

## Chapter 5: Promoting Economic Opportunities



*Each year the CHA offers its residents a host of trainings and skill building opportunities to enhance their job readiness and acumen.*

In FY2006, the CHA continued to administer economic self-sufficiency programs focusing on minorities, women, and disadvantaged business enterprises, as well as low- and very-low income residents, and residents who own businesses. The CHA has devised and implemented policies, training programs, and training sessions for residents that will allow them access to the wide variety of economic opportunities that are created in the Plan. CHA residents who take advantage of the skill-building opportunities are often taking the first steps toward living an economically self-sufficient lifestyle.

### **Minority, Women, and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (M/W/DBE)**

Rebuilding the public housing infrastructure of a large city requires the participation of a substantial number of stakeholders. The CHA has taken the opportunity to revitalize public housing by incorporating the talents of businesses owned by minorities, women, and disadvantaged individuals. Utilizing an outreach program and a proactive response to policy enforcement, the CHA is actively using the services of these entrepreneurs to help implement the Plan for Transformation.

During FY2006, the CHA continued to make available numerous opportunities for women to do business with the CHA. For example, the CHA hosted booths at the Black Woman's Expo and the Women's Business Development Center Expo. These venues provided the CHA with the ability to promote the various opportunities the CHA has to offer to businesswomen in Chicago. The Black Woman's Expo is an annual event sponsored by a local radio station and presents events targeted to black women. The Women's Business Development Center Expo provides help to women in the Chicagoland area who are launching new businesses.

The CHA also marketed business opportunities to the Latino community in FY2006. The CHA participated in the monthly meeting of the Latino Breakfast Club and hosted a booth at the Hispanic Business Development Expo in September 2006. As with the Black Women's Expo, the CHA used this opportunity to promote business opportunities to the participants. The Latino Breakfast Club meets monthly and allows members of the Latino community to network and build business relationships, as well as foster positive community relationships across neighborhoods. The Hispanic Business Development Expo is designed so that corporations in Chicago can reach a large number of prominent Hispanic companies in the area.

In an effort to ensure that all firms awarded CHA contracts abided by the M/W/DBE requirements established by HUD, the contracted firms were notified at both pre-award and pre-construction meetings of M/W/DBE requirements. Firms that were negligent in following the M/W/DBE guidelines were notified via mail or telephone that their funds would be withheld until evidence of compliance was submitted. In the event a firm had its funding withheld, the firm needed to document that the problem was corrected before funding was restored. The CHA hired an independent compliance firm to assist in the monitoring of CHA contracts.

Total Awards and M/W/DBE Commitment January 1 - December 31, 2006								
Contract Type	Contract Amount	Awards (\$)	Participation Requirement (Percent)	Participation Requirement (Dollars)	Committed (Percent)	Committed (Dollar)	Variance (Percent)	Variance (Dollar)
Construction	Under \$25,000	\$0	0%	\$0	0%	\$0	0%	\$0
Construction	\$25,000-\$200,000	\$187,971	25%	\$46,993	30%	\$55,653	5%	\$8,660
Construction	\$200,001-\$500,000	\$281,169	30%	\$84,351	30%	\$84,351	0%	\$0
Construction	\$500,001-\$1,000,000	\$608,000	35%	\$212,800	82%	\$6,123,422	47%	\$284,712
Construction	Over \$1,000,000	\$13,976,381	40%	\$5,590,552	0%	\$0	0%	\$35,358
Service Supply and Delivery	Over \$25,000	\$34,085,594	20%	\$6,817,119	20%	\$4,615,474	0%	\$1,111,207
<b>Total Awards</b>		<b>\$49,139,115</b>		<b>\$12,751,815</b>		<b>\$10,878,900</b>		<b>\$1,439,937</b>

### SECTION 3

The Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 contains a provision requiring that any organization that receives HUD financing must assist in developing local economies, improve local economic stability, and increase resident self-sufficiency. As a result, the CHA

established its Section 3 Program to provide job training, employment, and contract opportunities for low- or very-low income residents. Public housing residents whose income falls below HUD's income limits may qualify as a Section 3 resident or a Section 3 business entity.

One of the CHA's responsibilities under the Section 3 Program is to create and maintain a Section 3 Compliance Fund. The fund is comprised of money contributed by outside firms who are CHA vendors, and it is administered by an independent firm on behalf of the CHA. Proceeds from the fund afford the CHA the opportunity to allocate resources toward providing CHA residents' part-time employment, job training, and coverage of day care or transportation costs. Residents who are lease compliant and income eligible can contact the CHA to participant in the Section 3 Program.



*CHA residents interested in learning more about the Section 3 Program may speak with a CHA Human Resources staff member for more information.*

In FY2006, the CHA was very active in promoting the Section 3 Program. The CHA used pre-bid conferences to inform residents of business opportunities available under the Section 3 Program. Additionally, the CHA advertised the program through solicitations for upcoming projects. Also, the CHA reached out to current contractors, developers, and private property managers to tout the Section 3 Program.

### **Communication & Economic Opportunities**

In FY2006, the public was able to utilize the CHA website, [www.thecha.org](http://www.thecha.org), as a source of information on how to do business with the CHA. Through the website, the CHA was able to advertise a directory for its Section 3 Program. The directory serves as a resource for companies doing business with the CHA to find candidates for potential Section 3 employees. The directory provides employers with a list of names and addresses of people who are qualified to perform various job functions.

The CHA also used its website to communicate with vendors regarding procurement and CHA contracting. The CHA receives the majority of its funding from the federal government. As such, the CHA is obligated to abide by regulations regarding everything from how the CHA

purchases items and issues contracts for services with vendors to hiring practices. The website provides a direct link to the applicable federal regulations guiding CHA procurement activities.