

# CEDAM 2008 AWARDS

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CED Advocate of the Year  
Awarded by CEDAM



The *Community Economic Development Advocate of the Year Award* is presented annually to a person or organization that has made significant contributions on behalf of our industry. The CEDAM Board of Directors selects the awardee. This year CEDAM is pleased to recognize **Daniel Kildee and the Genesee County Land Bank** for their ground-breaking, nationally-recognized work in Flint.

Daniel Kildee has been Genesee County Treasurer since 1997. Before his election as Treasurer, Mr. Kildee served for 12 years as a Genesee County Commissioner, including five years as Chairman of the Board of Commissioners. Kildee has initiated the use of Michigan's new tax foreclosure law as a tool for community development and neighborhood stabilization. He founded the Genesee County Land Bank - Michigan's first land bank - and serves as its Chairman and Chief Executive Officer. Kildee is also President of the Genesee Institute, a research and training institute focusing on Smart Growth, urban land reform, property tax reform, and land banking. In 2003, Governor Granholm and legislative leaders appointed Kildee to the Michigan Land Use Leadership Council, which made 160 recommendations to address urban sprawl and other land use issues. In 2005, Granholm appointed Kildee as one of the initial directors of the Michigan Land Bank Fast Track Authority, the nation's first statewide Land Bank, which Kildee currently chairs. He is also a member of the Executive Committee of the National Vacant Properties Campaign.

The Mission of the Genesee County Land Bank is to manage land obtained through foreclosure, gift, or purchase in such a way as to return those properties to the tax roll and, when appropriate, to a higher and better condition than when received.

Since its inception in 2002, the Genesee County Land Bank has taken the lead in applying the economic tools created under this new system by playing an active role in stabilizing neighborhoods and revitalizing the City of Flint and the surrounding areas. The Land Bank encourages re-use of more than 4,000 residential, commercial, and industrial properties that it has acquired through the tax foreclosure process. This is accomplished through partnerships with public, private, and nonprofit partners as well as with the proceeds from the tax foreclosure process, proceeds from GCLB sales and rental programs, grants, loans, and bonds.

The Land Bank has 12 internal staff members and 5 external staff members who work together on the wide spectrum of Land Bank programming, including Planning and Outreach, Brownfield Redevelopment, Development, Adopt-a-Lot, Clean and Green, Demolition, Housing Renovation, Sales, Side Lot Transfer, and Foreclosure Prevention. In 2007, Kildee and the Genesee County Land Bank were recipients of the prestigious Innovations in American Government Award, presented by Harvard University and the Fannie Mae Foundation.

Congratulations to Daniel Kildee and the Genesee County Land Bank for their successful efforts in dealing with vacant land and for being recognized as national experts on the topic!

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## Community Developer of the Year Awarded by CEDAM



The *Community Developer of the Year Award* is a new award being offered by CEDAM this year. This award will be offered annually to recognize a CEDAM member who has best embodied the spirit of community economic development, through community impact, innovative programming, organizational growth, scope of projects/programming, and so forth. This year, CEDAM is pleased to honor the **Council for World Class Communities / Cornerstone Alliance**, for their all-inclusive work in housing, youth development, economic development, and much more, in Benton Harbor.

Council for World Class Communities (CWCC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the social and economic growth of Benton Harbor with a focus on workforce talent and diversity. There are many success stories that can be offered about CWCC's work: one example is their Bridges to Digital Excellence program that offers computer hardware and software for technology-disadvantaged 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade children and their families. Another example is their five day Diversity and Inclusion workshop for the community that allows the participants to become Diversity and Inclusion facilitators for their own business, church group, or family. Another successful program is the Housing and Home Ownership (H2O) Consortium, done in partnership with sister organization Cornerstone Alliance, which provides financial management training, homeownership training, and credit counseling to participants.

Cornerstone Alliance, as noted, is a sister organization to CWCC. Cornerstone also is dedicated to the social and economic growth of Benton Harbor, with a focus on economic development through small

business growth. Their goal is to create a disciplined investment policy geared toward providing an overall framework for (re)development, establishing links between business and education, and supporting the preparation of local business leaders to sustain positive change.

