

# The PHA Experience

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## PHA Marks the Grand Opening of Blumberg Phase I

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Mayor Kenney and other dignitaries joined PHA as the housing authority celebrated the completion of the first phase of the agency's Sharswood/Blumberg Transformation. The ceremony took place in mid-November at North 24th and Oxford Streets, across the street from the former site of the high-rise Blumberg Apartments.

"In many neighborhoods that are seeing an influx of new faces, it is important that we protect the rights of long-time residents in those communities and that we protect their neighborhoods' culture," said Mayor Jim Kenney. "What we are seeing here in Sharswood/Blumberg is a different kind of neighborhood renaissance. The plan PHA and its partners have designed for this community... gives us the first real opportunity to bring this neighborhood all the way back - and doing so in a way that protects affordability as it looks ahead to a future community of mixed income residents."

Fifty-seven affordable rental homes were built on parcels of vacant land owned by PHA adjacent to the site where the Blumberg Apartments formerly stood. All the high-rises except for one senior building were demolished last March. The development is centered around 24th and Jefferson Streets.

"We are delivering on the first part of our promise to this neighborhood to create sustainable, energy efficient, affordable housing, while increasing critical amenities to make Sharswood a neighborhood of choice," said PHA President and CEO Kelvin A. Jeremiah. "I'd like to thank HUD Secretary Julian Castro, Mayor Kenney, Council President Clarke, all of our Sharswood/Blumberg Transformation Plan partners, and especially the PHA residents and the entire community for their past and continuing support of these efforts."

"The community-based approach to planning this development



PHA marked the completion of the first phase of the Sharswood/Blumberg Transformation. The ceremony took place at North 24th and Oxford Streets, across the street from the former site of the high-rise Blumberg Apartments. PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah (far left) joined former residents who cut the ceremonial ribbon with Council President Darrell Clarke and Mayor Jim Kenney.

is why we are hopeful it will succeed," Council President Darrell L. Clarke said. "When residents have confidence that their concerns are being heard and that they will be supported, they will work just as hard as the builders and engineers to maximize every opportunity that affordable housing can provide: a safe place to raise children, get an education, get job training, and work toward self-sufficiency."

In December 2013, HUD awarded a Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI) Planning Grant to PHA. The \$500,000 planning grant provided the agency with the opportunity to create a transformation plan for the redevelopment of the area stretching north of Girard College, south of Cecil B. Moore Avenue, and between 19th and 27th Streets. More than 40 planning meetings with residents and stakeholders took place to create a blueprint for a thriving, prosperous, self-reliant community.

(continued on page 12)



PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah (center) handed out commemorative bricks from the old Blumberg Apartments to former residents who will move into new homes constructed in the Sharswood neighborhood. PHA Commissioner Asia Coney (center) who led the effort to make sure that residents could return to the neighborhood looks on. The grand opening took place in mid-November.

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*PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah and Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney got together recently to talk about issues important to PHA residents and the City. The mayor took part in the November grand opening for the first phase of the new Blumberg Apartments. He called the Sharswood/Blumberg Transformation plan the first real opportunity to bring the neighborhood all the way back while protecting affordability. He praised the housing authority for its plans to revive the Ridge Avenue commercial corridor, and its work with the city's other nonprofit groups to create affordable housing and reinvigorate neighborhoods.*

*What follows is the essence of their conversation.*

## Q&A *with the Mayor Jim Kenney and President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah*

**Philadelphia has one of the highest poverty rates of any major U.S. city. How is your administration addressing that issue?**

In June, the Mayor and City Council successfully passed a beverage tax in order to fund new programs to decrease poverty, including quality pre-K. Philadelphia's pre-K program, PHLpreK, provides parents with free, quality childcare, and research shows that children who go through quality pre-K perform better in school and make more money later in life. If you are interested in enrolling your child in the first available pre-K seats starting in January 2017, please call 844-PHL-PREK (844-745-7735).

Using funding from the beverage tax, we will also create 25 community schools. Community schools provide our students and their families with resources like healthcare and job training, so that poverty doesn't keep our children from succeeding. Nine community schools have already launched. To find out if there is one near you, call (215) 686-0333.

In addition to these programs, the City's Office of Community Empowerment is also exclusively dedicated to connecting low-income families with resources that can move them out of poverty. If you'd like to speak with them about resources for your family, please call 215-685-3600.

**How will your community schools model help our kids?**

We cannot expect our children to be successful in school if they are too hungry, too sick or too

traumatized to learn. Community schools work with educators, families and students to put resources in the school that children and their families need in order for the students to do well academically. This can include anything from ESL classes for parents to infant childcare or a food kitchen or in-house healthcare. This model has already helped many children in low-income Districts achieve across the country and we are hopeful that it will do the same in Philadelphia.

**Why do you think it's so important for Philadelphia to have an adequate supply of housing for low-income families and seniors?**

It is difficult to maintain a job, achieve in school or stay mentally and/or physically healthy if you don't have a roof over your head. Having a home stabilizes individuals and families, period.

**How are the City and PHA working together to decrease homelessness?**

The City and PHA have worked together since 2008 to provide affordable rental units to people who are homeless. Since 2008, 1365 single individuals and 1922 families have been housed through the program. Individuals in the program who suffer from serious mental illness and substance abuse are treated by the City's Behavioral Health teams. As a result, the program has an 88% success rate for singles and a 97% success rate for families in preventing a return to street homelessness.

**What steps has the city taken to ensure that there is more diversity among workers in your Rebuild program?**

Rebuild is a program that will invest up to \$500 million in the city's parks, recreation centers, and libraries. These projects represent a opportunities to put underemployed Philadelphians to work. We plan to do that by taking the following steps:

1. Work closely with the building trades to recruit Philadelphians from under-represented populations (e.g., low-income residents, veterans, etc.) for an apprentice ready program.
2. Provide supports and the promise of paid work to make sure apprentice ready participants are successful.
3. Create opportunities for minority- and women-owned businesses up and down the construction industry chain.
4. Provide supports for minority- and women-owned businesses to address barriers to participation such as issues with delayed payments, bonding, and insurance.

**Who is your favorite Philly Born entertainer?**

Patti LaBelle

**What is your favorite Philly food?**

Bean Soup



*The PHA board has approved a \$45 million contract for the construction of the agency's new headquarters building on Ridge Avenue. The new location will allow for the consolidation of several housing authority offices at one location.*

## PHA Moves Forward on Plans for New Headquarters

The Philadelphia Housing Authority is following through on its economic and principled commitment toward improving the Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood.

The PHA board has approved a \$45 million contract with the joint venture of Shoemaker Construction Co. and Synterra, Ltd., for the construction of the agency's new headquarters building on Ridge Avenue. The new location will allow for the consolidation of several housing authority offices at one location, as well as the development of an adjacent grocery store.

Following the implosion of two high-rises at the Blumberg Apartments site in March and the groundbreaking for new homes last

August, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission unanimously approved moving forward with street striking and zoning changes to support the development of the new headquarters and supermarket.

"This is the next important step in the Sharswood/Blumberg transformation efforts," said PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah. "The change in zoning, from various zoning designations to a singular focus designation, will allow for mixed use development. The Philadelphia Housing Authority looks forward to other businesses joining us along the Corridor to bring the amenities that every community wants and deserves."

PHA is currently headquartered in offices located at 12 S. 23rd Street. The current lease runs out at the end of March 2018.

