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USDA 2025 Lending Partner Awards Ceremony

The Single Family Housing Guaranteed Loan Program (SFHGLP) enjoyed hosting another annual Lender Award Ceremony and luncheon on June 24, 2025. This event was held to recognize some of the top achievements in creating homeownership by our program partners. In efforts to promote the SFHGLP to potential applicants and interested lenders around the country, the accomplishments of our most successful lending partners are celebrated every year for their utilization of the program for low- and moderate-income families across rural America. The ceremony was held at the Whitten Patio in Washington, DC, where we presented trophies to 28 recipients in 9 different categories.

The live and virtual viewing audiences were treated with opening remarks from our program's top leadership, including Christine Mechtly, Deputy Administrator of Single Family Housing, and Ingrid Ripley, Executive Director of the SFHGLP. Through their inspiring words, they shared valuable experiences from within the Agency that fueled their dedication and success. They also offered well-deserved praise to our program partners, whose outstanding accomplishments directly support the Agency's mission of enhancing the lives and opportunities of rural Americans.

Ingrid Ripley expanded her remarks to highlight some of the positive program efforts currently underway. Delegated Authority, the process that would allow approved lenders to approve and close loans with minimal Agency involvement, is in development and a pilot is expected to be announced in the near future. Another improvement that is currently under development is the much-anticipated Business to Government, or B2G. This is the system upgrade that will accommodate the direct communication between GUS and the lender's Loan Origination System (LOS) and eliminate any need for uploading files between the two. These and other key improvements presented garnered much excitement amongst the attending audience. The Agency is excited to continue improving program procedures and policies to better align with the needs of our partners across the nation.

The award winners shared their feelings and experiences surrounding the program during their acceptance speeches, highlighting the opportunities USDA creates through guaranteed lending partnerships. The celebration continued its highlight of special programs like Single Close Construction and manufactured housing programs to aid in bringing more affordable housing opportunities back into rural areas. Manufactured housing continues to be an excellent option for affordable housing, and with the recent adoption of the previous pilot program, lenders in all states can now finance existing manufactured units that meet program requirements.

We at USDA would like to thank all our program lending partners for their continuing efforts to provide housing opportunities for rural American families. Our congratulations go to all this year's award winners! Our appreciation goes out to all our program partners who make the dream of homeownership possible for rural families across America. See you all at next year's ceremony!



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Top Originating Lenders

Presented by Ingrid Ripley

1st Place: Guild Mortgage

(Bill Saunders)

2nd Place: DHI Mortgage

(Mark Toelle, Tom Dean, and Sam Blunden)

3rd Place: Neighbors Bank

(Kolby Hurt and Robert Stretch)

4th Place: Flat Branch Mortgage

(Karen Powell, Renee Williams, and Jessica Christy)

5th Place: Fairway Independent Mortgage

(not in attendance)



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Top Wholesale Lenders

Presented by Ingrid Ripley

1st Place: United Wholesale Mortgage

(Brittany Taurence)

2nd Place: Equity Prime Mortgage

(Keith Russell)

3rd Place: New Rez

(Chase Hicks and Mark McArdle)

4th Place: Click N Close

(Soliman Martinez)

5th Place: Flagstar Bank

(not in attendance)



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Top Local Lenders

Presented by
Chasity Gatson

1st Place: HR Mortgage

Puerto Rico
(Harry Rodriguez)

2nd Place: Gum Tree Mortgage

Mississippi
(Kenneth McNeal)

3rd Place: Jersey Shore State Bank

Pennsylvania
(not in attendance)

4th Place: Metroplex Mortgage

Florida
(not in attendance)

5th Place: Bangor State Bank

Maine
(not in attendance)





Top Secondary Market Partners

Presented by
Joaquin Tremols

1st Place: Oriental Bank
(Liana Pacheco and Joanelle Vargas)

2nd Place: PennyMac Loan Services
(Isaac Boltansky)

3rd Place: Arvest Bank
(not in attendance)



Top Underwriting Quality

Presented by
Chasity Gatson

1st Place: HR Mortgage

(Harry Rodriguez)

2nd Place: Banco Popular de Puerto Rico

(Linette Negron Lianza and Joanna Deynes Navajas)

3rd Place: Arvest Bank

(not in attendance)

4th Place: Trustmark National Bank

(not in attendance)

5th Place: Gershman Investment

(Kim Grimes)



Specialty Awards

presented by Joaquin Tremols



**Top Originator
Manufactured Housing**

Guild Mortgage
(Bill Saunders)



**Top Wholesale
Manufactured Housing
AND
Single Close Construction**

American Financial Resources
(Chris Guerin and Robert Pieklo)



**Top Originator
Single Close Construction**

1st Signature Lending
(Mike Johnson, Vic Vance, and
Cory Sitton)