pleased to bring this Community Builders program to hundreds of communities, drawing on the compassion and the competence of the people who live and work in them.



The Community Builders Fellowship program offers paid, temporary fellowships for skilled professionals from many walks of life: bankers, school principals, law enforcement officials, directors of non-profits, social workers, academics, architects, planners, lawyers, economic development experts, health care workers, doctors, nurses, technology specialists and many other professions. Community Builders work full time for the agency for two to four years. After two years, HUD may ask a Community Builder to remain another two years for a total of four years.

The 1999 class of Fellows has been expanded to include "Specialists" who focus on targeted policy or program initiatives. These Specialist positions require particular expertise. As part of HUD's new focus on outreach and customer service, Community Builders work out of HUD field offices in up to 81 cities across the country and travel into nearby cities and towns to serve as the agency's first point of contact or, in other words, HUD's front door. Specialists are working out of some HUD field offices and service centers, as well as out of HUD's headquarters office.

First Point of Contact

Community Builders are the first point of contact with the agency for the thousands of people who need HUD's help: homebuyers, tenants, community leaders, non-profits, foundations, mayors, county executives, governors, bankers, real estate agents, business owners, and many, many others. Community Builders are HUD's front door, providing information and access to HUD's services. Community Builders

always find solutions. They are trained in all aspects of the agency and serve as team builders, fostering partnerships both inside and outside of the agency.

Community Builders empower communities by providing technical expertise in finance and economic development programs. They help facilitate comprehensive community-wide planning by bringing various groups together. They also work closely with other HUD program experts, known as Public Trust Officers, to help communities solve problems. Public Trust Officers are long-time, highly experienced, HUD employees who monitor the effectiveness of all agency programs.

Community Builders report to a Senior Community Builder, a career HUD manager who oversees the work and projects of the office.

In addition to the Senior Community Builder, HUD has opened the position of career Community Builder. In most HUD field offices, there are career HUD employees who have become Community Builders. They, together with the Senior Community Builder and the Community Builder Fellows, comprise the Community Builder staff for the office.

Community Builders' Projects

The Class of 1999 includes Community Builder Fellows who are specialists that have been assigned to both the Field Offices and to HUD's service centers and headquarters offices. For example, housing specialists are working with the Home Ownership Centers, and environmental specialists are working with the headquarters office of brownfields initiatives.

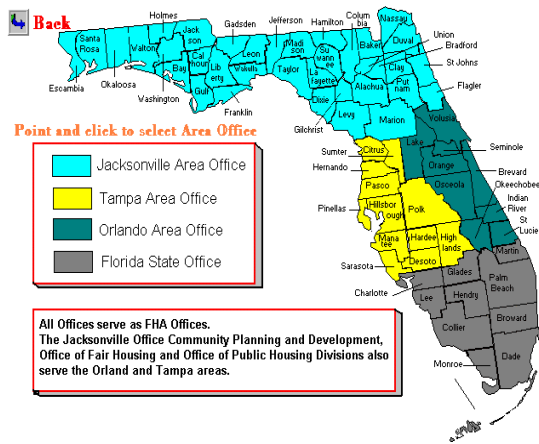
A few examples of work assignments that Community Builders have been successful with over the course of this past year are:

- Meeting with community leaders, business owners, educators, officers of non-profits, and elected officials to help them design a comprehensive plan for effectively utilizing funds from government, the private sector, and foundations.
- Assisting in the planning and coordination of Home Buyer Expos around the State.
- Participating in Fair Housing workshops during Fair Housing Month.
- Working with social service providers and city governments to develop a Continuum of Care strategy for serving the needs of the homeless.
- Networking with Faith and Faith-based organizations to understand HUD programs and how they can participate in HUD grants.
- Working with State agencies and universities to bring Technical Assistance workshops to community development corporations.
- Working closely with Public Trust Officers to improve the quality of life for residents in subsidized rental communities.

