(COMMUNICATIONS ACCESS REALTIME TRANSLATION (CART) IS PROVIDED IN ORDER TO FACILITATE COMMUNICATION ACCESSIBILITY AND MAY NOT BE A TOTALLY VERBATIM RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS.)

>> KATHY HATCH: You know what, we have all of our presenters here and I think we will go ahead and get started. First of all, I want to say hi to everybody, I'm Kathy Hatch and I want to welcome everybody to this IL Conversation on rural housing solutions. This conversation, is presented by the New Community Opportunities national training and technical assistance program of ILRU, and it was organized and facilitated by APRIL. So we are really happy you could join us and we are looking forward to a lively discussion.

We have about an hour and a half. We will begin with the introduction of our speakers and they will each talk about Rural Housing Solutions. We want to keep it as conversational as possible and I know there will be questions that come up sort of throughout the material. So presenters will start and we'll open it up for questions and answers at the end, but if you have sort of a burning question during a presentation, do feel free to ask. Because we still want to hear from you.

So a little bit of housekeeping before we start. First, there is one document up on the APRIL website which is [www.April‑rural.org](http://www.Aprilrural.org). It's the H.U.D. document that came out this week. I don't know if anybody saw that or not. It would be helpful, I think, probably after the call.

Also, let me see here, we are ‑‑ let's see. We are providing CART on the call today.

That can be accessed from our website as well. So go to, again, the APRIL website and you will see today's IL Conversation on there, and you will notice the highlighted area in red and you will find the CART link. You just click on that and you can join the chat line.

I know we have mentioned it before, but if anybody is on either a cell phone or a speaker phone, it does make it kind of hard sometimes to hear. So we would like you to use \*6 to mute your phone, you know, during the time that the speakers are speaking.

And if there's any possibility of getting to a land line, rather than using a cell phone or a speaker phone, we would really appreciate that.

Again, I will try to moderate the discussion as we get going, and then, you know, if we just all try to be courteous, we will be in good shape.

So, now, I would like to welcome our presenters. I will begin by telling you a little bit about each one of them. I have to mention, Jeff Hughes who is the executive director of Progressive Independence in Norman, Oklahoma, was supposed to be one of our presenters today and I got an email from him this morning, that he has an abscessed tooth and he was not feeling well at all. So Debie Fiddler from his organization has stepped in and she will speak about their housing project.

We also have Pam Pulchny who is the executive director of Oklahomans for IL in McAllister, Oklahoma and that's a resource Center for People with Disabilities that serves southeastern Oklahoma and has since 1986. Pam has been with OIL for 21 years and has extensive training with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the state of Oklahoma's community based waiver program. She assists people with disabilities through education and making life choices that will encourage independent lifestyles.

Our third presenter is Craig Henning who is the executive director of Disability Resource Association in Festus, Missouri. He became the executive director in 1999. Over the course of his years of service, it has grown from four staff and a budget of $205,000, to over 45 staff and a budget of $7 million annually. Congratulations, Craig. That's an amazing thing.

Disability Resource Association began expanding housing services in 2007, and has become the leading accessible affordable housing organization within the St. Louis region.

Now, I just want to point out that even though these guys come from, well, at least Jeff is in Oklahoma City and Craig is, I guess, it's outside of St. Louis, the St. Louis region, but all three of them are very much ‑‑ have very rural areas that they cover.

So I'm going to go ahead and get started now and let them do their little presentations.

So I would like to hand it over now to Debie, who is going to get started and Debbie, you just sort of give us a little bit of information about yourself before you go.

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: Sure. My name is Debbie Fiddler. I work at Progressive Independence. I have been there since August of 1999. Jeff actually came on in June of 2000, when I started to work at our independent living center, it was pretty small. There were approximately two other people there. Yeah, there were just three of us. When Jeff came on, he really got us focused on what we need to be doing as an Independent Living Center and trying to look at transitioning people out of nursing homes and finding housing and all the resources.

That kind of led into what I'm going to talk to you about, our **Shelter Plus Care** program. Working as an Independent Living Center for as long as I have, I have been called an independent living specialist and now I'm a case management supervisor, but as most people who work in centers know, we do a little bit of it all. So if you want me to go ahead and talk about our Shelter Plus Care program or did you want to let the other people talk first?

>> KATHY HATCH: No, you go ahead. Go ahead and talk about that.

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: We applied for ‑‑ it's called a Shelter Plus Care grant through HUD and I think that was 2001. So that was about a year after Jeff had started as our executive director. A big part of why we applied for that. While transitioning people, we ran into these huge waiting lists for Section 8 housing or subsidized housing, you were looking at long waiting lists and having a hard time getting people transitioned out of nursing homes.

One of the things that Jeff pushed me to do, which I'm not a big person on speaking in front of people. He had me do these round table conversations, where we pulled people in from the community, everyone from our city organizations, to our housing authorities, to different nonprofits, state agencies, and told them what we are looking for and what we were trying to find. That's when one of the ladies who worked for the city of Norman was telling us about what they call the continuum of care. It's a homeless continuum.

In that homeless continuum, it's how you can get linked into these grants called Shelter Plus Care through HUD. And so they convinced us to apply for these ‑‑ these ‑‑ this grant in 2001, and we were awarded it in 2002. We were a little bit different than most people who applied for a Shelter Plus Care grant, because we were targeting the population that was different than what was normally on a Shelter Plus Care grant.

Normally, it's supposed to be more for people with mental illness, chronic problems with alcohol, drugs or AIDS, but we were going for our target population of people with disabilities who were at risk of going into nursing homes because of their homelessness, and their disability, they were at risk of going into a nursing home placement because typically, the homeless resources out there aren't accessible, and that's where a person usually ends up getting placed instead of being placed into a shelter. They end up going into a nursing home because of their disability.

And then one of the things we had to get HUD to understand, a person in a nursing home is not housed, but they are still homeless. Especially if they came from a homeless system and in the nursing home. If they are in a nursing home long enough, they will normally lose their housing.

We were finally able to get that where they ‑‑ we had a definition that said that they were homeless.

This past year, we ran into a roadblock where once a year, they usually come out with their homeless definitions and categories of who you can serve on your Shelter Plus Care grant and they all of a sudden said that on our Shelter Plus Care grant, we couldn't service people out of nursing homes. We're like, whoa, that's not right. We had to fight a battle and basically we got a ruling back from HUD saying that yes, people in nursing homes are homeless so that we could serve those individuals again but for about a year, it really messed us up on our program on who we could serve.

The good part is that it helps us to house people with disabilities. Often they come on to the Shelter Plus Care grant and then they are on a waiting list for Section 8. So they transition off of our Shelter Plus Care rental assistance on to a Section 8.

One of the things you had to do on this type of grant is you had to have service match. With our service match, most of our individuals who we serve have significant disabilities and they are receiving Medicaid services out in the community, usually on home‑based waivers. So we are able to get from our healthcare authority, a matching thing that tells us how much is being paid out for that person to get home and community‑based services and we can turn that in on our annual reports to show that they are getting matching services out in the community. So matching services don't always have to just be our services. They can be what services we have helped them tie into in the community.

Even though ours only ‑‑ our Shelter Plus Care grant only serves people who want to live in the city of Norman, and that's mainly because the project grantee is Norman Housing Authority. We are the housing sponsor who manages the grant. But this can happen in rural communities. You can find out who your continuum of care provider is in that area and who your homeless continuum is.

