

# The PHA Experience

Issue 42

A Community Newspaper For and About Residents

February 2019

## A New Beginning: PHA Opens New HQ on Ridge Avenue

PHA celebrated the new year by moving into its headquarters building at 2013 Ridge Avenue. The building anchors the Ridge Avenue commercial corridor and is a key part of the Sharswood/Blumberg Transformation Plan. PHA has consolidated a number of offices and functions at this location.

“The opening of our new headquarters here in Sharswood shows that we are keeping our promises to the community,” said PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah. “By its very design, it is a beacon, a shining light. It is a landmark that neighborhood residents can point to with pride. I want to thank the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development along with our other partners who have made this jewel possible.”

Jeremiah also noted that until now PHA, the state’s largest landlord, had never owned its headquarters location. The agency was spending \$1.5 million annually to lease space at its old 23rd Street location.

The modern design of the building with its large glass windows conveys transparency and an outward looking agency. The 5-story building contains approximately 136,000 square feet gross floor area. The building is located on a triangular site along the East side of Ridge Avenue between Jefferson and Master Streets. The Board Room on the first floor of the building is named in honor of former Commissioners Nellie Reynolds and Jannie Blackwell for their long service to PHA. Blackwell still serves on City Council and remains instrumental in helping the authority reach its development goals.

“PHA is making a strong statement about its commitment to the Sharswood neighborhood with the opening of its headquarters here,” said Mayor Jim

Kenney. “The completion of this jewel of a building, the addition of retail businesses, as well as the opening of Vaux Big Picture High School represents tremendous momentum that will help ensure this community’s long-term success.”

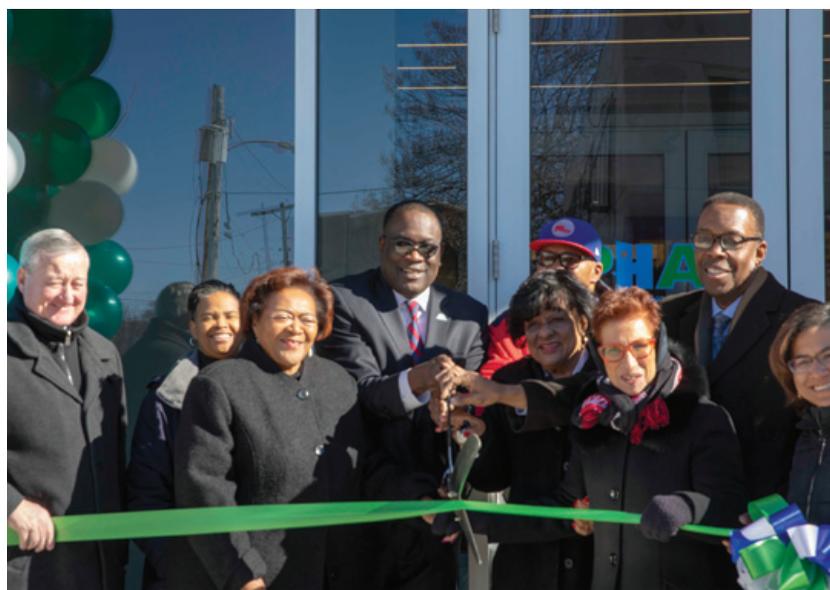
“PHA is living up to its promise to ensure that all Philadelphians, regardless of income, are able to live in a community of choice,” said Council President Darrell L. Clarke (5th District). “The agency’s investment will create both jobs and services, by placing more residents and workers on the Ridge Avenue corridor while increasing safety. Other cities are watching and this community will set the national standard for housing authorities and affordable housing development.”

“As a longtime resident of Sharswood, I can tell you that the completion of this headquarters complex gives me hope and confidence about the future of the community,” said Darnetta Arce, Executive Director, Brewerytown-Sharswood Neighborhood Advisory Committee.

Jeremiah announced that construction adjacent to PHA’s new headquarters will bring a Save-A-Lot grocery store, a Pagano’s restaurant, an urgent care facility, and a hardware store to the area in the coming months.

PHA’s new home features 10 Indego bicycle docks along Jefferson Street and 8 Indego bicycle docks along Ridge Avenue, with 10 on-street bike parking spaces along Ridge Avenue, and 16 off-street bike parking spaces located on the property.

The new building is designed to achieve a LEED Certification rating and shall meet the latest applicable Energy Star Standards. The total investment cost for this new facility is \$45 million, with \$30 million from bonds and \$15 million from PHA funds.



PHA formally dedicated its new headquarters building at 2013 Ridge Avenue on January 22nd. The building is part of development under the Sharswood/Blumberg Transformation Plan. The housing authority has consolidated a number of offices and functions at this location.



The Board Room on the first floor of the new PHA headquarters building is named in honor of former Commissioners Jannie Blackwell and Nellie Reynolds (3rd and 4th from left) for their long service to PHA. Blackwell still serves on City Council and remains instrumental in helping the authority reach its development goals.

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## Promises Kept

Almost eight years ago, PHA began a journey to renew and revitalize the Sharswood neighborhood in North Philadelphia. It was my belief then, as it is now, that no child should grow up in a neighborhood plagued by drugs and violence, without a good school, while adults lacked essential services and job possibilities

along the commercial corridor.

With the help of the Resident Advisory Board and Sharswood/Brewerytown Civic Association, we began working toward a Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant in July 2011. Our work paid off in late November 2013 when the U-S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded PHA a \$500,000 grant. The formal planning process under that grant began in February 2014 at Girard College on the night before a blizzard struck Philadelphia. Despite the threatening weather conditions, the excitement was palpable.

Fast forward to August 2015 when the groundbreaking for Blumberg Phase I took place on vacant parcels adjacent to the old complex. The following March, PHA imploded two high-rises and demolished all the low-rises on the superblock that was the Blumberg Apartments. The grand opening for Phase I took place in November 2016.

In May 2017, PHA purchased Vaux High School from the School District of Philadelphia and eventually rechristened it as the "Vaux Building." After investing over \$5.7 million, Vaux Big Picture High School opened that September with HUD Secretary Ben Carson as our special guest. We also have plans to locate medical and dental services at the site in partnership with Temple University. HUD has also designated the Vaux Building as an

Envision Center, one of only 19 in the country, and we plan on offering more services to the community.

PHA and Habitat for Humanity completed a three-year home repair program in December 2017, ensuring that 49 long-term, lower-income residents can stay in the neighborhood to enjoy better times ahead. This is in keeping with the agency's plans to keep Sharswood affordable as the wave of renewal in adjoining city neighborhoods takes place. We're well into the process of rehabilitating the remaining Blumberg high-rise for seniors, reconnecting streets through the old superblock, which began one year ago. The building of 83 rental units at the east end of the reconnected community began recently.

As the PHA Experience went to press, we celebrated the completion of our new headquarters at 2013 Ridge Avenue and the consolidation of a number of the agency's offices. You'll find it more convenient to get the services that you need. Also, we have firm plans to bring a supermarket and two other retailers to the Ridge Avenue commercial corridor, and there's more to come.

