

Highlights from the 2014 Award Luncheon

By [Amber Kent](#), Public Information Officer

At the annual statewide conference Lieutenant Governor Sue Ellspermann was joined by IHCD and IACED staff and board members along with award sponsors and industry professionals, to recognize organizations and individuals for their outstanding projects and services.

1. Lt. Governor's Award for Excellence in Affordable Housing and Community Development - Rural

Recognizing a rural affordable housing project that creatively and cooperatively improves the lives of their residents and the community.

Recipient: RomWeber Flats, Batesville, IN

Situated in a once-vacant plant that was the former home to the 140-year-old Romweber Furniture Company, RomWeber Flats provides 84 apartments for seniors in the Batesville community. The facility not only offers beautiful and affordable housing - its unique amenities include the Big Four Cafe and local retailers.

With a recent expansion, RomWeber Flats is now utilizing Medicaid vouchers to assist residents with living expenses, allowing them to continue their independent lives.



2. Lt. Governor's Award for Excellence in Affordable Housing and Community Development - Urban

Recognizing an urban affordable housing project that creatively and cooperatively improves the lives of their residents and the community.

Recipient: Crawford Apartments, Bloomington, IN

Named for Franklin "Road Dog" Crawford, a well-known member of the Bloomington-area homeless community, Crawford Apartments offers 25 units of supportive housing in a Platinum LEED certified building operated by [LifeDesigns, Inc.](#) and the [Shalom Center](#).



Providing access to services and resources, residents are able to receive assistance with health, substance abuse and mental issues, helping residents lead more stable, productive lives. The facility demonstrates the wonderful things that can happen when community partners collaborate to tackle one of our society's most serious issues - chronic homelessness.

3. The John Niederman Rural Development Leadership Award

Created this year by the IACED Board of Directors and awarded for the first time, the award is named for John Niederman, the longtime CEO of Pathfinder Services Inc., based in Huntington, Ind. This IACED award recognizes an individual that embodies social entrepreneurship, places people at the center of their work and supports innovation to improve rural communities.

Recipient: Dr. Janet Ayres, Department of Agricultural Economics, Purdue University

For more than three decades, Dr. Janet Ayres has worked to improve the quality of life in rural Indiana by building the skills, knowledge and leadership capacity of its residents. She has worked tirelessly in support of conservation and education, playing an instrumental role in developing the leadership development program for the Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisors and developing over 30 educational modules on community leadership.

Dr. Ayres also had the honor of being the first award recipient to accept an award at the conference via Skype.

4. Key Award for Program of the Year

An IACED award recognizing a leading program which brings the community together and provides a unique public service

Recipient: Neighborhood Spotlight, Legacy Foundation

In Lake County, the Legacy Foundation has created an atmosphere for collaboration, trust, and community growth through its willingness to tackle problems adaptively. Neighborhood Spotlight facilitates resident empowerment and collective impact planning and the leveraging of resources over a multi-year commitment to impact.

Neighborhood Spotlight isn't a program that just brings money to a community - the program that nurtures homegrown leaders with longstanding ties to their communities and a vested interest in seeing their neighborhoods thrive.



John Niederman (2nd from left) was honored at the 2014 luncheon, as the IACED Rural Development Leadership Award was renamed in recognition of his lifetime of achievements.



Bo Beaulieu, Director of the Purdue Center for Regional Development, (2nd from left) accepts the John Niederman Award on behalf of Dr. Janet Ayres.



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5. Robert O. Zdenek Staff Member of the Year Award

An IACED award recognizing leadership, personal initiative and lasting contributions to their organization and community economic development

Recipient: Chris Maples, Director of Advancement, Partners In Housing (Posthumous)

Chris Maples served as Director of Advancement for Partners in Housing, an organization dedicated to providing permanent supportive housing for those in need. A husband and father of two, he valued family and was passionate about creating stability for families struggling with the many issues impacting our homelessness neighbors.

Passing away at just 37 years old, Chris was a creative thinker and developed innovative and exciting events; touching lives far beyond the walls of Partners in Housing, and his work to build community and bring hope and stability to Hoosier families will continue on.

Nominees were selected by a separate committee and judged based upon their impact, initiative, creativity, and collaboration and financial soundness in furthering community economic development throughout Indiana. The winners were selected by a panel of judges with expertise in the housing and community economic development fields. Congratulations to all of the 2014 award winners! 🟩



Colleen Maples (2nd from right) accepts the posthumous award honoring her late husband, Chris Maples.

