Dynamic and unique structures have always captivated humankind. They resemble the essence of human ingenuity and serve as a reminder that we are only bound by our imagination.

In the affordable housing arena, architects are often limited in how creative they can be. After all, for years the traditional model of building affordable housing developments remained the same: if it looked expensive, it was too good to be labeled “affordable.”

However, a handful of partners at Pinnacle Housing—one of the largest manufacturers of affordable housing in the southeast—saw things differently. They were determined to step outside of the traditional model and, literally, change the face of affordable housing.

In fact, Louis Wolfson, partner at Pinnacle Housing, says his buildings stand in stark contrast to the older model. He and his partners were determined to break down boundaries and explore new ways of building affordable housing.

“If it looks ‘affordable,’ or feels ‘affordable,’ it isn’t a Pinnacle Housing Group community,” Wolfson said.

Based in Miami, and surrounded by an array of color and local art, Wolfson and his colleagues began brainstorming. They wondered how they could incorporate local works of art into their design elements.

What has evolved is pairing local and aspiring artists with Pinnacle architects to create “Art in Public Places.”

It seems like an odd pairing of sorts. After all, art and affordable housing are two words that seem to conflict with each other—but, not to Wolfson. He says the locally inspired art brings something totally unique to the surrounding neighborhoods in which they develop.

(continued on page 3)
We are in the midst of the holiday season, and a new year is on the horizon bringing with it new opportunities for Florida Housing as 2009 comes to a close. Currently, we are engaged in projects that will carry over to the New Year and result in more affordable housing becoming available for Floridians statewide.

Most recently, as a part of the comprehensive federal plan to stabilize the US housing market, the Obama Administration announced a new initiative for state and local housing finance agencies (HFAs) to help support low mortgage rates and expand resources for affordable housing opportunities—for borrowers and renters—over the long term. This New Issue Bond Program (NIBP) was created under authority granted through the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 (HERA), and allows HFAs to issue debt that is purchased by the US Treasury. The two components of the NIBP in which Florida Housing will participate include provisions for single family and multifamily new issue bonds. For single family, approximately $547 million in bonds will be issued; for multifamily, approximately $250 million in bonds will be issued.

On the single family side, the program will help thousands of additional families in Florida by offering much lower interest rates on mortgage loans so that more qualified first time homebuyers can take advantage of historically low sales prices. This will help reduce the inventory of homes currently on the market, while helping to stabilize declining home values throughout the state. On the multifamily side, the program will provide low-interest rate, tax-exempt financing to developers acquiring or constructing multifamily developments that qualify for private activity bonds. This means thousands of affordable rental units will be preserved or constructed for Florida’s working families.

The NIBP initiative will be a significant factor in helping families nationwide to maintain affordable housing during these tough economic times, and Florida Housing is well-positioned to ensure our state takes full advantage of this landmark opportunity.

Another focus for us has been the preservation of older affordable housing rental units. During the 2009 regular legislative session, Florida lawmakers appropriated $1,000,000 to help public housing authorities address the rehabilitation needs of aging public housing developments. In November, Florida Housing issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to award this funding, which is to serve as a match to the funds that PHAs received through the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) of 2009. We expect to make final funding awards toward the end of January 2010.

Finally, during this past year, Florida Housing’s Board of Directors and staff participated in a deliberative planning process to update the Corporation’s Strategic Plan. The final adopted plan is now available on our Web site. While the plan is not comprehensive, it provides a big picture outline of key strategies that Florida Housing will be working on in the next few years and is meant to give us guidance to ensure that we are well positioned to meet the state’s affordable housing needs of the next decade. I encourage you to read the plan and partner with us to work toward achievement of the goals and objectives contained therein.

Have a great holiday season and a Happy New Year!

FROM THE Executive Director

Treasury Unveils New Bond Issue Program

In late October, the U.S. Treasury, the Federal Housing Finance Administration, Fannie Mac and Freddie Mac announced the HFA Initiative/New Issue Bond Purchase (NIBP) program. The program was created based on authority granted under the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 (HERA) and is designed to maintain the viability of Housing Finance Agency (HFA) lending programs on a temporary basis by allowing HFAs to issue debt that is purchased by the U.S. Treasury.