The Sharswood/Blumberg Transformation Plan reflected the community's interest in establishing a grocery store in the neighborhood, since residents lack access to fresh food, produce, and meats. The housing authority worked with a consultant, Urban Partners, to seek out potential and interested grocery store operators before choosing Save-A-Lot. The aforementioned plan for creating a neighborhood of choice and opportunity calls for investments of over \$500 million.



This rendering by BLT Architects shows the location (Phase 2, Retail) of a new Save-A-Lot grocery store at Ridge Avenue and Jefferson Street. Immediately to the right is the new PHA headquarters building.

## PHA Takes Big Step Toward New Supermarket for Sharswood

One of the anchors for the revitalization of the Ridge Avenue commercial corridor in Sharswood is closer to becoming a reality as PHA and Save-A-Lot have reached a tentative agreement to build a new grocery store. The new store would cover 18,500 square feet and would be located next to the new headquarters building for the housing authority.

A grocery store in what is now a food desert represents a major part of the Sharswood/Blumberg Transformation Plan. Under the terms of the 10-year agreement, with final details still to be negotiated, PHA will develop the building using non-federal funds at a cost of approximately \$4.5 million. Once the structure is in place, Save-A-Lot will cover the cost of all fixtures and installation. The grocer will make lease payments to the housing authority or its affiliate.

“During the development of the plan to transform the Sharswood/Blumberg community, residents told us a grocery store was a feature the neighborhood badly needed,” said PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah.

“We heeded the call and conducted outreach. Three grocery operators expressed interest, but only Save-A-Lot provided a written proposal detailing its commitment to the neighborhood so we selected them.”

Save-A-Lot will operate a modern store with products that include fresh produce, poultry and seafood, and other items that have not been available in the neighborhood. Construction is scheduled to begin early next year with the opening set for the Spring of 2018.

The grocery store and the new PHA headquarters building will go up on the west side of Ridge Avenue at Jefferson Street. Final details on the headquarters building, which will consolidate employees from several sites into one, will be completed soon.

“The offer from Save-A-Lot presents an opportunity to deliver on two commitments made to the residents – to bring in a high quality grocer and to revitalize the Ridge Avenue Corridor,” Jeremiah said. “All parts of the plan are aimed at making Sharswood/Blumberg a neighborhood of choice.”

The PHA board has also taken the next step toward providing quality pre-K in the neighborhood.

Earlier this year, the PHA board approved a memorandum of understanding with Public Health Management Corporation (PHMC) to operate an early childhood education program in Sharswood/Blumberg. The program, funded by a grant from the Green Light Fund, will serve up to 200 families over a four year period, further delivering on the Transformation Plan for the community. Named the Parent Child Home Program, it will provide literacy and basic numeracy training to children and parents in their homes beginning with kids as young as 2-years old.

“The most obvious sign of renewing the neighborhood will be the hundreds of homes we will build over the next several years, but the vision here is to add the elements that make a community whole,” Jeremiah said. “That includes access to quality education, starting with pre-K, access to a supermarket, plenty of green space and a thriving business corridor. These latest actions show that we are progressing on all fronts.”

## PHA & Habitat for Humanity Expand Home Program in Sharswood

PHA has expanded a successful home repair program aimed at helping Sharswood homeowners remain in the Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood in partnership with Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia. The housing authority and Habitat are also expanding the agreement to include the development of new affordable homes for sale in Sharswood in order to attract and retain lower-income families to the community.

The partnership paves the way toward achieving some of the housing goals of the Sharswood/Blumberg Transformation Plan that PHA previously unveiled. Members of the community strongly indicated they wanted Habitat to be a partner in the process. PHA responded to those calls by naming Habitat as a partner in the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative Planning Grant for Sharswood/Blumberg. The latest agreement demonstrates the agency’s commitment to keep existing homeowners in the community.

“We committed to existing homeowners in Sharswood from the beginning of the planning process. We told them that we planned to work with another quality, affordable housing provider in Habitat for Humanity of Philadelphia,” said PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah. “This partnership has proven fruitful and we believe that it can become more so as we add working class homes for sale to the mix as well as helping long-time homeowners remain in place.”

The latest agreement expands the Sharswood Preservation Home Repair program to serve 30 additional homeowners in the neighborhood. Under the program that began a year ago, 11 homeowners received extensive critical repairs for their homes.

Repair needs determined through home evaluations by Habitat covered a wide range including roofing, heating, electric and plumbing, exterior, and structural work to insure the integrity of the homes. PHA covers the cost of materials while Habitat provides the labor. Homeowners provide sweat equity by assisting in the repairs, and they repay a percentage of the cost

based on a sliding scale determined by income.

The historic Sharswood/Blumberg Neighborhood Transformation Plan calls for a mix of market rate and affordable housing in the community. Like residents in many of Philadelphia’s transitioning neighborhoods, Sharswood residents feared the prospect of being pushed out as the community develops and rents, housing prices, and taxes rise. The PHA-Habitat collaboration is aimed at preventing that from happening here.

“Just in restoring the 11 homes in our pilot project, members of the community have already seen and felt the impact of our collaboration with PHA,” said Habitat Executive Director Frank Monaghan. “Now, with the opportunity to join with families to build 20 new homes in Sharswood and restore 30 more we are well on our way to helping PHA achieve its goal of ensuring that working class families, and lower income homeowners will be proud residents of Sharswood as it rebuilds.”

Habitat Philadelphia will identify families eligible to buy the 20 new homes that they and PHA will develop for sale in the neighborhood. PHA may recommend families, specifically those who were relocated from the neighborhood and want to return.

Accepted applicants must fulfill 350 hours of “sweat equity” that includes volunteering at construction sites, working at Habitat’s ReStore (a discount home improvement store in South Philadelphia), and participating in required homeowner workshops. The profits from ReStore help support the home repair and homeownership programs.

Habitat homes built under this program will be two stories with three bedrooms and one and one-half baths and basements. Homes will likely be around 1,200 square feet with rear yards. All of the new homes will be built to Energy Star rated construction standards making them affordable for purchase, and to maintain and operate. All homes should be completed by the end of 2018.

# PHA Partners With Archdiocese for Expansion of Senior Complex

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia has broken ground for 52 new senior units in the Grays Ferry neighborhood, thanks in large part to a \$9.9 million subsidy from PHA.

St. John Neumann Place II is an addition to an existing senior facility by the same name on the campus of the former St. John Neumann Catholic High School. The existing complex has been open since 2008 and is comprised of 75 senior units. The groundbreaking ceremony took place in early August.

The housing authority is providing project based vouchers to subsidize new units across the city under a plan to create 6,000 units of affordable housing in five years. PHA is providing

the subsidy with Project Based Vouchers (PBV) through the HUD Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program. Those vouchers stay with the units at the site, unlike traditional tenant-based vouchers that a person can use anywhere in the United States.

“We are proud to partner with the Archdiocese of Philadelphia to serve seniors by expanding affordable housing and health care services here in South Philadelphia,” said PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah. Our investment reflects PHA’s desire to work hand-in-hand with mission-driven organizations like the Archdiocese.”

Catholic Health Care Services and the Archdiocesan Office for Community Development are managing the expansion of the senior facility. In addition to PHA’s subsidy, the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency awarded \$12 million in Low Income Housing Tax Credits toward construction of the new units.

Plans for the site include a wellness center that will serve income eligible seniors in the surrounding community, as well as those who live at St. John Neumann. The housing authority remains heavily invested in South Philadelphia with nearby developments which includes Greater Grays Ferry Estates, Wilson Park, and Cassie L. Holly Court.



