

MaineHousing's ReStart Program Earns NCSHA Excellence Award



MaineHousing's ReStart FSS Coordinator Laurie Glidden and Director Daniel Brennan accepted NCSHA's 2022 Award for Program Excellence in the Homeownership category of Empowering New Buyers during the council's annual conference in Houston on October 25, 2022.

MaineHousing's ReStart Program was honored by the National Council of State Housing Authorities (NCSHA) in its Awards for Program Excellence Contest during the NCSHA Annual Conference in Houston on October 24, 2022. The ReStart program is Maine's version of the federally funded Family Self-Sufficiency Program and pairs Housing Choice Voucher clients with career and financial coaching and education. Participants volunteer for the program, which is headed up here at MaineHousing by Laurie Glidden and Brianna Martin. MaineHousing's program received its award in the [Empowering New Buyers](#) segment of the Homeownership section of the contest. Glidden was on hand to pick up the award and later presented to a large group of colleagues from around the country on how MaineHousing's program helped many voucher holders become financially independent, up to and including being able to purchase their first home. It was a very exciting moment for MaineHousing to be recognized before about 700 people from housing finance agencies from across the U.S.

Brennan Elected to NCSHA Board of Directors

During the NCSHA annual conference in Houston in October, MaineHousing Director Daniel Brennan was elected to serve a 2-year term on the council's board of directors.

The National Council of State Housing Agencies (NCSHA) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization created to advance, through advocacy and education, the efforts of the nation's state HFAs and their partners to provide affordable housing to those who need it.

NCSHA's members include: the state HFAs, as well as the HFAs of the District of Columbia, New York City, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands; the agencies that allocate the Low Income Housing Tax Credit in the states where an HFA does not; and more than 300 affiliate members in the affordable housing field.



MaineHousing Welcomes New Commissioners

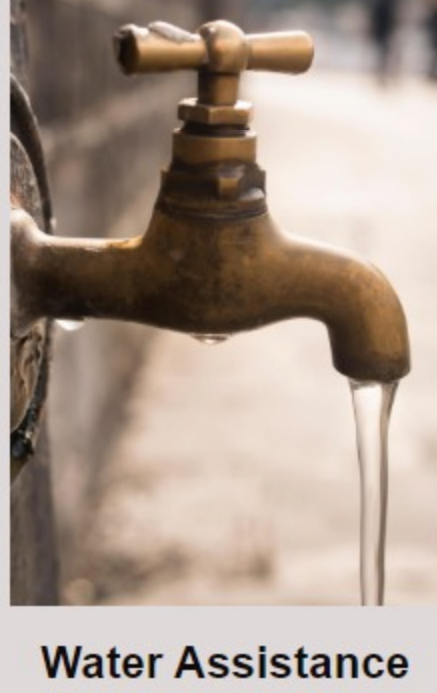
Paul Shepherd

In October, Paul Shepherd joined the MaineHousing Board of Commissioners after his confirmation by the Maine State Senate. Shepherd is the co-owner of [Penobscot Home Performance](#) and a BPI-certified building analyst. He has been involved in hundreds of residential energy retrofit projects throughout Maine that have helped homeowners make their homes more comfortable, healthy, and energy efficient, as well as lower their greenhouse gas emissions. He previously spent eight years working for both Penquis and Coastal Community Action Programs where he was responsible for implementing the Weatherization Assistance Program and the Central Heating Improvement Program. He was also a certified lead inspector and lead sampling technician and has been involved in lead abatement projects. He has a B.S. degree in Architectural Studies from the Philadelphia College of Art.



Deb Ibonwa

This month Deb Ibonwa joins the MaineHousing Board of Commissioners after being confirmed by the Maine State Senate in September. Ibonwa is an attorney who works as a housing and legal advocate for [Maine Equal Justice](#). In her current role Ibonwa focuses on housing policy advocacy, immigrant access to public benefits, and providing legal services to Mainers with low incomes who are unable to access legal services from other providers due to their immigration status. Ibonwa is a 2014 graduate of Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts and is a 2017 graduate of the University of San Francisco School of Law. She was admitted to Maine Bar as an attorney in 2018 and to the U.S. First Circuit and U.S. District Court of Maine in 2019. In addition to her professional work as an attorney and advocate, Ibonwa has life experiences as a refugee who was first brought to Maine as a child. Through this she experienced displacement and home insecurity. "I understand the various impacts one can experience depending on housing status," Ibonwa told lawmakers on the Legislature's Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing during her confirmation hearings earlier this year.



Water Assistance Program Helping Mainers

In September MaineHousing launched Maine's first [water assistance program](#). A collaborative effort between MaineHousing and 166 water and wastewater districts around Maine, the program helps income-eligible households pay off overdue water bills, get their water turned back on or even a lien removed from their home. The one-time program requires local water and sewer utilities to sign up for their customers. The utility can then receive a payment for an eligible home in bill from MaineHousing. Since opening in September, the program has helped 136 households, paying just over \$123,000 in benefits with the average benefit being approximately \$909.

Johnson Joins Executive Team



Jamie Johnson was promoted to Senior Director of Operations at MaineHousing in September.

Johnson, who joined the agency in 2007, has held a variety of roles within the agency, including most recently serving as the director of planning and operations in the Communications and Planning Department. Johnson has also worked in the agency's Asset Management and Housing Choice Voucher departments.

In her new role as a part of the agency's executive team, she will be responsible for developing MaineHousing's long-term operational strategies. Working collaboratively with all agency departments, Johnson will supervise the documentation of all operations while ensuring consistent and efficient workflows are being implemented and maintained to yield optimal performance and productivity for agency staff and partners.

