



COMMUNITY
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Highlights from 2007: The Community Development Corporation of Utah December 2007

A look back at a fulfilling year brings great anticipation for a new year of challenges to be met and deserving households to be served. With 2007 in the books, the Community Development Corporation of Utah (CDC) would like to pause briefly to reflect on the shared successes it has enjoyed over the last year with its many exceptional affordable housing partners.

The mission of CDC is to develop quality affordable housing, revitalize neighborhoods and communities, and encourage individual and family self-sufficiency through homeownership. This mission is made possible only with the support of many outside the doors of CDC who give of their time, talents, and resources to make affordable housing a reality in communities throughout Utah. The following are but a few examples of what was accomplished last year through the collaborative efforts of many.

Early in the year CDC was able to utilize resources from a Housing Preservation Grant awarded from the US Department of Agriculture. This money allowed CDC to provide assistance for low- and very low-income (below 80% of the area median income) rural homeowners in Tooele County by providing them with emergency repairs and housing rehabilitation. One of these homeowners is Becky Thorne, a single grandmother struggling to make ends meet. She cares full-time for her granddaughter, Zennica Przybyla, who is afflicted with a degenerative disease – cystic fibrosis. On meeting Zennica, it appears she is like any energetic, active three year old. However, she has been in the hospital a lot, takes many medications, and has a daily regime of respiratory and physical therapy, including wearing a pulsating vest hooked up by tubes to a \$16,000 machine.

Zennica needs clean air for her condition, but the house she shares with her grandmother was in need of some work. The old windows (some were cracked) did not keep out the wind – indeed, Becky had stuffed rags around the window in Zennica's room to keep out the blowing dust, and during windstorms it piled up on the window sill in the front room. Becky tried to apply for some assistance with weatherization from the HEAT program, but their waiting list was 12 months long, so they referred her to CDC. CDC's staff determined Becky's eligibility for the USDA grant money from an application she filled out, and went to work assessing the situation. CDC was able to replace twelve windows with new energy-efficient and sealed thermopane windows. The furnace and air ducts were all cleaned out and three damaged doors were

replaced. All of this greatly improved the air quality in the house which in turn helped Zennica's condition improve. "What a wonderful program; they just took care of everything. I am so grateful."

More recently, CDC was able to assist a single mother and her three children realize their dream of homeownership. Despite working with a tight budget, Eliana Tholen knew if she wanted to buy a house she would need to save as much as possible to use towards the down payment. "I had been working hard to save money for the last three years, but I probably would not have been able to purchase this home without the additional funds arranged through the CDC." Eliana knew she had been approved for a certain amount of money to use toward her down payment, but when CDC staff informed her that there was more than expected, Eliana was overwhelmed. "I cried when they told me; it was amazing."

The home Eliana bought listed for \$136,000, but she was eligible for \$23,160 in down payment assistance: \$10,000 from the Own in Salt Lake Down Payment Assistance Program (from Salt Lake County), \$8,160 from the American Dream Downpayment Initiative (ADDI) program, and a \$5,000 grant from the Federal Home Loan Bank of Seattle (FHLBS). The financial assistance Eliana received along with her hard-earned money solidified the deal and she was able to realize her dream.

The home, located in Magna, Utah, is nestled among mature trees on a well-maintained lot. The neighborhood is quiet and welcoming and Eliana already feels right at home.

As for her experience with CDC, Eliana could not be more satisfied. "All my home buying questions were answered quickly and everyone was very helpful." Eliana also mentioned that the pre-purchase home repairs, which included replacing windows and blinds, updating the kitchen and bathroom, and repairing the evaporative cooler, were done quickly. "CDC did a great job of making the house look great. I would recommend CDC to anyone looking to buy a home that could benefit from their program. The whole home buying process was a piece of cake and CDC went out of their way to help me with everything I needed. It's great to have a place to call my own."



CDC owns and operates the Affordability Project Warehouse and has been able to draw upon the available items there to help with many projects this year. The warehouse receives donations of quality home materials including, but not limited to, cabinets, doors, appliances, lumber, interior and exterior lights, and painting supplies. Materials donated come from building supply companies, homeowners, and contractors, and are put to use in CDC's construction and rehabilitation projects. Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouses have been a particularly

valuable partner and have donated thousands of dollars worth of materials that have helped to make a difference in the lives of families and community-based organizations in many Utah neighborhoods and towns. And earlier in the year, CDC received a generous grant from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS) Foundation, to help families in need of emergency and health and safety home repairs as well as accommodations for disabled family members. Many families have already benefited from this generosity. The Affordability Project Warehouse holds monthly public sales to reduce inventory that is not used in CDC projects and to raise money to further the CDC's mission.

