

700 E. Franklin St., Suite 3A,
Richmond, Virginia 23219

804-354-0641
Fax: 804-354-0690
TTY: 804-237-7545
help@phonehome.org

www.phonehome.org

PRESS RELEASE

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CONTACT:

MIKE BURNETTE 804.354.0641
mburnette@phonehome.org

HOME WINS GOVERNOR'S AWARD

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Norfolk, VA— Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia, Inc. has received the Best Housing Organization Award as presented by Gov. Tim Kaine at the 2006 Governor's Housing Conference in Norfolk on November 30th.

Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia, Inc. (HOME) occupies a unique place among those organizations dedicated to improving housing conditions in Virginia. HOME does not build houses: it invests in people and works to change the systems and practices that limit housing choice.

HOME works to end the conditions that limit housing choice and access. Founded in 1971, HOME has helped address discriminatory practices through education, training & technical assistance, and legal action. As a national leader in fair housing, HOME helps train other fair housing organizations as well as local, state, and federal agencies. HOME works cooperatively with the housing industry to help make their products more widely available and to achieve fair housing.

In 1982 the United States Supreme Court unanimously upheld a HOME case involving racial steering, providing precedent for other successful challenges to discriminatory practices nationwide. HOME continues to lead the way in challenging housing discrimination in its many forms.

HOME also provides services to assist people overcome other obstacles to housing access, such as poor credit, access to financing, and access to financial counseling. By working to sort out financial problems, identify solutions and help renegotiate loan modifications, more than 70 percent of homeowners who are in default and seek HOME's help are able to avoid foreclosure.

Housing for people with disabilities can be particularly challenging. HOME provides assistance to group home providers who encounter difficulties in locating these critically needed facilities.

Credit abuse and predatory mortgage practices can quickly undermine a person's financial stability. HOME has provided leadership in this arena by helping to identify predatory practices and carrying out education campaigns to alert the public about these perils. HOME also helps victims of credit abuse and predatory lending re-negotiate loans and escape the terms of these dubious financial arrangements.

HOME is recognized for its ongoing leadership in advancing changes in equal housing. All Virginia citizens benefit from these accomplishments, and the repercussions of HOME's efforts are a valuable legacy for future generations as well.

Note: HOME is slated to open its Tidewater office in January 2007 in Portsmouth.