

SWMHP IMPACT

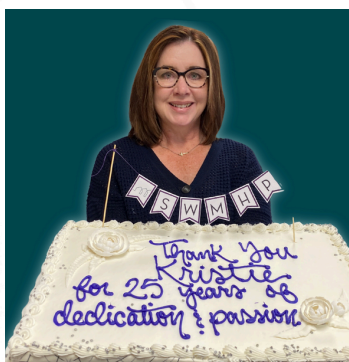
WE PARTNER WITH COMMUNITIES TO DEVELOP PLACES FOR PEOPLE TO CALL HOME.

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● CELEBRATING KRISTIE BLANKENSHIP'S 25 YEARS OF LEADERSHIP



This year, Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership celebrates **Kristie Blankenship's** remarkable **25 years of service** with the organization. Joining in 1999, Kristie has held a variety of roles, each contributing to the organization's growth and success. From expanding the multifamily portfolio to overseeing innovative housing projects, Kristie's leadership has been integral to SWMHP's mission of providing safe, affordable homes to communities across Southwest and South-Central Minnesota.

Kristie's leadership philosophy centers on **collaboration** and **community engagement**, believing in understanding the unique needs of each community and fostering partnerships that drive long-term success.

Reflecting on her 25 years, Kristie shared, "Time is a funny thing. It can be measured in a multitude of ways, in seconds, hours, days, weeks, years, decades. Time is constant, a minute is always 60 seconds, an hour is always 60 minutes, but time can feel different. Some days feel as though they fly by, and others seemingly drag on. When asked to reflect upon my 25 years of service at SWMHP, I can say that there are days when it feels like I have only been here a few years and others when it feels like an eternity. I am proud to be a part of SWMHP and continuing my work towards fulfilling our mission of partnering with communities to develop places for people to call home. I am endlessly impressed with all that we have accomplished and look forward to what the future will bring."

Kristie's contributions over the past 25 years have been pivotal in shaping SWMHP into the trusted, innovative partner it is today. As she continues to lead the organization in her role as COO, her vision and dedication to affordable housing remain a driving force behind SWMHP's ongoing **success** and **growth**.

REFLECTING ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT (RD) PROPERTIES RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY

On September 4th, the Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership (SWMHP) commemorated the completed preservation and rehabilitation of the **RD Properties** portfolio – a major milestone in affordable housing! This undertaking, which began in 2017, included \$12 million in rehabilitation work (and a total development cost of \$26 million) to preserve and enhance affordable housing for several rural communities in Southern Minnesota. With a total of **243 housing units** across **7 cities**, this effort ensures long-term affordability for families in need.

The celebration brought together community leaders, government officials, and housing advocates to reflect on this achievement. Notable speakers included **Colleen Landkamer**, USDA Rural Development State Director; **Jennifer Ho**, Minnesota Housing Commissioner; **Deletta Dean**, Regional Vice President for NeighborWorks America Midwest Region; and **Andrea Brennan**, CEO of Greater Minnesota Housing Fund (GMHF). **John Errigo**, Managing Director of Equity Investing for GMHF, emphasized the significance of this project, stating, "These things don't just happen. It takes vision, tenacity, and the partnerships necessary to preserve 243 affordable apartments across Greater Minnesota."

The rehabilitation project, supported by USDA Rural Development, Minnesota Housing, NeighborWorks America, GMHF, and other partners, ensures the long-term sustainability of these units. As Errigo noted, stable and affordable housing is crucial to improving health outcomes, education, job stability, and economic development. SWMHP's work plays a vital role in addressing Minnesota's statewide housing shortage and providing stable homes for families across Greater Minnesota.



PARTNERSHIP COMMUNITY LAND TRUST (PCLT) GROUNDBREAKING



On October 23rd, SWMHP celebrated a groundbreaking event for the construction of two new homes to be added to the **Partnership Community Land Trust (PCLT)**. These new homes will offer high-quality, affordable housing options for families and individuals in Mankato. By adding them to the PCLT, SWMHP ensures that they will remain affordable for generations, fostering long-term stability and growth within the community.

The ceremony featured a symbolic groundbreaking and recognized homeowners who have already purchased through the PCLT. It also highlighted key partners, including the **City of Mankato**, **Drummer Development**, and **Wilcon Construction**. The event provided an opportunity for community members to learn more about the PCLT and its ongoing impact on affordable housing in the region.

The PCLT is an innovative affordable housing solution that works by separating the cost of the land from the cost of the home. The nonprofit trust retains ownership of the land, leasing it to homeowners for a small, nominal fee, which significantly reduces the upfront cost of homeownership. This model ensures that homes remain affordable for future generations by requiring homeowners to resell their property at an affordable price to income-eligible buyers. Since its inception in **2008**, the PCLT has provided a pathway to homeownership for families who might otherwise face barriers due to rising housing prices and interest rates, and the program plans to expand to **100 homes** over the next **5 years**.



On November 13th, SWMHP held its **Annual Board Meeting** – a day of collaboration, recognition, and reflection. The event began with a productive board meeting, where plans for 2025 were discussed, followed by heartfelt recognitions for board members **Scott Marquardt** and **Dawn Hegland**. Scott and Dawn were honored for their exceptional service, marking 10 and 9 years of dedication and support to SWMHP.

Following the meeting, the group boarded a bus for a scenic tour of Granite Falls and Montevideo. The tour included a stop at **The YES House** in Granite Falls, an inspiring space that SWMHP is proud to have contributed to. The YES House is already making a lasting positive impact on the community, and it was a privilege to see the results of our efforts firsthand. The tour also featured some exciting developments in **Montevideo**, showcasing several successful community projects that are strengthening the region.

The day concluded with a dinner and networking session at the Montevideo Golf Course, where presentations were made by key members of SWMHP. **Jen Theneman**, Real Estate & Community Development Director, **Ali Joens**, Homeownership Director, and Board Chair **Tara Onken** all shared insights on the organization’s progress and future plans. Tara, in her speech, thanked Scott and Dawn for their invaluable service and leadership, remarking, “Your guidance has shaped SWMHP into the organization it is today, and we are deeply grateful for your unwavering commitment.” The event was a wonderful celebration of community, growth, and the collective efforts that drive SWMHP’s mission.



MISSION

We partner with communities to develop places for people to call home.

VISION

Our vision is for Southwest and South Central Minnesota to be a place where communities thrive and neighbors have a choice in a safe and welcoming home. We work toward this by promoting and delivering a high quality, comprehensive menu of housing education, products, and services.

VALUES

WE BELIEVE IN: Strong Rural Communities • Safe Housing as a Fundamental Right • Shared Empowered Future • Innovation Centered in Quality and Sustainability • People Working Together

YOUR DONATION MAKES A
DIFFERENCE!

Minnesota’s housing needs are varied and many, and we can’t do this work alone. Please partner with us today to help our friends and neighbors fulfill their housing dreams throughout Southwest and South Central Minnesota.

DONATE ❤️