NIBP has two components: the Single Family New Issue Bond Program and the Multifamily New Issue Bond Program. The single family program provides temporary financing for HFAs to issue new housing bonds to fund new mortgages to qualified first time homebuyers. The purchase by the Treasury of Florida Housing’s long-term bonds should help lower the mortgage rates offered to borrowers through the state’s First Time Homebuyer (FTHB) program. In Florida alone, nearly 9,000 new fixed-rate mortgages may be made to first-time homebuyers due in large part to this program.

The multifamily program portion grants housing bond issuers the opportunity to sell multifamily bonds to Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac (the GSEs) that will, in turn, be securitized and sold to the Treasury. The purpose of the program is to provide low-interest rate, tax-exempt financing to developers acquiring, rehabilitating or constructing multifamily developments that qualify for private activity bonds. The NIBP also will support development of approximately 5,000 new or rehabilitated rental units for working families.

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Foreclosures Present Preservation Opportunities for Investors

Florida Housing Finance Corporation (Florida Housing) currently is listing properties that are either in or nearing foreclosure on its Web site. The listed properties received some form of financing through Florida Housing and will be available for purchase to potential investors.

You can view the listings by visiting www.floridahousing.org, and then click on “Preservation,” and then “Preservation Opportunities.”

Each property listed has an accompanying data sheet that provides detailed information, such as occupancy reports, number of units, square footage and much more. In addition, a photo slideshow and map location of the property are also available.

Potential investors should contact the person listed as the “primary contact” for additional information on a property; should the primary contact be unavailable, a secondary Florida Housing contact also is available to supply information. 

*Not all properties have an accompanying photo slideshow. If additional photos become available, they will be posted to the respective data sheet for the property.
More Affordable Housing Available for Broward Seniors

Broward County—Highland Gardens II, an affordable housing community for seniors, recently opened its doors for business in Deerfield Beach.

The newly developed community provides 100 units, with rents starting as low as $695.

Kevin Cregan, CEO of the Broward County Housing Authority, couldn’t be more excited to offer these units. He says the location of phase one of Highland Gardens was a perfect fit for this project.

“When we realized the under-utilized area on the Highland Gardens site could accommodate additional residences to serve seniors, we were excited about the prospect of adding affordable housing opportunities for the community,” said Cregan.

He says Highland Gardens II is a continuation of the successful development partnership between Broward County Housing Authority (co-developer and owner/operator) and Pinnacle Housing Group (lead developer).

The development was built with its resident’s safety in mind. Controlled access entry into buildings and safety lighting provide a secure living environment.

One resident, Marilyn, said she particularly appreciates the comfort these features provide.

“It says to the neighborhoods, ‘these buildings are not normal affordable housing buildings,’” Wolfson said.

Affordable housing developments, no matter where they are located, have always fought a certain stigma. Surrounding property owners are constantly concerned about these developments bringing their property values down—commonly referred to as NIMBYism (Not In My Back Yard-ism).

Wolfson says his buildings take away a lot of these concerns. “We are bringing your property values up,” he said.

In fact, he sees it as a direct challenge to some of the more dilapidated structures surrounding his multi-million dollar structures.

“Aren’t the bare minimum...this isn’t even close to bare minimum; now, it’s your turn neighborhood,” he said. “Let’s bring up the neighborhood. We’re doing our part, now you have to do yours.”

People at Pinnacle Housing are no strangers to thinking outside the box. For instance, Pinnacle was the first to introduce the idea of vertical high-rise affordable housing. David Deutch, partner at Pinnacle Housing, says the idea was literally born out of necessity.

He says that in the late ’90s, the trend was to develop in the suburbs where land was cheap and readily available. However, building in the suburbs came with a price.

Living further outside the city meant longer commutes, increased stress and less family time. For Pinnacle, this simply didn’t add up.

To us, it was counter-intuitive to be building all of these units down [in the suburbs of Miami],” Deutch said. “There were so many urban infill redevelopment opportunities that not only put the housing in better locations, but also...put it next to jobs, public transportation, and next to needed services.

“That model, today, is now the primary vehicle for developing affordable housing in Dade County,” Deutch said.

Deutch admits that it took some time for folks to come around to this type of building process—even Florida Housing. “We had to overcome the issues with building a high-rise on a program that had historically supported low-rise construction,” he said.

A lot of the hesitation came from the belief that high-rises were difficult to maintain. Nevertheless, Pinnacle was adamant to change people’s perception.

“We said, ‘you know what, we’re going to crack the code and show folks why this makes a lot of sense and dispel a lot of notions [that it couldn’t be done].’” Deutch said.