And there's a way to find that out. We need to find out who the continuum is. If you get linked into the continuum, it's an option of being able to get this to get housing for individuals with disabilities, for who are disabled, either to try to transition out of nursing homes or are homeless.

>> KATHY HATCH: Okay.

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: I hope I didn't confuse everybody with this.

>> KATHY HATCH: Well, what came through to me, though, Debbie, is that there were ‑‑ there were periods of time when you really had to work on this hard. You said at one point, you had to fight a battle to get them to understand what you were trying to do, and I think CILs, that's something that everybody needs to understand, is that it's not going to be easy. Y'all know that already. But these things are out there and are available. Is that right?

>> PARTICIPANT: Can I ask a question?

>> KATHY HATCH: Yes.

>> PARTICIPANT: This is Judy Telge in Corpus Christi, Texas.

>> KATHY HATCH: Hi, Judy.

>> PARTICIPANT: Hi. You subsidized rentals, is this in any way similar or can it be structured so that it's similar to a TBRA voucher or Section 8 but on a short‑term basis? How does the money end of it work?

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: It is like tenant based rental assistance (TBRA), because our rental calculations are similar to what the housing authority uses. And actually, when we finally did a renewal on this in the past year, the good thing is after so many years, when you get the first grant, it's for five years.

It locks you into the year that that grant was awarded. So, like, our first grant was awarded in 2002. So that means for five years, the fair market rate on the units that the person could get was tied into that 2002 rate, and when you get the renewal, then it goes up. So at the end of the cycle, we were having times where it was difficult to find apartments or rental units for people that came under that fair market rate.

>> PARTICIPANT: So were most of those Section 8?

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: Well, what we do, when we are trying to find units for the individuals is we typically do try to find ones that accept Section 8, because we do this in collaboration with the Norman Housing Authority, their inspectors go out and inspect the units for the same things that they inspect for a Section 8 apartment. So, yeah.

>> PARTICIPANT: So you can actually build up housing, you can actually build up your Section 8 housing with this program, as well, that's a benefit?

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: Right. Because we ‑‑ you know, we are trying to get more landlords to be willing to accept Section 8 so that not only can they help us, because our whole goal is for them to be on this, but then, you know, they want to get on Section 8 voucher, we want them to work with us to be that bridge until they get on to Section 8. And placing them in a place that does accept Section 8, means they don't have to move when they get on Section 8. It's difficult for the costs, you know, the transfer fees and the deposits and stuff like that. We want to make it as simple as we can.

But it's also a good way of making landlords and the housing authority and the people in the community more aware of the accessibility needs of people with disabilities and also how good of a tenant you can get. If you even make the apartment accessible, or the rental unit accessible, then you are going to have a base of people who really can use this and will stay there because it will meet their needs. So ‑‑

>> PARTICIPANT: Mm‑hmm.

>> PARTICIPANT: Hello, Debbie. This is Darren in Montana.

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: Hi.

>> KATHY HATCH: Hi, Darren.

>> PARTICIPANT: I have an comment. I'm really happy that you got HUD to recognize that people in institutions are homeless, because we have tried to use the continuum of care for that, but they are not considered to be homeless. So I am wondering if you would ‑‑ if you could email me or provide me that statement from HUD.

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: Yeah. I could actually do that. That came from our HUD office out of Oklahoma City, because we were fighting with them this past year when they were trying to change that, because our original letter, when we did the grant back in 2001, was ‑‑ we had gotten, either Bob Kafka or Stephanie, saying that, no, you couldn't ‑‑ HUD had to say ‑‑ you know they could not say people in nursing homes are homeless, but that they were homeless. So we were able to get that grant, but this past year we finally did, just this spring, got something from our Oklahoma City HUD office saying that people in nursing homes are homeless.

So I have no problem with sending out a copy of that letter. I could get it to Kathy and that way she could get it out to other people so they could see it. That's not a problem.

>> KATHY HATCH: You know what ‑‑

>> PARTICIPANT: That would be wonderful. I would like to share that with some of my advocate friends. And when we're working on it. I think that would be great. I just wonder if that HUD letter from Norman would be helpful, would be indicative of HUD in Montana.

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: I would hope so. You would hope if one HUD office would say it, the federal office would do it.

>> KATHY HATCH: Is that something we can put up on the website so that people can look at or do you think that might mess up the ‑‑ you know what I mean?

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: I don't have it today to give to you and I'm sorry, I'm working from home today.

>> KATHY HATCH: That's all right.

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: I have it back at the office, but I can get it to you. I just can't get it to you today, I'm sorry, because I looked in my emails and different stuff today before I got on the call to see if I had a copy of that letter, but I don't. I know where it's at in my office, but ‑‑

>> KATHY HATCH: I tell you what, I can get it to Darren, but if there's other folks on the call, why don't you drop me a quick email and I will make sure to get it out. I guess I shouldn't put it on the website because we don't want to mess something up, in case somebody saw it there, you know?

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: Right.

> And this is Sky Bennett at Access Alaska. When you were using your program as a bridge to Section 8, were your Section 8 applications flagged because they were already housed? Because we have a point value in Alaska.

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: With ours ‑‑ our housing authority doesn't give any kind of preference or anything like that. Our one in Norman doesn't. Oklahoma City does. They have, like, a disability preference.

>> PARTICIPANT: Right.

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: But the one in Norman doesn't. When our individuals apply, we have them put down on that application that they are receiving our assistance and most of the time they know, because they will even send me a letter, wanting me to verify that they are getting it from me. You know how that is. You could have one person that you talk to there but the other people in the agency don't know about you.

>> PARTICIPANT: We actually only have one person. We have Jay.

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: Well, Norman Housing Authority is not really huge but they have several housing counselors and stuff, but I'm close friends with the deputy director and so, I mean, she's really kind of been with us from the start on this whole Shelter Plus Care grant and so that has been really helpful to have that connection.

>> PARTICIPANT: Debbie, if you had somebody who was already on the waiting list for HUD, and then they came in and they found out about your program and they got monies from you and got placed and everything else, did that affect their HUD placement?

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: It shouldn't, no. They should still stay on ‑‑ if they are already on a waiting list, we just encourage them to make sure that they keep their stuff up to date. You know how most housing authorities are, or most waiting lists, if they purge the list, and you haven't bothered to give them your new address, perhaps, or phone number…

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: Then they have no way to contact you. They say, well, we purged the list. We sent out stuff to the individuals and we got no response. So they are not on the list anymore.

>> PARTICIPANT: Okay. Great.

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: We have had that happen a couple of times for people who have been on Shelter Plus Care, and I went back and said, okay, they didn't receive a letter. Please take this into consideration. They put them back on the list.

>> PARTICIPANT: Got it. Okay. Great, thanks.

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: Mm‑hmm.

>> CRAIG HENNING: Debbie, this is Craig Henning from disability resource in St. Louis.

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: Hi.

>> CRAIG HENNING: I wanted to ask. You mentioned that consumers getting waiver services, that the state entity would share information to kind of put a value stamp on what services the center had provided for those folks.