We need your help and input to be successful. Please work with your resident leaders through the Resident Advisory Board so that PHA is opening doors of opportunity for you!

KELVIN A. JEREMIAH  
President & CEO

## GET TO KNOW US

and our experienced team of certified registered nurse practitioners

## VAUX COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

A nurse managed health center serving the Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood

2300 West Master Street | Philadelphia, PA 19121 | 215.707.0585

## TRY OUT OUR WELLNESS PROGRAMS AT NO COST!

**Mondays:** Achy Bones Take A Break From The Pain  
**Tuesdays:** Stressed? Reduce And Relax  
**Wednesdays:** Pull Up A Chair For Yoga  
**Thursdays:** Asthma: Take A Breath

*Classes are held each day at:*  
 1pm to 2pm  
 3pm to 4pm

**Open Monday – Thursday  
 Noon to 5 PM**

# PHA Breaks Ground on “Blumberg 83”

Construction of the Blumberg 83 has begun on east end of the old super block that formerly contained the now demolished high-rise complex.

The development is part of PHA’s Blumberg/Sharswood Transformation Plan and a key component of the Choice Neighborhood Initiative planning grant awarded by HUD in 2013. The development will cover the 2200 Blocks of West Oxford Street, Jefferson Street, and Bolton Street, as well as the 1500 Blocks of 22nd and 23rd Streets, with 23rd Street being reconnected through the former superblock as part of a redesigned street pattern.

“We are transforming a superblock into a walkable, green community with the start of this development,” said PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah. “The reconnected 23rd Street will be wide enough to accommodate bus service. The redesign and reconnection of streets in this neighborhood is essential to the development of a neighborhood that promotes safety, walkability, beauty, transportation access, and improved water quality.”

The redesign of the street pattern in Sharswood follows “Green City, Clean Waters,” the City of Philadelphia’s plan to reduce storm water pollution from entering the city’s combined sewer system through the use of green

infrastructure. The plan resulted from a 25-year agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency that was begun in 2011.

The development will consist of 83 new rental units spread across a mix of townhomes and multi-unit walk-up buildings. The new units will range in size from 616 square feet to 1,641 square feet. Residents of the development will have access to a community center, landscaped green space, and PHA management office.

“The Blumberg/Sharswood Transformation Plan is an integral part of our comprehensive strategy to support equitable and inclusive growth in the City of Philadelphia,” Council President Darrell L. Clarke (5th District) said. “The days of other-izing affordable housing or warehousing people are over for good. I’m grateful to all of our partners for integrating affordable rental housing into a shared vision of communities of choice for every Philadelphian.”

The Blumberg 83 will serve as an example of high quality, sustainable design. It will feature modular wood frame construction, and will include sustainable design elements guided by two green rating programs; Enterprise Green Communities and Energy Star Certified Homes. The modular manufacturing process will significantly reduce the amount of construction waste and energy use.



The Blumberg 83 complex will be located on east end of the old super block that formerly contained the now demolished Blumberg Apartments high-rise complex.

## HUD Approves Critical Community Improvement Projects in North Central Neighborhood

Four key neighborhood improvements designed to advance the revitalization of the North Central neighborhood that contains the Norris Apartments have received approval from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The City of Philadelphia, which received a \$30 million Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant with PHA, successfully proposed these latest improvements based upon residents’ expressed visions for the community.

The improvements, valued at over \$12.9 million, are designed to meet residents’ top priorities, including skills training and job opportunities, public safety and walkability, intergenerational recreation and programming, and commercial and retail activity.

The Critical Community Improvements (CCI) support the community’s aim to link new and rehabilitated housing to a safer and more sustainable environment that connects residents to each other, and assets, jobs, and opportunities within

the neighborhood, downtown, and region-wide.

The biggest chunk of money will help Philabundance, the region’s largest hunger relief organization, to double the size of its workforce development program with construction of a new facility on a vacant lot bordered by Nevada, Colona, 10th, and 11th Streets. Construction of the new building will cost \$8.64 million with \$1.5 million coming from Choice Neighborhood Initiative (CNI) funds. The rest of the money will come from Community Development Block Grant (CDBG),

City, state, and private funds.

Three key intersections along the SEPTA Viaduct that bisects the neighborhood will receive improvements to address community concerns about safety, lighting, trash, and linkage. Cost: over \$2.16 million with over half of the money coming from CNI funds.

The 8th and Diamond Playground and Recreation Center, a key asset for the neighborhood, will receive long overdue improvements totaling over \$1.1 million. The last major investments at the Center were made

over 10 years ago and have not kept pace with the demands of the surrounding community. Just under half the cost of improvements is coming from CNI funds combined with CDBG and City funds.

The addition of 4,000 square feet of retail and commercial space at 10th and Berks Streets will receive \$500,000 in CNI funding to cover half the \$1 million cost. The City, PHA, Norris Resident Council and Jonathon Rose Companies, who are partners in this redevelopment, are still finalizing plans for the site.

## Norris Phase II Apartments Now Open



City Council President Darrell Clarke (center) is joined by Norris Resident Council President Donna Richardson (left) and resident Barbara Harris (right) at the ribbon cutting for the Norris Phase II grand opening. Clarke remembered when the neighborhood was called “the badlands.”

PHA and the City of Philadelphia celebrated the completion of the Norris Apartments Phase II at a ceremony in early November, signaling a major change in the North Central community.

“We’re thrilled to see the renewal of this neighborhood as we work toward building a stronger, safer, more vibrant and sustainable community,” said PHA President and CEO Kelvin A. Jeremiah. “The Choice Neighborhoods Implementation grant that makes this and other redevelopment activities possible is one of the most significant investments in affordable housing by the federal government in recent years.”

Norris Phase II consists of 89 newly constructed rental units bounded by 9th, Diamond, Marshall and Berks Streets, east of the Temple University regional rail station. It partially replaces a low-rise development west of the station which had become obsolete. The

development is one of five phases planned under a \$30 million Choice Neighborhoods Implementation grant made to the City and PHA by HUD in June 2014.

City Council President Darrell Clarke recalled when 9th Street had just two homes standing and everything else was empty. Back then, the neighborhood used to be called “the badlands.” No more. Clarke now gets calls from old friends who want to move into the neighborhood.

“This is the place of choice,” he said. “We have created the level of synergy around this neighborhood that every neighborhood should ultimately have.”

To obtain the grant, the City and PHA worked with more than forty partners. A series of community meetings identified a number of resident priorities: more job training and opportunities; reduced crime and increased neighborhood safety; elimination of trash-strewn vacant

land; and high-quality educational resources. The North Central Philadelphia transformation plan will address all of these areas of concern.

Norris Apartments Resident Council President Donna Richardson told the crowd that few people in the neighborhood are without jobs, thanks to the Choice Neighborhood activity. She noted that men who once sold drugs on the corner now have legitimate jobs and people are receiving medical help through the Public Health Management Corporation (PHMC). The grant, Richardson noted, opened so many doors beyond just housing.

