



**FOR IMMEDIATE
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**Jon Gutzmann, Executive Director of Saint Paul Public Housing Agency,
Elected President of Public Housing Authorities Directors Association**

Jon Gutzmann, Executive Director of the Saint Paul Public Housing Agency (PHA), recently was elected president of the national Public Housing Authorities Directors Association (PHADA). Andy Boss, Chair of the PHA's Board of Commissioners, said "Jon's election to lead PHADA attests to the fact that he is one of the top housing administrators in the country. Before and during Jon's 18 year tenure, the Saint Paul PHA has earned a reputation for excellent public housing and Section 8 voucher programs." In 1996, the St. Paul PHA had the highest performance ranking of the nation's large housing authorities (the only year HUD published such a ranking).

Mr. Gutzmann and the Saint Paul Public Housing Agency (PHA) have racked up an impressive list of awards from housing organizations and "High Performer" ratings from HUD (U.S. Dept of Housing & Urban Development), which pays the housing subsidies to cities and states each year after Congress appropriates funds. In 1999, Minnesota's Chapter of the National Association of Housing & Redevelopment Officials' presented Mr. Gutzmann their most prestigious award, the Allan Anderson Award of Merit. In 2004, he was awarded Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity's "Community Builder of the Year" award.

Mr. Gutzmann and PHADA are in the forefront of current housing industry efforts to improve how HUD's programs work and how Congress funds them. They are simultaneously working with Congressional members and staff, HUD officials and other housing leaders on several breaking issues, including a major housing bill that recently was introduced in Congress ("The State and Local Housing Flexibility Act of 2005"). Mr. Gutzmann testified before a House subcommittee in May, supporting some parts of the bill and recommending changes to other provisions. He and PHADA are working with other housing groups to present a unified set of recommendations to HUD and Congress.

Founded in 1979, PHADA represents the professional administrators of more than 1900 housing authorities from all over the United States. Jon Gutzmann has served as PHADA's Vice President for Housing for the past two years. Earlier he held a similar position with the National Association of Housing & Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO).

Mr. Gutzmann says, "I'm looking forward to this opportunity to lead PHADA's efforts to reform national housing policy and secure adequate funding from Congress for affordable housing. PHADA's professional staff in Washington and the leadership team drawn from the member agencies are top-notch. They are knowledgeable and effective advocates with access to key

Congressional staff and members, top HUD officials and other housing industry organizations. This is a critical time for people who rely on federal housing assistance and for the 3200 housing agencies running the local programs across the country. During my term with PHADA I will try to help move the debate in positive directions, that will help the St. Paul PHA achieve its mission of providing safe, affordable, quality housing to low income families.”

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Background:

Under the federally-funded “Public Housing” program, the St. Paul PHA owns and manages over 4200 rental homes and apartments for low income families and individuals, about 10,000 residents total. In the “Housing Choice Voucher” program, previously called “Section 8”, the PHA pays federal rent subsidies to private property owners who rent to qualified low income families and individuals. The PHA administers the voucher subsidies for about 4,000 homes and apartments, providing affordable housing to over 10,000 individuals. In both programs the tenants pay about 30% of their household income for rent and utilities, and the federal subsidies make up the difference. Taken together, the public housing and voucher programs will return over \$55 million in federal tax dollars to Saint Paul this year.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) consistently rates the Saint Paul Public Housing Agency (PHA) a “High Performer” in both its public housing and “Housing Choice Voucher” rent subsidy programs.

Information about the PHA is also posted at: www.stpaulpha.org