

Helping to  
welcome you



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Dear Friends of Housing on Merit,

The fourth quarter brings a heightened awareness of the duality that encompasses the year-end. The frantic sprint to finalize transactions and surpass business objectives is juxtaposed with reflection upon the year's accomplishments and gratitude for partnerships new and old.

This quarter, Housing on Merit (HOM) highlights our new resident services partnerships with Children's Studio School of D.C. and Comcast. We also celebrate newly formed donor relationships with the USS Midway Foundation, San Diego Master Gardeners Association and First Unitarian Universalist Church. HOM is inspired by the intensifying national discussion around innovative housing solutions and development financing. We supported and participated in the Coalition for Nonprofit Housing & Economic Development's annual Community Development Week, the Turner Center for Housing Innovation's "InnovateHousing" event, and the Council of Development Finance Agencies' National Development Summit.

Our mission to create a bridge to permanent affordable housing for vulnerable populations is critical as demand for housing far exceeds supply. In 2019, the work continues. Wishing you a joyous Holiday Season and a smashing New Year!

With Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Patrick Luke'.

**Patrick Luke**  
President  
Housing on Merit Board of Directors

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jennifer Litwak'.

**Jennifer Litwak, Esq.**  
Executive Director  
Housing on Merit



## At HOM

### Housing on Merit's Development Portfolio

#### *Butterfly Grove Apartments*

Housing on Merit is the co-developer of Butterfly Grove Apartments, an affordable multifamily community in Fresno, California. This transaction effectively preserved 406 units of housing for residents earning up to 60% of the area median income.

In addition to co-developing, HOM also provides onsite resident services programming at this community.



*Butterfly Grove Apartments in Fresno, California.*

#### *Capitol Vista Apartments*



*Mayor Bowser with the Capitol Vista development team breaking ground on Capitol Vista.*

Housing on Merit along with its development team, Mayor Bowser, and leaders from the Department of Housing and Community Development, Housing Finance Agency, and the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development recently broke ground on our Capitol Vista project. HOM is a co-developer of Capitol Vista.

This multifamily project is part of Washington, D.C.'s Roots-to-Roofs initiative and will bring 104 additional units of affordable housing to residents earning up to 50% of the area median income in Ward 6.

### Housing on Merit's Resident Services Programming

Housing on Merit continues to make a significant impact in the lives of residents through our resident services programming. We highlight the following successes from our Learning Centers in quarter four.

#### Center for Academic Excellence: *Promotes academic achievement for residents of all ages.*

Throughout quarter four, Housing on Merit provided over 280 hours of after-school programming across our communities. For a second year HOM has provided new school supplies to participants in our San Diego, California, and Washington, D.C., Learning Centers through our partnerships with the University of California San Diego and the D.C. Child and Family Services Agency.

Housing on Merit recently partnered with the historic Children's Studio School in Washington, D.C., to incorporate their Arts as Education curriculum into the after-school program at Fort Chaplin Park Apartments. Since its opening in 1977 the Children's Studio School has received numerous awards and accolades for its work with young children in D.C.



*Artwork made by Fort Chaplin youth exploring homelessness, published in the November issue of Street Sense.*

Participants were challenged to identify problems they felt most plague their neighborhood and city, and as a group they agreed it was poverty and homelessness. As their culminating project for this program, participants created an art piece that incorporated poetry and drawings. Their project was published in the November issue of Street Sense, a unique D.C. newspaper created by individuals facing homelessness and that serves as a pillar of hope for this population. The newspaper has a readership of over 2,000 individuals throughout the District.

We are also excited to announce that Fort Chaplin Park Apartments has been selected as a site for Comcast's Learning Zone Project. This project provides complimentary internet services to community centers located in areas without the necessary bandwidth to bridge the digital divide. With this support, HOM provides a vital resource to the community by promoting digital literacy.

**Center for Employment and Financial Stability:** *Tackles issues of unemployment, under employment, and financial instability.*

Housing on Merit continues to support residents who seek assistance with writing their resumé and applying for jobs. Since much of the job search and application process is now online, one-on-one support and access to technology are vital resources to our residents.

**Center for Growth and Empowerment:** *Mobilizes residents to create a vibrant community reflective of their communal and personal goals.*



*Youth from Rio Vista showing off their hand-made maracas, a common instrument in Hispanic music.*

Our Learning Centers in San Diego, California, celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month through literacy and art. Studies show that as the world becomes increasingly diverse, children most thrive when encouraged to develop a healthy curiosity and empathy for different cultures.

Access to resources such as books that reflect the experiences of others is key to this development.

