

**2007 Bulletin of Reports
Delaware-Maryland Synod**

AGENCIES, INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

DELAWARE INTERFAITH HOUSING

In 2006, Interfaith significantly expanded and enhanced our housing staff and resources with the acquisition of Community Housing, Inc., a complementary affordable housing agency working primarily in West Center City Wilmington. As of November 8, our new agency name is Interfaith Community Housing of Delaware, Inc. With Community Housing (CHI), the newly consolidated agency has built, rehabilitated, and owns or manages a cumulative total of 1200 housing units - both rental and homeownership - and building lots, plus undeveloped land, and is the largest state-wide nonprofit community housing organization in Delaware. We continue to work with our national affiliate NeighborWorks America to document that *families who own their own homes are more stable, their children do better in school, and they are able to build equity and wealth for their future and the future of their children.*

In 2006, in partnership with New Castle County, Interfaith built and sold an additional four homes in Belvedere, further eliminating overgrown and trash-filled lots and replacing dilapidated and substandard housing, making a total of 17 of up to a projected 20 modern, efficient single-family homes - and helping revitalize the entire community. We also rehabbed and sold the first two homes in our new project in Dunleith, and acquired the next three in a projected total of 10-12 units, all for affordable homeownership. We are working there in partnership with the county and the Dunleith Civic Association to reverse the recent trend toward more rental properties by absentee landlords and to increase the rate of homeownership.

With the City of Wilmington and our other community development partners, Interfaith completed the first of nine properties in the Hilltop, for rehab and new construction as affordable homes, completed the first unit in our West Center City Initiative project where, with our recent acquisition of CHI, we now own a total of 13 properties for rehab and new construction, and working with the public/private Wilmington Housing Partnership, acquired the first five of what has now become a 13-unit project in the historic Southbridge community

In partnership with the Delaware State Housing Authority we began construction of 78 new rental units plus a community clubhouse on our Colony West property in Milford, now 60% complete.

Our HomeOwnership Center housing counseling/training programs also expanded with the acquisition of CHI, adding new expertise in default counseling and reverse mortgages. The Center served a total of over 2100 families/households, approximately 5,000 people, setting a new benchmark for the consolidated agency; 130 of these families

successfully went to settlement on their first-time homes, and generated about \$15.5 million in mortgage loans.

The new homeowners include two very low-income families from our *Delawareans Save!* Individual Development Account program, which had an annual total of 43 households saving for matching grants to pay their down payment and settlement assistance costs. All of our counseling/ training programs are available at several locations state-wide, in both English and Spanish, including this year for the first time, in Sussex County, as part of Delaware State University's economic development program for Coverdale Crossroads community. The HomeOwnership Center began its new HOMEWorks closing cost assistance loan program for underserved markets statewide, and has since made the first 5 loans.

Dennis Sheer, director