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# WHEDA and partners look to increase African American home ownership

By WHEDA

In an effort to increase African American home ownership throughout Dane County, the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) has scheduled a series of home buyer education classes for 2009–10 as a part of its African American home ownership initiative. These classes, starting January 31, will feature individuals who are specially trained by WHEDA to help mentor prospective home owners.

“Despite our current inability to lend due to capital markets, we remain as committed as ever to the success of Wisconsin home owners,” said WHEDA Executive Director Antonio Riley. “We hope that these classes will help to continue our initiative to increase the number of African American home owners in

the Madison area. We at WHEDA believe everyone deserves the opportunity to pursue the dream of home ownership.”

WHEDA is partnering with several local organizations to offer these home buyer education classes. Each class will offer opportunities to learn about topics ranging from home budgeting to financial planning. Mentors will join participants at the classes and will offer individual support outside of class to better prepare them for home ownership. All classes for the initiative will be held at Villager Mall, located at 2300 South Park Street.

The classes will run from January 2009 to August 2010, with the first class being a six-hour required home buyer education class on January 31. Following the initial introductory class will be a year-long series of two-hour classes held on

the fourth Saturday of each month.

There will also be an opportunity to take three post-purchase classes for individuals who went through the classes and purchased a home.

WHEDA’s partners for this initiative include African American Council of Churches, Campus Community Partnerships, Fair Housing Council, Financial Education Center, Madison Development Corporation, South Madison Housing Community Team, South Metropolitan Planning Council, and the Office of the Chancellor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

*To apply for these home buyer education classes, please contact David Smith, South Metropolitan Planning Council, at (608) 260-8078 or email [smpcinc@yahoo.com](mailto:smpcinc@yahoo.com).*

The South Metropolitan Planning Council (SMPC) is a coalition of neighborhood associations, South Metropolitan Business Association, and the town of Madison that works together to increase the civic capacity on the Southside.

WHEDA is an independent state authority that works with lenders to provide low-cost financing for housing and small business development in Wisconsin. In 2007, WHEDA launched a campaign to increase home ownership in the African American community. WHEDA identified a growing demand for affordable mortgages in Madison because it is a key urban center with a diverse population. For more information on WHEDA’s housing programs, call (800) 334-6873 or visit WHEDA’s website [www.wheda.com](http://www.wheda.com).