

# AHMA

## NORTHWEST

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*Affordable Housing Management Association - Serving Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington State  
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### PRESS RELEASE

**AHMA Member Next Step Housing Honored With Prestigious  
"Communities of Quality" National Affordable Housing Award  
for Turnaround of Sommerset Apartments in Yakima**

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Bellevue, WA (December 13, 2004). The Washington State chapter of the Affordable Housing Management Association announced today that one of its members received the prestigious **NAHMA Communities of Quality Award** following a national competition. **Next Step Housing** won the top honor in the category "Outstanding Turnaround of a Troubled Property" for their work in redeveloping **Sommerset Apartments in Yakima, WA**. Only one award is given in that category annually by the **National Affordable Housing Management Association (NAHMA)**. **John Mifsud**, Executive Director of Next Step Housing, will travel to Washington DC in March to attend the national awards ceremony. The property competed nationally against 15 other chapter finalist properties after winning regional honors in the Northwest in August, 2004. The national award was announced last Friday by NAHMA which is headquartered in Alexandria, VA. NAHMA's members manage more than 50 percent of all privately owned, government-assisted housing and provide quality affordable housing to over two million Americans. NAHMA is an advocate for preserving decent, safe and sanitary housing and strongly encourages the achievement of excellence in affordable housing through competitions such as this one.

When Next Step Housing purchased the 43 unit property in January of 2003, some units were completely blighted, the exterior of the building needed major upgrading, and the property had a very high vacancy rate.

Next Step Housing was able to purchase and renovate the building through a very creative collaboration of private, public and non-profit dollars aggregating \$2.6 million from sources such as Washington State's **Housing Trust Fund, US Department of HUD, Impact Capital, Seattle Federal Home Loan Bank, HOME** funding through the **City of Yakima's Office of Neighborhood Development Services, the Washington Opportunities Industry Center, Washington Mutual Foundation, US Bancorp, and Wells Fargo Bank.**

Cash flow at the building is healthy. Units are only vacant while they are being remodeled and the property enjoys a healthy waiting list to fill vacancies. The property currently enjoys 100% occupancy. Eleven of the units serve homeless/disabled individuals and families supported through the McKinney Homeless Program.

The Sommerset community continues to be owned and managed by Next Step Housing. Next Step Housing is the largest provider of special needs housing in Eastern Washington operating 5 Alcohol and Drug Free Communities (ADFs) in Yakima. John Mifsud, Executive Director, can be reached at (206) 720-1744.

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