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: Not the center. Not the center, the community‑based services they received. Like in Oklahoma, one of the home and community‑based Medicaid waivers is called the **Advantage** program and the Oklahoma health program is the Medicaid entity and I can send to their billing department through a release that the individual signs and get a value for ‑‑ because our yearly reports that go to HUD on our annual progress reports are for a year's time and I have to specify on that release exactly what I'm looking for. And it talks about service match. I'm not asking for any kind of thing other than I want to know what was billed on that home and community‑based waiver from this date to that date. They do that and our healthcare authority does, and that gives us a way to show to HUD, this is the value of the service that they got for that waiver that they are receiving out in the community.

It wasn't our services. It was a service we helped them link up to in the community that enabled them to live independently in the community.

>> CRAIG HENNING: Do you use that information with the state legislators and the powers that be to demonstrate that you have some cost mitigation over nursing home or facility placement?

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: I'm not sure if we have. I'm sure we have in the past, when we talk about how beneficial it is for people to live in the community over living in nursing facilities. I mean ‑‑ I mean, we really hit strong on that when we were trying to get what we called our **Living Choice** program, our **Money Follows the Person** program in place, however many years ago back when that finally went into place. But all the Centers for Independent Living were strong advocates to get that to happen.

>> KATHY HATCH: That's good. That's good. It sounds like you can use it the way Craig is talking about any time.

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: Yeah.

>> KATHY HATCH: Okay. Any other questions for Debbie right now? Okay. Well, let's go on to ‑‑

>> PARTICIPANT: One more real quick if you don't mind.

>> KATHY HATCH: Go ahead, sure.

>> John McCaskey. That particular match, is that useful as a match to other programs besides continuous care plans or are there other HUD funding sources that would want that same type of match?

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: I'm not sure. On the Shelter Plus Care grant, what they are basically wanting are the rental assistance that you provide to that individual, your match has to be equal or above that. When you look at what they receive on the community on home an community‑based services, even if you don't factor in the time we put in on the services, that we provide, linking them up to things, it well exceeds the rental assistance we pay them per month.

>> PARTICIPANT: Sure.

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: Our match over the years that we have had the grant has way exceeded the small amount of rental assistance that they get.

So I could see that as being used that way. I don't know if our executive director has ever done that or not. I wouldn't put it past him. So, yeah. (chuckles).

>> PARTICIPANT: I just sent an email requesting a copy of your HUD letter. Thank you very much. I will be quiet.

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: Okay. No problem.

>> KATHY HATCH: Great. Great. Let's move on to Pam Pulchny from McAllister, Oklahoma. Pam, are you ready to go?

>> PAM PULCHNY: Yes, I'm here.

>> KATHY HATCH: Okay.

(Laughter).

>> PAM PULCHNY: I had you on mute.

>> KATHY HATCH: That's what I figured. Go ahead.

>> PAM PULCHNY: A lot of what you are going to hear me say is some of the same things that Debbie talked about. We are in Oklahoma too, so we have some of the same programs. When she was talking about the **Living Choice** program and our response to that, to assist our consumers in transitioning from nursing home to the community, we serve a very rural area. We drive at least an hour to get to one person's home and in their communities there may just be a grocery store and a gas station at that.

So when it came time for us to transition people out, our biggest barrier was accessible housing. And we had to begin researching, you know, what are we going to do? How are we going to be successful in moving these individuals out if the appropriate housing is not there?

And in doing so, in our purchase, we came across **Accessible Spaces Inc.** out of Minnesota. I don't know if you know about their program or not, but it is a program that provides accessible, affordable assistance and supported living opportunities for people with physical disabilities, brain injuries and seniors. It's totally accessible housing.

We contacted them and asked them if they would be willing to construct a housing complex in our home county in Pittsburgh (Oklahoma) and they came and wanted to do that. So Accessible Spaces gets the funding with HUD to construct. That's been going on for five years now. We started in May of 2008, and the apartment complex will be finished sometime probably in October. We are currently taking applications now.

It is just a small answer to a big problem for this county. It has 15 accessible apartments and it's totally accessible. It is for people with disabilities or seniors and it's not specific. It is all disabilities. It's not just mobility. It's mental health. It's developmental. It's all disabilities. And so that was one way that we tackled the problem here. It is a $2 million construction that is going on. They use Section 8‑11 housing HUD assistance. And then when we transition someone out of a nursing home, if they are able, there's a list where they have to apply, they will pay 30% of their adjusted gross income for rent. It was just a solution for our immediate need.

And so that was one way that we addressed the housing issue.

>> KATHY HATCH: Isn't there something about that too, even though it's like one person who is in the family ‑‑ I mean, they are families, right?

>> PAM PULCHNY: Yes, there are families. There are one and two and three‑bedroom apartments. The apartment manager lives there as well. And so when we looked at it, my first question was, well, okay, is that not segregated? Isn't that what we are trying to get away from? And that's when I was told, well, no, it's inclusional because it's anybody. You just have to have a disability and then meet the criteria. And what that whole problem was is finding the accessible apartment and housing that they could afford, because as rural as we are, in any housing that we looked at, you know, a 50‑year‑old home that is accepting Section 8 vouchers, we would go to it and it wouldn't be accessible.

So this was just an answer to that solution for this area.

And with that, it has to relate to you, to understand that it is inclusional, and it is accessible, it is not a group home setting. It's not anything that you look at and you say, oh, I'm back at the nursing home. I have been pleasantly surprised at this whole issue of moving through and getting this housing done. As a matter of fact, it has been a blessing for us.

>> KATHY HATCH: Is that permanent housing for folks, or is that temporary?

>> PAM PULCHNY: No, it's permanent. It's permanent.

>> KATHY HATCH: Okay.

>> PAM PULCHNY: Mm‑hmm. There's recreation, and community rooms. There's a storm shelter, your own laundry. You are in your own home. It's just like you are in an apartment anywhere else. It's very, very nice place. It's centrally located in town so that you have access to resource and services and transportation and that was one of the big issues too, you know, finding housing where people could access the hospitals, the clinics, the health departments, the -- care, and those type of things.

So this was our solution.

>> KATHY HATCH: So it's cross disability and cross cultural, all kinds of things like that too?

>> PAM PULCHNY: Yes. Yes. It's pet friendly. It just has to be approved. There's a manager on site. They are still in the construction phase, so I ‑‑ I'm anxious to see what it's going to really be like when all the residents get moved in. There's quite a waiting list. There's been a waiting list for six months now. People started applying ‑‑ like I said, we have several other housing units here in town, but out of all of those complexes that qualify and so forth, they may have three or four units that are totally accessible. And so here, you know, we have 15 and I know what's going to happen. I have already seen it. A lot of people that are in those older housing complexes, they are applying to move into the new one.

So they will move into the new, but that still opens up, you know, what they moved out of, and so one way or another, we still have, you know, 15 new apartments that we have access to.

>> KATHY HATCH: Mm‑hmm. And the $2 million price tag.

>> PAM PULCHNY: Mm‑hmm.

>> KATHY HATCH: The money is all from HUD or how did that work?

>> PAM PULCHNY: No. I believe it was $1.3 million, somewhere around in there, came from Accessible Spaces and then the rest ‑‑ no, I said that backwards. $1.3 million came from HUD, and then the rest, I believe, was ASI.

>> PARTICIPANT: Can you say that again?