One example of how the materials from the warehouse were utilized came when members of the American Bosnian Herzegovian Association (ABHA) approached CDC with their request for building materials for their social center. Past president of ABHA, Mladen Maric, said donations from the CDC warehouse included a stove, a microwave, some molding and tile, a sink and sink base, kitchen cabinets, and hardware. These items were used to upgrade the facility and make it more inviting to those who wish to visit.



“We got down on our hands and knees and did the work ourselves.” The donated materials from the CDC warehouse were greatly appreciated especially because ABHA is a volunteer-based organization that depends on funds from members and donations from outside sources.

In addition to the materials supplied to the ABHA, Mladen acknowledged that the CDC has been very helpful in recent years by providing grants and financial assistance for home purchases to many of his fellow countryman. “Many of the Bosnian refugees came here with nothing more than a suitcase and the clothes on their backs.” The CDC reached out to help many of them become established in a newly renovated home. “The supplies from the warehouse were a welcome resource that helped fill a need. Thanks again to the CDC and their staff.”

CDC has also seen great success in its efforts to provide exceptional homebuyer education. CDC was recently granted a two year renewal from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to continue as a certified HUD Housing Counseling Agency. This has been a valued partnership since 1998 and one that allows CDC to better serve the educational needs of first-time homebuyers. CDC also maintains an excellent working relationship with the widely-admired Housing Partnership Network (HPN) which has shown great confidence in CDC's ability to properly manage its homebuyer education services as validated by the high scores and positive feedback received in a recent evaluation.

CDC staff has provided homebuyer education and/or counseling to over 500 families this year. This is a credit to CDC's homebuyer services team and those it works with in the financial industry. The team strives to do everything possible to help families purchase quality affordable housing and more importantly retain their investments by making informed decisions and learning how to properly manage their finances.

CDC is one of fewer than 15 Asset Control Area program partners in the country. CDC entered into the partnership in February, 2005, which allows it to purchase US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) foreclosed properties at 50 % of their as-is value in specific areas designated for any combination of three factors, i.e., low income, low homeownership, or high foreclosure rates. CDC rehabilitates the homes and resells them to police officers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, teachers, and income-eligible homebuyers. The new sales price of these homes is their fair market (renovated) value; yet in many cases, CDC has been able to improve the homes while keeping its costs below the improved, fair market value. This means that the eligible buyers secure mortgages for the cost of the homes and HUD retains temporary "enforcement notes" or soft second mortgages for any difference. HUD forgives these enforcement notes after one to three years, allowing the buyers to realize the equity. Through this partnership, CDC helps to revitalize neighborhoods and raise homeownership rates.

CDC has had great success with the Asset Control Area (ACA) program and, despite its slowdown, continues to manage projects throughout Utah with an emphasis on low-income census tracts and redevelopment areas. CDC is currently working on over 30 different affordable housing projects in communities throughout the state, including ACA homes. During 2007 CDC purchased all available ACA homes and has to date rehabilitated and resold twelve of them with another four currently being renovated.

In a continuing effort to provide the best possible affordable housing, CDC completed the construction of three new homes in Magna, Utah, in November that meet the highest ENERGY STAR building requirements. Three dilapidated homes in Magna were razed and replaced with energy-efficient homes that received an exceptional "Five Star" energy rating based on ENERGY STAR criteria. The rating is determined by the overall efficiency of the thermal "envelope," meaning how tightly sealed the house is, and also how efficient the heating, ventilating, and air conditioning systems are. Of the three Magna homes evaluated, two scored 67 and the third scored 72 on the HERS scale of relative energy efficiency. A score of 85 or less is required to achieve the highest rating. According to Jeff Hayden, CDC Construction Manager, "A numerical index is assigned after initial plan reviews, periodic site inspections, and

final testing. The final test measures actual air infiltration from the outside and also from within the furnace and air conditioning ductwork.”

According to ENERGY STAR statistics, “ENERGY STAR homes result in lower ownership costs compared to standard-built homes because they use substantially less energy for heating, cooling, and water heating, resulting in \$200 to \$400 in annual savings. This averages out to thousands of dollars in saved utility costs over the course of just a few years.” This proves to be especially helpful for first-time homeowners who often cannot bear the financial burden of excessive utility costs.



CDC also has projects recently completed or underway in several locations including, but not limited to, Tooele, Ogden, Clearfield, the Uintah Basin, and areas throughout Salt Lake County. Most notable is a large-scale condominium project that will be built downtown in Salt Lake City. Four different organizations submitted proposals to the Redevelopment Agency of Salt Lake City to develop a property that would create a transit-oriented development and a livable and walkable urban environment. CDC has been preliminarily awarded the project which has been named Ninth Street Place. The property is located immediately adjacent to a light rail station, providing excellent access to downtown Salt Lake City and its amenities. Ninth Street Place will provide a combination of retail and live-work residential units, as well as studio, one, two, and three bedroom condominiums. CDC is designing the building to meet a silver certification in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program. LEED Green Building Rating System is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high performance green buildings.

