

ANGELA A. RUSSO

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), Office of Block Grant Assistance (OBGA)
Disaster Recovery & Special Issues Division**
Community Planning & Development Specialist

**New York City, NY
January 2020 - Present**

- Provide technical guidance and oversight to a portfolio of three Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program grants totaling \$4,417,775,000 to aid communities in achieving long-term recovery after major disasters
- Serve as a Desk Officer to address regulatory and programmatic inquiries made by Community Planning & Development Representatives across Regions I, II, III who monitor field-held CDBG-DR grants
- Monitor the programmatic and performance goals and objectives of CDBG-DR grantees to assess the grantee's operations and determine compliance in priority areas such as program processes, accountability of funds, benefit, national objective and eligibility, DRGR reporting, effective use of funds, and sub-recipient management
- Develop guidance and technical assistance materials concerning program requirements to ensure that the grantee meets the regulatory requirements on work priorities, deadlines, and recovery goals. For example, designed a grant launch presentation and provided regulatory guidance to assist the State of New Jersey in the launch of its new CDBG-DR grant allocated for the recovery from Hurricane Ida
- Lead a team of CPD Specialists, Program Managers, and Financial Analysts to assist with monitoring and technical assistance visits by determining the scope of monitoring, the technical expertise and staff required, establish methods of file and information sharing among team members, lead team check-in calls and address grantee and regulatory questions posed from the team
- Review grantee disaster recovery Action Plans, Amendments, and Quarterly Progress Reports; issue reports providing recommendations on how to resolve problems and issues
- Evaluate and design division procedures to guide staff in the management of the agency's CDBG-DR program. For example, was lead writer of the division's procedures for responding to citizen complaints and inquiries, as well as further defined DRSI's Desk Officer role. Additionally, as a member of the Grant Management Council, I led a team of DRSI grant managers in the creation of a list of standardized responses to most common CDBG-DR monitoring Findings.
- Advise on the development of HUD's [Citizen Participation & Equitable Engagement \(CPEE\) Toolkit](#), including the communication of agency priorities and decisions to project contractors; facilitated interdepartmental coordination as the team lead for work with the Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO); tracked and evaluated materials submitted by the project's assigned technical assistance provider, development and revision of materials; and presentation and training to various levels of management, grantees, and other stakeholders
- Conduct research on agency and industry initiatives that seek to foster more equitable disaster recovery as a member of the DRSI Equity Work Group; analyze findings and brief management on the implications to division work

**HUD, Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO)
Office of Policy, Legislative Initiatives, and Outreach (OPLIO)**
Management Development Assignment

**Washington D.C.
October 2019 – February 2020**

- Acted as a Subject Matter Expert for OPLIO's Program Standards and Compliance Division (PSCD) during its efforts to enhance of Civil Rights and fair housing compliance in CPD programs
- Evaluated the fair housing and civil rights chapter in CPD's Monitoring Handbook and drafted a version that better aligned Civil Rights related program requirements with CPD's internal monitoring procedures.
- Participated in the Disaster Recovery Working Group which was a collaboration between FHEO and DRSI to enhance efforts to affirmatively further fair housing through disaster recovery assistance programs
- Assessed departmental clearances such as proposed regulations, rules, and guidance for possible civil rights and fair housing implications across HUD's program offices, such as CPD, Public and Indian Housing and Housing Operations; determined problem areas and recommended necessary revisions in the development, implementation, and communication of policy, initiatives, and legislative proposals

HUD, Office of Community Planning and Development Division (CPD)
Community Planning & Development Representative

Newark, NJ
August 2017 – December 2019

- Provided technical guidance on CPD grant programs to entitlement grantees, community organizations, elected officials, citizens and other stakeholders in the planning and implementation of program and community development needs
- Interpreted Federal policies and regulations to ensure grantees have a clear understanding of the processes, procedures, and regulatory requirements associated with CPD programs, such as CDBG, HOME, and Continuum of Care (CoC)
- Monitor the programmatic and performance goals and objectives of CDBG-DR grantees to assess the grantee's operations and determine compliance in priority areas such as program processes, accountability of funds, benefit, national objective and eligibility, reporting, effective use of funds, and sub-recipient management
- Made recommendations to Division Director and Supervisor on policy, management, resources, and procedural requirements in support of CPD programs
- Designed new training programs targeting CoCs in New Jersey centered on overall program eligibility, compliance, and implementation of coordinated entry for the homeless and grant management responsibilities.
- Effectively managed one of the largest CPD portfolio in the office consisting of ten (10) entitlement communities and four (4) Continuum of Cares
- Operated CPD systems such as the Integrated Disbursement and Information System (IDIS), LOCCS, ESnapS, Sage HMIS Reporting Repository, Disaster Recovery Grant Reporting System (DRGR), and Grants Monitoring Process (GMP)

