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HARRIS COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY HONORED WITH NAN MCKAY'S PIONEER IN HOUSING AWARD

*ACHIEVEMENT BRINGS NATIONAL RECOGNITION TO LOCAL ORGANIZATION FOR ITS
DISASTER RESPONSE*

January 26, 2010 (HOUSTON) – The Harris County Housing Authority (HCHA) has garnered recognition from Nan McKay & Associates, Inc. (NMA) for its Disaster Housing Assistance Program (DHAP) following Hurricane Katrina. NMA is the nation's leader in Housing Solutions for Public Housing Authorities. The Pioneer in Housing Award recognizes housing authorities that use "out of the box" thinking to improve the future of their employees, community and industry. HCHA is only the second Housing Authority in the Country to receive this prestigious award.

"Hurricane Katrina brought more than 25,000 families to Houston's Astrodome," said Guy Rankin, Executive Director and CEO of the HCHA. "With no model in place to assist with housing these evacuees, we knew it was time to create and implement a repeatable process that would help families to find safe and sanitary housing – and, eventually find their way back to permanent self-sufficiency."

The HCHA worked around the clock to expand its housing stock by establishing a **"Housing Choice Center"** — ***the first of its kind housing solution center developed in the United States for mass emergency housing response.***

HCHA assisted HUD in the creation of the Disaster Housing Assistance Program (DHAP) to begin to put in place a longer-term solution. The DHAP Program launched in 2007 and was administered in Harris County by the HCHA. DHAP assists in making rental payments for hurricane survivors previously supported by FEMA, while adding a crucial social services and case management component. HCHA was also challenged with operating DHAP USA, a program that led to HCHA assisting families in 41 states throughout the country.

Through effective planning and strategic outreach to target audiences, the HCHA enrolled more than 6,000 families and 1,200 landlords within Harris County. Moreover, HCHA also successfully assisted more than 20,000 families and 8,000 landlords across the country through DHAP USA and various other DHAP programs. HCHA's success was established by a multi-tiered strategy where the needs and interests of each group involved—including landlords, families and social service providers, was addressed. This 360 degree approach ensured that families would be given every opportunity to recover after a major natural disaster.

“Nan McKay is pleased to present the 2009 Pioneer in Housing award to the Harris County Housing Authority,” said John McKay, CEO, Nan McKay and Associates, Inc. “A true pioneer within the housing industry, the HCHA received this honor by setting an example for housing authorities across the nation that can now quickly and efficiently implement this highly effective Disaster Housing Assistance model within their city to support families who are in immediate need of housing and social services after a disaster strikes.”

About the Harris County Housing Authority

The Harris County Housing Authority operates housing-choice voucher programs and family self-sufficiency programs for more than 4,100 residents of Harris County. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has given the Authority its highest performance rating for six years in a row. For more information visit: www.hchatexas.org.

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