

## WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM A TEACHER

*"I'd like to live in the same community as the kids I teach. But on what I make, I'd have to choose between rent and food."*



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There's a shortage of affordable housing in the Chicago area and throughout Illinois. A critical shortage. And if you think it just affects the very poor, think again. Seniors are being forced to move away from their families, away from the very place they call home. Young people, just starting out, can't get started in the towns and cities where they grew up. Firefighters and police officers and nurses can't afford a place to live in the communities they serve. As these people leave, communities lose their vitality, their strength, their purpose. That's why making sure we build affordable housing is in everyone's interest.

## HOUSING ILLINOIS

Housing Illinois is a network of 45 housing organizations, lending institutions, housing developers, foundations, public agencies, and municipal leaders working to increase the acceptance and availability of affordable housing for working and moderate-income families in the Chicago area and throughout Illinois.

Contact:  
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## WE NEED THE PEOPLE WHO NEED AFFORDABLE HOUSING





# THE SURPRISING FACTS ABOUT AFFORDABLE HOUSING

## BUILDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING WE CAN'T AFFORD NOT TO.

**Surprise #1:** *You'll never believe who needs affordable housing.* Imagine a family: a mom, dad, two kids. Dad works in a printing factory and makes \$15 an hour. This family won't be able to afford an ordinary two-bedroom apartment anywhere in the Chicago area. Seniors whose only income is Social Security can't afford apartments in countless communities.

A person needs to make more than \$17 an hour to afford an average two-bedroom apartment. A minimum-wage worker would have to work at 3.5 jobs for 140 hours a week to get that apartment.

**Surprise #2:** *Funny. It doesn't look like affordable housing.* Affordable housing has a new face. Just look at the pictures on these pages. Working

with community leaders, architects, and landscape designers, today's affordable housing is meant to blend in, to be as much a part of the community as the people who live in it.

**Surprise #3:** *Johnny got all A's and B's.* As the cost of housing goes up, working families on the edge have to move from place to place. That means kids moving from school to school to school. They suffer. Their education suffers. Affordable housing gives families stability and kids thrive.



**Surprise #4:** *You won't believe what my house sold for.* Some people may think that mixed-income housing has a negative effect on property values. But experience all across America has shown that *not* to be true. In many cases, property values for both houses and apartments have gone up as affordable housing is built.

**Surprise #5:** *Am I the only one who thinks this is a great idea?* We asked people all over the Chicago area how they felt about building affordable housing where they lived. Two-thirds of them said they supported more moderate- and low-income housing in their area. Even so, when affordable housing is proposed for a community, the few voices against can be pretty loud. So speak up and say "yes." Affordable housing is worth fighting for.