City of Jersey City, Division of Community Development
Program Manager – Homelessness Programs

Jersey City, NJ
January 2015–August 2017

- Administered the City's HUD-contracted Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDs (HOPWA), and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) programs and served as co-chair of the jurisdiction's Continuum of Care, the Hudson County Alliance to End Homelessness
- Developed new grant monitoring procedures ensuring compliance with Federal regulations and to assist the City's homelessness grantees effectively meet the area's emergency housing and services needs. These new procedures were replicated throughout other HUD-funded programs throughout the Division
- Provided recommendations and assistance to City and County representatives on policy and programming addressing homelessness and housing for special needs populations
- Led the development of policy and training adopted by the Hudson County Alliance to End Homelessness to ensure homeless targeted housing projects remained committed to LGBTQ inclusivity
- Managed a team of one, providing performance appraisal summaries to the Division Director with performance appraisals homelessness
- Re-established the Continuum of Care's Youth Homelessness Committee and advanced cross- sector collaboration with local educational institutions and youth agencies to address the service needs of the County's homeless youth
- Led the design and launch of the [Homeless Services Navigator](#), a web-based search engine to help residents access a directory of agencies and organizations assisting the homeless within Hudson County. The Navigator also serves as a website for the Hudson County Alliance to End Homelessness to share announcements with the public and service providers
- Reviewed annual entitlement grant applications and provided recommendations to City leadership funding

Operation Hope, Inc.
Youth Empowerment Program Manager

New York, NY
February 2014– January 2015

- Facilitated the organization's financial empowerment programs targeting under resourced youth in New York City by establishing partnerships with key financial institutions, public school systems, and political offices for the advancement of youth programs within the NY/NJ market
- Within the first quarter effectively tripled the amount of youth educated and partnerships leveraged with local schools and financial institutions
- Established a new partnership with New York City's Youth Summer Employment Program, expanding partnerships with local nonprofits and City offices
- Expanded services beyond New York City by establishing a partnership with the City of Jersey City; providing financial empowerment workshops to its Summer Youth Employment Program
- Supervised college interns, assigning duties and conducting regular check-ins throughout their assignments; provided summary reports on intern projects to the program Director

- Recruited and trained volunteers to lead workshops on financial education and entrepreneurship to young adults and students in 4- 12 grades

DeVry College of New York

New York, NY

Federal Financial Literacy & Default Management Consultant

December 2008-January 2013

- Spearheaded the implementation of the NY Metro Campuses default management efforts, serving a diverse population of more than 1,500 student
- Launched the College's financial literacy program and default management program which expanded awareness amongst colleagues and students, leading to the College's most successful student loan counseling completion numbers
- Promoted after two years from a Financial Aid Officer to the metro- campus Financial Literacy Consultant
- Tailored money management workshops for students and trained staff on student financial education outreach
- Advised undergraduate students and families of available financing options utilizing knowledge of Title IV Federal Financial Aid eligibility and processing
- Received Certificate of Recognition from the President of DeVry for exceptional work performance and customer service

WomenRising, Inc.

Jersey City, NJ

Family MicroLoan Program Coordinator & Certified Credit Counselor

May 2007- February 2009

- Recruited by the Director of Economic Development to expand the agency's financial empowerment programs targeting youth, single mothers, and women in recovery
- Produced the most successful borrower repayment history resulting in 0% defaults for participants who entered the program during that period
- Created a new financial literacy curriculum which shaped the framework of the agency's future financial literacy programs

EDUCATION & LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS

- **Rutgers University, School of Public Affairs and Administration**
Master of Public Administration - Spring 2021
- **Rutgers University, Edward J Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy**
B.A. in Urban Studies – Housing and Community Development - May 2007
- **Management Development Program (MDP) – U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development**
A 12-month Executive Core Competency (ECQ) based management program for high performing employees - 2020 Graduate
- **CPD Onboarding Ambassador Program – U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development**
August 2021

CURRENT VOLUNTEER POSITIONS & BOARD APPOINTMENTS

- **South Orange/Maplewood Community Coalition on Race**, Residential Committee Member January 2020 – Present
- **The Interdependence Project**, Board Member January 2017 – Present
- **Kismet of Kings**, Executive Board Member 2014-January 2022
- **Road to Government, Policy, and Service Program**, Mentor January 2019 – March 2020