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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**TAMPA HOUSING AUTHORITY RECEIVES THE LARGEST FSS (FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY) GRANT IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA!**

*While the agency has consistently received Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Funding for more than 20 years, the mandatory baseline of families that are required to be served is 78; however, the Tampa Housing Authority currently provides service for over 356 families. This award of \$486,017.00 will allow us to increase our goal to serve as many as 450 families.*

**Tampa, FL (January 8, 2020)** A recent notification from the Washington, D. C. Office of Housing and Urban Development announced a total \$80 Million in FSS (Family Self-Sufficiency) funding across the country. This funding enables public housing agencies to collaborate with social service agencies, community colleges, businesses and other partners to help FSS participants further their education, gain marketable skills and otherwise increase their income potential through new employment or by advancing in their current workplace. Local housing authorities will be able to hire Service Coordinators who work directly with residents to connect them with existing community/agency programs and services in their local communities. These service coordinators build relationships with networks of local service providers who provide direct assistance to the FSS participants.

President/CEO Jerome D. Ryans said, “the FSS program is a God-send and allows us to prepare residents and their families for bright futures. I am so pleased each time an FSS graduate decides to use their escrow to realize the American dream of homeownership. Our Assisted Housing team is the best in the State! We are proud that their hard work has resulted in this large FSS award that will benefit additional families”.

Here is how the program works: the participant signs a 5-year contract requiring the head of household to obtain employment. No member of the FSS family may have received cash welfare assistance for 12 months prior to program graduation. Families in the program have an interest-bearing escrow account established for them. The amount credited to the family’s escrow account is based on increases in the families earned income during the term of the FSS contract. Successful participants receive the escrow funds that enable them to apply those funds to advance their personal circumstances, paying education expenses or making a down-payment on a home. Families that graduate the FSS program can participate in the homeownership program that currently has 65 participants.

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“Cultivating Affordable Housing While Empowering People and Communities”