**Center for Health and Wellness:** *Addresses restrictions of access to quality health and wellness services.*

Housing on Merit received a grant from the San Diego Master Gardeners Association to support our community garden at Rio Vista Apartments. Master Gardeners has worked with HOM since we opened the garden in

2016, and has provided residents with technical assistance and education on how to start and maintain a garden. This grant will assist HOM to further empower residents to grow their own produce and promote a sense of community among their neighbors.

## Beyond HOM

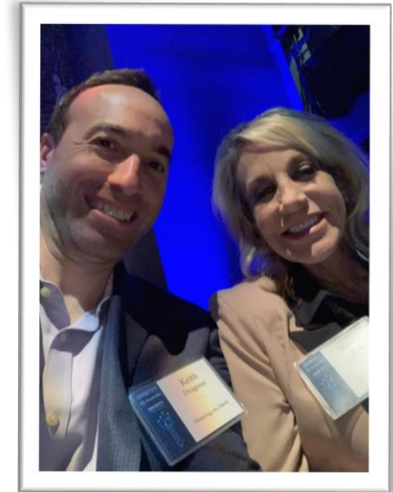
In this section we highlight Housing on Merit's involvement in national discussions about innovative housing solutions and development financing.

### *CNHED Community Development Week*

The Coalition for Nonprofit Housing & Economic Development (CNHED) is a member association that supports the nonprofit housing and economic development industry in Washington, D.C. CNHED held its annual Community Development Week in October. Throughout the week members of CNHED and the development community participated in panel discussions and roundtables related to intergenerational communities, and effectively leveraging public and private financing. Housing on Merit attended the *Community of Leaders* event to celebrate the successes of industry leaders at the Spire Conference Center. The event honored Jim Dickerson, Executive Director of MANNA, Inc., with the Bob Pohlman Life Time Achievement award for his work in perserving affordable housing for those most vulnerable to housing instability in the District.

*InnovateHousing at the Terner Center*

In November the Terner Center for Housing Innovation at UC Berkeley and Fannie Mae hosted “InnovateHousing,” an event designed to explore new ideas about the future of “home.” Housing on Merit’s Board Members Keith Dragoon and Monica Ball attended the event, which brought together innovators, journalists, policymakers, builders, designers and investors to find solutions for the nation’s housing supply and affordability crisis. The event focused on exploring the role of technology in solving the housing crisis occurring across the United States. Industry leaders discussed innovative building solutions to address the time and cost of new construction, and also delved into the policy and financial barriers associated with bringing these products to scale. The conference also explored how technology can revolutionize real estate finance using data-driven and blockchain-based technologies to increase transparency, efficiency and access.



*Board Members Keith Dragoon and Monica Ball in attendance at the InnovateHousing Conference.*

*CDEFA National Development Finance Summit*

In November the Council of Development Finance Agencies (CDFA) held its annual National Development Summit in Dallas, Texas. The event is designed to bring together stakeholders in the development finance industry to explore best practices, trends and project financing solutions. This year’s summit included the newly launched Introduction to Housing Finance course and Housing on Merit’s Executive Director, Jennifer Litwak, was invited to speak on two panels covering pertinent topics. During the *Investing in Housing Tax Credits* panel discussion, Ms. Litwak spoke on how layering different types of finance tools including housing, new market and historic tax credits can successfully support diverse housing. Additionally, Ms. Litwak examined innovative housing finance case studies from across the country for the panel on *Local and State Financing Programs*.

## Welcoming Our Heroes HOM

*First Unitarian Universalist Church Generosity Offering*

Housing on Merit was selected to receive the First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego’s Generosity Offering in October. The church supports local organizations making an impact in their communities by designating a portion of their monthly offerings to one organization each month. As a result of the offering, HOM raised nearly \$3,400 to support our Awards of Merit for Housing Assistance program.

*USS Midway Foundation, Pillars of Freedom Grant*

Housing on Merit is proud to announce receiving the USS Midway Foundation’s 2018 Pillars of Freedom Grant. HOM received a \$15,000 grant to support our Awards of Merit for Housing Assistance program, which assists women veterans in San Diego, California, transition from homelessness to permanent housing. This grant will enable HOM to house twice the number of women veterans compared to previous years. The USS Midway Foundation supports military, veteran and first responder service organizations viewed as vital pillars in the community.



*Housing on Merit receiving their Pillars of Freedom award from Dan Beintema, President of the USS Midway Foundation.*



HOUSING ON MERIT

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**Your donations go a long way!** Consider supporting our work by making a monetary or in-kind donation. See the various ways to give below.

**Ways to Give**

Online: [housingonmerit.org/donate/](https://housingonmerit.org/donate/)

Checks made payable to:  
Housing on Merit  
1901 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 395  
Los Angeles, CA 90067

Look up our EIN when you shop: 45-2991692  
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