Johnson earned an M.B.A. and a bachelor's degree in entrepreneurship from Thomas College in Waterville. She also holds a Lean Six Sigma Green Belt certification from the University of Southern Maine.

Home Ownership Sets New Record

First Home Loan production surpassed the entire 2021 loan total with the November 1 purchase and there are still three scheduled purchases remaining for 2022. Meanwhile total dollar volume for all of 2022 will easily surpass the previous record high program volume of just under \$153 million set in 2019.

New loan reservations coming into the program have slowed in recent weeks, which is typical for the late fall season, and is a likely reflection of the rise in mortgage interest rates, which have doubled since the beginning of the year and are now averaging just above 7% in Maine. On the positive side for homebuyers is the slow decrease in home prices, and there are reports of some gain in the inventory of homes for sale which has been a huge obstacle for the past several years. Loan reservations are also up 35% over this time last year and the dollar volume of the current pipeline is \$57.8 million, a huge, 61% increase, over last year.

You can see all of our First Home production numbers [here](#).

USDA RD Visits MaineHousing



On September 14, MaineHousing hosted USDA Rural Housing Administrator Joaquin Altoro for a community roundtable event. Pictured here with Joaquin is Rhiannon Hampson, Maine State Director – USDA; Kelsey Brown, former HUD State Office Director; and MaineHUD Director Daniel Brennan.

Data Dashboards

To see all the current data on MaineHousing programs visit our program dashboards [here](#).



MaineHousing has helped Maine people own, rent, repair, and heat their homes since 1969. MaineHousing is an independent state authority created to address the problems of unsafe, unsuitable, overcrowded, and unaffordable housing. MaineHousing is a \$2.1 billion financial institution with a staff of over 190 people. MaineHousing assists more than 90,000 Maine households and invests more than \$300 million in the Maine economy annually.

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HEAP Benefits Released Early

In October MaineHousing was able to temporarily transfer about [\\$11 million to help launch the Home Energy Assistance Program](#) about 30 days earlier than normal. The move saw the agency loan funds from its Development Department that are earmarked for affordable housing development and will be repaid once MaineHousing receives its annual HEAP grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services later this month.

"The decision to move these funds and release them in the HEAP program to vendors means as temperatures begin to drop some of our most vulnerable neighbors will have heating fuel in their tanks," said MaineHousing Director Daniel Brennan.

The transfer allowed heating fuel to be delivered to about 11,000 households with a priority placed on homes with residents over the age of 65, disabled or under the age of 6.

UMaine 3-D house Update

Later this month, MaineHousing staff will join a delegation of other visitors to the University of Maine's Advanced Structures and Composites Center to attend an opening ceremony for the center's 3-D printed house project. An unveiling ceremony for the house will be held at the UMaine Orono Campus November 21. The house and its parts, printed in the center's Factory of the Future, is now outside for winter testing. The scientists and students at the lab will now monitor and study the house as it experiences a Maine winter on the Orono campus. This next phase of the research will be key to understanding not only how the renewable composite wood fiber and corn resin material the house is made of holds up, but it will also help researchers learn about the house's internal environment as well.



MAINE AFFORDABLE HOUSING COALITION

MAHC Annual Conference November

The Maine Affordable Housing Coalition (MAHC) will be hosting its biennial Housing Policy Conference and Workshop on Thursday, November 17, at the Westin Portland Harborview on High Street. Featured speakers include: Diane Yentel, CEO, National Low Income Housing Coalition; Mike Kingsella, CEO, Up For Growth Bank Boston, AARP Maine, Bangor Savings, KeyBank, Drummond Woodsum, WNC, Clark Insurance, Gannett Construction, John T. Gorman Foundation, Morgan Stanley, NeighborWorks America, The Caleb Group, Avesta Housing, Norway Savings Bank, Zachau Construction, Genesis Community Loan Fund, and VOA Northern New England. Learn more here: [The Maine Affordable Housing Coalition \(MAHC\) - Maine Affordable Housing Coalition \(mainehousingcoalition.org\)](#)

Event sponsors include: MaineHousing, Olet Atwell, TD Bank, Federal Home Loan Bank Boston, AARP Maine, Bangor Savings, KeyBank, Drummond Woodsum, WNC, Clark Insurance, Gannett Construction, John T. Gorman Foundation, Morgan Stanley, NeighborWorks America, The Caleb Group, Avesta Housing, Norway Savings Bank, Zachau Construction, Genesis Community Loan Fund, and VOA Northern New England.

The conference will also include panel discussions with a bipartisan group of Maine lawmakers and housing and service providers that work with the most fragile and vulnerable populations in Maine. Awards and honors: At approximately 12:30 p.m., MAHC will honor two individuals with the Elizabeth "Libby" Mitchell Leadership Award, and the Rick McCarthy Leadership in Housing Award. MaineHousing will also announce its Stephen B. Mooers award for housing development.

Learn more here: [The Maine Affordable Housing Coalition \(MAHC\) - Maine Affordable Housing Coalition \(mainehousingcoalition.org\)](#)



Join our team. To learn more about employment opportunities at MaineHousing visit our career page here: [Careers at MaineHousing](#)

New Campaign



Home is Key

Making homes warmer, safer & more affordable.



MaineHousing
MAINE STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY

LEARN MORE

MaineHousing's new umbrella marketing campaign launched this fall. In it you will see and hear our new "home is key" messaging. Helping Mainers make their homes safer, warmer and more affordable is key to the mission of MaineHousing. To see the latest videos from the campaign visit [MaineHousing's First Home Program page](#).