Apparently, the gamble paid off. Deutch said that today, his portfolio is as strong as ever, and he maintains that his developments are showing high residency, even during time of massive job losses and a downward economy.

He says this is a result of a few things, one being diligence in finding communities where affordable housing is greatly needed.

“We’ve always been a very disciplined organization in terms of site selection, counties and target markets,” he said.

Of course, like for all affordable housing developers in Florida, times are a bit challenging. However, Deutch believes that it is just a temporary speed bump and he is quick to acknowledge that his organization values its relationship with Florida Housing.

“They’re my partner, they’ve been responsive, helpful, forthright... I love being their partner,” he said.
Florida Housing Recognizes Top Lenders at its 2009 Lender Appreciation Awards Dinner

On Friday, June 12, Florida Housing Finance Corporation (Florida Housing) hosted the Sixth Annual Lender Appreciation Awards Dinner in Orlando. The event—held at the famed Peabody Hotel Orlando—drew nearly 150 lenders, Realtors, developers, non-profit representatives, elected officials, and other housing providers and advocates to honor the top-producing lenders for the state’s First Time Homebuyer Program.

In addition to the awards presentation, Florida Housing Executive Director Steve Auger took a few moments to offer encouraging words to those committed to helping families purchase their first homes.

“The recession and global economic turmoil has challenged all of us and made it much more difficult to serve first-time homebuyers in Florida,” he said. “However, we want all of you to know that Florida Housing has conservatively managed its resources and stands ready to continue its mission to provide both first mortgages and down payment assistance to borrowers through the First Time Homebuyer Program.”

Also, Florida Housing took the opportunity to thank both the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the Florida Association of Realtors (FAR), each of which received the Platinum Partnership Award for their strong partnerships with us during the past year.

Pat Gaver, BB&T, receives a Platinum Loan Officer Award from David Westcott, Director of Homeownership Programs, and Jennel Johnson, Single Family Programs Analyst.

LEADING Lenders & LENDING Institutions

Each quarter, Florida Housing congratulates top-producing lenders for the First Time Homebuyer Program. Based on various stages in the origination process, this quarter’s winners are as follows:

The Top Three Loan Officers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lender</th>
<th>No. of Loans</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bank of America</td>
<td>131</td>
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<tr>
<td>BB&amp;T</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regions Bank</td>
<td>52</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Top Three Lending Institutions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lender</th>
<th>No. of Loans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shelter Mortgage</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regions Bank</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SunTrust Bank</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

REALTOR Corner

Attention Education Directors!

Florida Housing offers a three- (3) hour Continuing Education course, titled “Affordable Housing Solutions: What Every Realtor Should Know.”

Approved by the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR), the course is taught in your location by Florida Housing Single Family Programs staff and provides an overview of Florida Housing’s homeownership programs, with special emphasis on our First Time Homebuyer (FTHB) Program.

This program may benefit buyers in your market by providing them with access to 30-year, fixed-rate mortgage financing that may be coupled with down payment and closing cost assistance. The loans are originated through a large network of trained loan officers representing approved participating lenders located throughout the state.

Currently, Florida Housing is working to complete the 2010 training schedule, which is limited to a maximum of 24 classes this year. Requests for trainings will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis.

For more information on the course and to view the 2010 schedule, visit www.floridahousing.org or contact Natalie Zundel, single family programs analyst, at natalyne.zundel@floridahousing.org or call her at (850) 488-4197.

UPCOMING Events

January 20, 2010 . . . . Realtor Training
Realtor Association of Miami Dade County
9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Plantation, FL

January 22, 2010 . . . . Florida Housing
Board of Directors Meeting
Residence Inn by Marriott
600 West Gaines Street, Tallahassee, FL
8:30 a.m. to adjournment

February 10, 2010 . . . . Realtor Training
Emerald Coast Association of Realtors
9:00 a.m. to noon, Fort Walton Beach, FL

March 9, 2010 . . . . Realtor Training
Northeast Florida Association of Realtors
10:00 to 4:00 p.m., Jacksonville, FL

March 25, 2010 . . . . Realtor Training
Orlando Regional Realtor Association
9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Orlando, FL

April 21, 2010 . . . . Realtor Training
Realtor Association of Greater Miami & the Beaches
9:00 a.m. to noon, Miami, FL
Grandmother Receives ‘Gift of a Lifetime’

First-time homeownership stories never get old. Each one is just as exciting as the last. This story is no exception.

