



NEWS RELEASE

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Iowa Finance Authority Awards \$2.7 Million to Shelter House in Iowa City to Construct Affordable Housing for Chronically Homeless

Innovative FUSE Project to Support Chronically Homeless Individuals

Des Moines – The Iowa Finance Authority Board of Directors today awarded \$2.7 million to Shelter House in Iowa City to fund the organization’s new Frequent Users Systems Engagement (FUSE) project. The funding will assist in the construction of a 24 unit rental development that will serve chronically homeless individuals. The funding was made available through the National Housing Trust Fund program.

“The individuals who will be assisted by this project habitually cycle through emergency rooms, behavioral and mental health services, corrections systems, emergency shelter and support services equating to \$140,000 per person a year in the Iowa City community,” said Iowa Finance Authority Executive Director Dave Jamison. “I commend Shelter House, the Housing Fellowship and the Housing Trust Fund for Johnson County for their innovative response to this challenge and look forward to seeing how this program will enhance the quality of life for Iowans.”

The National Housing Trust Fund program is a new affordable housing production program aimed at increasing and preserving the supply of decent, safe and sanitary affordable housing for extremely low-income and very low income households, including homeless families. The program is a federal block grant program administered at the state level and requires a 30-year affordability period.

“The Johnson County Local Homeless Coordinating Board joined together in 2013 to better understand the cross-system service utilization patterns of members of our community, said Shelter House Executive Director Crissy Canganelli. “We uncovered a story of four individuals who cycled through services over a four and a half year period for a total cost to the community of \$2.16 million and knew there had to be a better way to serve these individuals.”

The 24 one-bedroom rental homes to be developed with the National Housing Trust Fund award will follow a Housing First model, which is a permanent housing solution for the chronically homeless. This is an intervention that is proven to save both lives and money. The development will offer various services onsite, including offices and an exam room for case managers and health and behavioral health providers.

The Iowa Legislature created the Iowa Finance Authority in 1975 to undertake programs to assist in the attainment of housing for low- and moderate-income Iowans. Since then, the Iowa Finance Authority’s role has grown to include nearly 40 affordable housing, water quality and beginning farmer programs. The Iowa Finance Authority is a self-supporting public agency whose mission is to enhance the quality of life for Iowans.

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