Norris Phase II complements ongoing private housing and commercial development in the neighborhood. Ultimately, five phases of construction will take place in there over five years with the creation of 267 rental units and 30 homeownership units.

## Norris Phase III Construction Under Way

PHA has started construction for Norris Apartments Phase III following a groundbreaking ceremony in mid-September in the city’s North Central neighborhood.

The development represents the third of five phases of development following the award of a \$30 million Choice Neighborhoods Implementation grant to the City of Philadelphia and PHA by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in June 2014.

A series of community meetings following the receipt of the award identified a number of resident priorities: more job training and opportunities; reduced crime and increased neighborhood safety; elimination of trash-strewn vacant land; and high-quality educational resources. The North Central Philadelphia transformation plan will address all of these areas of concern.

“We’re thrilled to see the renewal of this neighborhood as we work toward building a stronger, safer, more vibrant and sustainable community,” said PHA President and CEO Kelvin A. Jeremiah. “The Choice Neighborhoods Implementation grant that is making this and other redevelopment activities possible is one of the most significant investments in affordable housing by the federal government in recent years.”

“I was proud to support this project from the start and pleased that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development chose to invest in the City,” said Senator Bob Casey who attended the ceremony. “I look forward to the project’s completion and the resulting economic growth, job creation and new affordable housing.”

“Norris Phase III - and the Norris Development overall - is a great example of the kind of great outcome the City and PHA can accomplish together, especially when we listen to the community for what they think a choice neighborhood should include,” said Mayor Jim Kenney.



Pennsylvania Senator Bob Casey, who attended the Norris Phase 3 groundbreaking, said he was proud to support the Choice Neighborhoods grant for the North Central neighborhood from the start.

To obtain the grant, the City worked with more than forty partners, including the School District of Philadelphia, Temple University, PHA, the Philadelphia Police Department, local leaders and community stakeholders through the Office of Community Housing and Development to create the resident-driven North Central Philadelphia transformation plan.

Norris Phase III complements ongoing private housing and commercial development in the neighborhood. PHA expects completion of the construction by November 2019. The new development consists of 50 newly constructed rental units that will partially replace a low-rise development that dated back to late 1959 and early 1960, and had become obsolete.

“The residents here just want to come out of their apartments and be proud of their neighborhood,” said Norris Resident Council President Donna Richardson. She worked with officials on the successful grant application.

The new development has high sustainability goals and will seek certification from LEED, EnergyStar Homes and Enterprise Green Communities. Ultimately, five phases of construction will take place in the North Central neighborhood over five years with the creation of 267 rental units and 30 homeownership units.

## Home Is Really Sweet for Courtyard Residents



*Courtyard at Riverview President Inez Green sheds some tears of joy as she cuts the ribbon signaling the completion of 18 months of rehab work at Courtyard at Riverview Apartments. A record setting deal under the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program provided the cash necessary to make the repairs.*

Tears of joy flowed as Courtyard at Riverview President Inez Green cut the ribbon to signal the completion of much needed repairs at the complex in late October.

The renewal of the site, formerly known as Southwark, took 18 months. It followed a record setting deal under the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program between PHA, the U-S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and The Michaels Organization. The RAD transaction changed the unit subsidy from public housing to Project Based Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) assistance. This allowed the buildings' owner (Michaels) to generate private capital for the much needed repairs and upgrades.

The deal insured that 470 affordable housing units were preserved in a high property value neighborhood. The development is located at the south end of Queen Village and adjacent to the Italian Market area.

"It was a lot of emotions (sic). My mother did it (cut the ribbon) the first time around when Southwark was imploded and rebuilt as Courtyard Apartments at Riverview," Green said. "They (the repairs) were long overdue. We sat down with Kelvin Jeremiah, Asia Coney, Ethel Wise, Milton Pratt of Michaels Development, and Interstate Realty Management, and the plan with the RAD conversion came to light."

"We are fortunate to have a like-

minded partner in The Michaels Organization," said PHA President and CEO Kelvin A. Jeremiah. "Courtyard is the latest example of PHA's desire to work with private-sector partners who understand the importance and the need to preserve affordable housing, especially in areas of the city where rents are rising."

Michaels Management (formerly known as Interstate Realty Management) serves as the property manager for Courtyard at Riverview.

Green said residents felt a sense of relief as the rehab project came to a close. She went door to door to visit every resident who had to pack up their belongings and move out for two weeks into two buildings at the site that were converted into hotel units.

"We thank our residents for their patience during the rehabilitation process, and the strong support of the Philadelphia Housing Authority and the city of Philadelphia, which made the modernization of Courtyard possible," said Andrew Davenport, Vice President of Michaels Development.

The kitchens of all 470 units at Courtyard were updated with new counters, and energy-saving appliances, and all baths were renovated with new fixtures and vanities. Individual units also received new flooring. Building repairs included roofing and window replacements, modernization of the elevators, and improvements to the heating and ventilation system.

## Blackwell Community Center Open for Business!

The long-awaited Lucien E. Blackwell Community Center, on the site of housing development that bears the name of the late congressman and city councilman, has opened. Dignitaries including City Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell, the widow of the late Congressman, celebrated the opening on a beautiful fall day in mid-October at an emotional ceremony that had plenty of fanfare.

"We are excited that residents of the Mill Creek neighborhood and Lucien E. Blackwell Homes have a modern and convenient community gathering space," said PHA President and CEO Kelvin A. Jeremiah. "This center reflects our commitment to improving the quality of life in neighborhoods across the city in a variety of ways."

The building, located at the intersection of 47th and Aspen Streets, covers approximately 12,000 square feet. It features a regulation size basketball/volleyball court, warming kitchen, community room, and outdoor patio. The site also contains

parking spaces and an INDEGO bike station, and has LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification.

Councilwoman Jannie L. Blackwell secured \$2 million from the City as part of the \$6.3 million construction cost.

"We've wanted to build this center since 2001," Blackwell said. "We're very grateful to see it become reality, so that we can fulfill our commitment to the neighborhood, to the community, and certainly to the legacy of Lucien Blackwell."

JD Bravo Company, a 100 percent disabled veteran Minority Business Enterprise, built the center and met its goal of 30 percent of hires who are low- or very-low income residents under the federal Section 3 program.

"This center will become a pillar of the community, very much like the man for whom it is named," Mayor Kenney said. "We did not have the opportunity to work together because

Lu left Council just as I began my service there. However, I am very aware of his trailblazing accomplishments."

JD Bravo Company, a 100 percent disabled veteran Minority Business Enterprise, built the center and met its goal of 30 percent of hires who are low- or very-low income residents under the federal Section 3 program.

The development took 19 months to complete. The new center is the next to last phase of redevelopment of the former Mill Creek housing project under a former federal program called HOPE VI, which enabled PHA to rid the neighborhood of old style public housing. PHA completed the last of 685 units of new family-style homes in 2008, both on the former Mill Creek site and in the surrounding area.

