

News Release

National American Indian Housing Council



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Indian Housing Group Launches Inaugural IDA Conference; Attendees Will Learn About Potential Homeownership Tool

Washington DC–September 19, 2006–The National American Indian Housing Council (NAIHC) is inviting Indian housing leaders from across the country to its first-ever conference on Individual Development Accounts (IDAs). This event will cover topics such as why IDAs are useful for homeownership programs, how to get funding for a program and how to market IDAs within your community, among other topics. This three-day conference will be held in **Denver, CO on Oct. 9-11, 2006.**

The homeownership rate for Native Americans is **only 33%**, half that of the general population and the lowest of any ethnic group, according to the Government Accounting Office. With that as a backdrop, **NAIHC** wants to help promote homeownership opportunities for tribes through its various offerings, including this IDA conference. IDAs are a matched savings program that Indian Housing Authorities can use to promote saving for homeownership and housing repairs.

“Now more than ever, it is important for tribal housing authorities to know about all the tools available to promote homeownership in Native American communities,” said **NAIHC Chairman Marty Shuravloff**. “Informing Indian Housing Authorities about the usefulness of IDAs is more important than ever. According to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, an estimated 200,000 housing units are needed immediately in Indian Country, and approximately 90,000 Native families are homeless or under-housed.”

Some tribal housing authorities have successfully launched an IDA program on their reservations, and tribal members are using these savings to purchase or renovate homes. For example, the Umatilla Reservation Housing Authority is managing 15 IDA accounts, with four that have successfully met the match and are planning to use their funds towards homeownership or renovation. However, many tribes have not yet explored IDAs, and are not taking advantage of their powerful benefits. With this training, **NAIHC** hopes to demonstrate the benefits of the IDAs to Indian Housing Authorities that are not familiar with the program, through expert speakers and panelists as well as other tribes who have used IDAs.

NAIHC appreciates the support of its sponsors, including **Wells Fargo Housing Foundation, Washington Mutual** and the **Federal Home Loan Bank System of San Francisco**, who have helped to fund this conference. **NAIHC's** other partners, including **Fannie Mae, PMI Mortgage Insurance**, and **GreenPoint Mortgage** contributed to **NAIHC's** “Housing First for First America capacity building campaign,” of which this conference is an activity.

For more information about the conference contact Jane DeMarines or Phillip Hillaire at NAIHC: (202) 789-1754. **A limited number of scholarships are available for Indian Housing Authority representatives to attend this conference.** For scholarships please contact Angel Washington, (800) 284-9165. This event will be held at the Adams Mark Hotel in Denver, CO on **Oct. 9-11.**

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NAIHC assists tribes and tribal housing entities in reaching their self-determined goals of providing culturally relevant, decent, safe, sanitary, and quality affordable housing for Native people in Indian communities and Alaska Native villages.

NAIHC... “A Tradition of Native American Housing” www.naihc.net