

Dothan Housing Held Its Inaugural Our Purpose Gala & Announced Susan Morrison Memorial Scholarship

Alabama College of Osteopathic Medicine (ACOM) received the 2022 Community Partnership Award, & Jeff Williams was selected as the 2022 Commissioner of the Year

DOTHAN, ALABAMA, UNITED STATES, January 13, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Dothan Housing (DH) hosted its Inaugural Our Purpose Gala & unveiled the Susan Morrison Scholarship on Friday, December 16, 2022! This Gala event took place from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM at Bella's Fine Dining & Ballroom in Dothan, AL. The gold-ladened ambiance in the city's heart, downtown Dothan, AL, served as a beautiful catalyst for some notable moments perfect for an inaugural event.



Susan Morrison Scholarship Check

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As we chase a better version for ourselves and have evolved from an agency that just collected rent, this scholarship will change the lives and trajectory of families for generations to come.”

Samuel P. Crawford

After a year of accomplishments, [the Our Purpose Gala was most assuredly the crowned jewel for 2022](#). DH's President & CEO, Samuel P. Crawford, wanted a space to honor Board Commissioners for their dedication to DH and highlight notable community partners. This vision was made tangible by Human Resources Generalist Justise Black, who spearheaded the event and served as the evening's Master of Ceremony.

Opening with a liberating invocation from one of the agency's Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program Managers, Tiffany Trailer, the evening flowed seamlessly

into a warm welcome from DH's Senior Vice President & COO, Dr. Michael C. Threath. "To be a part of this historical moment in our agency's history, commemorating 80 years of development,

was nothing short of an honor and privilege", says Dr. Threatt.

While listening to the intricate sounds of the invited saxophonist Charles "CC" Carter, guests marveled over dinner and socialized, preparing for the program to come. Surrounded by pieces of curated DH history, celebration and reflection filled the atmosphere. The evening's program continued with a lively introduction of the guest speaker completed by Reverend Dr. Charles Lewis of Dothan Community Church.

Gala attendees were pleased to receive Pastor Delvick McKay, the City of Dothan's Director of Personnel and Pastor of Greater Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church (GSMBC). Pastor McKay spoke to the occasion and theme of Transformational Leadership and being a product of public housing as a Johnson Homes success story.

With vigorous applause, the evening carried forth as Tera Wells and Samiyah Craddock, DH Resident Service Managers, acknowledged the importance of public-private partnerships. They presented the 2022 Community Partnership Award to the Alabama College of Osteopathic Medicine (ACOM), an education extension of Southeast Health.

Hannah Taylor, ACOM Student Life and Activities Coordinator, accepted the award on behalf of the academic institution and facilitators, Dr. Audrey Vasauskas and Dr. Chante Richardson. The partnership with ACOM began as a collaboration with other entities to address the COVID-19 pandemic response and ensure underserved communities received vaccine information and opportunities to receive the vaccine.

This partnership also created a Community Health Clinic at the new headquarters of DH, the Our Community Housing & Enrichment Center (OCHEC). DH became part of ACOM's curriculum for medical residents to graduate. This collaborative partnership has assessed, planned, implemented, coordinated, monitored, and evaluated community medical services for low-income communities, including public housing residents, Section 8 HCV participants, and other community stakeholders' health and human service needs.

DH has received \$300,000.00 from the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) to address COVID-19 through this partnership. The same award was the catalyst for DH's selection for the



80 Years of Development Logo

ACOM logo

2021 Best Practices of the Year award from the Alabama Association of Housing & Redevelopment Authorities (AAHRA) for Bridging the Gap between Housing and Health through Public-Private Partnerships.

Next, the 2022 Commissioner of the Year was presented by Dr. Threatt and DH's Board Chairman, David Jamison, to the agency's Vice Chairman, Jeff Williams. Williams has 30 years of experience in the banking industry, including his current role as Regional President for SmartBank®. "The progress made by the agency can be attributed to multiple individuals and supporters, yet dedication of duty like that of Vice Chairman Jeff Williams is rare and appreciated. His insight is truly invaluable," says Jamison.

Williams went above and beyond the requirements of the Vice Chairman position by teaching a series on Financial Literacy and participating as a commencement speaker at the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program graduation this year.

Following the award presentations, Crawford unveiled the Susan Morrison Memorial Scholarship in honor of former Commissioner Susan Morrison. Post-unveiling Mr. Morrison, the widower to the late Susan Morrison, presented a heartfelt bio of the famed Berkshire Hathaway REALTOR®. Her unexpected passing was heartbreaking, so establishing the scholarship to continue the heritage of her name was essential to DH.

Post remarks made by the Morrison family came from Misty Morgan of the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce. Morgan enthusiastically pointed out DH's level of impact and change. She encouraged attendees to contribute to the Morrison scholarship to continue effective change through education.

In a display of corporate social responsibility and as a heartfelt surprise to the Morrison family, SmartBank's® Vice President/ Corporate Relationship Manager Susan Wilkins presented \$1,000.00 toward the scholarship fund. The contribution and those made by additional patrons in attendance solidified a foundation for scholarship awards, their recipients, and DH's impact goals. "As we chase a better version for ourselves and have evolved from an agency that just collected rent, this scholarship will change the lives and trajectory of families for generations to come," says Crawford.

Speaking of scholarships, DH is happy to inform the public that the Public Housing Authorities Directors Association (PHADA) Scholarship application is ready and available to eligible graduating seniors.

Every year PHADA awards three scholarships to deserving youth currently being served by a PHADA member agency. These include the Stephen J. Bollinger Memorial Scholarship; The Freedom & Civil Rights Scholarship; and the Nan McKay Pathway to Achievement Scholarship so generously provided by that renowned consulting firm.

Scholarship money goes directly to the school the recipient will be attending and may be used to pay for tuition, books, and activities directly related to the student's education.

Previous DH's PHADA Scholarship Recipient, Jamilla Kinsey, received the scholarship and recently finished Fisk University in May 2022. This is a testament to the effectiveness of the PHADA Scholarship opportunity. Watch the video to learn more about her accomplishments as a college graduate in her interview with WDHN and her goal of attending [law school](#).

Please email Community Relations Manager Leah Gunn, at lgunn@dothanhousing.org, for more information.

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