



FEDERAL HOME LOAN BANK OF INDIANAPOLIS
Building Partnerships. Serving Communities.

NEWS RELEASE

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Federal Home Loan Bank of Indianapolis Announces Community Spirit Award Recipient

Indianapolis, IN...Recognizing excellence in community economic development, Milton J. Miller, President & CEO of the Federal Home Loan Bank of Indianapolis (FHLBI), announced that Sonali Allen, Vice President, Community Development Officer of Mercantile Bank of Michigan in Grand Rapids, is the recipient of FHLBI's Affordable Housing Advisory Council's annual *Community Spirit Award*.

The FHLBI and its Affordable Housing Advisory Council present the annual Community Spirit Award to honor an individual from one of the FHLBI's member financial institutions who has shown an outstanding dedication to affordable housing and community economic development. Judging is based on a nominee's dedication to community, spirit, and action.

Sonali has demonstrated outstanding dedication to community economic development for over 10 years. Beginning as a branch manager, she built strong relationships with small businesses and residents in the low- to moderate-income neighborhoods served by her branches. When Mercantile Bank of Michigan grew to a large bank with CRA responsibilities, Sonali was a natural choice for a full-time CRA officer. During the past four years, Sonali has created and developed an outstanding community development program at Mercantile Bank of Michigan. She has developed numerous partnerships among nonprofit organizations and Mercantile Bank. She also played a leadership role in creating community development volunteer opportunities for Mercantile Bank employees. With her assistance, Mercantile has increased its support of affordable housing by investing in tax credits and by increasing involvement in the FHLBI grants for affordable housing. Finally, because of Sonali's efforts in financial literacy, Mercantile Bank of Michigan received the Michigan Bankers Association financial literacy award in 2008 and 2010.

Sonali is also very involved as a community volunteer and director for organizations such as Neighborhood Ventures, Habitat for Humanity of Kent County, LISC, Grand Rapids Opportunities for Women and the YWCA.

We recognize Sonali for her passion for community economic development and commend her for making a real difference in Michigan's communities.

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The Federal Home Loan Bank of Indianapolis (FHLBI) is one of 12 regional banks that make up the Federal Home Loan Bank System. FHLBanks are government-sponsored enterprises created by Congress to ensure access to low-cost funding for their member financial institutions. FHLBanks are privately capitalized and funded, and receive no Congressional appropriations. The FHLBI is owned by its financial institution members, which include commercial banks, credit unions, insurance companies, and savings banks headquartered in Indiana and Michigan. For more information about the FHLBI and its Affordable Housing Program, visit www.fhlbi.com.