

# Rhode Island Housing: 2016 was banner year

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By PBN Staff

PROVIDENCE - Last year was Rhode Island Housing's biggest year in the more than 40 years it has been involved in mortgage lending, and 2017 is shaping up to be just as strong, the agency said Tuesday at its annual breakfast.

The agency helped more than 1,600 Rhode Island families buy homes in 2016. R.I. Housing's first mortgages climbed 29 percent last year compared with 2015. First mortgages are already 39 percent ahead of 2016's numbers, the agency added.

"A healthy housing market is essential to the overall economic prosperity of our state, and we are thrilled to announce that 2016 was R.I. Housing's strongest year ever, with an all-time annual record of 1,625 first mortgages funded," Barbara Fields, Rhode Island Housing's executive director, said in a statement. "This exceeds our previous high from 2007 and clearly shows that Rhode Island's housing market has finally rebounded from the crash several years ago."

Keynote speaker and native Rhode Islander Laurie Aquilante, head of HubSpot's North America Funnel Marketing Team, discussed how social media has changed buyer expectations.

As the state's housing agency, Rhode Island Housing has helped thousands of Rhode Islanders through its programs and loans for first-time homebuyers, current homeowners and those looking to finance home improvements. Mortgages are offered through its Loan Center, and the agency works with more than 30 participating lender partners and the real estate community to help Rhode Islanders buy homes.

Coastway Community Bank was recognized during the breakfast with the 2016 Participating Lender of the Year award for supporting first-time homebuyers.

In 2016, Coastway produced 324 Rhode Island Housing first mortgages, a 63 percent increase from 2015. Coastway also was named the 2016 FirstHomes Tax Credit Lender of the Year for its efforts in producing 279 FirstHomes Tax Credit certificates, the largest number since the program began in 2014.

In addition to Coastway Community Bank, the following individuals were recognized at the breakfast:

**First Homes Tax Credit Loan Officer of the Year**

- John Gibbons III – Semper Home Loans, Providence

**Top Producing Loan Officers**

- Bronze Partner: Keith Quinton – Coastway Community Bank, Warwick; Michael Nadeau – First Home Mortgage, Seekonk
- Silver Partner: David Campagnone – Coastway Community Bank, Lincoln; John Gibbons III – Semper Home Loans, Providence
- Gold Partner: Michelle Proia – Coastway Community Bank, Warwick; Karen Xavier DaCunha – Coastway Community Bank, East Providence

**Loan Center Originator of the Year**

- Rob Rocchio – Rhode Island Housing Loan Center, Providence

**2016 Realtor of the Quarter**

- Kyle Seyboth, first and second quarters – Keller Williams Realty, Cumberland
- Nelson Esteves, third quarter – RE/MAX Professionals, East Greenwich
- Jeff Mateus, fourth quarter – Mateus Realty, East Providence