

AHC's Resident-Services Effort Wins Inaugural 'Bozman Award'

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The resident-services program of AHC Inc. (Arlington Housing) has been named recipient of the inaugural Ellen Bozman Affordable Housing Award, presented by the Alliance for Housing Solutions.

Susan Retz, chairman of the alliance, said it was "particularly fitting" that the first Bozman award went to the resident-services program.

"Not only was Ellen a founder of AHC, but she also was a strong proponent of, and a volunteer participant in, the program," Retz said.

Now more than 15 years old, the resident-services program is designed to provide education and personal-development services to residents of AHC's rental properties. Reaching out to individuals from pre-school-age to senior citizens, the program touches 2,000 people each year.

The outreach program includes tutoring, summer camps, after-school services, ESL classes, computer training, financial workshops, nutrition programs, craft classes and college and career counseling.

"The purpose really is to improve the quality of life" of residents, said Jennifer Endo, director of the AHC resident-services program. "We're community-based, and the staff become trusted members of the community."

Bozman, who died in January, served on the County Board from 1974 to 1997, and even in retirement was active in a host of community endeavors, including the search for affordable-housing. She was a founder of the Alliance for Housing Solutions, and served on its board of directors.

As a volunteer, she each week would help teach sewing skills to immigrant women, and "experienced first-hand the value of providing much-needed services to people where they live," Endo said.

"She was so committed," Endo noted.

Endo recalled that, as Bozman's health declined in the months preceding her death, the participants in the sewing program expressed their concern in many ways.

"What a great life - she was loved among some of the most disenfranchised," Endo noted.

Founded in Arlington, the Alliance for Housing Solutions is a non-profit organization that aims to reverse the loss of affordable-housing units, particularly family-sized units, and foster new approaches to address the housing crisis in the county.



Susan Retz of the Alliance for Housing Solutions presents Jennifer Endo of AHC's resident-services program with the first Ellen Bozman Affordable Housing Award.