

NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING SERVICES OF NEW HAVEN, INC.

Community Building Specialist

Nature of Work

The Community Building Specialist is responsible for the planning and implementation of NHS' Community Building and Organizing activities, providing community outreach to both the HomeOwnership Center and the NHS Rehab Department. The Community Building Specialist actively promotes the homeownership initiatives of both NHS and the HOC.

Community outreach and community building are critically important for the promotion of homeownership activities as well as for the revitalization and future self-reliance of the neighborhoods served by our organizations. The Community Building Specialist will help NHS and the HOC to attain these objectives by informing and educating community residents about their opportunities, and by motivating them to take advantage of available programs.

Work is performed under the direction of the NHS Executive Director, with input from the Managing Director of the HOC and the Director of Design and Construction; performance is reviewed and evaluated by the Executive Director. In the absence of the Executive Director, the Board may designate a committee to perform and/or review staff evaluations. The Community Building Specialist serves as a liaison to the NHS Community Relations Committee, and activities will reflect any other goals and objectives set by the Committee, working in conjunction with the Executive Director of NHS, the HOC Managing Director, the Director of Design and Construction, and the Board of Directors.

Illustrative Examples of Work

- Informs neighborhood residents of the availability of NHS' programs and services through appropriate communication and marketing mechanisms such as:
 - a. Door-to-door outreach with residents and potential clients. (Walking throughout selected neighborhoods will be required on a regular basis.)
 - b. Attending meetings of civic groups, organizations, groups of neighborhood residents, and tenants in public housing developments to inform them of homeownership opportunities sponsored by NHS and HOC, and to motivate them to take advantage of these opportunities.
 - c. Developing written, visual, and oral presentations for distribution within the neighborhoods and to representatives of the City and local business community.
- Implements NHS' Revitalization Demonstration Project in selected micro-neighborhoods as determined and identified by the NHS Board of Directors.
- Meets with residents who live, or own property, in the immediate vicinity of houses NHS owns or is about to acquire and rehabilitate, thereby ensuring that neighbors are apprised of the work NHS has planned for the houses. Convenes informal meetings of residents who would be affected by or may be interested in programs implemented by NHS.
- Works with the Community Relations Committee and other committees, groups, and individuals including representatives of Empower New Haven and the Community Foundation of Greater New Haven to plan and conduct activities designed to promote homeownership in selected target neighborhoods.

- Works with area Realtors to determine houses that are available for sale to prospective first-time homebuyers.
- Prepares a neighborhood inventory of vacant, abandoned, and under-maintained properties for investigation by the NHS and HOC staff to help determine ways in which we can sponsor the rehabilitation work and make the houses available to first-time homeowners.
- Coordinates NeighborWorks® Week activities for NHS and the HOC.
- Collaborates with other NHS/HOC staff in planning and preparing for open houses and other NHS-sponsored activities in the community.
- Assists with the preparation of grant applications that are directly related to NHS' Community Building and Organizing line of business.
- Performs other related duties as required.

The Community Building Specialist will develop a work plan with concrete, measurable goals, objectives, and accomplishments. This work plan will be submitted periodically, upon request, to the NHS Executive Director for review.

Requirements of Work

Two (2) or more years experience in community outreach work or community organizing, community development, marketing, or other community relations/ community building activities or any equivalent combination which provides the following knowledge, skills, and abilities:

- Ability to relate to community leaders and neighborhood residents who may come from a variety of backgrounds.
- Ability to communicate effectively with staff, members of the NHS and HOC Boards of Directors, neighborhood residents, and community leaders both orally and in writing.
- Ability to prepare funding applications that are directly related to NHS' Community Building and Organizing line of business.
- Ability to motivate the involvement of prospective homebuyers in homebuyer education programs offered by HOC.
- Ability to exercise good judgement in interrelating with all people.
- Ability to work calmly when confronted by stressful situations.

The Community Building Specialist must be highly creative in his/her approach to community outreach strategies, and diligent while pursuing difficult and at times frustrating challenges. In addition, he or she must be willing to accept the fact that his or her position requires considerable flexibility in work hours. Evening meetings and meetings on weekends are to be expected. He or she must be committed to the goals and philosophy of NHS and the HOC, and must possess a high degree of motivation. He or she is expected to work as part of a team to accomplish common organizational goals and objectives.