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Winnsboro native ends 1st year as Delaware's housing director

DOVER DE - Winnsboro native Sandra Ross Johnson has celebrated her first anniversary as director of the Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA).

Since taking office in February, 2001, Johnson has followed through on her commitment to serve the citizens of Delaware by making affordable single and multi-family housing her first priority.

"Given Sandra's passion for improving the living standards of people, I have no doubt that Delaware will continue to be a model for new, creative and attractive housing initiatives," said Gov. Ruth Anne Minner.

Johnson's responsibilities include not only the management of such housing initiatives, but also the management of the \$500 million Housing Finance Agency.

As director of DSHA, Johnson has introduced such initiatives as: Individual Development Accounts (IDA), a financial independence program which encourages people to save money so that they may become economically self-sufficient; the revision of Delaware's Housing Tax Credit Allocation Plan for preserving and building new housing developments to better serve communities; and the revision of the Moving To Work demonstra-



Winnsboro native Sandra Ross Johnson (left) with Delaware Gov. Ruth Anne Minner

lies receiving Public Housing and Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher assistance to move into fair market rental housing. Her work also involves community and economic development.

"I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who has supported me throughout my career," said Johnson. "And especially to Gov. Minner, who has given me this wonderful opportunity to serve Delaware. Housing programs here mirror those of my home state, South Carolina: The availability of low-interest loans for first-time homebuyers, home rehabilitation assistance - especially for the elderly, and affordable, attractive rental units for those who are not mortgage-eligible or choose not to own a

Johnson recently has been accepted into the fellowship program of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, where she will study government policy and strategies with local and state officials from across the country.

Johnson has worked within the industry for more than 10 years, serving as executive director of Interfaith Housing Delaware, Inc., and head of the New Castle County Department of Community Services. Prior to that, she worked in management, labor and law in Arizona and California.

She is the daughter of Maude Ford Ross and the late Julius M. Ross, Sr., and granddaughter of the late Estelle and Ernest Ford and William and Beatrice Ross,