The final segment of the development is a park built by the City next to the new community center. The new park complements the community center with space for the residents of Mill Creek and the surrounding neighborhood.



*The new Lucien E. Blackwell Center is located at the intersection of 47th and Aspen Streets in West Philadelphia, and covers approximately 12,000 square feet. It features a regulation size basketball/volleyball court, warming kitchen, community room, and outdoor patio.*

## PHA and Habitat Celebrate 500th Home Repair



Lopa Kolluri, Senior Executive VP and Chief Development and Operating Officer at PHA (far right), took part in Habitat for Humanity's celebration of its 500th home repair in Philadelphia. Habitat is one of PHA's partners in the Sharswood Transformation Plan.

One of PHA's partners in the Sharswood Transformation Plan has reached a milestone fittingly enough in that neighborhood with the completion of its 500th home repair. Habitat for Humanity celebrated the new marker on a sunny fall day in late October in the 2300 block of West Oxford Street.

"We are fortunate to have a mission-driven partner in Habitat for Humanity helping to ensure that as we rebuild the Sharswood-Blumberg neighborhood, long-time homeowners can maintain their homes in an ever-strengthening community," said PHA President and CEO Kelvin A. Jeremiah.

Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia's Home Repair Program partners with homeowners in low-income neighborhoods to make affordable repairs that keep homes and families warm, safe, and dry. The program is a strategic response to three factors that make this work urgent and necessary in Philadelphia: the city's high poverty rate, high homeownership rate, and aging housing stock.

"The Home Repair Program's work is crucial to ensure that homeowners can preserve their home as a family asset, and can comfortably age in place thanks to safety and accessibility improvements," said

Corinne O'Connell, CEO at Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia. "We are grateful to the many partners in this work across Philadelphia who make it possible to serve more families."

Lopa Kolluri, Senior Executive Vice President and Chief Development and Operating Officer at PHA, attended the event across the street from the site of the Blumberg Phase 3 development. She noted that adjacent to that the 83-unit site, Habitat for Humanity will build 20 new, affordable, homes through its homeownership program as part of the transformation plan. Homeownership is a critical element of the plan.

In December 2017, PHA and Habitat completed a three-year home repair program in Sharswood worth over \$1 million. It ensured that the homes of 49 long-term, lower income residents are safe, stable, healthy, and remain affordable.

Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia transforms lives and the city itself by building and repairing quality homes in partnership with families in need while uniting all Philadelphians around the cause of affordable housing. Since 1985, Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia has built and sold 213 energy-efficient homes to first-time homeowners.

## Community Ventures and PHA Celebrate Opening of Centennial Village

Fifty-one new affordable housing units have opened at Centennial Village in West Philadelphia, thanks in part to project based vouchers from PHA. The development was spearheaded by Community Ventures, a nonprofit affordable housing developer and PHA partner, which works with local leadership to transform Philadelphia neighborhoods using housing and mixed-use development.

Centennial Village is located in the 1700 block of North 52nd Street in the city's West Parkside community and is located close to ParkWest Town Center, a full service shopping mall, the Mann Music Center and Fairmount Park. PHA provided 23 project based vouchers worth over \$4.8 million to help subsidize the sparkling development for the next 15 years.

"PHA needs partners such as Community Ventures in order to address the tremendous need for affordable housing in the City," said PHA President and CEO Kelvin A. Jeremiah. "There's a whole lot to like about Centennial Village because Community Ventures, like PHA, is taking a holistic approach, developing neighborhoods as well as housing."

The new development itself has some commercial space, meaning residents will ideally have easy access to basic services and even some job possibilities. Besides the shopping center, the Philadelphia Business & Technology Center, and West Philadelphia Business Park are located within walking distance of Centennial Village.

Community Ventures believes, as PHA does, that it's imperative to build

as "green" as possible. The nonprofit strives to include environmentally sustainable practices in every development, including energy efficient buildings, storm water management and landscaping using primarily native species.

"Centennial Village rejuvenated 44 formerly vacant and blighted lots and buildings into a vibrant new neighborhood anchor," said David La Fontaine, Community Ventures' Executive Director.

The opening of Centennial Village required almost a decade of planning and acquisition, years of funding applications, and a twenty-month construction process. The mixed-use development includes a mix of one, two, three, and four bedroom affordable apartments and houses, and four commercial spaces.



PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah (upper right corner) helped celebrate the opening of Centennial Village in West Philadelphia in late August. Also shown: front (L-R) Aisha Herring-Miller, Commerce Department; Former State Rep. Vanessa Lowrey Brown; Lucinda Hudson, Parkside Association; David La Fontaine, Community Ventures. Middle (L-R) Senator Vincent Hughes; Councilman Curtis Jones, Jr.; Brian Hudson, PHFA; Tony Gay, PECO. Back (L-R) Mayor Kenney; Congressman Dwight Evans; Gregory Heller, PRA; consultant Al Spivey.

## BOARD RESOLUTION UPDATES

### June 2018

**Resolution 12002** – authorized PHA to contract with BOO PHA Finance, LLC for Financial Training Services, with the total amount to be expended under the contract not to exceed one hundred fifteen thousand dollars (\$115,000.00).

**Resolution 12003** – authorized PHA to amend PHA's task order with Shoemaker/Synterra, as entered into with existing modifications, to have the task order not-to-exceed amount be increased by ninety-one thousand ninety-one dollars (\$91,091.00).

**Resolution 12004** – authorized PHA to undertake a number of actions to implement Phase III of the North Central Philadelphia Transformation Plan, under the Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant, including PHA's providing a loan in an amount not to exceed eight million dollars (\$8,000,000.00).

**Resolution 12005** – approved the submission of the Moving to Work Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2018 to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD").

**Resolution 12006** – authorized PHA to negotiate and finalize any and all documents necessary for PHA or its wholly-owned affiliate to acquire the 99.99% limited partnership interest in Suffolk Manor Apartments and Cambridge Plaza, including paying specified transaction costs of five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00).

### July 2018

**Resolution 12007** – appointed Francis G. McLaughlin to the Audit Committee as an independent member.

**Resolution 12008** – authorized submission of an application for funding to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD"), pursuant to the Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant Program FY2018 Notice of Funding Availability that was published on May 18, 2018. The application will focus on the former Norman Blumberg Apartments site and the surrounding Sharswood neighborhood and request up to thirty million dollars (\$30,000,000.00).

**Resolution 12009** – authorized PHA to negotiate, finalize and submit various documents to the HUD for approval, in

order to provide an operating subsidy to New Courtland Apartments at Henry Avenue– Phase IB, in an amount not to exceed five hundred dollars (\$500.00), per unit, per month, for thirty-six (36) units.

**Resolution 12010** – authorized PHA to contract with North American Roofers for roofing repair and replacement services for Katie B. Jackson and West Park Plaza, in a total amount not to exceed two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000.00).

**Resolution 12011** – authorized the President & CEO to approve awards of unit based subsidy in accordance with RFP #P-004806 and execute one or more contracts with the proposers or project owners, with the requirement that PHA will report to the Board on all such commitments made.

