



HOUSING COUNSELING MATTERS

Informed Homeowners, Stronger Communities

Housing Action Illinois is a nonprofit that supports housing counselors. We are collecting stories from professional housing counselors and clients to help illustrate how housing counseling makes a difference in our communities. We will use these stories to show the need for robust federal funding for housing counseling and support for education for all community members.

Example stories from recent media placements:

"One of these new homeowners, Tasia Gooden, reflected on the opportunity by telling us, 'My life will change ... by allowing me the opportunity to establish homeownership and financial literacy that will help me maintain stability, a sense of community and belonging, and financial growth that can be passed on to my children.'"

Federal budget cuts to housing counseling will hurt Champaign families, Chad Hoffman of Habitat for Humanity of Champaign County in the *Champaign News-Gazette*

"One client, Vicente Hernandez, came to HOME DuPage after more than a year of unsuccessfully searching for a home. Through pre-purchase counseling, he learned how to save for a down payment, manage his finances, and navigate the homebuying process. Today, he and his family are successful homeowners. As Vicente shared with us afterwards, HOME DuPage didn't just help him purchase a house; it helped him build stability and a future for his family."

Budget Cuts Hurt Home Affordability, Maria Luengas of HOME DuPage in *The Daily Herald* (June 2026)

"I see every day how this work changes lives. I recently heard from Sandy, a HUD-certified housing counselor in our network who provides services at Embarras River Basin Agency in Central Illinois, about a client who has been eager to become a homeowner since 2019, when he was single and working two jobs. He focused on building his credit score, married, secured a more stable job, and, with Sandy's ongoing guidance, was finally able to buy a home to provide a stable foundation for his children and wife."

Opinion: Building homes isn't enough. Buyers need help, too., David Young of Housing Action Illinois in *Crain's Chicago Business*

Well-told stories help turn moments of great crises into moments of new beginnings.

MARSHALL GANZ