Sarah Cannida, a grandmother of four, recently bought her first home using Florida Housing’s “Florida Assist” program. “There were so many pieces to the homebuyer process,” she said. “I knew from the very beginning that Lois [her lender] was going to be a friend of mine forever. She answered all my questions.”

Lois Healy-Sparks with BB&T in Fort Myers helped Cannida purchase her new home. “The process for Sarah was exciting and confusing all at the same time because Sarah had never owned a home before and always wanted to,” Healy-Sparks said. “So, as her home was being built, I explained the whole process to her and helped her understand why we ask for certain documents, and the whole loan process.”

The homebuying process actually started out as a goal for Cannida’s daughter a few years ago. However, her daughter passed away before reaching that goal, thereby, leaving Cannida with four grandchildren to raise and her daughter’s dream of wanting to own a home to fulfill. Cannida set out to do just that for her grandchildren, and for her daughter.

“Sarah’s daughter passed away leaving Sarah to raise her three [grandchildren],” Healy-Sparks said. “Sarah’s daughter always wanted a home for her children and was never able to provide that. Sarah had never owned a home either and, usually, worked two jobs to keep the family together. Through Florida Housing’s bond program and the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program, we were able to have Sarah own the home of her dreams on the street that she wanted to live, thus, fulfilling a lifelong dream for her and daughter, and her daughter’s children.”

BB&T, the City of Fort Myers SHIP office, and Steve Jones with Hope Homes made Cannida and her daughter’s dream come true; on June 19, 2009, she and her four grandchildren moved into their newly built three-bedroom/two-bathroom home with a two-car garage.

“This is something my daughter wanted for herself and her children. Grandma did it!” Cannida exclaimed.

For more information on Florida Housing’s homeownership programs, contact Single Family Program staff at (850) 488-4197.

From Homeless to a Place to Call Home

With the ribbon officially cut, Walter Refour (second from right) celebrates with (L-R) Erika White, Gulf County SHIP; Mike Ubias, USDA; Joe Paul, Taunton Truss.

Walter Refour, a 77-year-old veteran, recently purchased a newly constructed home using Homeownership Opportunity Pool (HOP) program funds offered through Florida Housing. A native of Wewahitchka, Florida, he started the homebuying process in December 2008.

After serving in the military, Refour was homeless when he returned to Wewahitchka. He began looking for a home; as luck would have it, he contacted Joe Paul at Taunton Truss—a family-owned and operated business providing affordable housing construction needs. A veteran, himself, Paul made it his mission to help Refour get into a home.

Refour was able to achieve his dream of purchasing a newly constructed home using $61,200 in federal funds from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA); $24,289 from the HOP program; and $17,500 in local funds from the Gulf County State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program.

On July 28, Taunton Truss hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony in Wewahitchka for Refour at his new home. “Construction is now complete and a true gentleman, Mr. Walter Refour, will soon become the proud owner of his very own home,” said David Taunton, owner and founder of Taunton Truss. “We are so excited for Refour at his new home. “Construction is now complete and a true gentleman, Mr. Walter Refour, will soon become the proud owner of his very own home,” said David Taunton, owner and founder of Taunton Truss. “We are so excited for Refour at his new home.”

For more information on Florida Housing’s homeownership programs, contact Single Family Program staff at (850) 488-4197.

FLHOP

Florida Homebuyer Opportunity Program

The Florida Homebuyer Opportunity Program (FL HOP)—created during the 2009 regular legislative session—provides $30 million in financial assistance to first-time homebuyers eligible to receive the federal first-time homebuyer tax credit established through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. The FLHOP Program has been extended as a result of the passage of the Worker, Homeownership, and Business Assistance Act of 2009 (see page 1).

The FL HOP program is administered through the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program; offices are located in all 67 counties and 53 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement cities. Eligible FL HOP applicants can receive up to $8,000 in purchase assistance, which is expected to be repaid by the applicant upon receipt of his/her federal tax refund.

Interested persons should contact their local SHIP office for additional information and/or to apply for the program, or visit www.floridahousing.org and click the FL HOP icon.
What's Developing wants to feature groundbreaking and open house events, and articles on projects and developments that are made possible through funding received from Florida Housing Finance Corporation. Please contact Cecilia Rose Green, communications director, at cecika.green@floridahousing.org to submit your information.

