ACTION-Housing

2013-2014 Annual Report
To empower people to build more secure and self-sufficient lives through the provision of decent, affordable housing, essential supportive services, asset building programs, and educational and employment opportunities.

Your support is needed to continue the mission of ACTION-Housing. Please send a tax-deductible contribution to the attention of: Lawrence A. Swanson, Executive Director, ACTION-Housing, Inc., 425 Sixth Avenue, Suite 950, Pittsburgh, PA 15219-1819.

For your online donation, go to: www.actionhousing.org.

The official registration and financial information for ACTION-Housing, Inc. may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling, toll-free, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

ACTION-HOUSING, INC. UNITED WAY CONTRIBUTOR CHOICE #54

Front Cover: McKeesport Downtown Housing, ACTION-Housing’s newest building, is a rehabilitated YMCA that was built in 1922. It is now home to 84 individuals who would otherwise be homeless.
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

As ACTION-Housing’s Board President, I was pleased to oversee another fine year — our 57th — as a robust housing and social service organization. ACTION-Housing has endured since 1957 because we always have been able to adapt to a changing landscape and meet new challenges.

ACTION-Housing is in the midst of a significant shift in how we operate. We are looking at how our work improves communities, the region, and the environment. We are doing this in a more comprehensive way than ever before, while continuing to seek the support of the most effective community and service partners.

We broke ground on the Uptown Lofts in December. We hope this development will demonstrate the feasibility of building to Passive House Standards, a promising energy-efficient building model that drastically reduces energy use. Built on two vacant lots across the street from each other along Fifth Avenue, the Lofts development will dramatically improve the gateway into the long-neglected neighborhood. But most importantly, the building will be a new home for 47 individuals, 24 of whom are for young people who have aged out of the foster care system.

Since we began the MyPlace Program for youth aged out of foster care, we have tripled the number of young people we can serve in just three years. The Uptown Lofts were conceived as a way to provide another housing option to meet their needs. When we started to design it, we found a way to do so much more.

Our focus on the individual — the client, the resident, the person in need — has been our guiding principle for the past 57 years. Now we’re taking a broader look at the people on the periphery of our work. We’re developing properties that improve the neighborhood around them while minimizing the effect on the environment. For the first time, in Hazelwood, we’re even developing projects that don’t include a housing component, but have the potential to help rejuvenate a neighborhood on the cusp of realizing its potential.

Expanding our focus also has helped us look internally in a significant way. This year, for the first time, the entire agency came together to learn collectively and form a more cohesive bond. This year, ACTION-Housing’s commitment to diversity and inclusion took a big leap forward. When an agency starts to look inwards, it starts to do its best work. Our 57th year was a remarkable one, and as it closes, I am filled with a sense of optimism for the year to come.

Michael L. Dean
Executive Director Larry Swanson discusses the historic rehabilitation of the former McKeesport YMCA with Herman Rosner, a 95-year-old World War II veteran and long-time member of the YMCA.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S MESSAGE:
Inclusive Communities Support Sustainable Affordable Housing

In 1957, Mayor David A. Lawrence and civic leader Richard King Mellon jointly founded a non-profit organization to improve Pittsburgh’s neighborhoods by investing in better housing. They believed that quality sustainable neighborhoods were a key element to building a healthy city and region. It was a realization that was ahead of its time. Strong neighborhoods create the environments that support our lives in an organic and mutually beneficial system. The organization they created in 1957 was ACTION-Housing.

Over the years, ACTION-Housing has worked with community partners, public agencies and civic leaders to improve housing and drive appropriate programs that are linked to housing. Improving the stability of homeowners through energy conservation and financial counseling are two important pieces of that work. We create new housing options for seniors and people with disabilities who can no longer live in the homes where they once thrived. What we try to create and preserve are mutually symbiotic relationships between people and neighborhoods, where individuals are tied to each other for a long period of time.

Part of the dynamic is creating the opportunity for those who require supportive housing to be integrated into the physical and social fabric of a community. Four of our recent projects build on strong neighborhood and community support to create options for both working people and those with special needs. In McKeesport, we have worked with partners to preserve homeless housing in a building — the McKeesport YMCA — that has been an icon in Downtown McKeesport since 1922. In Hazelwood, we worked with community partners and the Heinz Endowments to develop the community-identified multipurpose center that brings the Carnegie Library and community services to Second Avenue. On Fifth Avenue in Uptown, we are building both supportive housing for youth aged of foster care and affordable housing for working families from the neighborhood. Finally, our most recent project at Penn Avenue and Mathilda Street will provide supportive housing for Veterans and workforce housing for residents in a development that will be designed to support neighborhood objectives.