*St. John Neumann Place II shown in this rendering will add 52 units to an existing senior facility by the same name on the campus of the former St. John Neumann Catholic High School in South Philadelphia. PHA is subsidizing the development with Project Based Vouchers worth \$9.9 million.*

# PHA Contribution Makes Kensington Senior Site a Reality

PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah took part in the dedication of Saint Francis Villa in the Kensington neighborhood in early October. The 40-unit senior development is the latest affordable housing facility for older adults established by archdiocesan Catholic Health Care Services. The Philadelphia Housing Authority contributed \$1.8 million toward the construction of the units and pledged an additional \$9 million in future rent subsidies which will make the finances for the site pencil out.

“We at PHA are thrilled to have a part in the renewal of East Kensington and contribute to quality, affordable housing for our seniors,” Jeremiah said. “The housing authority has a serious commitment to the revitalization of once proud neighborhoods across Philadelphia. In addition to our own work, we are financially backing 21 different projects like this one with mission-driven partners.”

Mr. Jeremiah noted that good housing is fundamental to the general



Photo credit: Cecil Baker + Partners and Matt Wargo, Catholic Philly.com

*St. Francis Villa is located on the 1900 block of East Hagert Street at the site of a former factory that burned to the ground in 2010. The 40 apartments at the complex contain bedroom, bath and living space with kitchen.*

welfare of society. He also said that partnerships such as this one allow longtime residents to remain in neighborhoods that are undergoing renewal.

St. Francis Villa was a decade in the making. Kensington has been a very poor neighborhood for years. Even with revitalization, many people there still live in deep poverty. The development is part of the Archdiocesan Office of Community Development’s commitment to the area surrounding Visitation Parish. The neighborhood strategic plan

identified affordable senior housing as a need.

“The rent subsidies (from PHA) will enable us to reach down to the most vulnerable senior citizens in our community,” said John Wagner, deputy secretary and CEO for archdiocesan Catholic Health Care Services. “We are committed to bringing affordable housing into communities and providing seniors with well designed, dignified housing.”

Archbishop Charles Chaput told the audience that St. Francis Villa is more than a building and more

than housing. “It is a home,” he said, urging them to help build community among themselves.

St. Francis Villa is located on the 1900 block of East Hagert Street at the site of a former factory that burned to the ground in 2010. Total cost of the development was \$14.2 million, with more than \$12 million obtained through low-income housing tax credits from PNC Bank. The 40 apartments at the complex contain bedroom, bath and living space with kitchen. Most occupants, already in place, are single but there are a few couples.



Photo credit: BradleyDigital.com

*PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah confers with Philadelphia Archbishop Charles Chaput at the dedication of St. Francis Villa in the Kensington neighborhood. The housing authority contributed \$1.8 million toward construction of the senior facility and \$9 million in future rent subsidies. Shown on the far right is Councilman Mark Squilla.*

# PHA Reaches Agreement to Redevelop Former Chestnut Street Headquarters Site

The Philadelphia Housing Authority has reached an agreement to work with Alterra Property Group, LLC to convert the agency's former headquarters site at 2012 Chestnut Street into an apartment building with approximately 200 units. The plan calls for 160 market rate apartments and up to 40 PHA-supported apartments for lower-middle income tenants.

Alterra will act on the housing authority's behalf to secure the financing and final development of the site under the 99-year ground lease agreement that was approved in October by the PHA Board of Commissioners.

"We know that the Chestnut Street property is attractive and have received

numerous inquiries about it," said Kelvin A. Jeremiah, PHA President and CEO. "It's in our interest and the City's interest to redevelop this site to maintain a vibrant, healthy atmosphere in Center City. Including affordable apartments was a critical component of this deal for us as well."

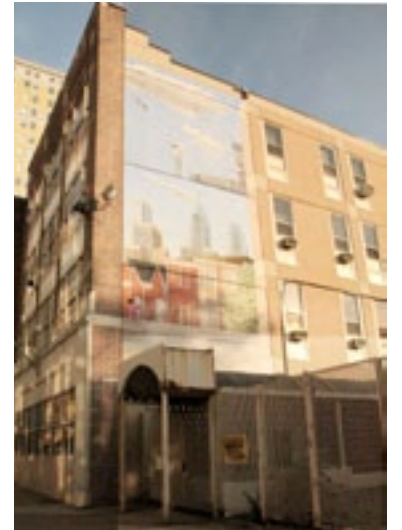
Under the agreement, "affordable" means that up to 40 apartments will be offered to individuals or families earning no more than 60% of Area Median Income (\$30,840 for a family of two or \$38,550 for a family of four). Alterra's plan also includes other amenities to be made available to all residents, as well as 7,000 square feet of commercial space on the first floor.

Alterra is a diversified real estate investment, development and management company based in Center City. The firm handles all aspects of real estate development, investment and management. It has completed real estate transactions across 15 states, and developed and currently manages hundreds of upscale apartments in Philadelphia that are managed under the umbrella of the APG Living.

Eight companies, including Alterra, made proposals to PHA in response to a solicitation put out by the agency last November. Seventy-six companies located in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland, Georgia, Virginia, New York, and Florida were contacted.

The four-story brick office building at 2012 Chestnut was built in 1927. PHA still had some offices in the building as recently as January 2008.

In April, the PHA Board approved a contract with the joint venture of Shoemaker Construction Co. and Synterra, Ltd., for the construction of new headquarters on Ridge Avenue, a key part of the authority's redevelopment plans for the Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood. The new location will allow for the consolidation of several housing authority offices at one location, as well as the development of an adjacent grocery store.



*Alterra Property Group, LLC and PHA's plan calls for 160 market rate apartments and up to 40 PHA-supported apartments for lower-middle income tenants.*

# Rehab of Historic School Is Under Way at Richard Allen Homes

The long awaited remake of the historic Spring Garden School located just south of 11th and Poplar Streets has begun. It represents the last leg of redevelopment at PHA's Richard Allen Homes. The rehabilitation of the school building will create 37 affordable apartment units for veterans and seniors. A formal groundbreaking ceremony took place on a sunny, fall day in late September.

PHA is partnering with HELP USA, one of the nation's largest homeless service providers and low-income housing developers serving at-risk populations including veterans, to rehabilitate the building to the tune of over \$13.5 million. Most of the construction cost is being covered with Low Income Housing Tax Credits and Historic Tax Credits obtained by HELP USA. The housing authority has leased the school building to HELP USA for 99 years and is subsidizing the rental units with Project Based Vouchers (PBV) for 20 years, a value of \$9.5 million.

"This new development is a down payment of sorts on a debt that we can never fully repay to our vets," said PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah. "I want to commend HELP USA for its commitment to housing the country's most vulnerable people."

Residents of the neighborhood have waited decades for something positive to occur at the site. The school has been vacant since the 1970's and was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1986 because of its special design and architecture. Over the years, the building was vandalized and became a source of blight that hardly fit in with the neighborhood renewal taking place all around it.

City Council President Darrell Clarke, whose district includes the historic site, recalled two years of wrestling with the School District to get control of the building and put it into use again. Because of regulations, the district had to pass the building to the City of Philadelphia, and then the City passed it on to PHA.

"At the end of the day, we're standing here," he said. "We're going to have some first class housing. I will no longer be getting any phone calls about people going in here."

David Cleghorn, Senior Vice President of Real Estate for HELP USA and a Philadelphia native, recalled seeing the Spring Garden School in earlier years.

"I would drive up and down the street on my way to and from work and I used to think 'Why isn't anybody

doing anything with this gorgeous building,'" he said.

He went on to note that the redevelopment is expensive because it involves historic rehabilitation of an existing building, and it required eight different sources of financing.

