



March 2021

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My Fellow Commissioners - I greet you at the start of this new year 2021. It is my sincere hope that each of you and your families are well and safe. My name is Beryle Downs and I currently serve on the Board for the Anne Arundel County Housing Commission. I am also your representative on the Maryland Association of Housing and Redevelopment Agencies ("MAHRA") where I serve as the Vice Chair of the Commissioners Committee. The Commissioner's Committee supports programs to expand the skills of commissioners to effectively discharge their responsibilities. I am writing you to share two very important points from the Executive Board. First, I am asking for a commissioner from each jurisdiction to join my committee. Second, I am asking that commissioners take advantage of training that is available for commissioners.

Training is the foundation for creating a culture of quality. To that end, I am advocating that the Commissioners Overview and Fundamentals sponsored by the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Organizations ("NAHRO") be a part of the onboarding for newly appointed commissioners. Seasoned and long serving commissioners are encouraged to review the NAHRO course offerings for commissioners and seek recertification.

I am proud to serve in Anne Arundel County where Richard Ay served with distinction from 1989 - 2011. As Chair of the Anne Arundel County Housing Commission Board, he was passionate about the work of NAHRO, attended many of the educational offerings and was a Certified Commissioner in the accredited program. To honor his service and commitment, the Richard L. Ay, Sr. Memorial Award Program was established and offers financial assistance in paying the tuition for courses administered by NAHRO. A link is provided below for additional information about this program.

Thank you for being a part of this important work. Together we are building affordable and sustainable communities through education, innovation and advocacy.

Beryle Downs

To join MAHRA Commissioners Committee

<https://mahramd.org/index.php/committees/commissioners>

Information about the Richard L. Ay, Sr. Scholarship

<https://www.mahramd.org/index.php/resources/richard-l-ay-sr-memorial-scholarship-program>

www.mahramd.org