>> PAM PULCHNY: $1.3 million was set aside from HUD to construct this unit, and $117,300, I think is what it was, came from ASI.

>> PARTICIPANT: What is ASI?

>> PAM PULCHNY: Accessible Spaces Incorporated.

>> PARTICIPANT: Are they the developer and the owner?

>> PAM PULCHNY: Yes.

>> PARTICIPANT: They are developing it. They are putting up the money and are they also going to manage it? Because ASI does do management.

>> PAM PULCHNY: Yes, they do manage it. One of the apartments will be used by the manager. I believe in reading their literature, I want to say they put housing up in 21 different states. I think they have 99 units constructed, you know, right now. There's some in Illinois, Colorado, Kansas, Nevada, Arizona. I think they have several in their home state of Minnesota. And ‑‑

>> PARTICIPANT: Add Texas there's at least one in Texas.

>> PARTICIPANT: Do you know how we can get ahold of them to work something out?

>> PAM PULCHNY: Sure go online to [www.accessiblespace.org](http://www.accessiblespace.org). I also have a phone number here. That number is 1‑800‑466‑7722.

>> PARTICIPANT: Thank you. Accessible space.org?

>> PAM PULCHNY: Yes.

>> PARTICIPANT: Can I add something? This is Darryl Christianson from Phoenix. I'm also on the NCIL Housing Subcommittee. I have known Accessible Space back from my days living in Minnesota, my home state. I have known about them since 1987, and there's a double edged sword with what they do. Some would say that they provide some great accessible housing that otherwise would not be made available if it were not for their developments and such.

The other side of the coin, however, is that it's segregated housing. It's only for people with disabilities and it's segregated primarily for physical disabilities, unless they can't fill them, then they go to cognitive ones. So people have to be aware, at least cognizant that, yes, you are going to get some additional units built in your community and your state, but it is ‑‑ it is segregated housing too.

>> PARTICIPANT: Darryl, can I add to that, this is Judy in Corpus Christi, we had dealings with them over the years, and I think the reason is they have been at the forefront in using HUD 8‑11 funding, which we know now it can be used differently than it traditionally had been used.

>> PARTICIPANT: Absolutely, yes.

>> KATHY HATCH: Is that a good thing, then, Judy? Are you saying that it will open it up to, you know ‑‑ because that was my question before, if it's families and things, my understanding was that one person had to have a disability in the family, but, you know, obviously the rest of the family doesn't have a disability and that helped to make it more inclusive.

>> PARTICIPANT: Yes, again, the way that 8‑11 is structured, specifically for people with disabilities. They did congregate settings. We did one here in Corpus Christi, there's been two done and it's because of the interpretation and the restrictions of the 8‑11 funding, but what's been demonstrated is that you can use 8‑11 in a more integrated fashion. You can, for example, like UCP and Easter Seals have done in Texas, you can purchase condominium units, and those would be scattered throughout the community. That's certainly integrated housing and 8‑11 can be used for that.

It was a fight to get it to that point, but I think that ‑‑ the fact that ASI was able to easily access 8‑11 is why they have done so many projects in that manner and hopefully they are expanding their resources. They may be using more low‑income housing tax credits and so forth.

>> KATHY HATCH: That's good. So it's not something to be ‑‑ I mean, you want to look into it at least and make sure, you know ‑‑ do a little advocacy, that kind of stuff too.

>> JUDY: Well, you also ‑‑ and I think you better check with them to see how they are in terms of HUD ‑‑ especially in Texas is pretty rigorous in terms of who they recommend to be involved in projects. And at one time, when we looked at them, they weren't recommending ASI for whatever reason. There was a falling out or what have you.

>> PARTICIPANT: And this is Darren. The new regulations state that in new construction only 25% of the units can be for someone with a disability. So new construction has to be integrated in the community.

>> KATHY HATCH: And that's newer, right, Darren?

>> PARTICIPANT: That's new construction.

>> KATHY HATCH: That's what I thought, yeah. So it used to be lower than that.

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: This is Debbie. I think with 8‑11, you can always push for scattered sites like she's talking about. We tried to do that with Oklahoma City Housing Authority trying to find some individuals willing to do that. We were not successful, but it doesn't mean that we don't keep pushing for it.

>> PARTICIPANT: This is Sky. I have a quick question. On 8‑11 funding, what do you know about as far as for criminal background checks? Do they have a standard?

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: You know, I think they do. I'm trying to remember. You know, on the ‑‑ it's not 8‑11s. What is it? The one that's for the elderly housing?

>> PARTICIPANT: 202.

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: The 202s, they are very stringent on that because we had an individual we were transitioning out of a nursing home who ‑‑ I mean this great new, elderly, 202 housing was available and accessible and we couldn't get him in because of something that happened back in 1975.

>> DEBBIE FIDLER: You had to look at what funding sources funded the property. And because of some kind of IRS regulation, it made the background check go farther back or the criminal backgrounds go farther back. I found that that's a big issue in figuring out what all kinds of regulations you are looking at at these places.

>> PARTICIPANT: Yes. We just have a huge prison. We now have the largest prison in the state in Wasilla, and so now my concern is clients that are going to be paroled from that prison. We already have limited resources. If it's HUD funded, if we offer a suggestion for a HUD‑funded program, are we going to eliminate all of those people based on the fact that they are coming out of a prison directly? They are still on parole?

>> PARTICIPANT: I think you have to make sure, because this is what we did, was that your policy may come from the owner, the manager, the management company of that property, the policies can allow that.

>> PARTICIPANT: Okay. So as long as we word it as that it allows it ‑‑

>> PARTICIPANT: And it may be in conjunction with something else.

>> PARTICIPANT: Right.

>> PARTICIPANT: But if you have a policy that allows it, HUD won't, if it's an 8‑11, they won't slam the door on you being able to do that.

>> PARTICIPANT: Okay.

>> KATHY HATCH: So it all goes back to that same old relationship building and talking and figuring out how to make things work?

>> PARTICIPANT: Absolutely.

>> PARTICIPANT: Well, the prison is open now and we are playing catch‑up. We didn't know this was happening. The community didn't know.

>> PARTICIPANT: Oh, really?

>> PARTICIPANT: Oh, yeah.

>> PARTICIPANT: Well, they knew it was coming, but it was all a big shock. They opened the doors and said we are willing to start accepting our transfers back from out of state where they were being housed in Colorado and Texas and Arizona, and in less than a year, they are going to be at capacity at almost 1600 inmates by October and we are already looking at releases of about 100 inmates a month after that.

>> PARTICIPANT: Right now we are at 821 with 221 staff. And so it's really killing our housing ‑‑ available housing out here, just from the staff. Forget the inmate families and things like that, and only a percentage of those ‑‑ a small percentage from the criminals is going back to home villages.

>> PARTICIPANT: This is Heidi in Alaska. We knew about all of that. We discussed all of that while the planning was going on and trying to figure out where to put that prison. (Static).

I was really involved in that process and you are absolutely right, though, we anticipated, at least the government did, that housing simply because of the increased number of employees, would be a scarce commodity.

But what we did not talk about, when we were doing the planning is the release of inmates and where they were going to go.

>> KATHY HATCH: Didn't think about that part.

>> PARTICIPANT: And that's where we are trying to plan ahead for what's going to be happening in the next year and ‑‑ so, yeah.