Community Builders in Florida

There are four HUD field offices in the State of Florida, located in Miami, Jacksonville, Orlando, and Tampa. Each office has several Community Builders that are working and representing HUD's programs in their respective communities. Community Builders are assigned specific work areas that may be geographic areas or topical. Each HUD office has determined how to deploy its Community Builders based on local need and the Department's resource.

The geographic responsibility of each Field Office is presented on the following map. While some program areas, such as Multifamily Housing, cut across Field Office boundaries, the Community Builders work within the respective jurisdictions of each office.



A complete list of all Community Builders is available on HUD’s web site: <http://www.hud.gov>.

The following is a list of Florida offices and the Community Builders that staff each office.

MIAMI - The Miami HUD office is the State Office. Jose Cintron, Senior Community Builder is also the HUD State Coordinator. The office address and telephone number are:

Florida HUD Office - Miami
 Brickell Plaza Federal Building
 909 SE. First Avenue - Room 500
 Miami, FL 33131-3028
 Tel: (305) 536-4456
 Fax: (305) 536-4698

Miami home page: <http://www.hud.gov/local/fso/fsoabhud.html>

Miami Office Community Builders:

- Jose Cintron, Florida State Coordinator and Senior Community Builder
- Anthony F. Britto, Community Builder
- Mark Buchbinder, Community Builder
- Al Cazzoli, Community Builder
- Hulbert H. James, Community Builder
- Linda Kelly Kearson, Community Builder
- Marlene A. Kocher, Community Builder
- Cheryl Marken, Community Builder
- Ron M. Muscarella, Community Builder
- Don A. Vargas, Community Builder
- Elbert L. Waters, Community Builder
- Judy Ayers, Associate Community Builder
- Migdalia Nuñez, Associate Community Builder
- Bruce P. Paul, Associate Community Builder



JACKSONVILLE - The Jacksonville Area Office Program Divisions provide technical assistance to Northern and parts of Central Florida for Community Planning and Development as well as Public Housing programs. The address and telephone number for the Jacksonville Office are:

Jacksonville HUD Office
301 West Bay Street, Suite 2200
Jacksonville, Florida 32202
Telephone: (904) 232-2627
Fax: (904) 232-3759

Jacksonville home page: <http://www.hud.gov/local/jkv/>

Jacksonville Community Builders:

James R. Walker, Senior Community Builder
James H. Martin, Community Builder
Elaine D. Spencer, Community Builder
Thomas M. Vetica, Community Builder
Alesia Scott-Ford, Community Builder
Harold Perry, Community Builder
Gloria F. Villarreal, Associate Community Builder

ORLANDO - The Orlando HUD Office is responsible for serving eight counties in East Central Florida. The address and telephone number for the Orlando Office are:

Orlando HUD Office
3751 Maguire Boulevard, Suite 270
Orlando, FL 32803
Telephone 407-648-6446
Fax 407-648-6310

Orlando home page: <http://www.hud.gov/local/orl/>

Orlando Community Builders:

Michael P. Daly, Senior Community Builder
Victor Alvarado, Community Builder Fellow
Jerrie G. Magruder, Community Builder Fellow
Katherine S. Wilson, Community Builder Fellow
Sarah G. Lavoie, Associate Community Builder

TAMPA - The Tampa HUD Office services 12 counties in West Central Florida. The office address and telephone number are:

Tampa HUD Office
Timberlake Federal Office Building
501 E. Polk Street, Suite 700
Tampa, FL 33602-3945
Phone: 813-228-2504
Fax: 813-228-2431

Tampa home page: <http://www.hud.gov/local/tam/>

Tampa Community Builders:

George A. Milburn, Jr., Senior Community Builder
Nikki A. Spitzer, Community Builder
Rosemary S. Gadsden, Community Builder
Andrew Madison Jr. Community Builder
Karen Jackson Sims, AICP, Community Builder Fellow
Marcel O. Charpentier, Community Builder Fellow
John W. Marsh, Community Builder Fellow

The Community Builders invite all of HUD's customers, partners, and prospective clients to contact the local HUD office. Don't hesitate to call the office and get to know your local Community Builder!