Congressman Robert Brady, who has worked actively with HELP USA to create four other developments for veterans in the city, spoke of his continued commitment to create more housing for them.

"I'm going to build a lot more of these because it's worth it. It's what we need to be doing for our veterans," he said.

Situated between the full-service Drexel Community Health Center and PHA's John F. Street Community Center, the building will feature a rooftop garden and playground, as well as on-site services provided by HELP USA. Services will include healthcare, counseling, employment, and youth services delivered by Drexel University and other community partners. Work on the development, to be known as HELP V, is expected to be completed by late 2017.



*Graffiti classrooms inside the historic Spring Garden School will be rehabilitated into apartments for veterans and seniors. The construction work at the site represents the final segment of redevelopment of the Richard Allen Homes.*



*PHA President & CEO Kelvin Jeremiah (second from right) was joined (from left) by Congressman Bob Brady, HELP USA President & CEO Tom Hameline, and City Council President Darrell Clarke at a groundbreaking ceremony for the HELP's fifth Philadelphia development. The historic Spring Garden School located next to the John F. Street Community Center will be rehabilitated into affordable housing for veterans and seniors.*

# Three PHA Sites Awarded Board Resolution Updates for Excellence



PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah (left) and Michael Johns, Senior Executive Vice President - Capital Projects & Development, beam with pride after the agency received three "Best in Apartment Living" awards from the Pennsylvania Apartment Association. The housing authority has a long commitment to building affordable housing that meets and exceeds private market standards while improving real estate values in neighborhoods across the city.

PHA residents can once again take pride in the management of their developments.

The Pennsylvania Apartment Association (PAA) honored three Philadelphia Housing Authority sites with "Best in Apartment Living" awards at a banquet held in mid-September.

Queen's Row received a Gold Award in the maintenance category with a score of 95%. PHA totally rehabilitated the site - in an attractive neighborhood in northwest Philadelphia - after purchasing it from the HACE CDC several years ago.

Nellie Reynolds Gardens received a Bronze Award for maintenance with a score of 93%. The Apartment Association was complimentary of the senior development's spacious atrium area which features an indoor garden. Nellie Reynolds Gardens is also PHA's

first totally green building with a 20,000 square foot green roof.

The new Queen Lane Apartments in Germantown received a Gold Award for community presentation with a score of 91%. The judge who visited the site noted that Queen Lane has efficient accommodations for people with disabilities, including those people who are hearing impaired. That feature resulted in 4 bonus points which put Queen Lane over the top for the Gold Award.

"We greatly appreciate it when our colleagues in the leased housing industry recognize the work that PHA is doing to create quality, affordable housing throughout Philadelphia," said PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah. "PHA holds its property management team to a high standard. We want our developments to improve the communities where our developments are located. These

awards are a great inspiration to all PHA employees to continue the hard work that's necessary to achieve excellence."

The Association received 250 entries in this year's "Best in Apartment Living" awards with the vast majority of those entries coming from private sector developments in the city and the region. Other PHA sites were entered and scored 80% or above in either the maintenance or community presentation category. That reflects solid property management, but the bar for the awards is set high so that only the highest rated apartment communities are recognized.

The judges for the contest are hired from outside Philadelphia to inspect apartment complexes and score each site for award consideration. The process keeps the judging impartial and reflects what a member of the public might see when visiting a site for the first time.

## April 2016

- **Resolution 11845** - approved the amendments to and amended and restated versions of the Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy, the Administrative Plan and the form of Public Housing Lease Agreement, including a Community Service Rider.
- **Resolution 11846** - approved PHA's Act 130 Report for FY 2016 and authorization for its submission to specified elected officials, as set forth in and required by the Pennsylvania Housing Authorities Law.
- **Resolution 11847** - authorized PHA to take actions related to effectuating the RAD conversion of Southwark Plaza Apartments (also known as Courtyard Apartments at Riverview), a mixed finance development, and dosing the transaction.
- **Resolution 11848** - authorized PHA to submit an application to HUD for the demolition of a Property at 3228 Arlington Street.
- **Resolution 11849** - authorized PHA to acquire 2013 Ridge Avenue by condemnation for the Blumberg Project.
- **Resolution 11850** - authorized PHA to settle litigation, with PHA's contribution to the settlement not to exceed twenty-six thousand twenty-nine dollars and one cent (\$26,029.01), in non-federal funds.
- **Resolution 11851** - approved PHA to issue a task order to Dale Corporation for construction management services for electrical systems upgrades for Morton Homes, in a total amount not to exceed two million seven hundred nine thousand seven hundred and three dollars (\$2,709,703.00).
- **Resolution 11852** - authorized PHA to contract with Johnson Controls, Inc. for energy, water and other audit services and for implementation of the Energy Procurement Contract, in an amount not to exceed two million five hundred thousand dollars (\$2,500,000.00).
- **Resolution 11853** - approved PHA to modify existing contracts with LOR-MAR Mechanical Services, Inc. and Devine Bros., Inc. for mechanical and plumbing maintenance and repair services, to accelerate the contract option periods to perform required services.
- **Resolution 11854** - authorized PHA to contract with Urban Engineers, Inc. for environmental services at the Walton School, in a total amount not to exceed two hundred fifty thousand two hundred sixty-eight dollars (\$250,268.00).
- **Resolution 11855** - authorized PHA to construct a consolidated headquarters for PHA at Ridge Avenue, in the Blumberg/Sharswood neighborhood, and contract with Shoemaker/Synterra, A Joint Venture, for construction management services for the headquarters. The total contract amount is not to exceed forty-five million dollars (\$45,000,000.00).
- **Resolution 11856** - approved PHA to negotiate, conclude out and execute an Agreement of Sale and a Development Agreement for the sale and development of the former PHA Liddonfield public housing site to New Courtland, Inc. as the Developer, for five million five hundred thousand dollars (\$5,500,000.00).
- **Resolution 11857** - authorized PHA to contract with Lomax Real Estate Partners, Mosaic Development Partners LLC, and TN Ward Company for modular contractor development services, in a total aggregate amount not to exceed fifty million dollars (\$50,000,000.00).
- **Resolution 11858** - authorized PHA to enter into a Pre-Development Agreement with Telesis Corporation, in an amount not to exceed one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000.00), and to take all steps necessary to complete the development of a final mixed use development plan for the site.

## May 2016

- **Resolution 11859** - authorized PHA to approve the election of Lynette Brown-Sow as Chair of the Board, Herbert Wetzel as Vice-Chair and approval of the following Board-appointed officers: Laurence Redican as Secretary, Andrea Bowman as Assistant Secretary, Celeste Fields as Treasurer, and Marlen Montanez as Assistant Treasurer.
- **Resolution 11860** - authorized PHA to approve a schedule for regular meetings of the Board of Commissioners from June 2016 through May of 2017.
- **Resolution 11861** - authorized PHA to approve the annual reports of the standing committees of Policy & Planning, Finance and Resident Services, pursuant to their charters, which were approved by the Board in May of 2015.

- **Resolution 11862** – authorized PHA to contract with North American Roofers, Inc. and Union Roofing Contractors, Inc. for roof replacement and related work at Hillcreek Apartments, Katie B. Jackson Homes, and Westpark Plaza-Building D, with a total contract value not to exceed six hundred fifty-three thousand five hundred five dollars (\$653,505.00).
- **Resolution 11863** – authorized PHA to enter into a preliminary agreement for the leasing of an approximately eighteen thousand five hundred (18,500) square foot commercial space to Save-A-Lot for the establishment of a grocery store, containing fresh produce and meats, on Ridge Avenue, in a commercial space to be developed by PHA or its designee.
- **Resolution 11864** – authorized PHA to adopt a Memorandum of Understanding with the Public Health Management Corporation for the administration of an Early Childhood Education Program, with PHA's initial commitment being three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000.00), for the first two years, with additional funding from PHA for the third and fourth years contingent on performance, the availability of funding, and express Board authorization.