We at ACTION-Housing have had the great fortune of working with strong neighborhoods in the City of Pittsburgh and strong communities throughout Allegheny County. Although real estate development is seldom without some controversy, the overall support for this work has been strong and remains so. We want to thank all of our community partners for that support.
Invested in programs and services

$10,603,000

Real Estate Development

$76.1 million worth of real estate currently in development

Supportive Housing Management Services (SHMS)

1190 units in 48 developments

Total real estate portfolio

1736 units in 55 developments

Families served with mortgage assistance or pre-purchase counseling

1102 households
Weatherization Assistance Program
780 clients served in one year

MyPlace provided housing and extensive case management
59 young people aged out of foster care

Family Savings Account Program
$40,000 given in matching funds

Terri F. Gould Scholarship awarded to clients in an institute of higher learning
$10,000 given to 6 clients

Sustainability programs
768 units serviced

Homeless Family Services helped individuals, parents, and children seeking services
1,482 served
OUR VISION

Imagine a city where the most at risk populations could be assured of an affordable place to live with access to health care, supportive services, transit, employment, and fresh foods; where neighborhoods welcome and plan for the inclusion of those with special needs; where parents of children with special needs could be assured that care would continue once they could no longer provide it themselves. Imagine an energy-efficient city; an accessible city; a city with economically sustainable housing; a city that preserves existing affordable housing, in addition to building it. Pittsburgh could be that city.

**Pittsburgh could be that city.**

As we expand our capacity to develop and maintain properties, three main factors will make this vision a reality:

- **Affordability** — preserving, designing and building housing with affordable rents or mortgages, low utility costs, and access to quality public transportation.
- **Strong Neighborhoods** — Designing with community in mind, fighting foreclosure, and helping individuals establish and maintain strong roots in their communities.
- **Supportive Services** — connecting to strong community partners and hiring dedicated human services workers who can provide necessary supportive services to facilitate independent living.

Our real estate development team is doing this in Uptown, McKeesport, and Hazelwood, with other developments currently in planning for a total investment of $76.1 million in Western Pennsylvania. This will be a mix of commercial, residential, and buildings that include both. We will serve the young, people with disabilities, the homeless, and in Bloomfield at the intersection of Penn Ave and Mathilda Street, our Veterans. These are new populations, but it is the same mission ACTION-Housing has always had. Our management team oversees a portfolio that has served at-risk populations for more than twenty years. Our social services and programs have impacted individuals across the region with the goal of providing and preserving decent, safe, affordable, and efficient housing for Western Pennsylvanians.

We believe that the next ten years will put Pittsburgh on the national radar as a compassionate city that cares for all of its inhabitants. It is ACTION-Housing’s intent to be an integral part of making this so.

*Representative Ed Gainey thanks ACTION-Housing and the Veterans Leadership Program of Western Pennsylvania during a ribbon cutting for a new transitional home for Women Veterans in Crisis.*
ANGELICA COOPER

Angelica Cooper's home was warm. One afternoon, her son, daughter, niece and nephew alternated between building a snowman and throwing snowballs on her front lawn, while Ms. Cooper’s six-month-old slept in the warmth of the living room.

Ms. Cooper made that warmth a priority. In 2009, she entered the Family Savings Account program at ACTION-Housing. The program provided a dollar-for-dollar match if she met her savings goal, and when she did, Ms. Cooper invested in the home’s future equity. She bought new energy-efficient windows, rewired her basement, and remodeled her kitchen.

In 2013, we reached out to Ms. Cooper again. Her mortgage company, the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, launched an energy-efficiency program, through which she was linked to ACTION-Housing's Weatherization Assistance Program. Weatherization provided insulation and air sealing work, while her mortgage company replaced her furnace with a new energy-efficient model. Through a winter that saw multiple sub-zero days and more than double the average snowfall, Ms. Cooper’s home stayed warm. Her energy bills decreased while her personal comfort improved. Throughout, Ms. Cooper’s home was a meeting place for friends and family. By investing in energy efficiency and home equity, we invested in the future of Ms. Cooper’s home; a place where there will be naps, snowmen, and smiles for winters to come. A home where there will be warmth.
KAYLA AND KALYNN

For Kayla and Kalynn, two clients in ACTION-Housing’s MyPlace program for youth aged out of foster care, their experience is about finding permanency.

