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**HELP USA, Philadelphia Housing Authority, The City of Philadelphia,
and The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency
Open New Affordable Housing for Veterans and Seniors**

**- HELP USA transforms unused Reynolds School into 55 apartments
and support space for seniors and homeless veterans -**

(May 11, 2022) Philadelphia – National housing non-profit HELP USA, in partnership with the Philadelphia Housing Authority, the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, PHDC, and the City of Philadelphia, celebrated the grand opening of The Brigadier General Hazel Johnson Brown Veterans Center at HELP Philadelphia VI. The renovation of the former school in the Sharswood neighborhood of North Philadelphia created 55 units of housing for seniors and homeless veterans.

“Opening our sixth project in Philadelphia is a significant milestone,” said David Cleghorn, Chief Housing Officer at HELP USA. “This building will provide housing and support services to people in need. Its transformation from an abandoned building into an asset for the neighborhood and the city exemplifies the best kind of public-private collaborations.”

The 51 one-bedroom and 4 two-bedroom apartments are designated for low-income seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities. Nine units have been set aside expressly for formerly homeless or special needs veterans. The building also houses a community room, health-service spaces, and office space for supportive services.

“We strongly support this development of Veterans housing for worthy veterans who need safe, affordable places to call home in Philadelphia,” said Philadelphia Council President Darrell Clarke. “These men and women served our Country admirably; now, it’s time we served them, and this development helps us all towards that worthy goal.”



The apartment building provides modern housing and community services for seniors and veterans.



Public and private partners came together to convert an empty school into affordable housing for Philadelphians: Representing the stakeholders from left, Kelvin Jeremiah, President and CEO, Philadelphia Housing Authority; City Council President Darrell Clarke; Jerry Hemmingway, a Brown Veteran Center resident; State Rep. Donna Bullock; Matthew Schatz, Vice President Commercial Real Estate, TD Bank; Assia Richardson, representing Senator Street’s office and David Cleghorn, Chief Housing Officer, HELP USA.

The project serves as a partner to Philadelphia Housing Authority's Sharswood Blumberg Neighborhood Choice Revitalization Plan. This ambitious plan is already working to radically transform the neighborhood from high-rise public housing to a more residential scale by renovating senior housing and constructing single-family townhouses.

"It is an honor to again support our great community partner HELP USA in its mission to provide homes for the people most in need, particularly our formerly homeless veterans," said PHA President and CEO Kelvin A. Jeremiah. "Our commitment includes funding of more than \$1,000 a month for the next 20 years for 49 of the units in this building, and a long-term \$1.5 million loan. The conversion of this formerly vacant school building represents the latest addition to the ongoing, incredible transformation of Sharswood that PHA is privileged to lead."

The project has received widespread support, including endorsements from Governor Tom Wolf, Mayor Jim Kenney, Council President Darrell Clarke, State Senator Sharif Street, and former U.S. Representative Bob Brady.

"PHDC is proud to be a part of this development that helps house our seniors and homeless veterans," said David Thomas, CEO of PHDC. "Our commitment to affordable housing and community development through financing, land, and other solutions are important to projects like this. The Reynolds School, once used to educate our children, has been repurposed to become the Brigadier General Hazel Johnson Brown Veterans Center, helping house some of our most vulnerable residents in Philadelphia."

"The Jon Bon Jovi Soul Foundation is proud to once again partner with our friends at HELP USA", said Leo Carlin, President of the Jon Bon Jovi Soul Foundation. "Joining forces on this project in Philadelphia was important to us as it addresses a huge need in this community by providing not only a safe place for people to call home, but also services that can help shape the rest of their lives. The JBJ Soul Foundation has always believed that projects like this one are made possible by organizations from all sectors coming together to make a difference and we are thrilled to be one of them."

About HELP USA

HELP USA is one of the nation's largest homeless service providers and low-income housing developers serving at-risk populations, including families, veterans, and victims of domestic violence. HELP USA currently serves more than 8,000 people every day at over 50 programs and residences across five states. Since its founding in 1986, HELP USA has served more than 500,000 men, women, and children and developed more than 2,500 units of housing.

About Philadelphia Housing Authority

The Philadelphia Housing Authority is the nation's 4th largest housing authority, serving nearly 80,000 residents. PHA is also a major real estate developer. Learn more about PHA at www.pha.phila.gov

About PHDC

PHDC is the City of Philadelphia's full-service community development organization. For over 40 years, PHDC creates and provides services and programs that make Philadelphia a great place to live. PHDC helps residents, community groups, businesses and developers repurpose vacant land. PHDC also facilitates the repair of homes and finances affordable housing projects. Supported by dedicated staff, PHDC works in every neighborhood in Philadelphia. The Philadelphia Land Bank and the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority is staffed by PHDC, and PHDC works closely with the City's Department of Planning and Development. Visit <https://phdcphila.org/> to learn more.