

For Immediate Release  
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## **HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER HOLDERS RECEIVE SAME DAY HOME LOAN PRE-APPROVALS AT HARRIS COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY HOMEOWNERSHIP FAIR**

**HARRIS COUNTY, Texas** – On Saturday, June 25, Harris County Housing Authority (HCHA) helped two Housing Choice Voucher Program participants who attended HCHA’s Homeownership Fair become pre-approved for home loans and will also have helped a third family find approval from another lender by the end of the week. At the fair, Housing Choice Voucher Program participants learned how to use their vouchers to pay a portion of their monthly mortgage note for up to 15 years, allowing them the opportunity to build home equity instead of years of rental payments. To date, HCHA has helped 34 families on its HCV Program move from renting to homeownership.

“HCHA’s Homeownership Program is one of the programs where a family, in partnership with HCHA and private sector lenders, can make a significant difference in their own lives,” said Horace Allison, CEO of Harris County Housing Authority. “As a catalyst, our ultimate goal is for HCHA to be a stepping stone for families to move up and out of the HCV Program by becoming economically self-sufficient. A client may enter the HCV Program as a renter but through their diligence, hard work, and assistance from staff and others, families have an opportunity to achieve the American Dream of homeownership and independence.”

“As I listened to the speakers I kept thinking, this is too good to be true. I work hard and do my best to pay my bills on time and save as much as I can, but I never felt that it would be enough to actually purchase my own home. I can’t believe this is really happening,” said an attendee who was pre-approved the same day of the event.

In order to qualify for the Homeownership Program, HCV Program participants must be a first-time homebuyer, be in good standing with their current landlord, have a full-time job, and have a minimum credit rating and income. All participants who qualify for the program must go through the same rigorous application process with a mortgage company as any non-voucher holding private citizen and must additionally complete a required six-week credit counseling course.

“There are many hard working HCV holders who have responsibly managed their credit and therefore qualify for this program which is designed for those who genuinely want to be self-sufficient,” said Adeline Benoit, HCHA’s Special Programs Manager. “Our job is to equip them for the journey, support them throughout the process and be there at the end to congratulate them on a job well done after all of their hard work.”

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### **About Harris County Housing Authority (HCHA)**

HCHA is committed to helping low income residents in the unincorporated areas of Harris County achieve self-sufficiency and economic independence. For over 40 years, HCHA has offered desirable, livable, and sustainable communities for low income residents including families with school aged children, seniors, veterans and persons with disabilities. HCHA’s supportive housing services include the administration of more than 4,500 Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) with over 600 dedicated to Veterans, a thriving homeownership program for HCV holders and is the general partner of eight affordable housing developments with its ninth development, The Retreat at Westlock, opening Spring of 2017. Learn more at [www.hchatexas.org](http://www.hchatexas.org) and follow us on Facebook and Twitter, @hchaTexas.