



NEWS RELEASE

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**NAHRO Announces Its Housing America Campaign's Annual
"What Home Means to Me" Poster Contest**

12 winning posters out of 82 entries will comprise the 2013 Housing America calendar

WASHINGTON, D.C. OCTOBER 10, 2012. The National Association of Housing Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) is pleased to announce the completion of the annual Housing America's 2012 Poster Contest – "What Home Means to Me," and reveal the names of the 12 winning contestants. The contest, which has been held annually since 2007, collects original artwork, accompanied by thoughts about "what home means to me," from children living in affordable housing developments throughout the United States. Each year, 12 winners and several honorable mention awardees are selected from around the country. The winning entries are used to create the annual Housing America calendar. The 2012 contest received 82 entries from housing authorities (HAs) nationwide;

This year's winner is Kayla Padgett, a 17-year-old living in Celina, Tenn. (Cookeville, Tenn. Housing Authority). As grand prize winner, Kayla and her family will attend NAHRO's Legislative Conference, held in Washington, D.C. in March 2013; the family will also enjoy visits to iconic sites such as Capitol Hill during their time in the nation's capital. Kayla will receive a \$500 savings bond, and her poster will be featured on the front cover as well as the month of January in the 2013 "What Home Means to Me" Calendar. Other winning entries were submitted by:

- Ester Prieto, 12 years old, Housing Authority of Yamhill County, McMinnville, Ore. (February)
- Cassidy Galloway, 7 years old, Gainesville Housing Authority, Gainesville, Fla. (March)
- Cerina Monge, 8 years old, City of Phoenix, Phoenix, Ariz. (April)
- Marcaya Geegan, 6 years old, Housing Authority of the County of Alameda, Hayward, Calif. (May)
- Wajiha Akif, 17 years old, Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino, Redlands, Calif. (June)
- Elva Trevino, 16 years old, Edinburg Housing Authority, Edinburg, Tex. (July)
- Kennaja Simmons, 11 years old, Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority, Cleveland, Ohio (August)
- Veronica Eckersley, 12 years old, Cameron County Housing Authority, Brownsville, Tex. (September)
- Sarai Damasco, 9 years old, Adams County Housing Authority, Westminster, Colo. (October)
- Alisa Proffer, 18 years old, Housing Authority of Pueblo, Pueblo, Colo. (November)
- Dezhanay Simmons, 16 years old, Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority, Cleveland, Ohio (December)

Each of these winning entries have been announced nationwide, as well as within the winners' own local communities.

“The ‘What Home Means to Me’ calendar has become a tradition with NAHRO, its housing authority and redevelopment agency members, and Housing America,” said Saul Ramirez, Jr., NAHRO CEO. “Young residents across the nation compete, and the number of entries grows exponentially each year. It’s heart-warming to see, in living color and in their own words, how home and family enable these children to enjoy comfort, security, peace and happiness that truly nurtures their hopes and dreams.”

Betsey Martens, NAHRO President, agrees. “We see this annual contest as an important initiative in raising awareness of the positive outcomes that affordable, safe and decent housing has not only on adults, seniors, veterans, and persons with disabilities, but also, critically, on families and young people who, as a result will grow up to be more stable, confident, and happy. We are delighted with the many children that enter the contest, and the depth of thought behind the artwork is very impressive.”

The posters will be displayed at NAHRO’s Legislative Conference, which will be held in Washington, D.C. in March 2013, and will be sold at an auction to raise money for savings bonds for the winners. To learn more about the Housing America program, view all the winning entries, and purchase a calendar, please visit www.housingamericacampaign.org/what-home-means-to-me.html.

ABOUT NAHRO

Based in Washington, D.C., the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials is a professional membership organization comprising approximately 23,000 housing and community development agencies and officials throughout the United States who administer a variety of affordable housing and community development programs at the local level. NAHRO members own or administer nearly 1 million units of public housing (a vast majority of the nation's inventory), 1.65 million units of tenant-based Section 8 housing, and over 700,000 units of other assisted housing. In all, NAHRO's members provide housing for more than 7.9 million low-income people. www.nahro.org

ABOUT HOUSING AMERICA

NAHRO’s Housing America campaign is designed to educate the American public about the critical role safe, decent and affordable housing plays in all aspects of life – for individuals, families, children and young adults, seniors, persons with disabilities, and our veterans, as well as for our communities and the national economy. Its mission is to raise national awareness of the need for and importance of safe, decent and affordable housing through stimulating partnerships and encouraging the ongoing commitment on the part of federal, state, local and government. [www.housingamericacampaign.org/index.html#/.](http://www.housingamericacampaign.org/index.html#/)

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