

Virginia Tech Center for Housing Research

2005/06 Annual Report

A. Mission Statement

The Virginia Tech Center for Housing Research strives to improve the affordability, durability, and quality of housing by creating knowledge through research. The Center serves as a resource to policy makers, communities, and businesses for research, information, and technical assistance on affordable housing.

Since its creation by the Virginia General Assembly in 1989, the Center has built its reputation for quality and productivity through a diversified portfolio of research contributing to affordable housing in Virginia and the nation. To this end, the Center conducts research on:

- Housing Needs & Markets
- Housing Technology
- Home Ownership
- Nonprofit Housing
- Assisted Housing, and
- Fair Housing

B. Classification of Center and Key Personnel

Interdisciplinary University Center

Center Director: Casey J. Dawkins

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URL: <http://www.vchr.vt.edu>

In January 2006, Casey J. Dawkins was appointed Center Director replacing Ted Koebel (assumed the position of Chair, Urban Affairs and Planning Program, Virginia Tech). Dr. Koebel remains active with the Center as a Senior Associate.

C. Significant Accomplishments in 2005-06

Significant accomplishments of center and faculty associated with center for year ending June 30, 2006.

In our first attempt to secure funding through the National Science Foundation, the Center was awarded two three-year NSF grants in September 2005. Ted Koebel, Chair, Urban Affairs and Planning and a Senior Associate with the Center, is conducting research on modeling adoption and diffusion of innovations in residential construction. Walid Thabet, Associate Professor of Building Construction, Ralph Badinelli, Professor of Business Information Technology, and Ted Koebel are conducting research on the commercialization of innovative products in the residential construction market. The NSF funding awarded in 2005 totals nearly \$600,000 over a three year period.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded the Center a two-year extension (through April 2008) on our current up to \$50 million indefinite quantity contract for housing technology research. In 2005/06, under the umbrella of the HUD IQC, the Center faculty and affiliated faculty from the Departments of Building Construction, Architecture, and Urban Affairs and Planning began working on two awarded projects, continued work on several projects, and completed work on two projects. For new projects, co-PI's Casey Dawkins, Assistant Professor of Urban Affairs and Planning and Director, Center for Housing Research and Ted Koebel began research on the impact of zoning restrictions on the placement of manufactured housing. Michael O'Brien, Professor of Building Construction began work on populating a whole house calculator. Work continued on Industrializing the Construction Site (Phase V, Virtual Manufacturing) with Thom Mills, Associate Professor of Building Construction as PI. John Randolph, Director of the School of Public and International Affairs and Chris Nelson, Professor of Urban Affairs and Planning, continued conducting research under the HUD IQC on environmental regulations as barriers to affordable housing. Ted Koebel and Marilyn Cavell, Assistant Director of the Center, completed a project that explored how large production builders make decisions to use innovative processes and products. And through a subcontract with Newport Partners, Chris Nelson, Professor Urban Affairs and Planning and the School of Public and International Affairs, completed a project on alternatives to impact fees. Funding of nearly \$600,000 was awarded in 2005/2006 for HUD technology research.

In September 2005, the Center was funded by HUD to administer our fourth Community Development Work Study Program (CDWS). The CDWS program (\$90,000 over 2 years) focuses on community building and provides graduate student fellowships to three economically disadvantaged graduate students. The 2005-2007 program overlapped previous HUD CDWS funding for 2004-2006. Three students successfully completed year two of the 2004-2006 CDWS program in May 2006. The main focus of the program is to integrate professional practice, research, and course work within the student's academic program with the intended goal of preparing students for careers in a community building field.

The Center continues to provide on-going research support for state and local housing organizations. Ted Koebel served as a taskforce member for the Virginia Housing Study Commission and on boards of non-profit housing organizations. The Center was a sponsor for the 2005 Governor's Housing Conference, Roanoke, Virginia which provided a forum for showcasing our research projects and disseminating information to the Virginia housing community. The Center contracted with localities for housing needs

and market analyses including completing a project in August of 2005 for SAFE in McDowell County, WV. In the spring of 2006, the Center was awarded two new projects, one for the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (the Charlottesville, Virginia area) and one for the City of Portsmouth, Virginia.

Center faculty participated in a number of high profile national workshops in FY 06. Ted Koebel and Walid Thabet were invited to participate in a symposium sponsored PATH and McGraw-Hill Construction on Market Data for Housing Innovation, Housing Technology, Community and the Economy. The panel was organized to identify the most important social systems research affecting the attainment of the PATH goals to improve housing.

Casey Dawkins was invited to attend a symposium on housing affordability and density (sponsored by ULI) and also attended a symposium on entrepreneurship among minorities and women. In addition, Casey Dawkins was named co-editor of a special edition of the Journal of Urban Geography focusing on segregation measurement.

The Center hosted visiting professor Maria Luisa Gomez Jimenez July through August, 2005. Dr. Jimenez from Malaga, Spain is a Professor of Law at the University of Malaga, Campus de Teatinos and with input from Ted Koebel has completed a book on housing and land use issues.

D. Contracts Received in 2005-06

Grants and contracts received in year ending June 30, 2006.

NSF, Modeling Adoption and Diffusion of Residential Construction Innovations	\$299,869	Award, Aug. 2005
NSF, Facilitating Supply Chain Support for The Commercialization of Innovative Products in the Residential Construction Market	\$280,000	Award, Aug. 2005
HUD, Impact of Restrictions on Manufactured Housing	\$298,754	Award, Sept. 2005
HUD, PATH 13 – Whole House Calculator	\$229,843	Award, Sept. 2005
Community Development Work Study Program, 2005-2007	\$90,000	Award, Sept. 2005
Race, Space, and the Black- White Entrepreneurship Gap	\$24,695	Award, Nov. 2005
Whose Choice is it Really? An Analysis of Property Owner and Manager Characteristics and Their Impact on Housing Choice Voucher Acceptance	\$15,000	Award, Nov. 2005
Housing Needs and Market Analysis for Thomas Jefferson PDC	\$20,000	Award, Feb. 2006
HUD, two year extension on Indefinite Contract for Housing Technology Research	Up to \$50 M	Award, April 2006
Housing Strategies for Portsmouth, VA	\$45,155	Award, May 2006

Trends in Admission of Extremely Low Income Families to Housing Choice Vouchers
Following Implementation of QHWRA \$11,171 Award, June 2006

E. Goals for 2006-07

- Further develop nationally supported housing policy research
- Continue to influence the HUD research agenda and national housing policy
- Provide on-going research support for state and local housing organizations
- Expand our role in national real estate research projects
- Expand our focus in the area of “green building” and energy research.