

News Release | January 25, 2021

U.S. Conference of Mayors, Wells Fargo Grants to Advance Housing Affordability Solutions

Mayors and nonprofits in Denver, Anchorage, Grand Rapids, and Frankfort, KY receive top honors from CommunityWINS Grant Program

SAN FRANCISCO and WASHINGTON, D.C. – January 25, 2021 – The U.S. Conference of Mayors and Wells Fargo today announced 2020 CommunityWINS® grants to eight nonprofits to advance housing affordability solutions in local communities.

The grants totaling \$1 million recognize outstanding mayoral-nominated initiatives that assist their city in reducing the cost burden of housing and increase access to safe, affordable places to live. Each nonprofit will receive funding aimed at assisting cities with the opportunity to invest, strengthen, and address housing affordability issues in municipalities across the United States.

“The 2020 CommunityWINS Grant Program is an opportunity to honor and showcase impactful affordable housing efforts that are making a real difference in communities across the country,” said Tom Cochran, CEO and executive director of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. “We appreciate Wells Fargo and the Wells Fargo Foundation for their support of the CommunityWINS program, which also celebrates the leadership of mayors and city governments.”

An independent panel of judges selected recipients of the grants funded by the Wells Fargo Foundation from 139 applicants representing small, medium, large, and metropolitan cities as part of the competitive application process. The grants were presented virtually at the Conference’s 89th annual meeting.

“Even prior to the economic fallout caused by COVID-19, many vulnerable households were struggling with housing solutions,” said Nate Hurst, president of the Wells Fargo Foundation. “To foster a truly inclusive recovery, we have to recognize that the challenge of housing is even more profound in communities of color and be intentional about prioritizing the needs of underserved communities. CommunityWINS is an important example of the public and private sectors working together to help more people have a safe, affordable place to call home.”

The 2020 CommunityWINS Grant Program honorees are:

- **Michael Hancock, mayor of Denver**, receives the top honor in the metropolitan city category, and the Metro Denver Homeless Initiative is presented with a \$300,000 donation. Grant funds will be used to assist households who are experiencing a housing crisis throughout the seven-county Metro Denver region. The Housing Stability Flexible Fund is designed to remove financial barriers that prevent a household from obtaining or remaining in permanent housing.
- **Austin Quinn-Davidson, interim mayor of Anchorage**, is the top honoree in the large city category, and nonprofit Covenant House Alaska (CHA) receives a \$200,000 donation for its Bridge to Success program. Through the Bridge to Success project, CHA will renovate and expand space at the Youth Engagement Center to create 22 new on-site “micro-unit” apartments to

serve young people ages 18 to 24 who are experiencing homelessness. Residents will have self-contained rooms, increased independence, and complete access to on-site services.

- **Rosalynn Bliss, mayor of Grand Rapids** is the top honoree among medium city mayors, and G.R.A.C.E. Homes receives a \$150,000 grant for its Community Rebuilders project. This project will intentionally address the link between housing and health through the creation of affordable, service smart, rental housing.
- **Layne Wilkerson, mayor of Frankfort, KY** receives top honors among small city mayors, and Franklin County Women and Family Shelter Inc. receives a \$75,000 grant in support of its Frankfort CARES Coalition Transitional Housing Initiative. This initiative will create a new and innovative approach to transitional housing for residents at risk of homelessness and will actively engage the community in support of the whole range of homeless needs under a holistic Continuum of Care model.

Additional 2020 CommunityWINS Grant Program Outstanding Achievement awards honorees include:

- **Lori Lightfoot, mayor of Chicago**, receives honors among metropolitan city mayors, and nonprofit Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago is awarded a \$100,000 grant in support of the Preservation of Affordable Multi-Unit Properties Project. The grant will help launch a holistic, system wide solution and community resource for existing or potential owners of two-to four-unit buildings. The program seeks to not only support existing small landlords in keeping and fixing their affordable rental units, but also support and grow a next generation of millennial small landlords that can carry the community-oriented tradition of homeownership.
- **Ras J. Baraka, mayor of Newark, NJ**, is recognized among large city mayors, and nonprofit Invest Newark is awarded a \$75,000 grant in support of its City of Newark/Invest Newark Section 8 Homeownership Conversion Program. Grant proceeds will support the conversion of blighted city-owned properties into homeownership opportunities for Newarkers at income levels lower than 80% area median income.
- **Juan “Trey” Mendez III, mayor of Brownsville, TX** is recognized among medium city mayors, and nonprofit Come Dream. Come Build is awarded a \$50,000 grant in support of The SAMANO project. The grant will aid in the redevelopment of an unused Samano Securities Building into a small 6,000-square-foot grocery store, 39 studio apartments, a single one-bedroom unit, and a small rooftop hydroponics vegetable/herb farm.
- **Jay Coelho, mayor of Waterville, ME**, is honored among small city mayors, and Waterville Community Land Trust is awarded a \$50,000 grant for the Milliken Project. The grant funds will enable the nonprofit to develop perpetually affordable homes for low-income families and build community assets that will revitalize the South End of Waterville neighborhood, which is suffering from decay and neglect.

The CommunityWINS Grant Program is administered by the [U.S. Conference of Mayors](#) and funded by the Wells Fargo Foundation. The CommunityWINS recipients will be showcased in an upcoming webinar hosted by the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

Wells Fargo has invested more than \$6 million in the CommunityWINS Grant Program since 2016 and recently announced an evolution of the company’s philanthropic strategy that includes a [\\$1 billion commitment](#) to address the housing affordability crisis, and an increased focus on financial health and small business growth.

About the U.S. Conference of Mayors

The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are more than 1,400 such cities in the country today, and each city is represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the mayor. More information can be found at [facebook.com/usmayors](https://www.facebook.com/usmayors) or [twitter.com/usmayors](https://www.twitter.com/usmayors).

About Wells Fargo

Wells Fargo & Company is a leading financial services company that has approximately \$1.9 trillion in assets and proudly serves one in three U.S. households and more than 10% of all middle market companies in the U.S. We provide a diversified set of banking, investment and mortgage products and services, as well as consumer and commercial finance, through our four reportable operating segments: Consumer Banking and Lending; Commercial Banking; Corporate and Investment Banking; and Wealth and Investment Management. Wells Fargo ranked No. 30 on Fortune's 2020 rankings of America's largest corporations. In the communities we serve, the company focuses its social impact on building a sustainable, inclusive future for all by supporting housing affordability, small business growth, financial health and a low-carbon economy. News, insights and perspectives from Wells Fargo are also available at [Wells Fargo Stories](#).

Additional information may be found at www.wellsfargo.com | Twitter: [@WellsFargo](#).

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