### September 2018

**Resolution 12012** – approved the comprehensive annual financial report and the associated financial statement for the period of April 1, 2017 through March 31, 2018.

**Resolution 12013** – appointed Commissioner Camarda to the Audit Committee as an independent member.

**Resolution 12014** – authorized PHA to contract to sell 711 N 16th Street for fair market value.

**Resolution 12015** – authorized PHA to conclude a policy of insurance for Workers' Compensation and Employer's Liability Insurance coverage with Liberty Mutual Insurance Company, for a maximum amount not to exceed twelve million nine hundred nineteen thousand one hundred three dollars (\$12,919,103.00), for the policy period from October 15, 2018 to October 15, 2019.

**Resolution 12016** – authorized PHA to contract for concrete repair services with Ocean Construction, LLC; Milestone Construction Management, Inc.; and Mayfield Site Contractors, Inc., for a total aggregate amount not to exceed one million five hundred thousand dollars (\$1,500,000.00).

**Resolution 12017** – authorized PHA to perform a number of actions essential to completion of the third phase of the Blumberg re-development, including to: enter into a development services

agreement with an affiliate; create a limited partnership ("Partnership"), which will be the owner of the Development along with a housing development corporation to serve as the general partner of the Partnership; enter into a long term lease with the Partnership; secure construction financing from Citizens Bank through the issuance of bonds by PHFA; provide a PHA mortgage loan to the Partnership in an amount not to exceed eighteen million dollars (\$18,000,000.00); raise equity through the sale of the LIHTC's; provide customary financing and operating guaranties; and obtain all necessary HUD and other funding approvals in connection with the RAD conversion, construction and operation of the Development.

**Resolution 12018** – authorized PHA, with regard to North Central CNI Phase V, to: enter into a development agreement with Jonathan Rose Companies (the "Developer"), pursuant to its selection under a competitive RFP process, and/or its affiliate; enter into a long term ground lease with the Developer; provide PHA financing in an amount not to exceed ten million dollars (\$10,000,000.00); and obtain all necessary HUD and other approvals in connection with the demolition, construction, RAD conversion and operation of the Development.

### October 2018

**Resolution 12019** – authorized PHA to negotiate, finalize, and submit various documents to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for approval, in order to provide an operating subsidy to six (6) new public housing developments: 1) Casa Indiana; 2) Liberty 52; 3) Dauphin House; 4) Francis House; 5) Nicole Hines; and 6) Willard School, with the subsidy for each unit to be in an amount not to exceed five hundred dollars (\$500.00), per month.

**Resolution 12020** – authorized PHA to contract with Edgemere Consulting Corp.; CSG Advisors, Inc.; Econometrica, Inc.; and Bronner Group, LLC for management consulting services, in an aggregate amount not to exceed seven million six hundred thirty-five thousand dollars (\$7,635,000.00).



**Resolution 12021** – authorized PHA to contract with Lew Corporation; ARC Environmental, Inc.; Criterion Labs, Inc.; Satta Environmental Associates, Inc.; USA Environmental Management, Inc.; and Synertech Inc. to conduct lead based paint and lead hazard inspections, training, testing and monitoring activities within various PHA properties, in an aggregate contract amount not to exceed seventeen million three hundred twenty-two thousand dollars (\$17,322,000.00).

**Resolution 12022** – authorized PHA to remove the mandatory requirement to make additional tax-qualified retirement benefits to certain Executive-level employees from the Defined Contribution Plan and authorize optional payments in lieu of certain salary adjustments.

### November 2018

**Resolution 12023** - authorized PHA to contract with Lor-Mar Mechanical Services, One Mechanical New Innovations, LLC, and Devine Brothers, Inc. for mechanical maintenance and repair services, in an aggregate amount not to exceed fifteen million dollars (\$15,000,000.00).

**Resolution 12024** - attached in Appendix 1, was presented by Nicholas Dema, Executive Vice President of Planning and Development, to authorize PHA to amend its Memorandum of Agreement with Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia to increase the PHA funding commitment by five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000.00), to an amount not to exceed three million five hundred thousand (\$3,500,000.00), to develop twenty (20) homeownership units in support of the Sharswood/Biumberg Choice Neighborhoods Initiative.

## 2019

### PHILADELPHIA HOUSING AUTHORITY

#### BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING CALENDAR

The third Thursday of every month at 3:00 pm  
(There will be no meeting in August)

FEB 21 | MAR 21 | APR 18 | MAY 16

All PHA board meetings are held at  
2013 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19121

## SENIOR PRE-THANKSGIVING DINNER



## PHA DISTRIBUTES THANKSGIVING TURKEYS



Almost 200 seniors were honored at the annual Pre-Thanksgiving Dinner at Abbotsford Homes. PHA President and CEO congratulates Bernice McKnight, 88 years young, after she won a month's free rent during a holiday raffle. He also greeted attendees (below), including Marvinna Furlow and Vivian Hughes (l-r), who serve as officers on the Abbotsford Resident Council.

Continuing a longstanding tradition, PHA presented a total of 1,600 Thanksgiving turkeys to residents at 61 sites. Odessa Blocker of Community Operations and Resident Development (top) fills the bag of a senior at Wilson Park where (below) people lined up early to receive a turkey.

## BLACKWELL CENTER GRAND OPENING



## SENIOR MASQUERADE PARTY



The Mill Creek Brass Band entertained the crowd at the grand opening of the Lucien E. Blackwell Community Center in mid-October. The band is part of the Kimmel Center’s “Neighborhood Jams Program.” Those attending the event took part in a balloon release as part of the festivities on a gorgeous fall day.

92 seniors took part in the Senior Masquerade Party at the John F. Street Community Center to celebrate Halloween. Shown above, the winner with the best costume who won a gift card; another card was awarded to the best dancer. Always Best Care, a senior health provider, raffled off a TV. Another provider, Oak Tree, hosted a photo booth that was a big hit. (Photo Credit: Carla Fleming)

# Acme, Eagles, Philabundance Make Holidays Special For Johnson Homes Families

Families at Johnson Homes received one of the best gifts that anybody can give during the holiday season: a turkey dinner with all the fixings.

Eagles' wide receiver Alshon Jeffery made the event possible by partnering with Acme Markets and Philabundance. He had orchestrated a similar event in southwest Philadelphia at Thanksgiving and wanted to do it again at Christmastime. Acme and Philabundance were only too happy to oblige.

A recent study shows that hunger has risen 22% in the last six years, according to Samantha Retamar of Philabundance, the largest hunger relief organization in the Delaware Valley.

"We're trying to combat that as best as we can. We want to make sure that the children in our communities are being fed and that they are getting the help

they need in any way possible that Philabundance can help," she said.

"We want to give back to the neighborhoods that we serve. Philabundance is a huge partner for us," said Dana Ward of Acme Markets.

The grocery store chain donated 400 pre-cooked, frozen turkey meals with cranberries, mashed potatoes, stuffing, and gravy that would serve a family of eight.