>> KATHY HATCH: It will be interesting.

>> PARTICIPANT: Mm‑hmm.

>> KATHY HATCH: Well, I tell you what, let's move on to Craig now and hear about his program and then afterwards, we've got plenty of time for discussion and let's just keep this going. This has been a great call so far. So let's just keep that up, okay?

So does that sound okay with everybody? Move on?

>> PARTICIPANT: Yep.

>> KATHY HATCH: Okay. All right, Craig, do you want to go ahead and tell us about what's going on in Minnesota?

>> CRAIG HENNING: We are in Missouri. You said Minnesota.

>> KATHY HATCH: I'm sorry, Missouri.

>> CRAIG HENNING: Not quite that cold down here.

Anyhow, well, we had a unique situation. Our center is south of St. Louis, and we are ‑‑ we have also problems of an urban center and rural center all wrapped up into one. Where I sit now, 15 years ago was woods and now there's housing and various such around.

But we had a kind of unique situation where our HUD voucher list was closed for two years, which really doesn't do people who are in immediate need a lot of good and I'm sure that's probably the case in a lot of other communities. And we had become so ‑‑ (Static).

That finding subsidies that we basically had everything filled to the rafters. So this created a situation where there really was no housing (Static).

>> KATHY HATCH: Oh, shoot. We are having some problems on the line here. Craig, are you on a speaker phone?

>> CRAIG HENNING: I am on my office phone.

>> KATHY HATCH: Is there any chance ‑‑ you are sounding a little distant.

>> CRAIG HENNING: Do you want me to pick it up?

>> KATHY HATCH: That would be very helpful, yes, please.

>> CRAIG HENNING: Anyway, we found ourselves in an economic situation where ‑‑

>> KATHY HATCH: Much better.

>> CRAIG HENNING: Our economy was plummeting. We had two Chrysler plants within our area that completely shut down. And everybody lost their jobs. So we had this immediate crisis on housing. What we did is we were approached by HUD to become the **Community Housing Development Organization** for our county. And typically, that would go to your Action Agency, but our Action Agency refused to do it and our Public Housing Authority refused to do it.

So we were kind of the vendor of last resort, so to speak. So we decided we could kill two birds with one stone. We could get affordable housing built, and quit all the ILSs coming in and fighting over the newspaper to try to find rental units and get some funding for it and it would all be good.

So we went through the process of becoming a Community Housing Development Organization, which you know was typical HUD, hurry up and wait. Urgency: we do all the work and then wait six months.

After a two‑year period we got the certification, and what had happened is HUD had changed some of the rules for the rental assistance use for the low‑income housing tax credits and one of the rules that they changed is they used to have a provision saying, you needed a lead referral agency which was basically a not‑for‑profit that would say, here are the services available in the service area.

Now HUD wants that not‑for‑profit to actually provide services to the individuals who live in the affordable housing complexes. So that was the road we traveled down.

Immediately, a private developer sought us out and we began to plan this whole process for our project. After that planning process had begun, HUD came back and said, “we want you to wait a year before you start building anything.” We were caught off guard because we had hired somebody and we had people in place and all the provisions for going forward.

So we decided, okay, we would continue to work with this developer on a different project and we were going to have to find something we could do to generate income to go ahead and continue to pay the individual that we had hired to coordinate this whole project, and so what we did is we made an agreement with Wells Fargo Mortgage and they actually were giving us their foreclosed homes and so what we would do is we would get single family homes that had been foreclosed on. They would give them to us for free. We would do the renovation on the home and then we could sell it to an individual, a lower income individual.

For instance, we had a house; I believe it was a three‑bedroom house. We went back in. I believe Brent my housing coordinator, and they gutted the entire interior of the house. They created a nice roll‑in shower and everything was widened, the hallways and the doorways and it ended up selling to this gentleman for about $70,000 on a 30‑year loan.

We had several people that we have done that with. Unfortunately, Wells Fargo has gone into a program through HUD that is the National Community Stabilization Trust and that is a program that any of the CILs can apply for, for status and basically, it gives you the advantage of being able to get under water, foreclosed, big old family homes, donated to your organization, as well as it gives you what they call “first look,” which means before the general public can bid on a foreclosure, the not‑for‑profits get a shot at putting in a bid. So it really does help.

We are looking at a unit right now, a home that probably assesses out at ‑‑ appraises out at about $114,000 that we can get for about $70,000 and it doesn't need anything, really. So I mean, that would be something that we would probably sell for $60,000 and then leverage some other HUD funds to make up the rest.

One of the neat things about being a Community Housing Development Organization is that qualifies you for what they call **home funds** and home funds are directed through the ‑‑ the ‑‑ the community development block grants that each state gets, and what happens with those is they will pay for the training and the organization of your ‑‑ your Community Housing Development Organization structure.

My coordinator, Brent Darnell, had to attend four classes and they were each four days long, and apparently HUD thought that we would wait for those classes to arrive in St. Louis. They are $5,000 per class. What we did is we flew Brent to wherever the next class was until he was done because we were using HUD's money to do it.

So they paid us approximately $30,000 a year for the first three years to get this up and running. We opened up our first community, affordable housing community last year. It has 50 two‑bedroom units, all universal design. We leveraged state low‑income housing tax credits. We also leveraged a lot of green tax credits. All the units are completely geothermal so that the heating and cooling is around $30 a month. They are 1400 square feet, by the way, and then they have power assisted by solar.

So, you know, not only are the rents very, very low. They are in very low 300, $325 a month, but the utilities are pretty much mitigated as well. So right now we are in the process of breaking ground for another 40 units and we have another 40 in the planning stage if we can get that far.

>> KATHY HATCH: Wow.

>> CRAIG HENNING: So it ‑‑

>> KATHY HATCH: A lot going on there.

>> CRAIG HENNING: Well, and it's a different model.

>> KATHY HATCH: Yes.

>> CRAIG HENNING: And the good thing is, though, is with this new HUD provision, we are in there providing services and being paid for those services, so we make about $14,000 a year to go in and provide services for the individuals who live in those units and it's not segregated housing. Its seniors and people with disabilities. The one issue that we did have and this is somewhat ironic is we had ten set aside units out of 50 and, of course, we filled all of those. What the developer who works with us and the management company didn't realize is most of the other people who applied were also consumers of ours, but they didn't necessarily need an accessible unit. And they were not used to a group of people who would kind of pull together and self‑advocate at the drop of a hat. So they were not used to people going to the management company, going, what about this? What about that? And standing up for themselves. It's been an interesting ride.

>> PARTICIPANT: So, Craig, this is Judy. The CIL owns this apartment complex?

>> CRAIG HENNING: We don't own it. We are a time limited partner in it. In order to get ‑‑ to stay within the guidelines of RSA, we do not own the units. Go ahead.

>> PARTICIPANT: What is a time limited partner?

>> CRAIG HENNING: Well, the way the program is set up and I think this is a generalization to all states but I know it's in the state of Missouri, is that after a certain period of time, any interest we have in that complex has to be liquidated and we don't have a choice, even if we wanted to retain any interest in it we couldn't. So that ‑‑ that is how we have gotten around 9 permanent housing provisions. (Not clear what he said here.)

>> PARTICIPANT: Has that ‑‑ did you have to take that to RSA to get it sanctioned?