Coming from a background without the typical supports afforded to people their age, even after graduating college, the twins were seeking temporary solutions to permanent problems. Their housing and jobs were both temporary, they lived in an apartment provided by the Allegheny Department of Human Services on a short-term basis, and they worked temporary jobs provided to teach professional development. The two were getting by, but not thriving. They were comfortable, but not self-sufficient.

When they entered ACTION-Housing’s MyPlace program, things began to change.

“Here, you feel like an adult,” Kayla said, to which her sister quickly agreed.

In the fall of 2013, they moved into the quiet and residential Highland Park neighborhood and soon found full-time work as Certified Nursing Assistants. They pay rent, maintain employment, provide their own necessities, and formed a relationship with their case manager who is more like a peer. The two are adapting well. They discuss long-term goals, which include more education, and taking over their lease permanently.

Kayla and Kalynn will be self-sufficient. With professional and personal goals, they will leave the MyPlace program with the life skills ACTION-Housing strives to cultivate.
2013 EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARDS

JACKLYN SCULLION  Emma Jean Lewis Outstanding Teamwork Award

Jackie Scullion joined ACTION-Housing in 2004 as a part-time payroll assistant, and in her ten years with the agency, she has moved up to her current position as our Human Resources Manager. Jackie quickly ingratiated herself to the staff with her cheerful demeanor and ability to always make herself available to the staff. She meets and welcomes everybody and helps create a fair and consistent environment that extends from the newest employee to the executive director. Jackie stands out because of her attitude, dedication and enthusiasm while working with staff. She consistently goes above and beyond for her co-workers, making her a deserved selection for the Emma Jean Lewis Outstanding Teamwork Award.

LINDA A. GOBLESKY  Roger S. Ahlbrandt, Jr. Outstanding Client Service Award

Linda Goblesky, who manages the Homeless Families Services Program and the Braddock Apartments, an 11-unit housing facility that provides intensive case management for its formerly homeless residents, has been with ACTION-Housing since 1999. Linda has been drawn to human service her entire life. She doesn’t just excel at her demanding and challenging job, a feat in and of itself, but goes out of her way to help her residents even when she’s off the clock. Her dedication to her clients comes from a background of empathy, and her life experiences have trained her to be an even more understanding and caring servant. We’re proud to honor Linda with the Roger S. Ahlbrandt, Jr. Outstanding Client Service Award.

IN MEMORIAM  EDGAR MICHAELS and CHARLES PRINE

Two former ACTION-Housing Board Members and life-long community activists passed away this year. ACTION-Housing would like to extend our sympathies to the families of Edgar Michaels and Charles Prine, as well as thank them for their service to our agency. Both men will be missed.

Edgar Michaels was a Troy Hill native who was president of Hinkel-Hofmann, a North Side building supply company. He served on ACTION-Housing’s Board of Directors from 1974-1975, and from 1989 until his passing last July. In the interim between his two stints as a Director, Mr. Michaels served as a “Member” of ACTION-Housing’s board in an advisory role. His continued input and expertise were crucial as ACTION-Housing navigated the collapse of the steel industry and the decades-long fallout. Mr. Michaels was deeply committed to community development; he helped establish the Northside Civic Development Council and served one term as a city councilman. He would go on to serve on the city’s planning commission for six years starting in 1980.

Mr. Michaels is remembered fondly as a civic-minded leader who brought a thoughtful outlook and unique skill set to ACTION-Housing’s Board. He was 89 years old.

Charles “Chuck” Prine was a business leader deeply committed to the housing concerns of Western Pennsylvania. Mr. Prine was a Senior Vice President of Ryan Homes and served as ACTION-Housing’s Board President from 1988-1993. Mr. Prine also served on the board of the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, and as recently as 2010 helped spearhead a resident council at his senior building to help guide the building’s operations. He received ACTION-Housing’s Award of Excellence, and was named the United Way of Allegheny County’s Man of the Year. His input led us to begin developing supportive housing, one of ACTION-Housing’s biggest focuses for the past three decades.