Another first for CDC is the collaboration developed this year to build modular homes with Guerdon Homes of Boise, Idaho. Starting in 2008, CDC will be offering modular homes in various targeted areas of Utah with the goal in mind of creating another affordable housing option aimed at combating the effects of a difficult housing market that has priced so many out of homeownership.

Then there is the CDC staff which includes some new faces. The team consists of:

- **Darin Brush**, Executive Director who has been with CDC for over two years now. His keen interest in the needs of those CDC serves is evident by his ability to transform vision to reality. He has a remarkable memory, impressive attention to detail, and a knack for relating with every personality type imaginable. On a personal note, Darin loves listening to a wide spectrum of good music and spending time with his wife and their two boys.
- **John Farmer** is CDC’s Chief Financial Officer who has been with CDC for about a year now. John brings thirty years of financial experience to CDC which shows in his ability to tackle every financial challenge that comes his way. John

is from Centerville and enjoys the outdoors, sports, travel and spending time with his family. He is also fluent in Spanish.

- **Jean Barton** is the Accounting Manager who also handles all CDC's Human Resources duties. Jean has a wonderful ability to keep everything organized and on track and despite a heavy workload is always willing to take the time to answer a question or provide assistance wherever needed. What is more, Jean is an avid quilter and her work is wonderful to behold.
- **Chris Newsam**, Program Manager, has 12 years experience in the title and escrow industry and has managed the majority of CDC's closings over the last two years with Monument Title. Chris joined CDC in 2007 and manages our homebuyer services programs which include homebuyer education, down payment assistance, closings, and more. She has a great sense of humor and loves to travel, especially if the destination is Hawaii.
- **Jeff Hayden** is the Construction Manager who has been with CDC for about four years now. He is a general contractor with a wealth of experience in both the public and private sectors. This helps him relate to the needs of our contractors. Jeff oversees our projects with a strict attention to detail which has proven to be crucial to saving both time and money.
- **Kris (Kristie) Thorpe**, Project Manager has been with CDC for seven years. Kris has an extensive background in non-profit service which has proven to be of great benefit to the work she does in keeping CDC's projects running smoothly. Kris likes to travel when possible and to collect interesting items she finds at various markets. Good music is important to her as is spending time with friends and family.
- **Jay Wilder** is the manager of the Affordability Project Warehouse. He receives, keeps track of, and distributes thousands of donated building materials and other items to CDC's contractors and needy homeowners. He has a sharp wit and an ability to make those around him happy. He has a heart of gold and takes great satisfaction in helping others.
- **Carol LaFreniere** is the Home Sales Coordinator and a certified real estate broker. Carol is deeply dedicated to her work and has a genuine compassion for people. It is her persistence in seeking properties for CDC to develop or rehabilitate that helps CDC remain the leader in the affordable housing market. Carol has also coaxed her wonderful husband Stephan into maintaining the CDC website (pro bono!).
- **Stephanie Hanson** is the Housing Counselor and Education Coordinator who teaches CDC's homebuyer education workshops and provides pre- and post-purchase counseling to its many clients. She has a great personality and an ability to relate on a very professional level to the needs of our homebuyers. She takes great pride in her work and has helped CDC become an elite homebuyer education source. Stephanie has quickly risen to a position of respect among her peers in Utah and nationally.
- **Angie Maynes** is CDC's part-time Accounting Clerk who started at CDC in July. Angie handles the day-to-day accounts payable as well as the ever important job of seeing that CDC gets paid accurately and on-time. Angie is very organized and has already made a positive impact in the short time she has been here. Angie is

fun to be around, loves music, and especially enjoys spending time with her two boys. And, Angie recently married the love-of-her-life, Charlie.

- **John Henning** is a part-time Warehouse Clerk who helps maintain the warehouse after spending the majority of his day teaching school. John has an outgoing personality and a sharp mind. His work at CDC also entails keeping an eye on our houses before they sell which includes making sure lawns are watered and everything is in place. A nicer guy you will never meet.
- **Stuart Smith** is the Grant Writer and Public Relations Specialist who writes all the many grant applications and helps promote CDC through monthly stories and various outreach events. He enjoys a multitude of outdoor activities, a broad range of music, and spending time with his wife and their four boys. Stuart has a subtle but deadly sense of humor.

Having an exceptional, dedicated, and engaged board of directors rounds out a world class organization. CDC anticipates being able to find ways to meet the needs of many more deserving families in the coming year. Happy New Year and best wishes from the CDC team!