>> CRAIG HENNING: We had our division of vocational rehabilitation do that for us.

>> PARTICIPANT: Oh.

>> CRAIG HENNING: As long as it's not a long‑term situation, they were okay with that. Basically the way things are structured also, after these communities are built and they are filled which is not hard, there is a huge waiting list, our only affiliation is providing these services, which are basically expanded IL services. I wanted to give you an example. One of the things we know is that some of our folks, even though everything is accessible, they have a hard time getting trash out of the house and down to the dumpster kind of thing. So on Thursday, everybody puts their trash out by their front door and we have one of our other consumers who works for us go out and pick it up and put it in the dumpster for them. It's no big deal.

But those are the types of value‑added services that we are providing up there and we'll do that for a duration of 15 years.

>> PARTICIPANT: Well, and typically, HUD wants the properties to have a separate owner.

>> CRAIG HENNING: Right.

>> PARTICIPANT: I'm assuming that would be another way to get around what RSA requires.

>> CRAIG HENNING: Right. Right. Because actually the developer that we partnered with, he is the owner of record and he is the managing business partner of the property.

>> PARTICIPANT: Okay.

>> CRAIG HENNING: That's how we get around that. It works out really well, because what we have found is there is a lot ‑‑ our organization has kind of taken the perspective of “let's get paid for what we do.” And one of the things that we noticed over the last several years and like I said, we've had a really bad economic time with, you know, a couple of thousand Chrysler workers and what have you being laid off, that we were getting a lot of seniors who weren't necessarily meeting what we would call our standards or the criteria for disability.

But nonetheless, you know, you are homeless or, you know, you can't get your medication or whatever, and so we ‑‑ we have kind of always had a theory, we are not going to, you know, throw you out on the street if no one else would help you. What we have done is we found funders that will fund those other groups so that we can kind of make a cohesive service menu for everybody. Because the ‑‑ the reality of it is that the lower income seniors if they don't have a disability today, they will. That's one reality that we face, and those lines are blurring all the time. So it's kind of a win/win, plus it helps us with community integration.

>> PARTICIPANT: Absolutely. And now, let me ask you about the CHDO set aside, the 15% of all home allocations, do you take advantage of that on an ongoing basis?

>> CRAIG HENNING: Oh, yeah.

>> PARTICIPANT: How?

>> CRAIG HENNING: What we did is on the set aside, that's our service contract.

>> PARTICIPANT: Oh.

>> CRAIG HENNING: As well as having those other ten units subsidized.

>> PARTICIPANT: Okay. Good.

>> CRAIG HENNING: So it's kind of a win/win, and one of the things you have to, I guess if a center is going to get into this you start looking at these projects and there are some very large numbers floating across the page, and you have to understand they are not going to end up in your budget.

(Chuckles).

That's going to be somebody else's piece of the pie. The work that we did and the troubleshooting that we did, we were paid part of the development fee up front. So, you know, it's worked out all the way around for us. We actually are in the ‑‑ we are ready to break ground on the second set of these apartments and what we did is we pulled together some of the residents, tenants from the first set of units and we had a meeting in their community room. We said, what are things that are working for you? What are things that are not working for you? What are things that we are doing that you don't care if we ever do it again? And what are things that you think we need to be doing that we're not doing at all?

And what we found is ‑‑ and anybody who works with universal design knows this, universal design is not perfect, by a long shot. And so they made a laundry list of suggestions, and so we went to the developer and we said, we want to do as many of these things on this next project as we can and then the next one that comes down the line, we will continue to perfect this.

And his initial response was, you know, oh, my God, it's going to cost us a tremendous amount of money. When we went through the list, just getting him in to look at the list was the difficult part. When we shared the list with him, he said that's not going to cost much. We realized that. We just needed you to realize that. We're doing a lot of things, moving shelving, doing pocket parts of a kitchen counter so folks in wheelchairs can slide up. So there's lots of things that ‑‑ you know, that we have learned along the way and we are trying to make the perfect units. Probably it will never happen but we're working on it.

(Chuckles).

>> PARTICIPANT: Craig, is there any way to get your contact information so we can talk one on one maybe about some of those things and get some guidance?

>> CRAIG HENNING: Sure. Sure. Kathy can post up my email if she wants.

>> KATHY HATCH: I will tell you what, it's on the ILRU website too.

>> CRAIG HENNING: Is it?

>> KATHY HATCH: I believe so. Except it may have just a general email address, but I can put it up too. I can put it on our website so it's under this IL conversation.

>> CRAIG HENNING: Yep, that works.

>> KATHY HATCH: I will do it for all of three of you so if people want to call you and ask you questions, they can do that.

>> CRAIG HENNING: One thing that we are really kind of excited about too. When we got in a bind with how do we pay the housing coordinator because HUD won't let us build anything, and we started looking at these foreclosures, we are waiting to get our certification back, probably tomorrow, like I said from the National Community ‑‑ the stabilization trust and basically that will give us access to almost every major lender's foreclosures.

And in a lot of instances and, I guess, you know, maybe some other center people, this is not most of our forte. I have only been doing this 30‑something years. What do I know? The bottom line is for the banks, it's financially more beneficial to them to gift them (forclosures) over to the center than to let them be sold for auction. They are actually going to ‑‑ they are going to come out better financially. So, you know, they act like, oh, they have done you this tremendous favor. They are not doing you any favor. They are doing their shareholders favors. But if it's going to get a house for somebody who could never, ever, get a house, that's important.

We actually took a house and working with Hunger Task Force, which is a coalition of all the food pantries in our county, we took a house that they gave us. We renovated it completely and found a very low‑income family and sold them that house. And that money that the house sold for was used to start the process of making that Hunger Task Force, its own not for profit.

We had legislators there and the newspapers. It was great PR. I mean, what more could you do besides give somebody a house so that they could fund their own not‑for‑profit? We looked pretty good that day.

>> PARTICIPANT: Are you able to get interim financing? Or do you have cash flow good enough to do the fix ups?

>> CRAIG HENNING: We have cash flow to do that. We could get the financing if, in fact, we needed that. One of the things that they wanted us to do ‑‑ we ‑‑ we ‑‑ and I know this is different in every state and how it's done in every state is different, but in Missouri, our home and community‑based services program, we have had the consumer‑directed program since 1999. And we have a small in‑home program and I know some people are probably getting their hackles up, but our theory was, on consumer‑directed, if you lose the ability to direct your own care, because you should be in hospice, technically, legally, we were supposed to say, sorry, we have to send you to a nursing home now and get you to the finish line and toss you off. We just weren't willing to do that.

Anyway, we have leveraged those funds to go ahead and finance the housing program, but typically, we're not spending more than $5 to $10,000. It's not a tremendous amount of money.

>> PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

>> KATHY HATCH: And when you started doing this Craig, you didn't have all of that money?

>> CRAIG HENNING: No.

>> KATHY HATCH: In your little bio, you guys started with a really low budget and now you are, you know, doing real well. So ‑‑

>> CRAIG HENNING: And basically too, our center has cannibalized resources, so to speak, within our community, which every center does you know, every executive director out there, I don't think there's one that doesn't want to be able to sit back and say, we have a pretty firm command of every resource that's available to our consumer base. But the problem is, that's kind of like getting the water from the well for everybody. Eventually the well goes dry and you better dig a new one. That's kind of where we are at at this point. So we have been real happy with this, and like I said, it's kind of been a “what's going to happen next,” we're not real sure type thing, but it's been a good process, and if people are really interested, we are more than willing to help folks, because lord knows we had a lot of help getting started.