Mr. Prine’s commitment to social justice issues spanned his entire life. From testifying before the United States Senate Special Committee on Aging in 2010 to fighting for racial integration in the early 1960s, Mr. Prine led an admirable life. He was 87 years old.
ACTION-HOUSING BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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President, State Farm Insurance

SHERRY MILLER BROWN, Ph.D.
VICE PRESIDENT
Director, McCarl Center for Nontraditional Student Success, University of Pittsburgh

EDWARD M. WIELGUS
VICE PRESIDENT
Vice President, Northwest Savings Bank

JOHN E. CAPOZZI
SECRETARY
Vice President/General Manager, Newmark Grubb Knight Frank

RICARDO G. SAVIDO
TREASURER
Retired/Former President, Bank of New York Mellon Community Development Corp.

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Vice President & Community Investment Manager, Citizens Bank of Pennsylvania

STEPHANIE CIPRIANI
Senior Vice President and Market Manager, Community Development Banking, PNC Bank, National Association

PAUL D’ALESANDRO
District Director, Congressman Mike Doyle

JOAN W. STEIN
President & CEO, Accessibility Development Associates, Inc.

JOHN W. HANNIGAN
EILEEN STEVENSON

DIRECTORS EMERITUS

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1957-1972

JOSEPH W. TAUSEK
1972-1977

PAUL C. BROPHY
1975-1977

JONATHAN E. ZIMMER
1977-2006

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

LAWRENCE A. SWANSON
2006 - Present

EDGAR MICHAELS
Deceased July 15, 2013
President, Hinkel-Hofmann

A.C. VAN DUSEN
Vice Chancellor Emeritus, University of Pittsburgh

PRESIDENTS OF ACTION-HOUSING

BEN FISCHER
1976-1982
Assistant to the President, United Steelworkers of America and Distinguished Public Service Professor of Labor Relations at Carnegie Mellon University

CHARLES W. PRINE, JR.
1988-1993
Senior Vice President, Ryan Homes

CARL REUTER
1994-1996
Loan Guaranty Officer, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

LAUREL D. (MCADAMS) HUTCHENS
1997-2000
Past President, Realtors Association of Metropolitan Pittsburgh

TIMOTHY JOHNSON
2001-2002
Managing Partner, Horizon Mezzanine Fund

MATTHEW GILES
2002-2005
Chairman, Mellon Bank Community Development Corporation

PETER R. KAPLAN
2005-2009
Vice President-Acquisitions, PNC MultiFamily Capital

CHAIRMEN OF ACTION-HOUSING

J. STANLEY PURNELL
1957-1968
Assistant to the President, T. Mellon and Sons

LEON E. HICKMAN
1969-1975
Counsel, Eckert, Seamans, Cherin & Mellott

J. ROBERT FERGUSON
1976-1985
Senior Vice President, United States Steel Corporation
OFFICERS

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PRESIDENT
Vice President, Real Estate Lending & Services, Dollar Bank

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VICE PRESIDENT
Executive Director, ACTION-Housing, Inc.

JOHN E. CAPOZZI
SECRETARY
Vice President/General Manager, Newmark Grubb Knight Frank

RICARDO G. SAVIDO
TREASURER
Retired/Former President, Bank of New York Mellon Community Development Corp.

LINDA M. METROPULOS
VICE PRESIDENT
Director of Housing & Neighborhood Development ACTION-Housing, Inc.

RONALD CIOTTI
VICE PRESIDENT
Senior Housing Developer, ACTION-Housing, Inc.

PATRICK J. FENTON
VICE PRESIDENT
Deputy Executive Director, ACTION-Housing, Inc.