COMMON Acronyms

AMI Area Median Income
CDG Community Development Block Grant
CLT Community Land Trust
CMHHP Community Workforce Housing Initiatives Program
DVL Elderly Housing
ELI Extremely Low Income
FHC Florida Housing Coalition
FHCDO Florida Housing Data Sharehouse
FHFC Florida Housing Finance Corporation
FHC REHAB Foreclosure Recovery Housing Program
FTHB First Time Homebuyer
GZOA Good Opportunity Zone Act
HAA Homeownership Assistance for Moderate Incomes
HCE Housing Endowment
HCRP Hurricane Recovery Program
HELP Homeownership Loan Program
HOME HOME Investment Partnerships Program
HOP HOPE Homeownership Pool
HOPVI Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere
HUGI Housing and Urban Development Group
HGT Local Government Housing Trust Fund
HITC Low Income Housing Tax Credit
MCC Mortgage Credit Certificate
MVHR Multifamily Mortgage Revenue Bond
MHOA Multifamily Homeownership
NCSHA National Council of State Housing Agencies
NMY Not In My Back Yard
NODA Notice Of Deficient Housing
NOC Notice Of Change
NOCA Notice Of Credit Availability
NOFA Notice Of Funding Availability
NOFR Notice Of Proposed Rule Hearing
NOFSE Notice Of Possible Scoring Error
PHA Public Housing Authority
PDL Permanent Development Loan Program
QAP Qualified Allocation Plan
RELP Rental Recovery Loan Program
SHIP State Apartment Incentive Loan
SHIPRE Single Family Reinvestment Act
SHIPRO Special Housing Assistance & Development Program
SHIPV SHADP Special Housing Assistance & Development Program
SAIL State Apartment Incentive Loan
SHLR Rental Recovery Loan Program
SOL State Incentive Loan
SFPB Single Family Portfolio Bank
SFMH Single Family Mortgage Revenue Bond
SFMRB Single Family Mortgage Revenue Bond
SFPR Single Family Property Ownership
SIB State Incentive Loan
SIF State Incentive Fund
SAIL State Incentive Loan
SLR State Loan Revenue Bonds
SLRPF Special Housing Assistance & Development Program
SHP State Housing Initiatives Partnership
SHF State Housing Trust Fund
TLC Tallahassee Lenders Coalition

WHAT’S Developing • www.floridahousing.org

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Florida Housing was created by the Florida Legislature more than 25 years ago to help our fellow Floridians obtain decent, affordable housing that might otherwise be unavailable to them. Today, Florida Housing continues its mission by increasing affordable housing opportunities and ensuring that its programs are available to all Floridians, not just the needs of those we serve. We know that we cannot accomplish our mission alone. So, we work with local governments, non-profits, elected officials and others to help spread the importance of affordable housing in Florida’s communities.

SB 360 Florida Housing had a successful 2009 legislative session with the passage of Senate Bill 360 (Chap. 2009-96, Laws of Fla.)—a growth management bill that was amended in the final days of session with the Senate affordable housing language. Rep. Gary Aubuchon and Sen. Mike Ritenna continued their fight for affordable housing this year by sponsoring and championing an affordable housing package that eventually became law on June 1. Although the final bill did not repeal the revenue cap on the Sadowski Fund, SB 360 addressed many issues that Florida Housing had on its legislative agenda, including the following:

• Revisions to the State Apartment Incentive Loan (SAIL) program and the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program to clarify program purposes, eligibility requirements, and use of SAIL funding to help affordability housing units;
• Eligibility for SAIL funding for those who include green building principles, storm-resistance construction, or other elements to reduce long-term maintenance costs in their application;
• Increased affordable housing opportunities for youth aging out of foster care;
• Assessment of structural improvements, condominium parcels, and cooperative parcels on land owned by a community land trust and used to provide affordable housing;
• Authorization for Florida Housing to distribute funds on a quarterly or more frequent basis, subject to the availability of funds with respect to local housing distributions; and
• Authorization for school districts in areas of critical state concern to use certain property that provides affordable housing for teachers to include housing for essential services personnel.

