



For Immediate Release
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**BILLERICA HOUSING AUTHORITY RECEIVES AWARD
FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO LOCAL FOOD BANK PROGRAM**

The Billerica Housing Authority (BHA) has been recognized by the statewide public housing association for contributing its time and resources to food bank programs for the benefit of BHA residents.

The BHA was presented with an “Outstanding Agency Award” by the Massachusetts Chapter, National Association of Housing & Redevelopment Officials (MassNAHRO) at its annual conference in Falmouth. These awards recognize local housing authorities for outstanding achievement in innovative housing and community development projects.

Robert M. Correnti, Executive Director of the Billerica Housing Authority, explained that BHA residents, both elderly and non-elderly disabled, began participating in a local Food Bank program about two years ago. They drove to the distribution location or obtained transportation through the Billerica Council on Aging. But these residents had to carry boxes of food weighing 20 to 30 pounds, and obtaining transportation was often difficult.

So Correnti said the BHA decided to contribute the services of its staff in assisting these volunteers in this arduous task. BHA staff now picks up the food boxes and delivers them to each resident’s apartment. The success of this program has led to increased resident participation in the Food Bank program through participation in a second program that became available to BHA residents, the Greater Boston Food Bank. The costs to the housing authority are minimal and one staff member even uses his own vehicle. Correnti said BHA’s participation shows that even a small step can go a long way toward providing significant benefits to its residents.

“We are committed to doing what we can to assist our residents,” said Correnti. “Picking up and delivering food has connected many residents with the local Food Bank. Not only does our staff enjoy delivering the food, but it also provides interaction with residents to check on their well-being.”

“We are pleased to honor this great program developed by the Billerica Housing Authority,” said Donna Brown-Rego, Executive Director of MassNAHRO. “These awards provide an opportunity to inform the public of the innovation and creativity employed by local housing authorities across the state. They also create a resource for housing authorities to replicate these programs locally.”

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