>> KATHY HATCH: That's great.

>> PARTICIPANT: Congratulations, Craig!

>> CRAIG HENNING: Oh, thank you.

>> PARTICIPANT: We have done similar stuff here in Corpus Christi, Texas, and it does pay off, definitely.

>> CRAIG HENNING: Well, and I tell you what, even our ‑‑ the most conservative of our legislators, as I would put it, are more than happy ‑‑ they will get on the floor of the house of the Senate and say we don't need to do this tax credit anymore but if we are building it in their district, they are there cutting the ribbon. The mayor of the town our center is located in, his mother actually lives in a unit. So we have got a little buy‑in going on around here.

>> KATHY HATCH: It's developing those relationships. It's not going to be ‑‑ it's not easy, but it's doable.

>> CRAIG HENNING: Yep, yep, and it's over time.

One thing I do want to emphasize, and we thought the HUD people were just, you know, trying to kind of pull us along the process but they kept saying, as soon as you get your certification, developers are going to find you, and they did.

>> KATHY HATCH: Really?

>> CRAIG HENNING: They were knocking down the door. Yep. Yep. We had three or four contact us asking if we would sign off on projects. We signed off on one and we weren't willing to do that. It definitely gets you noticed.

>> KATHY HATCH: Hmm. What do you mean there? You said we had signed off on one but we weren't willing to do that. I'm not sure what you meant.

>> CRAIG HENNING: We had people competing for the same funding from the state to do various projects.

>> KATHY HATCH: But to do accessibility stuff?

>> CRAIG HENNING: Right. Right. And it was the same pot of money and so it was, you know, five or six entities fighting for that money. What happened was we were successful enough in our first endeavor, that they were ‑‑ they were naturally attracted. They figured that ‑‑ I think the thinking was, if they could get us to sign off, it was a linchpin and it was, you know, in the bag so to speak. And then we had Joplin. So that kind of threw a monkey wrench in things. But the bottom line is the developers will come out of the wood work and say, hey, can you sign off on my project? If you have somebody willing to pay $8 to $10 million to help out our consumers, you don’t want to sign on to a project with his competition, so to speak.

>> KATHY HATCH: Mm‑hmm. And did you have to ‑‑ when you did that first project, that had the accessibility features and all of those different things, how did you market that? I mean, how did all of those builders find out about it? What did you do to do that?

>> CRAIG HENNING: The Missouri Housing development Corporation handles all the HUD money for the state and they post what they call a NOFA and it's a Notice of Funding Availability and they break them down on their website as to what type of housing they are for. And these developers go in and look at those, and then they try to develop projects and get them approved. It's a competitive process. So that's how that works in the state.

HUD had just put out on their website that we were one of the new crop of Community Housing Development Organizations, and those developers, like I said, this is a significant ‑‑ this is a significant financial opportunity for them. So they are seeking out what they perceive as the best chance to have somebody sign on to their project and get approval and get the funding. So ‑‑

>> KATHY HATCH: Mm‑hmm.

>> CRAIG HENNING: It's a $190 million program a year in the state of Missouri. That gives you an idea.

>> KATHY HATCH: Wow. That's great. I wonder if it's like that in other states too.

>> CRAIG HENNING: I know that the other states do have the low‑income housing tax credits. I have heard, of course, but this could be slanted, that Missouri is the most generous, but, you know, the people telling me that are the people who want to cut the tax credit typically.

(chuckles).

>> KATHY HATCH: They have other ‑‑ other things that they want to do with that money.

>> CRAIG HENNING: Yeah, unless it's in their district, and then they want it. Then they are all for it.

>> PARTICIPANT: Craig, this is Judy again. And in that stabilization, it ‑‑ I believe I heard you say that the properties actually get turned over to you, so you own them right from the outset?

>> CRAIG HENNING: Yeah, just ‑‑ it's a temporary type of thing because what we actually do, because we have another line of money, and I don't want to muddy the waters too much, but suffice it to say the encapsulated version, we have another pot of HUD money that we get that pays rental assistance, mortgage assistance, utility assistance, repair and modification of homes. And in order to get that money for our consumers, we have to open up that program to disabilities, seniors and low‑income families. And so to do that, if we get a house that's completely inaccessible, that cannot be retrofitted, we will do what we need to do to repair it, and then we'll sell it to a lower‑income family, within the same guidelines we would use for consumers.

You know, because our way of thinking is that everybody, whether they are an individual with a disability, a low‑income senior, a low‑income family, if they are using a HUD service, if we get them into a house that they can buy and their payment is less than a Section 8 payment, then they are permanently off the grid. And so that's one more voucher or one more unit we've got to put somebody who is, you know, homeless right about now.

>> JUDY: Well, that's interesting. We have ‑‑ in Texas, there's a new program for veterans along the same lines but they hold the paper, this is through TCHEK, not through the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs. They hold it and they actually determine how much profit their participating partners can get and how much stays with them. So you don't have to go through all of that. You just own it up front. You find your own interim and then the whole profit is yours?

>> CRAIG HENNING: Yep. Yeah, and like I said, we have to jump through some hoops, but one of the things that we found too, and this is kind of whether it's housing or different other things, is that when you start looking at some of these other populations ‑‑ and I know other centers do it too. Especially the lower income seniors, their problems are the difficulties they experience every day are pretty similar to those individuals with disabilities and as our VR people, our voc rehab people for our state like to say, at our place, it's people with disabilities helping other people with disabilities, showing everybody else how to do it.

It's like they are coming to us. We have pretty much mastered the process here and now they want to come over to us. Now we don't know everything and we are not perfect, but, you know, we certainly do have a lot of pull and we work with those other communities in tandem to get housing, so get, you know, you name it, What's needed, like paratransit. We have been able to leverage a lot of that.

>> PARTICIPANT: I think the reality is there are lots of developers and lots of providers out there that do things that really don't want to mess with the population called quote/unquote disability. So let somebody else handle that, they know what they are doing and they can make me look good in the process.

>> CRAIG HENNING: Absolutely. Absolutely and it's quite lucrative too, I might add. And like I said, we would be ‑‑ myself or Brent Darnell who is on the call, will be more than happy to help anybody who wants our help.

We have a couple of other centers in our state that have cloned projects and they are similar to ours. One, actually had a state mental institution, a state hospital close down and everybody in the little town it was in lost their homes due to foreclosure because the state hospital closed, of course. And everybody worked there. So they bought up all of these homes and retrofitted them into RFCs and made a not‑for‑profit. They got a completely different outcome, but nonetheless, it's a very successful program and it's worked and it's allowed them to go in and model a program after pretty much exactly what we are doing.

So, you know, it's been a win/win and we have been able to take care of some problems in some very nontraditional ways. Nontraditional CIL issues that we run into, because what we find here in Missouri is every time our department of mental health or what have you cuts funds or discontinues services for one population, they are coming through our front door.

>> PARTICIPANT: Mm‑hmm.

>> CRAIG HENNING: So really if we are not ready for them, then, you know, it's going to be a problem.

>> PARTICIPANT: Mm‑hmm. You will end up with them.

