2013 Annual Report

HIGHLIGHTS

- Established in 2005, the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) continues to provide education and technical assistance for community housing teams to improve housing and revitalization neighborhoods. With 15 current communities, in total 50 cities have participated in the program. Dr. Tinsley is the Program Coordinator of GICH.

- In partnership with the Information Technology Outreach Services Division of the Carl Vinson Institute of Government and Dr. Robb Nielsen, the HDRC is developing a custom interactive map utilizing GIS software and HDRC-modified Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy data from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The customized data and map will provide the most recent housing indicators available for 1) each of the GICH program’s current (15) and alumni (30) communities and 2) all places in Georgia. This map will be hosted on the HDRC website.

- Dr. Pamela Turner is partnering with Georgia Southern University and the Georgia Department of Public Health to offer trainings for professionals and community advocates on the linkages between health and housing. She is working with Keishon Thomas at Fort Valley State University to coordinate a working group focuses on increasing healthy housing information and resources in rural Georgia.

- Dr.’s Skobba and Tinsley developed a new, service-learning course: HACE 4340S/6340S Housing and Community Development. The course examines how communities are created, preserved and revitalized through the community development process. Students learn course concepts and develop skills by working on a project identified by a community partner. Community partners will be selected from cities participating in the GICH program.
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A. Center Overview and Organization

The University of Georgia (UGA) Housing and Demographics Research Center (HDRC or Center) is located within the Department of Financial Planning, Housing and Consumer Economics (FHCE), previously the Department of Housing and Consumer Economics (HACE), in the College of Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS). Dr. Sweaney, the Center’s longtime, founding Director, retired in 2012. Dr. Karen Tinsley was named the new Director.

Faculty members associated with the Center traditionally focus research and outreach efforts on consumer related housing issues. Current focus areas include: technical assistance for community housing teams to revitalize neighborhoods, affordable housing, mortgage fraud, green living, weatherization, residential property management and multi-family industry education, and residential mobility patterns of low-income families.

Even without intramural resources, the HDRC has established itself as a highly resourceful program and is assisted by a Board of Advisors. Established in 2004, the Board includes 25 state/national housing professionals and industry leaders and meets three times a year for roundtable discussions, networking, legislative information, and information on special topics and programs.

http://www.fcs.uga.edu/hace/hdrc/advisory_board.html

B. Research Projects & Grants


Skobba, K. & Tinsley, K. (2013). Exploring the Homeownership Gap in Minnesota (2013), $25,000 subgrantee funding from Minnesota Homeownership Center (Wells Fargo Lift Grant)
Tinsley, K. *Service-Learning Fellowship*. Award to support the integration of service learning in HACE 4900: Housing and Community Development. University of Georgia Office of Service-Learning. 2013-2014. $2,500

Turner, P.R. *Radon Education Program*, Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Office of Environmental Management, 10/01/11 – 01/31/14, $271,485.

Turner, P. R. *Georgia Healthy Homes*, U.S. Department of Agriculture – National Institute of Food and Agriculture, 10/01/12 – 05/30/14, $11,995.

**C. Theses, Reports, Publications, and Presentations**


Skobba, K. (2013, October 8). *Housing stability among low-income households: Barriers and opportunities*. Invited presenter. Freddie Mac Affordable Housing Advisory Council (AHAC) Atlanta, GA.


D. Outreach Activities

Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) Program
The Center continues to partner with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), the Georgia Municipal Association, and the UGA Office of the Vice President for Public Service and Outreach to provide the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH), a three-year housing education and technical assistance program for cities in Georgia. Through a series of facilitated retreats, each year GICH helps 15 communities to fashion solutions to their community’s housing needs. The program has 35 “alumni” communities and provides increased networking opportunities through the GICH listserv, which has more than 600 subscribers.

The Initiative is primarily supported through in-kind time contributions of faculty and staff from the three partnering organizations, and the Georgia Power Company is the founding sponsor. More information about the GICH program and the 2012 annual report (2013 due in March) can be found here http://www.fcs.uga.edu/hace/hdrc/gich.html.

In 2013, in partnership with the Information Technology Outreach Services Division of the Carl Vinson Institute of Government and Dr. Robb Nielsen, the HDRC is developing a custom interactive map utilizing GIS software and HDRC-modified Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy data from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The customized data and map will provide the most recent housing indicators available for 1) each of the GICH program’s current (15) and alumni (30) communities and 2) all places in Georgia. This map will be hosted on the HDRC website.

UGA GreenWay
UGA GreenWay (www.ugagreenway.com) is an online outreach program designed to provide research-based information on living greener, or more sustainable lives. It was started in 2010 and consists of an interactive website with information on conserving resources, green cleaning, greenwashing, investing green, recycling, generation green, activating your community, and making a commitment to change one’s environmental behavior. Social media tools include a Facebook fan page, Twitter account and blog, and a Pinterest page was started in 2013, which includes a collaborative board with six other energy experts, including eXtension. The project is a team effort led by Dr. Pamela Turner and Sharon Gibson. At the end of 2013, there were 18 Pinterest boards with 108 pins and 73 followers; 49 blogs on Wordpress with 2,871 views; 1,800 tweets with 372 Twitter followers; 3,537 YouTube views; 127 Facebook group members; and 500 Facebook fans.

E. Student Association Activities

The UGA Student Chapter of NAHB continues to have a committed core of students who are engaged in career-related and service activities. In spring of 2013, the organization assisted the Athens Area Homebuilders Association by conducting exit interviews at the Association’s annual spring Home & Garden Show. In fall 2013, the students worked on a marketing project that resulted in the development of a new mission statement, an expansion of the organization’s focus and a new name. The organization, which continues to serves as the NAHB student chapter, is now called H.O.U.S.E. (Housing Opportunities for Undergraduate Student Enhancement). In spring 2014, the organization will be hosting its 3rd annual career panel focusing on housing-related careers, participating in the AAHBA Home & Garden Show and is planning service events with a local chapter of Habitat for Humanity.