NCALL News

Fall 2019

Board of Directors

J. Randall Kunkle, President
John G. Moore, Vice-President
Tracey Harvey, Secretary
Daniel Kuennen, Treasurer
Beryl Barmore
Joe Belden
Vickie Bryant
Tony DePrima
C. Denise Hicks
Jeanine Kleimo
James G. McGiffin, Jr.
Jeremiah Spruance
Amy Walls
Bobbie Jo Wert

Karen Speakman, Executive Director
Nora Hertel, Editor
Articles contributed by NCALL staff
www.ncall.org

NCALL Named Top Workplace 2019

We are proud to announce that NCALL has been named a Top Workplace by the News Journal and we were ranked number 9 out of 34! “We are thrilled to be included on the list and honored that we made it into the top 10,” said NCALL’s Executive Director, Karen Speakman. “A big thank you to our employees who made this happen.”

The list is based solely on employee feedback gathered through a third-party survey administered by research partner Energage, LLC, a leading provider of technology-based employee engagement tools. The anonymous survey measures several aspects of workplace culture, including alignment (where the company is headed), connection (whether employees feel appreciated), effectiveness (encouraging new ideas), and management (caring about concerns, helping employees to develop).

“Top Workplaces is more than just recognition,” said Doug Claffey, CEO of Energage. “Our research shows organizations that earn the award attract better talent, experience lower turnover, and are better equipped to deliver bottom-line results. Their leaders prioritize and carefully craft a healthy workplace culture that supports employee engagement.”

In addition to being named a Top Workplace, NCALL received a special award from the News Journal for work/life flexibility. This award recognizes NCALL’s management team for working with staff to have the flexibility to balance work and their personal life.

“Becoming a Top Workplace isn’t something organizations can buy,” Claffey said. “It’s an achievement organizations have worked for and a distinction that gives them a competitive advantage. It’s a big deal.”

Responding to Community Needs
The demand for affordable housing in New Castle County, Delaware is high. Waiting lists for affordable apartments in the area are lengthy, with few new communities under development. Unfortunately, costs are also high, with the median sales price for a home at around $220,000 and the average rent for a two bedroom unit at $1,200.* Our Lady of Grace Village, a new 60-unit affordable rental community located in Newark, will be a welcome addition to the County’s affordable housing inventory when it opens by year-end.

The project was developed by Our Lady of Grace Home and Felician Sisters of North America with technical assistance support from NCALL. The project received $8M in investor equity provided by Cinnaire through Delaware State Housing Authority’s (DSHA) Low Income Housing Tax Credit program and New Castle County provided $350,000 in HOME funds from the Department of Community Services, Community Development & Housing. Additional financing was provided by DSHA’s Housing Development Fund, Felician Sisters of North America, Felician Services, and Our Lady of Grace Home. Total development cost of the project is $15.3M.

The beautifully designed apartments consist of five units in each of 12 two-story buildings with covered porches.

One, two and three-bedroom apartments or townhouses will be available. Focus on green and sustainable design features including increased insulation, energy efficient heating and cooling systems, highly efficient appliances and lighting, and low-flow water fixtures. The units are spacious, with finish equivalent to market rate rental housing in the Newark area. The community’s design layout includes an accessible walkway to a bus stop and transit line connecting residents to transportation to local employers. Additional common area amenities include a new community building with management office, maintenance facilities, community room with kitchen and common laundry facility, outdoor green space, tot lot and parking. Supportive services will be available to all households free of charge, such as classes on healthy food preparation, nutrition, and community gardening.

All 60 apartments will be within financial reach of families with household incomes at or below $40,000 (60% of Area Median Income). Twelve apartments will be set aside for people or families with special needs.

The complex is located at the former Our Lady of Grace Home orphanage, a facility run by the Felician Sisters that served the area’s most vulnerable children from the 1940’s until its closing in 2009. Today, the Felician Sisters continue their vital role in the community through the development of this affordable rental housing community. According to Mary Lynn Owen, Felician Services Ministry Advisor and Board Member, “The development of Our Lady of Grace Village is an opportunity for the Felician Sisters to continue their mission work by providing safe, quality affordable housing for families. NCALL has been a key part of developing Our Lady of Grace Village by providing the expertise and technical assistance we need to be successful.”

The projected construction completion date is late November 2019 and rental applications are currently being accepted. To receive an application, please call (302) 368-2126.

*Delaware State Housing Authority’s New Castle County Real Estate Fact Sheet
NCALL Maintains its Exemplary Rating

NCALL is a chartered member of NeighborWorks America. In September, NCALL received a rating of Exemplary, the highest of their six levels of ranking, from their Organizational Health Tracking System. We are super proud of this rating and of being an exemplary organization!

To ensure that NeighborWorks America is accountable to Congress, OMB, funders and taxpayers for the allocation of grant funds, NeighborWorks America developed a system to rate the health and risk of network organizations. NeighborWorks America is a congressionally chartered nonprofit organization that supports community development in the United States and Puerto Rico. The organization provides grants and technical assistance to community development organizations. They also provide training for housing and community development professionals through its national training institutes.

The NeighborWorks network is comprised of community development organizations nationwide. Annually, NCALL undergoes a review by NeighborWorks.

National Self-Help Housing Conference Planned for Albuquerque

Pack your bags!! (Well...maybe not quite yet.) NCALL is working with the other three Technical & Management Assistance Contractors to plan the National Self-Help Housing Conference. This event will take place in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The conference, with the theme of 2020 - Sharing Our Vision, will take place at the Hyatt Regency in downtown Albuquerque on February 4-6, 2020.

