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**Affordable Housing Month Celebrated with Addition of Bilingual Housing Counselor**

May 4, 2023, Downingtown, PA—For generations, people have valued being a good neighbor, making sure others are safe, fed, and doing well. Yet, many of our neighbors do not feel like they belong in Chester County, struggling to remain and prosper due to rising housing costs and insufficient housing options.

The hurdles facing a first-time home buyer in Chester County are daunting. Why is that, when the County is one of the most affluent counties in the country? Although that affluence sounds very impressive, the reality is that not everyone shares the prestige of that title. For far too many, their income reflects less than 80% of median for the Philadelphia SMSA, or standard metropolitan statistical area. This means they could only afford a home that ranges between $130,000 to $200,000. Today, these price ranges very seldom come to market. To illustrate that fact, look at the median selling price of a home during the First Quarter of 2023—it was $464,990, while the average was almost $96,000 higher!

To commemorate Affordable Housing Month and help address this disparity, the Housing Partnership of Chester County (HPCC) is proud to announce the hiring of Luis Castro as its Bilingual Housing Counselor. Mr. Castro will complement HPCC’s HUD Certified Housing Counselor, Sheri Houpt, to extend the agency’s footprint into Southern Chester County. Among the programs and services provided are down payment and closing cost assistance of up to $20,000 for first-time homebuyers. In addition, there are programs to assist homeowners to repair and stay in their homes.

This Affordable Housing Month, HPCC invites you to embrace Chester County as our neighborhood, because good neighboring impacts more than just individuals; it strengthens our entire community. Join us in saying “yes” to proven, evidence-based solutions that can ensure that every person has a safe, stable, and affordable place to call home. Because every person in the County is our neighbor and they belong here with us. **Our neighbors are the heart of our communities.**

For further information, please visit our website at [www.housingpartnershipcc.com](http://www.housingpartnershipcc.com) or call us at 610-518-1522.