Florida Homebuyer Opportunity Program
To increase sales in the state’s housing market, the Legislature created the Florida Homebuyer Opportunity Program (FLHOP). The program is designed to front up to $8,000 in down payment assistance loans to applicants who are eligible to receive the federal first-time homebuyer tax credit created in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. For current fiscal year (2009-10), Florida Housing was allocated $30 million for the program; funding for FLHOP is being distributed through and operated under the SHIP program and, as long as the homebuyer tax credit is available, FLHOP will be the sole approved use of these funds. Specifications for FLHOP are as follows:

• The maximum income limits are $75,000 for a single taxpayer household or $150,000 for a joint-filing taxpayer household;
• Principle balance of the loan shall not exceed 10 percent of the home’s purchase price or $1,000, whichever is less; and
• Participating homebuyers must repay the loan within 18 months or 10 years after receipt of their federal income tax refund, whichever is earlier.

Florida Homelessness Rate is High for Foster Care Youth
Miam-Dade County—A recent Florida International University (FIU) study indicates that one out of four foster care youth (age 18-23) may experience homelessness after leaving State care. This statistic has Miami-Dade county officials and advocates scrambling to find a solution to this ever increasing problem.

“Miami-Dade County is well known for its lack of affordable housing,” said Ben Burton, executive director of the Miami Coalition for the Homeless, which funded the study. “This shortage, combined with the economic downturn, has severely impacted the lives of foster care youth aging out of foster care.”

Approximately 250 foster care youth age out of foster care on an annual basis in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties. These young people are 64 percent of the general population aged 18 to 23 living in Miami, according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) 2007 American Housing Survey.

One of the groups working hard to combat this issue is “Our Kids,” the local lead agency for child welfare in Miami and the Keys. Our Kids completed the FIU study, and leads the way in searching for a solution.

Fran Allegra, chief executive officer at Our Kids, says that to really appreciate the scope of the situation, you first have to look to the demographics. She says that many grow up and age out of foster care.

“There’s that well known statistic that 8 out of 10 foster care youth do not graduate from high school,” Allegra said.

However, this doesn’t stop Allegra and her colleagues from trying. She says she is always reaching out—trying to spread the word to as many people as possible.

“If you’ve inherited a system where kids have already been in [foster care] for 10 years, the likelihood that you’re going to be able to impact them and redirect their outcome is unlikely,” Allegra said.

So, the solution is not to place these youth into temporary housing, temporary living facilities, or even transitional housing. It’s a more holistic approach. However, this doesn’t stop Allegra and her colleagues from trying. She says she is always reaching out—trying to spread the word to as many people as possible.

“More funding and additional community partners are needed now more than ever if we want to give these young men and women a chance to make it on their own,” she said.

One of these partners is Carlisle Development Group. They provided 20 units for homeless youth at Santa Clara II.

Matt Greer, chief executive officer for Carlisle, spearheaded the effort and says that Santa Clara II has provided a valuable learning experience, so far.

In a way, it was a test site to gauge how well a revolutionary “continuum of care” system would work. Not surprisingly, the results were a mixed bag. Occasional behavioral issues arose, and landlords quickly found themselves dealing with issues that they are unable to manage.

Greer would like to see temporary housing, such as the Camilla House or Emmaus Place (a future development that will house eight young males), be a first stop for those exiting foster care. Once they have proved themselves in this environment, they would transition to a more independent living community.

He hopes that providing this buffer will eliminate many of the problems landlords would face with their new tenants. Still even with the early struggles, Greer says that he is confident in independent living arrangements.

“We’re still really hoping [Santa Clara’s] a model that we can refine to the point we can roll it out to others,” Greer said. “We’re trying to convince more people to come on board.”

Homelessness Rate is High for Foster Care Youth

The late Senator Jim King (R) — Jacksonville

Affordable Housing Day at the Capitol
On April 15 during legislative session, housing advocates from across the state gathered in the courtyard on the steps of the Old Capitol to celebrate “Affordable Housing Day at the Capitol.” The purpose of this annual celebration is to deliver the message to lawmakers, and others, that affordable housing is valued in a positive economic impact by creating employment and investments while generating tax revenues.

Immediately following the press conference, Sadowski Coalition members, local governments representatives, builders, Realtors, and advocates for homeless people and persons with disabilities made group visits to their local legislators.

Florida Housing Remembers Senator Jim King
For years, Sen. Jim King led the fight in the Senate for removal of the cap on the state and local housing trust funds, and for affordable housing issues, in general. In 2006 and 2007, Sen. King sponsored legislation to remove the cap while rallying many of his Republican colleagues to join the fight and become co-sponsors of the bill.

Florida Housing Finance Corporation is deeply indebted to Sen. King for his leadership and commitment to affordable housing for Floridians. He will always be remembered as a great friend to the State of Florida and Florida Housing.