We are very excited to announce that there will not be a registration fee for the event. So, please plan to attend. NCALL will also be offering scholarships to grantees in our region that need help with transportation and hotel costs. Please contact your specialist for more information.

We look forward to spending two and a half days with Rural Development personnel and grantee staff from across the country. There will be networking opportunities and training on all facets of the program. Registration will be coming out in late October or early November. Mark your calendar to save the date!!

Want to know more about Self-Help Housing? NCALL’s Self-Help Housing Director, Jill Lordan, recently had an article published about the program in the national housing and community development publication Shelterforce. Check it out at https://shelterforce.org/2019/09/30/working-up-a-sweat-with-the-self-help-housing-program/.

Kollias Tapped for Service by Regional Affordable Housing Provider

Karen Kollias, Director of NCALL’s Loan Fund, was appointed to the board of directors of Housing Development Corporation (HDC) MidAtlantic, one of the largest providers of affordable housing in Delaware, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. Karen brings her decades of community development lending experience, skills, and passion to HDC’s diverse and dedicated board.

HDC, based in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, is a fellow NeighborWorks America member with a mission to “build hope and opportunity by providing a safe and affordable place to call home.” It accomplishes this mission by providing real estate development services, property management services and resident supportive services.

HDC owns or manages more than 3,500 quality affordable rental homes for families, seniors and people with disabilities.
NCALL celebrated the progress in Central Dover and the opportunity to promote positive change, awareness and education during NeighborWorks Week in June!

Events included a dinner and credit seminar at Dover Interfaith Mission for Housing, a staff build day with Milford Housing Development Corporation, Restoring Central Dover and Wesley Community Garden party, and a seminar with Home Depot and Franklin Energy about how to save on utility bills.
NCALL partnered with Lessard Builders to build four beautiful energy-efficient single family homes on North Kirkwood Street in Dover!

The homes feature open floor plans with gleaming laminate wood floors, stainless steel appliances, and the perfect kitchen for entertaining! They are in an ideal location – just seconds away from shopping, restaurants, parks and all the great amenities of downtown Dover.

The homes are move-in ready and listed at $175,000. So far, three have been sold.

NCALL Welcomes Two AmeriCorps VISTA Members

NCALL hired two AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) members Asia Green and Sierra Green. As VISTA members, they bring passion and perseverance where the need is greatest: to organizations that help eradicate poverty. AmeriCorps VISTA members serve as a catalyst for change, living and working alongside community members to meet our nation’s most pressing challenges and advance local solutions.

Asia works as our Financial Education Outreach Organizer under the supervision of Consumer Services Assistant, Camille Moman. Sierra works as our Neighborhood Revitalization Outreach Organizer under the supervision of Community Engagement Specialist, Chanda Jackson.

We are proud to have them on board!

Joe Myer’s New Role

Joe Myer retired as NCALL’s Executive Director in 2018 after 37 years. He said NCALL was a dream job that gave him an opportunity to apply his faith with strong business skills for an inspiring nonprofit mission, all while working together to grow an amazingly impactful organization that makes the lives of so many better.

NCALL’s Regional Self-Help Team led by Jill Lordan asked if Joe would be available to work with grantee project directors, executive directors, and Boards who could use assistance with capacity building, succession, planning, governance, growth, management, finances, and organizational structure. To date, he has written articles for the Self-Helper Newsletter, been on a grantee site visit, reviewed grantee audits and financials, started a grantee search process, worked on a training handbook, and contributed wherever help was needed.

In the interim, Joe received DANA certification as one of their consultants available for work with the nonprofit community throughout Delaware.
NCALL is pleased to announce the addition of four new staff members – Sterling Doughty, Nora Hertel, Phyllis Rosica, and Nancy Aragon.

Sterling joined the Loan Fund team in January as a Loan Fund Servicer. He oversees daily administration and servicing of the loan portfolio, and provides customer service to borrowers and participant lenders as required. “Customer service excellence has always been and will always be one of the critical competitive advantages for any business,” Sterling said.

Nora joined NCALL in February in a newly created position as a Communication and Marketing Specialist. She promotes NCALL through social media, press releases, advertisements, events, and newsletters. Nora also manages and updates the website. “I’m very proud to promote NCALL. I’m blessed to work for a company that helps so many people in need, and has such a wonderful impact on my community,” she said. “If I win the lottery tomorrow, I wouldn’t quit my job.”

NCALL’s Self-Help team welcomed Phyllis in March. As the Self-Help Executive Assistant/Analyst, she provides administrative assistance to the Self-Help Housing team who work with nonprofits across the 21-state region that participate in the USDA Rural Development Self-Help Housing program. Phyllis also provides IT assistance to the NCALL staff. “What drives me in my role is knowing how NCALL makes a difference in peoples’ lives,” she said.

Nancy joined the NCALL family in August as our new Homeowner Specialist in the Georgetown Office. She brings her experience of working with families, a vast knowledge of Sussex County and bilingual skills to the job.

Every Gift Makes a Difference

Please include NCALL in your workplace giving this year: We’re a partner agency of the United Way of Delaware, #708. Do you work for the State of Delaware? It’s easy to contribute through the State Employees Combined Campaign (SECC). Look for us on #Giving Tuesday, December 3 – right after Thanksgiving!

We are going digital! Please send your current email address to Nora Hertel at nhertel@ncall.org.