Acme, the Eagles, and Philabundance reached out to Gideon and William Dick Elementary Schools, PHA, and the Mayor's Office of Education to make the event possible.

"Food brings people together. Any time that we can save folks money from doing one thing so they can put money into other essential opportunities, we jump on that opportunity," said Gregory Wright, the community school

coordinator from the Mayor's Office of Education at Gideon Elementary.

Jeffery contracted strep throat and was unable to make the distribution event, but donated 30 tickets to the Eagles' final home game. They were distributed to students at Gideon Elementary School who made the honor roll or had perfect attendance.

Cornerback De'Vante Bausby showed up in place of Jeffery and was right at home with fans young and old.

"I think it's very important to be in the community and give back," he said. "My purpose in life is just to help people. So, doing this, helping people, helping families, around this time of year is very important. I'm always down to do things like this."

And the families at Johnson Homes are, too!



Former Eagles Cornerback De'Vante Bausby (left) fit right in at Johnson Homes at a turkey dinner distribution event just before Christmas. Acme, the Eagles, and Philabundance reached out to Gideon and William Dick Elementary Schools, PHA, and the Mayor's Office of Education to make the event possible.

# Parent Child Home Program Celebrates 1st Graduation Class

A program designed to get children ready for school before they reach Pre-K celebrated its first graduating class early this fall. PHA's partnership with the Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP) began in November 2016. Forty-two families successfully completed the two-cycle program for a graduation rate of 76%.

The program prepares young children and their parents with the goal of improving literacy and school readiness. Employees who live in the community visit participating families for 30 minutes, twice a week. They take a book or educational toy for the family and show parents how to interact and increase verbal interaction between themselves and their children. The more words children hear has a huge impact on how ready they are to learn in school when it comes to reading, even social emotional development, as well as all types of

school readiness.

Malkia Singleton Ofori-Agyekum, state program director for the Parent-Child Home Program, said a second group of families began participating in the program last year and 85% are on track to graduate in 2019. She said they are happy with the progress of the program which exceeded its goal of enrolling 100 families over a two-year period in North Philadelphia.

"Eighty-seven percent of the families that PCHP is working with have household incomes of \$25,000 or under and 67% of those families have household incomes under \$10,000, showing that PCHP is working with some of the most under-resourced families in the community," Singleton Ofori-Agyekum noted.

Another bright spot occurred when Smith Memorial Playground and Playhouse selected the

program as a partner for a two-year Informal Learning Initiative funded by the William Penn Foundation. The partnership enabled PCHP to extend group play and literacy activities at the Smith Playground to PCHP families in North Philadelphia. Smith will also run regular programming at PHA partner sites targeting PCHP families in their neighborhoods.

PHA has expended \$100,000 in start-up funds to support PCHP, which is also supported by the GreenLight Fund, another nonprofit partner, that invested \$600,000 to get the program up and running. The program also produces opportunities for employment to neighborhood residents. The program routinely hires people from the neighborhood who understand the culture of the community and are a cultural match for families they visit. If you're interested, call 267-318-6421.



Forty-two families graduated from the first class for the Parent Child Home Program in late September. The program prepares young children and their parents with the goal of improving literacy and school readiness.

## PHA's MLK Day Gets Down to Business

Frigid weather on MLK Day? No problem!

Activities at the newly minted Blackwell Community Center focused on the promotion of businesses and nonprofits in the Mill Creek neighborhood and West Philadelphia.

"One of the things Martin Luther King wanted was what can you do for others? So, the biggest thing with this is we're trying to do for others, bring businesses to our community, that residents can take advantage of and be able to thrive," said Zach McNeil, Vice President of Community Operations and Resident Development at PHA.

A number of vendors and nonprofits took part in activities at the center on a bright, sunny albeit very cold day that lighted up the facility. McNeil believes that many people who live in the neighborhood may not even know that these businesses and nonprofits exist. He also noted that people can build a community from the bottom up by supporting local businesses and, in turn, promoting economic mobility.

"We want to help people be more self-sufficient. We want them to get a

piece of the American pie," said Rose Bryant, president of the Blackwell Homes Resident Council. "Sometimes people need the tools, so we're like the tool chest today."

Bryant also noted that "we have everybody including United Bank that would give them a small business loan" along with some business owners to familiarize people at the MLK event with starting their own business. Both she and McNeil emphasized that strong, local businesses are critical to having strong, vibrant neighborhoods.

The event featured a business run by two very young entrepreneurs. Kayla Epps and Dylan Taylor, ages 9 and 10 respectively, run "Velish" which sells lots of bling and a few books.

"We just wanted to show that we're powerful and we can be what we want to be," said Ms. Taylor. And then, smiling, she went back to showing and selling her wares with the dream of having an even bigger business when she becomes an adult.

Or to quote Dr. King, "Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase."



Kaya Epps and Dylan Taylor (l-r) brought their business "Velish" to PHA's MLK Day event at the Blackwell Community Center.

## Former Resident Facilitates Back to School Event

A former Bartram Village resident who is now a business owner in the neighborhood made this year's back to school event at Bartram Village possible.

Sharkeya Revels owns Tha Style Loft, a woman's clothing boutique on Woodland Avenue in the Kingsessing neighborhood. She lives independently and had worked at a variety of jobs before forming the business three years ago. Fashion, she says, is her passion. She is in the process of buying her business location. Not bad for someone who previously worked for a nursing home, American Airlines, and Burger King.

The event in late August included a DJ, entertainment for the children, food, and over 100 backpacks with supplies after Ms. Revels raised \$5,000 in cash and donations.

"I always wanted to do something to give back to the community that I came from," Revels said.

She initially started her efforts to give back to the community with clean up days on Woodland Avenue

over two years ago. Sharkeya wanted the community, which is the focus of PHA's latest Choice Neighborhoods Initiative, to have a certain look because she and others want to build up the community. She thinks the neighborhood needs businesses other than day cares or nail salons, such as food stores and other retail services.

Revels believes that give and take is necessary for communities to prosper. If someone takes from the community or earns from it, they need to give back. Residents of the Kingsessing community support her and she wants to demonstrate her appreciation on a regular basis. For her, that has translated into back to school drives, toy drives, and fans to help resident fight the heat.

And, yes, she's going to try to make the Bartram Village back to school event an annual affair. Sharkeya believes that without education "you'll go nowhere in life." In the next year, she plans on having classes for kids to empower them, to remind them of the importance of finishing school, despite unforeseen circumstances.



Sharkeya Revels a business owner, who once lived at Bartram Village, made this year's back to school event at Bartram Village possible.

# Spelling Bee Challenged Summer Camp Attendees

PHA's 4th Annual Spelling Bee for young residents who attended summer camps really tested their vocabulary and literacy skills during the "summer melt." In two of the categories, it seemed the contests would never end with a champion crowned. It's safe to say that as the contests reached their climax, some adults in the audience would have been sorely challenged to spell the words thrown at these kids.

