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HANO To Welcome National Alliance of Resident Services in Affordable and Assisted Housing to New Orleans This Week

More than 300 resident services trailblazers to attend 14th Annual Conference focused on capacity building and the transformation of impoverished communities

New Orleans, LA (September 20, 2016) - On Wednesday, the Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO) will welcome more than 400 public and assisted housing advocates, tax credit sponsors, employees and government officials from across the nation to celebrate the 14th Annual Conference of The National Alliance of Resident Services in Affordable and Assisted Housing (NAR-SAAH). The conference, in collaboration with The National Association of Resident Management Corporations (NARMC), will take place on September 21 thru 24 at the Sheraton Hotel located at 500 Canal Street.

The comprehensive three-day conference agenda includes certificate training on the fundamentals of housing advocacy for commissioners, resident leaders, service providers, and public housing agency employees. The organization will provide an educational tour of mixed-income housing communities, an exhibition, and a variety of resident caucuses, book signings and plenary sessions featuring local and national housing professionals.

The conference will kick-off with a session on affordable housing matters accompanied with lessons learned presented by local housing advocates, developers and staff from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). NAR-SAAH President and Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Samuel B. Little, along with members of the Board of Directors will preside over the conference, and will offer opening remarks to attendees.

"In the haze of economic tough times, and funding reductions for programs that enhance the quality of life, I applaud the attendees' exemplary courage, novel ideas and passion for families from diverse walks of life," said NAR-SAAH President and Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Samuel B. Little. "Many have collaborated to ensure that the conference provides a forum to exchange

ideas, illumine mysteries about capacity building programs, and foster programmatic breakthroughs."

Additional sessions include discussions on leveraging resourceful partnerships between public housing authorities and universities, standards of efficient housing providers, encouraging healthy eating for public housing families, sustainability through resident services, and the challenges and solutions associated with violence and community health.

NAR-SAAH will highlight the STEM Innovation Network Scholars Program during the conference, and will present eight national awards to individuals and/or organizations that have achieved success in developing innovative programming, capacity building mechanisms, and that continue to ensure the health and safety of the community during the Awards Luncheon on Thursday, September 22. The Housing Authority's **ConnectHome** initiative, launched by President Barack Obama in 2015 to enhance broadband connection to public housing residents, has been selected as a 2016 National Trailblazer Award recipient.

"HANO and our resident services leadership are thrilled to welcome members of NAR-SAAH to our great city to continue discussions on transforming public housing into sustainable, efficient communities," said Executive Director Gregg Fortner. "We maintain our commitment to providing affordable housing opportunities for low-to-moderate income families as the primary mission of this agency, but will continue to work with our very passionate resident leadership to ensure the economic growth and stability of our residents through the use of technology and other resources available."

The conference promises innovative keynote speakers including Dr. Sandra E. Crewe, Howard University Dean of the School of Social Work; Leslie Ellison, Orleans Parish School Board Member; Michael S. Harrison, Superintendent of the New Orleans Police Department; Chelsea Bosley, Miss Dillard University; and Eugene Jones, Jr., Chief Executive Officer for the Chicago Housing Authority.

NAR-SAAH is a 501-C3 organization developed in 2002 to assist resident services employees and public/assisted housing residents by shaping national housing policy, expanding partnerships with community institutions, leveraging funding streams to support resident programs, and speaking on matters impacted by changing economic conditions and shifting political priorities. The organization promotes programs to empower public housing residents about health, education, professional development and finances while assisting resident leaders in the areas of policy research and legislation, grant applications, business partnerships and audits.

For more information visit www.narsaah.org.