>> KATHY HATCH: You mentioned turning these homes into RFCs or what did you say?

>> CRAIG HENNING: Yeah, yeah the Residential Care Facilities. They are like three‑person almost like a group home. And which I'm not real ‑‑ you know, that's not my big thing but most of the folks they are talking about taking out of this institution, about 20% of them can live fairly independently out in the community. And then the majority of the individuals have a level of disability that ‑‑ that they do need ‑‑ they need some support. And so they are trying to do it with an independent living spin to give them as much freedom as they can, while providing enough support within the environment. And like I said, they had a ready made, whole blocks being foreclosed upon because the people who used to work at the hospital had those houses.

>> KATHY HATCH: Right.

>> CRAIG HENNING: So they kind of saved the town too. It was a really strange dynamic, but it's worked and they actually have a bunch of little towns around there that are ‑‑ you know, they are picking up houses and doing their thing. So ‑‑

>> PARTICIPANT: That model, Craig, you indicated they ‑‑ the center actually created another not‑for‑profit to handle that?

>> CRAIG HENNING: Right.

>> PARTICIPANT: Which is obviously an option to be done elsewhere.

>> CRAIG HENNING: Right and that's actually what we are doing. We have another not‑for‑profit that we are just kind of breathing life into, getting it up and running, and it will actually be able to hold accessible, affordable rental properties.

>> PARTICIPANT: Mm‑hmm.

>> CRAIG HENNING: And our hope is to be able to allow that entity to finance other low‑income people who probably most lenders would never look at.

>> PARTICIPANT: Right.

>> CRAIG HENNING: So ‑‑

>> PARTICIPANT: Very good. I would love to talk further with you. We have done that here in Texas. I've got ‑‑ thank you so much. I'm sorry to take up all the questions.

>> CRAIG HENNING: Oh, no, that's quite already.

>> KATHY HATCH: They are good questions. Does anybody else have a question that they would like to put to Craig or any of the other presenters?

>> PARTICIPANT: Yes, I have a question.

>> PARTICIPANT: Kathy, can I get your email address?

>> KATHY HATCH: Mine? Yes, it's kathatch@charter.net.

>> PARTICIPANT: All right. Thank you very much.

>> KATHY HATCH: Sure.

>> PARTICIPANT: This is Vito Lucido. I have a question. Yeah, Craig, when did you start this process when the Chrysler plants went down, you said, and that that's kind of when the problem presented itself. How long ago was that?

>> CRAIG HENNING: That was back in early 2007. And in a former life, I was a rehab employment specialist and one of the things that I was responsible for was watching some of the moderate industry to be able to spot trends so that if ‑‑ if, say, a certain sector of manufacturing was going to suddenly plummet, that you weren't having people from your vocational rehabilitation or whatever your state calls it, trying to find jobs for people in that industry, only to be laid off a month later.

And when I saw the information on the two Chrysler plants, it was ‑‑ you know, I told the staff here, who some of them have been with me since 1999, I said, we are going to get deluged and literally, it happened, we had 518 new people show up on our door step in the first three months.

Does that kind of give you an idea of what happened to us?

>> PARTICIPANT: Right.

>> CRAIG HENNING: And a lot of these were guys who, you know, diabetic, had a bad heart, this, that and the other and they were hanging on for another year to get their retirement and then they get pink slipped. And so they are in this crisis, where they are financially leveraged, you know, completely, and they have no way of getting income and getting disability. There's every roadblock in the world. You know, and plus it's kind of holding their hand and saying, you know, I'm sorry to tell you, but the way our systems are set up, you are going to lose probably most of what you own and that's not fun. It's one thing if you have to do it once in a blue moon, but 518 times in three months gets a little hard.

>> PARTICIPANT: Did you say that HUD approached you after the Community Action Agency and the Housing Authority said, “we don't want a part of this?”

>> CRAIG HENNING: Right. Right. Actually HUD sought us out. And the sad part was, that HUD sought us out! They are like, you have to, you have to, you have to. And we internally ‑‑ and we are pretty progressive and nimble around here. We can scramble and get something in place fairly quickly. So we got ‑‑ we put a lot of effort into it and Brent came on board and we were great guns and then all of a sudden it was ‑‑ we said we're ready for a project. They said, no! You've got to wait a year. We're like, pardon me? What did you just say? So we actually snuck in a project kind of with a developer and did it on the side, and so we got the experience, anyway.

>> KATHY HATCH: So it worked out the way it was supposed to.

>> CRAIG HENNING: Yep, yep, it sure did.

>> PARTICIPANT: This is Micah. Can you hear me?

>> KATHY HATCH: Yes, go ahead.

>> MICAH: Okay. Great. My question is regarding, well I have two questions, actually, I will start with the easy one. Where can I get the RSA guidelines regarding what type of housing Independent Living Centers are able to have or participate in?

>> CRAIG HENNING: Boy, off the top of my head, I want to say Section 504, but I could be wrong. I haven't looked at them in quite sometime. But I can try to find those for you. That's no problem.

>> PARTICIPANT: Okay. Thanks. And then my second question is, what was your primary role in this when you were approached to be a CHDO. What type of activities did you do?

>> CRAIG HENNING: Well, what we did, in order to leverage what they call home funds from HUD, we had to have somebody who we committed to train to be a -- I will shoot out the ‑‑ **housing development professional** which basically puts you on par with any housing developer out there so to speak.

So that was a $20,000 process and so they went ahead and funded that and that's really all we had to commit to doing. However, we had the capacity that we had quickly put together. So we decided we are going to do something and not just sit here waiting for, you know, the blessing to come.

So that's when we started looking at the foreclosures and things like that.

>> PARTICIPANT: I see. Great. Thank you.

>> CRAIG HENNING: Yep.

>> KATHY HATCH: Anybody else? Any other questions? Nope? Okay. Well, presenters, is there anything else that you would like to add just as closing comments?

No?

Well, then it is about 4:25 and I would just like to say thank you all for being here today. Thanks to our CART folks and to SKIL Independent Living out in Kansas for doing their thing, the CART presentation for everyone and also SKIL is recording this. So that it will be on our website very, very quickly after the call.

Thanks for being here. Again, I would like to invite you to visit the APRIL website where you can find documents discussed today and an archived copy plus a transcript of the presentation in just a few days. It's [www.April‑rural.org](http://www.Aprilrural.org) and look for IL Conversations and, again, my email is kathatch@charter.net , if you have any questions.

And two things I got from this, that I will put up presenters' emails on the website so that you can get in touch or talk to them if you like, and also there was a question about the RSA guidelines for CILs, it's not ownership really of housing but ‑‑ Craig you know what they are asking for. So we'll get together and make sure that that answer gets on the website as well. Okay?

>> CRAIG HENNING: Yep. Wrote it down. Ready to go.

>> KATHY HATCH: Very good. Very good. So this IL Conversation is presented by the IL Net which is operated by Independent Living Research Utilization at TIRR Memorial Herman and support for the presentation was provided by the US Department of Education, Rehab Services Administration. No official endorsement of the Department of Education should be inferred.

So again, thanks, everybody. I really appreciate you being here. Thank you so much, presenters. This was wonderful, and the discussion was great. Bye, everybody.

>> Bye.

(End of meeting 4:25 p.m. Eastern Time)