## June 2016

- **Resolution 11865** – authorized PHA to submit the Annual MTW Report to HUD, for PHA's Fiscal Year 2016.
- **Resolution 11865** – authorized PHA to contract with Delta Dental for employee dental insurance coverage for a one-year base period and an additional one-year option period, for a total amount not to exceed one million, six hundred forty-eight thousand dollars (\$1,648,000.00).
- **Resolution 11867** – authorized PHA to contract with Mutual of Omaha for employee Life & Accidental Death and Dismemberment insurance coverage. The contract is for a one-year base period with two one-year options, in a total amount not to exceed one million one hundred sixteen thousand dollars (\$1,116,000.00).
- **Resolution 11868** – authorized PHA to contract with Vision Benefits of America for employee vision insurance policies. The contract performance period is a one year base period with three (3) one-year options, in a total amount not to exceed one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000.00).
- **Resolution 11869** – authorized PHA to contract with Independence Blue Cross for employee medical and

prescription insurance coverage. The contract performance period is for a one-year base period with one (1) one year renewal option in a total amount not-to-exceed amount of forty-nine million, five hundred seventy-four thousand eight hundred dollars (\$49,574,800.00).

- **Resolution 11870** – authorized an amendment to the Defined Contribution Plan ("Plan") to allow any participant in the Plan who is a current PHA employee to have two (2) loans outstanding at a time and to extend the maximum loan term from two (2) years to four (4) years.
- **Resolution 11871** – authorized a number of amendments and revisions to the Employee Handbook.
- **Resolution 11872** – authorized PHA to contract to purchase electricity and natural gas futures from July 1, 2016 through July 1, 2017, and allow those purchasing commitments to extend to July 1, 2020, subject to a number of additional requirements noted in the resolution.
- **Resolution 11873** – authorized PHA to enter into a Pre-Development Agreement and a ground lease with Alterra Corporation to provide the best development plan for the parcels between 2012 through 2016 Chestnut Street.

## July 2016

- **Resolution 11874** - authorized PHA to seek approval from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to dispose of two (2) properties, at 624 N. 12th Street and 632 N. 12th Street, to the Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation or its affiliates at nominal value.
- **Resolution 11875** - authorized PHA to seek approval from HUD to dispose of four (4) properties, at 1015W. Cumberland Street, 2512 N. Alder Street, 2514 N. Alder Street, and 2516 N. Alder Street, to The Village of the Arts and Humanities, or Its affiliates, at nominal value for Its Community Arts Learning Project.
- **Resolution 11876** - authorized PHA to conclude and to execute a Memorandum of Agreement with Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia for repairs thirty (30) homes and the development of twenty (20) homeownership unit in the Sharswood neighborhood, for a total amount not to exceed three million dollars (\$3,000,000.00) over a period not to exceed two (2) years and six (6) months.

- **Resolution 11877** - authorize PHA to submit an amendment to HUD of PHA's Moving to Work Fiscal Year Seventeen Annual Plan for the conversion of one hundred twenty seven (127) public housing units at Plymouth Hall and Norris Apartments Phase 1 to the Rental Assistance Demonstration ("RAD") Program.
- **Resolution 11878** – authorized PHA to undertake actions related to effectuating the RAD conversions proposed In Resolution 11877, above and closing the transactions.
- **Resolution 11879** – authorized PHA to amend PHA's existing contracts with Lomax Real Estate Partners, Mosaic Development Partners LLC, and TN Ward Company, for modular contractor development services, to accelerate the contract option periods to perform required services. The three contracts would remain for the same contract period and amounts as previously authorized but without the yearly limitation on the annual contract expenditure amounts.
- **Resolution 11880** - authorized a contract with The Well Workplace, LLC ("WellAdvantage") for health management and wellness administration services for PHA employees, with a contract performance period of two years as a base period, with three one-year option periods for a total contract amount, if all options are exercised, not to exceed seven hundred twenty-two thousand two hundred dollars, (\$722,200.00).
- **Resolution 11881** - authorized PHA issue a task order to Dale Corporation for construction management services for Norman B. Blumberg Revitalization, which includes Bolton Way Senior Tower Renovations, with the total amount the task order not to exceed thirty million thirty-five thousand one hundred sixty-four dollars (\$30,035,164.00).
- **Resolution 11882** - authorized PHA's President & CEO to approve awards of unit-based vouchers for the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing program ("VASH") and to execute one or more contracts with the proposers or project owners, subject to an aggregate limit of 150 unit-based vouchers, should there be HUD approval of PHA's application for funding the VASH voucher Initiative.

## September 2016

- **Resolution 11884** – authorized PHA to accept the transfer of authority and duties with respect to the Mainstream Voucher Program, currently administered by The 1260 Housing Development Corporation, effective as of January 1, 2017.
- **Resolution 11885** – authorized PHA to conclude a policy of insurance for Workers' Compensation and Employer's Liability Insurance coverage with Liberty Mutual Insurance Company. The contract amount is not to exceed fourteen million six hundred forty three thousand one hundred seventy-two dollars (\$14,643,172.00) and is for the policy period from October 15, 2016 to October 15, 2017.
- **Resolution 11886** – authorized PHA pay for settlement of litigation in an amount not to exceed eighty-five thousand dollars (\$85,000.00) to settle a claim for one hundred eighty-five thousand dollars (\$185,000.00) total.
- **Resolution 11887** – authorized PHA to contract with U.S. Bank for banking services in a total amount not to exceed one hundred ninety five thousand two hundred fifty dollars (\$195,250.00).
- **Resolution 11888** – authorized PHA to execute a task order with TN Ward Company for modular development and site infrastructure services at the Blumberg Development, in a total amount not to exceed, thirty-five million five hundred twenty-seven thousand five hundred forty-seven dollars (\$35,527,547.00).
- **Resolution 11889** - authorized PHA to contract with D&N Enterprise, Inc., dba Signarama, for outdoor signage for PHA, in a total amount not to exceed one hundred eighty-eight thousand five hundred ten dollars (\$188,510.00).
- **Resolution 11890** - authorized PHA to contract with both HAKS LLC and G.T. Clifton Architects for City-required exterior building inspections at eight (8) sites, with the total aggregate amount not to exceed one hundred eighty-nine thousand twenty-seven dollars (\$189,027.00).
- **Resolution 11891** - authorized PHA to contract with Vellnicce Construction, LL; Daniels Contracting

of Philadelphia, Inc.; W & W Contractors, Inc; Total Environmental Concept, Inc.; ServPro of Spring Garden/Fairmount; and Operation Bulldoze, LLC for PHA clean out services. The total aggregate amount to be expended under the contracts is not to exceed two million nine hundred eighty-five thousand six hundred twenty-five dollars (\$2,985,625.00).

