



Vermont Housing Finance Agency

# news release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **NCSHA HONORS VHFA WITH TWO AWARDS AT NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

BURLINGTON, VT — The National Council of State Housing Agencies (NCSHA) honored Vermont Housing Finance Agency (VHFA) with two awards during its 2005 Annual Awards for Program Excellence luncheon.

VHFA's Vermont Housing Data Web site ([www.housingdata.org](http://www.housingdata.org)) was a winner in the "Management Innovation, Technological Innovation" category. The "Art House" children's poster exhibit, created by Agency staff for the Vermont Housing Awareness Campaign ([www.housingawareness.org](http://www.housingawareness.org)), took the award in the "Communications, Innovative Media" category.

"VHFA is proud to be recognized by its peers across the country as an innovator in promoting affordable housing through the Vermont Housing Data Web site and the 'Art House' poster project," said VHFA Executive Director Sarah Carpenter. "These awards stand as testaments to the creativity, energy and dedication of the VHFA staff."

VHFA Communications Coordinator Craig Bailey and Policy and Planning Coordinator Maura Collins developed the Vermont Housing Data site along with William Sawyer and Cathleen Gent from the University of Vermont's Center for Rural Studies in Burlington, with support and guidance from the state's housing community.

The site was developed entirely in-house and is the largest single source for Vermont-related market rate and affordable housing information. It features a searchable database of more than 120 pieces of data for every town, village, county and the state. The site contains approximately a quarter-million statistics including historical figures that stretch back decades.



**FROM LEFT: VHFA Public Affairs Manager John Fairbanks, VHFA Executive Director Sarah Carpenter, NCSHA President Richard Godfrey Jr., and VHFA Communications Coordinator Craig Bailey.**

Vermont Housing Data is also home to the Directory of Affordable Rental Housing (DoARH), a searchable database of all subsidized housing in the state, including bedroom size, tenant population, unit restrictions, funding source and vacancies.

VHFA Public Affairs Manager John Fairbanks coordinated the “Art House” exhibit under the auspices of the Housing Awareness Campaign, working with the state’s NeighborWorks® HomeOwnership Centers, Chittenden Bank, the Committee on Temporary Shelter, Very Special Arts, and other partners. Bailey provided production support.

The project began last summer, when the Campaign held several events around the state asking children to paint representations of what home means to them. From dozens of entries, 25 works have been selected to tour the state as a testament to the significant role “home” plays in the lives of Vermont's children.

The exhibit has shown in more than a dozen locations, including the Russell Senate Building in Washington, D.C.

Carpenter accepted the awards Monday, Sept. 26, at NCSHA’s 35th Annual Conference held at the Sheraton Boston Hotel. More than 1,100 housing professionals and affiliate members from across the country attended the event.

NCSHA is a non-profit organization created more than 30 years ago by the nation’s state housing finance agencies to coordinate and leverage their federal advocacy efforts for affordable housing. The Council has more than 400 member organizations.

The Vermont Legislature established VHFA in 1974 to finance and promote affordable housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income Vermonters. Since its inception, the Agency has helped almost 25,000 households with affordable mortgages and nearly 7,000 families into affordable rental units.