An estimated 250 children who attended summer camps at different locations took part in the late summer contest. All students who took part worked over their vacation from school on improving their vocabulary and reading skills. The staff from PHA's Community Operations and Resident Development department (CORD) managed the event.

Spelling bee contestants took part in one of three categories: grades 1-3, 4-6, and 7th grade and up.

Perhaps the most memorable spell down occurred in the first category where 8-year-old Calib Clark of Whitehall took first place by spelling "quarterback" and "typewriter" correctly. He said spelling is his favorite subject at Mastery Smedley Elementary School. 8-year-olds Heavenly Thomas and Miyanah Collins of Hartranft and Kearny Elementary Schools finished in second and third place respectively.

Nine-year-old Kysir Tyler of Whitehall, who says spelling is a challenge just like sports, won the 4th thru 6th grade category.

Kamiah White, age 11, of Johnson Homes took second place noting that she had "never had words this hard before." For a moment, Ms. White thought she had won the contest when Tyler stumbled during the closing rounds when she spelled a word that he could not. Then, she misspelled her own challenge word, opening the door for Tyler to win the title for the second year in a row.

J'mar Henderson, an 8-year-old from Hill Creek, took third place in the grades 4-6 group.

Parkway High School's Nina Williams won the first place trophy in the bee's 7th grade thru high school group. The Spring Garden Apartments resident said English, spelling, and math are her favorite subjects. Ms. Williams plans on becoming a pediatrician.

7th grader Amirah Davis-Donaldson of Oxford Village and Anderson Elementary School finished second. She likes spelling and art and would like to become either a gym or dance teacher or both.

12-year-old Jaysha Wright of Pratt Middle School, who finished third, is just as ambitious. She wants to be a teacher and says spelling and math are her favorite subjects. Ms. Wright, who likes to compete, said she won a spelling bee at her school.



Calib Clark (right) took first place for grades 1-3 in the 4th Annual Spelling Bee at Abbottsford Homes. Heavenly Thomas (middle) took second place while Miyanah Collins (left) took third.



Kysir Tyler of Whitehall (right) repeated as champion for grades 4-6 in the 4th Annual Spelling Bee. Kamiah White (center) of Johnson Homes took second place while J'mar Henderson (left) from Hill Creek took third. CORD VP Zach McNeil (back) and his staff managed the event.



Spring Garden Apartments' Nina Williams (left) won the first place trophy in the 4th Annual Spelling Bee's 7th grade thru high school group. Amirah Davis-Donaldson of Oxford Village (center) finished second and Jaysha Wright (right) of Pratt Middle School finished third. Robert Graves and Oddess Blocker of the CORD staff helped conduct the event.

# Mainstream Vouchers Will Help PHA Fight Homelessness

PHA has received 99 Mainstream Housing Choice Vouchers from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The vouchers are specifically for non-elderly persons with disabilities who are transitioning out of institutional or other separated settings, those at serious risk of institutionalization, homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless.

The voucher subsidies worth over \$873,000 enable non-elderly disabled families to lease affordable private housing of their choice. The vouchers are particularly valuable to persons with disabilities who often face difficulties in locating suitable and accessible housing on the private market. Sixteen percent of Philadelphia residents are people with disability and 13 percent of them are mobility impaired.

“We’re thrilled to receive these new vouchers to further the goals of the Americans with Disabilities Act by helping persons with disabilities live in the most integrated setting, as well as fighting homelessness,” said PHA President and CEO Kelvin A. Jeremiah. “The program also encourages partnerships with other agencies that enable individuals to live independently in the community, in this case, our partners, Liberty Resources and the Philadelphia Office of Homeless Services.”

“These mainstream housing vouchers will be a vitally important housing resource to assist low-income city residents with disabilities, especially those seeking to relocate from segregated, expensive and unnecessary nursing facilities to accessible, affordable housing units in the diverse communities of our great City,” said Thomas Earle, CEO of Liberty Resources.

“The Office of Homeless Services is pleased to partner with PHA on making these critically important ‘mainstream’ housing choice vouchers available to people with disabilities who would otherwise be in shelters or institutions,” said Elizabeth Hersh, Director of the Office of Homeless Services for the City of Philadelphia. “We always want our neighbors living with disabilities to be part of the community, living safely, affordably and with dignity. This assistance makes that possible.”

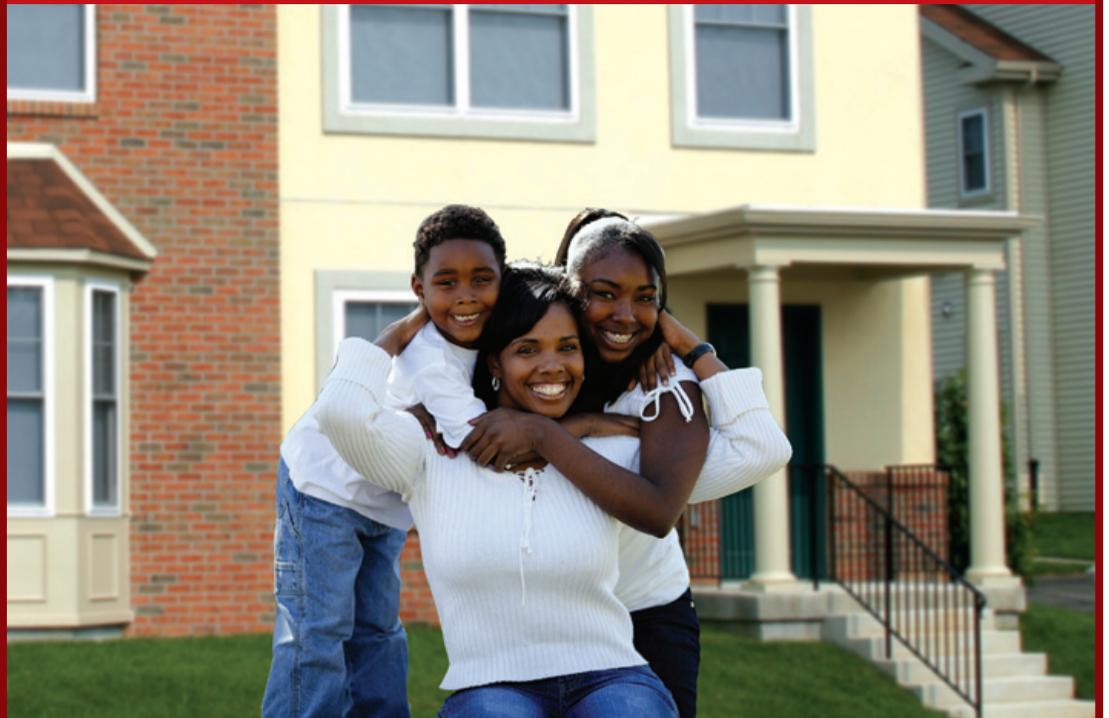
The new mainstream vouchers are in addition to an existing pilot program that addresses the same population, but is supported by traditional housing choice voucher subsidies.