## October 2016

- **Resolution 11892** – authorized PHA to contract for environmental engineering support services with the following six companies: Sci-Tek Consultants, Inc.; Duffield Associates, Inc.; STV, Inc. Urban Engineers, Inc.; Kleinfelder, Inc.; and REACT Environmental Professional Services Group, Inc., with the total aggregate amount to be expended under the contracts not to exceed three million dollars (\$3,000,000.00).
- **Resolution 11893** - authorize PHA to contract with Turf Construction Company, Inc. for storm water maintenance services at eighteen (18) sites, with a total amount to be expended under the contract not to exceed two million three hundred seventy-three thousand two hundred thirty-one dollars (\$2,373,231.00).
- **Resolution 11894** - authorized PHA to loan the limited partnership owner of Roberto Clemente Homes an amount not to exceed one million two hundred thousand dollars (\$1,200,000.00) for its planned mixed-use and adaptive reuse project in North Philadelphia, sponsored by Nueva Esperanza.
- **Resolution 11895** - authorized PHA to negotiate, conclude and execute a final development agreement and ground lease with Alterra Property Group and Rheel Capital Management, for the Development of 2012 -2016 Chestnut Street.
- **Resolution 11896** - authorized PHA to finance the development and construction of its new office building, in the Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood, through the issuance by PHA of one or more series of tax-exempt or taxable bonds in an aggregate principal amount not to exceed thirty-four million dollars (\$34,000,000.00).

## Veterans Day Breakfast



*Jill Ann Harris, Gregory White, John Bush, Rhonda Hart, Clarence Mayo, Ben Pinto (top photo) enjoyed the Veterans' breakfast at the John F. Street Community Center on November 10th. Tova Tenenbaum, HUD/VASH case manager (bottom photo), consults veteran Ronald Moody and his daughter, Joni.*

## Citation Winners



*The grandchildren of Abbottsford Resident Council corresponding secretary Darnetta Cheatom were among those who received citations from Councilwoman Helen Gym for their part for protesting and stopping the downsizing of classes at Thomas Mifflin Elementary School. Shiar Cheatom (top), age 7, is the youngest person to ever receive a citation from City Council. Najae Elemikan (bottom), age 8, who formerly lived at the development, but attends the school was also honored.*



## Turkey Giveaway



PHA handed out 1,600 turkeys to needy residents at over 50 sites including Wilson Park at the beginning of Thanksgiving week. A raffle took place at each site from November 1st to 14th to determine who would receive a turkey. The handouts were determined based on the population of each site. Shop-Rite discounted the purchase price of the turkeys by ten percent.

## Seniors Thanksgiving Lunch



An estimated 200 seniors attended a Thanksgiving luncheon at the Abbottsford Community Center sponsored by Calvary Chapel Word of Life church. Several of those in attendance won small prizes during a raffle held at the holiday event which took place on Saturday, November 19th. PHA thanks Pastor Mark Abrams and his congregation for their generosity.

# Blueprint to End Homelessness Program Marks 8th Anniversary

A combination of housing and services provided by PHA and the City of Philadelphia known as the Blueprint to End Homelessness turned 8 years old over the summer and the results are fantastic.

Overall, 93 percent of the nearly 3,300 individuals and families helped by the Blueprint to End Homelessness since 2009 have maintained their independence and did not return to homelessness.

"We are firmly committed to assist Mayor Kenney in his efforts of fighting homelessness by stabilizing individuals and families and helping them secure permanent housing," said PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah. "These types of partnerships are important because PHA cannot solve the issue of homelessness or affordable housing alone."

PHA provides housing opportunities through public housing units or Housing Choice vouchers, depending upon availability. The

Blueprint program provides up to 500 housing opportunities each year.

PHA works hand in hand with the City's Office of Homeless Services and the Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services (DBHIDS), so that homeless individuals and families receive supportive services that prevent a return to the street or a shelter.

"What's especially impressive is that the individuals in the program are all people who entered with a behavioral health challenge in addition to being homeless. It is the combination of an affordable unit with services, or what we call supportive housing, that makes up the "secret sauce," said OSH Director Liz Hersh. "You really need both components to ensure the complete transition."

"Given that a high percentage of homeless individuals experience behavioral health challenges, providing residential and housing supports is only one step to stability," said Dr.

Arthur C. Evans, Commissioner of the City's Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services (DBHIDS). "In addition to working collaboratively with PHA and OSH to provide residential and housing supports, we also help to ensure individuals have appropriate behavioral health services to support long-term, sustained recovery."

For some people, the Blueprint to End Homelessness Program insures that they have a certain quality of life.

Diane Currie-Miner and her husband are both disabled and on Supplemental Security Income. The PHA staff assisted the couple with their move to permanent housing during the winter. She and her husband had been couch surfing with their families until they could get a place of their own. Without the subsidy from the Housing Choice Voucher program, the Curries could not afford the housing they now have.

2017

PHILADELPHIA HOUSING AUTHORITY

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING CALENDAR

The third Thursday of every month at 3:00 pm

JAN 19 | FEB 16 | MAR 16 | APR 20  
MAY 18

All PHA board meetings are held at  
12 South 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Philadelphia, Pa 19103

"It makes it possible for me to be independent," Mrs. Currie said. "At the end of the day, I don't have to answer to anyone."

Troy Dupree came into the Blueprint to End Homelessness Program in 2012. He had lost everything he had, including his career as a funeral director, to recreational drug use. Eventually, Mr. Dupree entered a detox program and a light went on.

"When I realized that it was time to change, basically what I needed was an address 'cause you can't do anything

without an address," he said. "It was a saving grace."

Having a permanent home allowed Mr. Dupree to look for employment. He now works in a funeral home, makes over \$50,000 annually, was referred to PHA's Housing Choice homeownership program, and is now looking for a home of his own.

Under the current agreement with the City through June 2018, PHA is committed to providing 500 more housing opportunities per year to the Blueprint program, 300 for families and 200 for individuals.

## HOP Program Paves the Way to Better Outcomes



PHA's Housing Opportunity Program (HOP) means having a chance at a better quality of life. HOP is a housing mobility initiative aimed at assisting families participating in the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program

explore housing choices and move to Opportunity Areas in Philadelphia and surrounding counties.

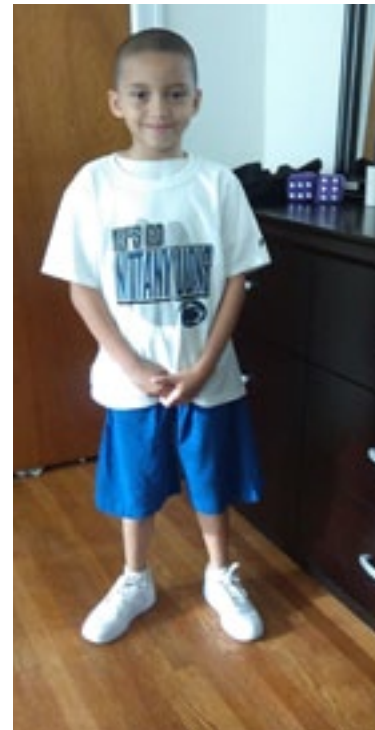
William Hall, a single father, moved from the Frankford neighborhood to Fox Chase in May 2016. HOP has made the difference in the lives of many HCV families, including Mr. Hall and his son. Since the move, his son has benefited from the ability to attend a higher performing neighborhood school in a better neighborhood. The neighborhood poverty rate in Fox Chase is drastically different from Frankford; 9.8% versus 34.1%.

"I get to enjoy a quieter and safer neighborhood," said Mr. Hall, when asked about the benefits of moving to a new neighborhood. "This community has great resources. My son gets to enjoy the neighborhood recreation center and he enjoys playing with the new neighbors".

HOP also provides Mobility Counseling to assist HCV Program families, so they can find and move into quality housing in top-rated communities throughout the Philadelphia region. Additional benefits of the program include credit and budget counseling, a free credit report, search assistance, and a post-move support

The program is open to current HCV Program participants, new admissions and families porting-in from another Housing Authority. To qualify, you must also be in good standing with the program and currently live in a traditional neighborhood. Once enrolled, you will be expected to make a concerted effort to move to an Opportunity Area.