These two groups, along with the Whirlpool Corporation, have come together to work on the Harbor Shores development, which is a project that is transforming the city of Benton Harbor and the economic potential of the entire southwest Michigan region. The Harbor Shores development involves plans for over \$479 million in development over 12 years, using Lake Michigan and the St. Joseph and Paw Paw Rivers as anchors for recreational and residential development, including a new community center, single-family housing (a mix of market-rate and affordable), and a revitalization of Benton Harbor's arts district. This project will be an enabler for broad based community development, and will allow for continued economic as well as social growth for the area.

For their all-encompassing efforts to make Benton Harbor a community of choice, CEDAM is pleased to honor the Council for World Class Communities and the Cornerstone Alliance with its Community Developer of the Year Award.

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## Financial Partner of the Year Awarded by CEDAM



The *Financial Partner of the Year Award* is a new award being offered by CEDAM this year. This award will be offered annually to recognize financial institution – a bank, foundation, investor, or similar – that has been especially supportive of the community economic development in Michigan. This year, CEDAM is pleased to honor **The Skillman Foundation**, for innovation and financial commitment to neighborhoods in the city of Detroit.

Created in 1960, The Skillman Foundation is a private grantmaking foundation that is a charitable, tax-exempt organization. Skillman uses its resources to support 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations. The Foundation manages programs in three specific areas, with an overall focus on developing good schools and good neighborhoods for children in Detroit. The Good Schools and Good Neighborhoods programs are the primary focus of the Foundation's grantmaking. The Good Opportunities program is set up to support the Foundation's primary work and to invest in special opportunities that can accomplish significant results for children.

In 2006, Skillman launched the Good Neighborhoods program to provide full-scale support to six Detroit neighborhoods where more than 65,000 children live, roughly 30% of the city's child population. Half of the children in these neighborhoods live in poverty. This program encourages the creation of safe, healthy, and vibrant neighborhoods where children, with the support of caring adults, programs, and experiences, can develop fully. Skillman has committed to spending \$100 million over ten years in these six communities.

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In addition to its immense support for Detroit's neighborhoods, Skillman approved nearly one half million dollars in grant funding earlier this year to strengthen foreclosure prevention programs in Detroit. This funding will provide for outreach programs on foreclosure prevention counseling and other resources.

CEDAM is excited to honor the Skillman Foundation for excelling as a supporter of the life-changing work being undertaken by CDCs in Detroit.

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## Innovator of the Year Awarded by CEDAM



The *Innovator of the Year Award* is a new award being offered by CEDAM this year. This award will be offered annually to recognize a CEDAM member who has engaged in creative new programming, has been involved in an exciting new development, or has generally proven to be a leader in advancing new policies, strategies, or best practices in community economic development. This year, CEDAM is pleased to honor **NCCS Center for Nonprofit Housing**, for their development of comprehensive best practices on dealing with foreclosure across many spectrums and in a rural area.

The NCCS Center for Nonprofit Housing (CNH) is located in Fremont in rural Newaygo County. Rural foreclosure is an epidemic that is happening everywhere but receives little to no attention from the media. This is where CNH's innovative programming comes into play. By attacking the foreclosure problem at three different levels, CNH is truly making a difference in its community.

The first level of foreclosure prevention programming is at the high school level, before the students encounter the world of credit cards and mortgage lenders. CNH developed a 10-hour financial counseling curriculum targeted to teenagers (10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> graders) which is taught by CNH staff members at local schools. This curriculum teaches the young adults in the program that home ownership is a privilege and a responsibility that not everyone is prepared to handle, especially with the hazards of increased unemployment, decreased income, high amounts of debt, and increased predatory lending.

The second level of foreclosure prevention programming is at the pre-homeowner and new-homeowner stage. Home Ownership Pre-Purchase Classes, Financial Management Classes, and Home Maintenance Classes are offered every month, and these classes are targeted at teaching rural homeowners about how to make the most out of their money and their home.

The third level of foreclosure prevention programming is working with homeowners on the brink of financial collapse. In the last year, CNH's three full-time foreclosure counselors have worked very hard, providing foreclosure counseling to 106 households, many of which have been able to avoid foreclosure.

For their innovative work in the foreclosure and financial literacy arena, we are pleased to honor the Center for Nonprofit Housing as CEDAM's Innovator of the Year.