In addition to the voucher program, PHA currently has over 1,000 wheelchair accessible units in its housing developments and over 250 adaptable units.

As for the future, PHA is constructing three developments and rehabbing one site with units dedicated to people with disability.

The new Norris Phase III Apartments will have 5 handicapped accessible units or 10 percent of the total being built. Similarly, the Blumberg 83, which will be built on a new neighborhood block being created from the old high-rise site, will have 9 handicapped accessible. The Blumberg Senior Tower, which is being rehabilitated, will have 12 handicapped accessible units, 24 adaptable units, and 2 for people with visual/hearing impairment; that’s a total of 38 dedicated units or over 40 percent of the units. And the Walton School, which will be rehabilitated, will have 4 handicapped accessible units out of 40 planned units.

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# PHA Properties Win 6 Awards for Management Excellence

The Pennsylvania Apartment Association recognized five Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) sites for excellence through its “Best in Apartment Living” awards this fall.

“We’re committed to meeting the highest standards of the housing industry,” said PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah. “Each residence has to be a home that raises people’s spirits while PHA service programs open doors to opportunities, so residents can advance themselves economically. To win any of these highly competitive awards, a development has to record scores in the 90 percent range.”

Queen Lane Apartments won a Platinum Award for Maintenance Excellence and a Silver Award for

Community Excellence. This modern development, which contains a historic burial ground, replaced an obsolete high-rise development, opening almost three years ago in the city’s Germantown neighborhood.

Queen’s Row, located near the Queen Lane rail station, won a Gold Award for Maintenance Excellence. Gladys B. Jacobs in the Poplar neighborhood and Plymouth Hall located in Hunting Park won Silver Awards for Maintenance Excellence.

Nellie Reynolds Gardens, located in North Philadelphia’s Stanton neighborhood, won a Silver Award for Community Excellence with a score of 98%. Five other PHA developments in this category scored well, too, although not quite high enough for an award. However, PHA received a score of 93%

for overall community excellence.

The entries in the Association contest were judged by team members from Market Viewpoint, a market research firm based in Chester County, which measures and manages customer experiences. The firm serves varied and diverse industries concerned with customer satisfaction, including real estate, apartments, new homes and senior housing.

Earlier this year, the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) honored PHA with the 2018 Award of Merit in the Project Design category for Blumberg Phase I. The development is part of a \$632 million transformation plan for the Sharswood neighborhood just north of Center City.



Queen Lane Apartments won a Platinum Award for Maintenance Excellence and a Silver Award for Community Excellence in the Pennsylvania Apartment Association’s “Best in Apartment Living” awards. Queen’s Row, Gladys B. Jacobs, Plymouth Hall, and Nellie Reynolds Gardens were also recognized by the Association. (Photo credit: Maurice Browne)

# PHA HAS MOVED



Our new offices  
are located at  
**2013 Ridge Ave**  
**Philadelphia PA 19121**

Questions: **215.684.4112**  
**info@pha.phila.gov**

**PHA**  
PHILADELPHIA HOUSING AUTHORITY  
OPENING DOORS TO OPPORTUNITIES

# Successful Auction of Excess Properties

PHA recorded total sale proceeds of nearly \$5 million following the auction of 71 scattered site properties on November 14th at Barry S. Slosberg, Inc., in Northeast Philadelphia. The auction is part of PHA's long-term strategy to restructure the agency's scattered site inventory. The PHA Board of Commissioners approved of the auction of the lots. The sales figure is a preliminary total and subject to change, based on several factors.

"Disposal of these vacant properties will create a financially sound and sustainable occupied scattered site portfolio, and enable PHA to raise capital to rehabilitate units and reduce vacancies in its remaining inventory,

and leverage its resources for future affordable housing development," said PHA President and CEO Kelvin A. Jeremiah.

This auction was the third such event in the past year, resulting in over 200 properties returning to the tax rolls. Many of the properties sold in prior auctions have been renovated and reoccupied.

In addition to auctions, PHA continues to make scattered site properties available to non-profit and other affordable housing development organizations to preserve and increase the supply of affordable housing in the City of Philadelphia.



*There was no shortage of bidders for vacant parcels that PHA put up for auction in mid-November.*



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- West Park Apartments
- Westpark Plaza
- Wilson Park
- Bartram Village
- Paschall Village



# PHA Lead Assessment Ensures Safety of Young Children

PHA has completed visual assessments of lead-based paint hazards on all homes in its portfolio built before 1978 where at least one child under six years of age lives.

More than 1,500 homes were assessed that could potentially pose a risk of lead exposure. Following protocols established by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), PHA staff corrected the few deficiencies identified. EPA-certified risk assessors then tested the repaired areas and confirmed that the corrections were effective. All work has now been completed.

“Our responsibility to the health and safety of the children who live in PHA properties is paramount,” said PHA President and CEO Kelvin

A. Jeremiah. “Although we inspect properties for chipped or damaged paint at least annually, we intensified our efforts in keeping with a national movement by school districts and housing authorities to check older buildings and any noted hazards were corrected. Now we can declare all of our properties where it was documented that children under six reside are currently free of lead-based paint hazard.”

Most of Philadelphia’s properties were built before 1978 when lead-based paint was widely and routinely used. PHA has since rebuilt many of its developments after lead-based paint was banned, and while the majority of PHA’s properties have been renovated over time, pre-1978 units remain.

Although the homes’ interiors have been painted many times over in the ensuing years, underlying lead can become exposed when an area, such as a window sill or wall, is damaged.

The most recent round of assessments began in July 2018 and represents a special one-time review. However, PHA annually examines all pre-1978 homes where children under six live. In addition, when a family moves out of a home, EPA-certified risk assessors test dust samples from the unit to confirm that there are no current lead-based paint hazards present before the next family can move in. All PHA maintenance staff – more than 600 employees – have been trained and/or retrained in lead-safe work practices.

PHA also initiated a public education campaign about lead safety. PHA contacted all residents living in pre-1978 homes and encouraged them to report deteriorated paint in their properties. These families also received pamphlets on keeping their homes safe from lead-based paint exposure. Moreover, PHA established a Lead Paint Hotline for residents (215-684-8600) so that they can call with questions and concerns about lead-based paint in their homes. Upon receiving a call about deteriorated paint in the home, PHA seeks to perform a visual assessment within 24 hours. Lead-based paint information has also been posted on the PHA website at [www.pha.phila.gov/lead-information/what-is-lead.aspx](http://www.pha.phila.gov/lead-information/what-is-lead.aspx).

“It is very important that families play a role in keeping their homes safe,” Jeremiah said. “We have trained our employees in lead-safe procedures, but we also need our residents to take care of their homes. And if they do have a young child in the household, they need to report damage to paint to us immediately.”

As part of PHA’s ongoing lead-based paint procedures, the agency is contracting with six highly skilled environmental consulting companies to conduct lead-based paint and lead hazard inspections, training, testing and monitoring activities within various PHA properties for the next five years. The contract represents a potential investment of more than \$3.4 million per year toward the safety of our residents.



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