To schedule an appointment with a housing counselor call 215-684-4050. For more information about the Housing Opportunity program visit [www.pha.phila.gov](http://www.pha.phila.gov).



# State Awards Tax Credit Financing for Strawberry Mansion Homes

Plans by PHA to develop a three square block area in the historic Strawberry Mansion neighborhood have received a financial boost from the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA).

The agency has awarded 9 percent Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) worth over \$13 million toward the construction costs of the new homes. The total cost of the Strawberry Mansion Apartments is estimated at \$23 million. The balance of the construction costs will come from \$7 million in PHA funds and private financing of \$3 million through the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program. RAD allows housing authorities to expand funding options beyond what is provided by HUD.

“This new housing will be ideally located next to Fairmount Park and enhance the neighborhood. We believe that homeowners who live nearby will see values in their properties increase,” said PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah. “PHA has worked closely with community leaders to make this development a reality.”

PHA will build 55 new apartments in an area bounded by 33rd Street to the West, Arlington Street to the North, 32nd Street to the East and Berks Street to the South. The new development will complement ongoing revitalization of the Strawberry Mansion neighborhood in North Philadelphia. It is currently experiencing a major transformation



PHA will build 55 new apartments in an area bounded by 33rd Street to the West, Arlington Street to the North, 32nd Street to the East and Berks Street to the South. The Strawberry Mansion Apartments will complement ongoing revitalization of the Strawberry Mansion neighborhood in North Philadelphia.

as a result of private investment and other capital improvements, after suffering from years of disinvestment and distress.

Construction of the Strawberry Mansion Apartments is expected to start no later than January 2017 and will consist of one, two, three and four-bedroom homes, ranging in size from 685 square feet to 1,734 square feet in a mix of walk-up apartments and townhomes. There will be at least six accessible units, two units for the hearing/visually impaired, and 38 units with features that at a minimum accommodate visitors with disabilities such as a zero-step entrances and ground-floor bathrooms.

These new homes are designed with sustainability and low energy usage in mind, with Energy Star rated appliances and mechanical equipment, and compact fluorescent bulbs throughout. The development will exceed the threshold 2015 Enterprise Green Communities Criteria. Streetscape improvements will include trees, lighting, curbs, and sidewalks. Residents of the new development will have easy access to the Girard Avenue commercial corridor, educational institutions, such as Temple University, and transportation, including the recently expanded and modernized 33rd Street transportation hub.

clients,” said Shane Manila, Director of Continued Occupancy. “They will no longer have to spend valuable time traveling back and forth to our office. Instead they will be afforded the option of completing their recertification process from the comfort of their own home.”

Once the new system becomes available, tenants can access it by visiting PHA’s website at [www.pha.phila.gov](http://www.pha.phila.gov).

# What Is an Emergency Service Order and What Isn’t?

The Philadelphia Housing Authority’s Customer Response Center (CRC) is dedicated to providing quality customer service to residents and those doing business with PHA. The CRC receives an abundance of routine and emergency service orders on a daily basis. Very often, routine service orders are mistaken for emergency service orders, which may cause confusion for those seeking immediate assistance.

Emergency service orders are created when conditions in a unit become hazardous to your life, health, or safety. An example of an emergency service order is a gas leak, no power in your unit, a fire, loss of heat, etc. All tenants must notify PHA immediately, if they believe they have an emergency in their home.

Routine maintenance service orders are basic repairs. These requests will not likely cause a hazard to your life, health or safety.

To further help identify the difference between the two, here are the top 5 routine maintenance service orders that are commonly mistaken as emergency service orders:

- No Hot Water
- Oven not working
- Lock outs

#### Non-senior or non-disabled

- Leaks

#### Not causing flooding or possible ceiling collapse

- Broken Windows
- Partial Power

#### Power issues that do not impact essential living spaces, kitchen and bathroom)

For more information on emergency service orders or routine maintenance service orders, please contact your property manager.

# Web Page Links Residents to Housing, Services

The Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program, formerly known as Section 8, remains committed to finding new ways to connect with clients to better service their needs.

The Tenant Resources page on the PHA web site was created to supply tenants in the HCV program with access to much needed forms and valuable information regarding programs and housing. These include transfer, appointment, interim, and portability forms. Tenants can also access GoSection8.com through the Tenant Resource page by visiting <http://www.pha.phila.gov/housing/housing-choice-voucher/property-listings.aspx>.

GoSection8 provides a list of rental properties, online, that are available to potential HCV tenants seeking apartment units, duplexes, single-family homes or townhomes in the private market.

The HCV Tenant Resource page will benefit and assist tenants throughout their participation in the HCV program. Check out the new HCV Tenant Resource page by visiting <http://www.pha.phila.gov/housing/housing-choice-voucher.aspx>

# HCV to Launch Streamline Portal

The Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program, formally Section 8, will soon launch a new system designed to replace in-person recertification appointments. With the new Streamline Portal, HCV clients will have the option to electronically upload and submit all necessary forms and documents required for recertification.

Similar to the recently launched Public Housing Customer Service

Portal, residents can update their household income, family composition, and much more with just a few clicks. HCV will first test the new system by selecting a few clients to participate in a pilot program to determine best practices and identify challenges as they arise.

“When we are able to fully roll out the online recertification process it will be a tremendous time-saver for our staff, but more importantly our

# Spelling Bee Creates a Buzz for Summer Camp Attendees

The correct spelling of the words “frothy”, “columnist”, and “acoustic” decided who became a champion at PHA’s 2nd Annual Spelling Bee at the Abbottsford Homes community center.

An estimated 120 kids who attend summer camps at different locations took part in the late summer contest. These boys and girls 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 which fascinated everyone in attendance.

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

Hind Underdue of Champlost Homes won first place in the K-3 category by correctly spelling the word “frothy.” While she was excited and happy to finish first, she also liked the fact that her brother got far in the contest, too. Hind is in the third grade at Pennell Elementary School this year. She was followed in second place by Nahye Human of Johnson Homes who attends Gideon Elementary School and Imanie Tisdale who attends St. Gabriel’s School in Grays Ferry.

Savion Williams, who likes the challenge of spelling and has won

spelling bees before, took first place in the 4th-6th grade division. He knew how to spell the word “columnist” and is in 5th grade at Kearny Elementary School this year. Second place went to Siani Mohammed of Richard Allen Homes who is going into the 6th grade at Spring Garden Elementary School while third place went to Jasiah Wilburn of Oxford Village who attends 5th grade at Carnell Elementary School.

The championship of the 7th grade and over division was won by Bree Johnson of Abbottsford Homes who attends Thomas Mifflin Elementary School who knew how to spell the word “acoustic.” She practices spelling with her mother.

Another Oxford Village resident, Trinity Bell of Pan American Academy Charter School, took second place in the division. She enjoys spelling because it helps her discover the meaning of things.

Maikya Brown of Oxford Village, a 9th grader at Franklin Learning Center who took third place, believes that spelling is a great way to express one self.

“If you don’t know it, you can learn how to spell it and it can become your favorite word as well,” Brown said.



The winners of this year’s 2nd Annual Spelling Bee! From left to right: Imanie Tisdale, Siani Mohammed, Nahye Hyman, Jasiah Wilburn, Savion Williams, Hind Underdue, Maikya Brown, Trinity Bell, and Bree Johnson. Standing behind the champs is William Myles, EVP of PHA’s Community Operations and Resident Development Department.