DIRECTORS

PAUL D’ALESANDRO
District Director, Congressman Mike Doyle

STEPHANIE CIPRIANI
Senior Vice President and Market Manager, Community Development Banking, PNC Bank, National Association

EDEN HARRISS

SHIRLEY CEPHAS

FRANK DEMES

MAJOR SUPPORTERS OF ACTION-HOUSING’S PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES

UNITED WAY OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY

FOUNDATIONS
Anonymous
BNY Mellon Foundation
CITI Foundation
Citizens Bank Charitable Foundation
FISA Foundation
The Heinz Endowments
Hillman Foundation
Huntington Foundation
John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
The Oak Foundation
The Pittsburgh Foundation
PNC Bank Foundation
Richard King Mellon Foundation
Wagner Family Charitable Trust
Wells Fargo Foundation

CORPORATIONS, LENDING INSTITUTIONS & OTHERS
Bank of America
Bank of New York Mellon
Bank of New York Mellon Charitable Gift Fund
Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania
Conservation Consultants, Inc. (CCI)
Dollar Bank
Dollar Energy Fund
Emerson Charitable Trust
Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh
First Energy Corporation
The Housing Partnership Network
Huntington Bank
The Mon Valley Initiative
Neighborhood Housing Services
Northwest Savings Bank
Peoples Natural Gas
Pittsburgh Partnership for Neighborhood Development
PNC Bank
Regional Housing Legal Services
The Reinvestment Fund Inc.
Senator Wayne Fontana
Turtle Creek Valley MH/MR
West Penn Power

PUBLIC AGENCIES
Allegheny County Department of Human Services
Allegheny County Economic Development
The Borough of Heidelberg
The Borough of Wilkinsburg
City of Duquesne
City of Pittsburgh
Commonwealth Financing Authority
McKeesport Housing Authority
NeighborWorks
PA Community Revitalization Program
PA Department of Community and Economic Development
PA Department of Public Welfare
PA Housing Finance Agency
Redevelopment Authority of Allegheny County
Redevelopment Authority of the County of Washington
Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

SPECIAL SUPPORTERS CONTRIBUTING $1,000 TO $15,000
Raymond and Harriett Baum
Senator Jay Costa
Frank R. Demes
Patrick J. Fenton
Terri F. Gould
Jewish Residential Services
Gifts In Memory of Edgar W. Michaels
Dean F. Richardson
William N. Susan
Lawrence A. Swanson
Kathleen J. Szwarc

CURRENT REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS
Autism Housing Development Corporation of Pittsburgh
Bank of New York Mellon
Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation
Center of Life
Community Development Corporation
Borough of Heidelberg
Borough of Wilkinsburg
Forest Hills Community Development Corporation
Greene County
Jewish Residential Services
National Equity Fund
PNC Multifamily Capital
Telesis Corporation
Uptown Partners
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<td>Bruce Rechichar</td>
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Marc Cherna and the Allegheny County Department of Human Services

ACTION-Housing is pleased to name the Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) and their Executive Director, Marc Cherna, as this year’s Award of Excellence winners.

DHS was formed in 1997 to consolidate the vast array of human services offered by Allegheny County, and now DHS and its network of funded service providers serve more than 200,000 people each year. They offer services for older adults; mental health and drug and alcohol services (includes 24-hour crisis counseling); child protective services; at-risk child development and education; hunger services; emergency shelters and housing for the homeless; non-emergency medical transportation; job training and placement for public assistance recipients and older adults; and services for individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. Given ACTION-Housing’s mission and client base, we’ve worked with DHS extensively since they were formed.

In just the past year, DHS has been a primary partner on McKeesport Downtown Housing, the Uptown Lofts on Fifth, Wood Street Commons, and our MyPlace program while providing additional support on numerous other programs and initiatives. We couldn’t have found a more able department in the country to partner with. DHS is a nationally recognized agency that attracts representatives from other jurisdictions around the country who want to learn how to replicate DHS’s model. This is in large part due to Cherna’s leadership, as Cherna was instrumental in introducing a number of reforms that made the agency what it is today.

Cherna’s body of work has been so impressive that the Casey Family Programs, a national foundation dedicated to child welfare and improving the foster care system, named him as the first ever recipient of their Lifetime Achievement Award. He was honored for his success in safely reuniting more Allegheny County families than had been in previous years, while simultaneously creating better outcomes for children in foster care. In addition to his 17 years at DHS, Cherna was head of Allegheny County’s Department of Children and Youth services for one year prior to DHS’s founding and he worked for another 13 years as the associate director of New Jersey’s Department of Human Services. While the award from the Casey Family Programs was for his work with youth, all of DHS has benefited from his leadership and hard work.

For Cherna, and his whole department’s success in turning Allegheny County’s Department of Human Services into a nationally cited agency, ACTION-Housing is pleased to name them our 2014 Award of Excellence winners.