



*Orange County*

## **Rural Development Advisory Corporation**

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### **NEWS RELEASE**

## **RDAC Announces Addition of Housing and Financial Literacy Counselors.**

In order to meet the growing demand for foreclosure prevention and mitigation services in Orange County, Orange County Rural Development Advisory Corporation (RDAC) is announcing the addition of three full-time housing/financial literacy counselors. The positions are being funded through a \$500,000 grant from the NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal.

According to RDAC, the demand for foreclosure prevention and mitigation services in Orange County has escalated—as of June 7, 2010, there were 1915 active foreclosures in Orange County, an increase of 450% from 2008—and these three positions are vital to achieving RDAC’s goals to assist 1750 additional homeowners. RDAC is also very concerned that the loss of existing affordable housing is a current threat from this crisis.

RDAC’s Executive Director, Alice Dickinson, states “RDAC has analyzed the income and housing data for its active cases and has identified that unacceptable losses are occurring to Orange County’s affordable housing stock. Data reveals that 64 percent of cases are lower income and elderly households with lower cost mortgages. RDAC is fighting to preserve this vital affordable housing stock.”

RDAC’s Director of Housing Services, Faith Piatt, said “RDAC has provided assistance to over 1400 Orange County residents, and helped them come to sustainable solutions. Prior to the existence of these three new positions, RDAC was unable to reach a high enough proportion of at-risk homeowners through direct counseling. These three new positions will drastically increase RDAC’s ability to help more Orange County residents keep their homes.”

The three positions have been filled by professionals of diverse backgrounds and levels of experience, all of whom share a common desire to keep Orange County residents in their homes and out of foreclosure.

- Bernard Bowen of Walden has over 36 years working in the banking industry and is intimately involved with families and youth in his community.
- Anne Carey-Colorado of New Windsor has decades of professional non-profit experience and has been a partner in diverse projects and other comprehensive community services.
- Jon Hilowitz of Stone Ridge is a recent graduate of Syracuse University. He has worked for 8 years with the YMCA of Kingston and has served as a Congressional Intern.

RDAC’s plans include addition of a legal team to provide a full continuum of services for the residents of Orange County.

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