Shaun Guess of PHA’s Community Operations and Resident Development department challenges a contestant with a word during the 2nd Annual Spelling Bee at the Abbottsford Homes community center. An estimated 120 children who took part in summer camps run by the Boys and Girls Clubs at PHA sites took part in the event.

## PHA Marks the Grand Opening of Blumberg Phase I

(continued from page 1)

The development is PHA’s first Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program project. RAD is the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s rental housing preservation strategy, allowing public housing authorities and owners of HUD-assisted properties to leverage public and private financing to maintain affordable housing in communities.

The Sharswood/Blumberg Transformation Plan has 10 phases and will yield over 1,200 total housing units with a mix of affordable and market-rate, rental, and homeownership units. The restoration of the Ridge Avenue commercial corridor is a major goal of the plan, with businesses that will be anchored by PHA’s headquarters and a supermarket.

It will take 5-7 years for PHA to complete the transformation of the community with a total investment estimated at slightly more than \$500 million. The plan represents an array of resources and partners across all levels of government.



The 2nd Annual Spelling Bee held at the Abbottsford Homes community center in mid-August featured thrilling finishes in all three divisions. Kids who attend summer camps at PHA sites managed by the Boys and Girls Clubs took part in this special event. They applauded all contestants, win or lose, because it takes courage to face a crowd on stage while being tested.



Philly SEEDS, Inc., a Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) subsidiary, honored 62 PHA residents seeking higher education with \$256,000 in scholarships. The scholarship total represents a \$37,000 increase from this same time a year ago. The awards were handed out during the agency's monthly board meeting. Shown here are winners of the \$5,000 awards with PHA President/CEO Kelvin Jeremiah (top left, back row). A total of 41 residents with GPAs between 3.30 and 4.00 received the awards though not all of them could make the ceremony.

## PhillySEEDS Awards Over a Quarter Million Dollars to Deserving Residents

You could say that PHA's award winning scholarship program hit the jackpot this summer when it handed out scholarships worth \$256,000 in late July. PhillySEEDS, Inc., a Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) subsidiary, honored 62 housing authority residents seeking higher education in a ceremony at the John F. Street Community Center. The ceremony took place in conjunction with the PHA Board's monthly meeting and commissioners congratulated each recipient.

The scholarship total represented a \$37,000 increase from a year ago.

Of the 62 college students receiving scholarships:

- 41 with GPAs between 3.30 and 4.00 received \$5,000
- 15 with GPAs between 3.00 and 3.29 received \$3,000
- 6 with GPAs between 2.50 and 2.99 received \$1,000

"Through the scholarship program, PHA empowers residents and helps families reach self-sufficiency by allowing them to access education and training resources necessary for them to succeed in a competitive economy and in life," said PHA President & CEO Kelvin A. Jeremiah. "As I know from my own experience, education is a game changer."

A scholarship committee composed of PHA employees, student residents, and a resident leader reviewed the applications. The applicants' essays, community service, extracurricular activities, internships, recommendation letters, and academic transcripts were considered by the committee.

The scholarship recipients represent PHA developments around the City, as well as the Housing Choice Voucher Program. Scholarship applications for next year will be made available in Spring 2017.

A total of \$835,000 has now been awarded to 206 residents since the award-winning program began in 2013. Money for the scholarships comes from PHA's operating budget and funds donated by program supporters and vendors as part of their Section 3 commitments.

PhillySEEDS, Inc. is an award-winning, 501(c)(3), charitable, non-profit corporation founded by PHA to promote the social and economic advancement of PHA-assisted residents through philanthropic activities, community-based partnerships, and special initiatives.



*'Tis the Season of Giving*

This is the time of year that we show our love and respect for one another.

One of the ways that we demonstrate our feelings is through charitable giving.

PhillySEEDS, Inc., an affiliate of the Philadelphia Housing Authority, is a charitable organization that provides opportunities for self-sufficiency, education, and empowerment to residents living in public and assisted housing.

PhillySEEDS, Inc. is uniquely positioned through strategic partnership in three initiatives with the housing authority: affordable rental assistance, affordable housing closing cost assistance, the Philadelphia Housing Authority Scholars Program.

These partnerships allow public housing residents to achieve prosperity. Your support will not be a hand-out but a hand-up to those families and individuals who seek and work toward achieving self-sufficiency.

You can make a tax-deductible donation via credit card or PayPal by going to

**[www.phillyseeds.org](http://www.phillyseeds.org)**

or by mailing a check to:

**PhillySEEDS, Inc.,**  
12 S. 23rd Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103.

*Thank you and Happy Holidays!*

# Partnerships Paying Off for PHA

PHA has accelerated the pace of developing and preserving homes for low-income families, seniors, and disabled citizens – working with partner organizations. The agency, which is in the midst of a multi-year plan, is working with over 25 organizations to create and support over 2,300 affordable housing units.

“With Philadelphia’s high poverty rate, the city has a continuous and urgent need to expand affordable housing opportunities,” said PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah. “However, as an agency we know we can’t build everything ourselves. Instead, we are working collaboratively with like-minded organizations that share our mission and vision so we can build, preserve and support more homes for those who desperately need them at a faster pace.”

When PHA launched its “6 in 5” Program in 2013, pledging to add 6,000 units over a five-year period,

the agency began a concerted effort to generate partnership opportunities for the development and preservation of low-income homes. Many of these partnership projects are now coming to fruition. In addition, many of these developments are combined with supportive services provided on-site for the residents.

Partner organizations include the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, CATCH, Inc., Community Ventures, Gaudenzia Foundation, HELP USA, Hispanic Association of Contractors and Enterprises, Impact Veterans Services, Inglis, Intercommunity Action, Liberty Housing, Methodist Family Services, Mission First Housing Group, Mt. Vernon Manor, NewCourtland, Nueva Esperanza, People’s Emergency Center, Presby’s Inspired Life, Project HOME, and Women’s Community Revitalization Project.

The majority of PHA funding for these developments comes from the



Photo Credit: Jay Gorodetzer  
Francis House of Peace at 810 Arch Street is one example of the partnerships formed between PHA and nonprofit groups, in this case, Project HOME. The majority of PHA funding for the partnership developments comes from the Housing Choice Voucher program formerly referred to as Section 8.

Housing Choice Voucher program formerly referred to as Section 8.

The homes being built, preserved and supported under these PHA partnerships are in addition to PHA’s own development work, including the historic transformation of the Sharswood neighborhood in North

Philadelphia where PHA and its partners are building 1,200 units over a period of several years. The first 57 of those homes will open later this month.

“We are using every tool available to us to meet the goal we have set

for ourselves to create 6,000 housing opportunities. That also means developing our own properties, rehabbing hundreds of homes that we own around the city and working hand-in-hand with our partners,” Jeremiah said.

# PHA & WCRP Partnership Produces New Housing in Port Richmond



PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah (center, right) took part in the ribbon cutting for Grace Townhomes in the Port Richmond neighborhood earlier this fall. PHA made the new development possible with a subsidy to all 36 units through Project Based Vouchers worth over \$407,000 annually.

The Port Richmond neighborhood in Northeast Philadelphia received a boost with the completion of the Grace Townhomes in September on a vacant lot in a formerly industrial neighborhood. PHA made the new development possible with a subsidy to all 36 units through Project Based Vouchers worth over \$407,000 annually. A 15-year contract between the housing authority and the Women’s Community Revitalization Project (WCRP) calls for a total maximum payment of over \$6.1 million.

Grace Townhomes received its name from another partnership involved in the development, the Firm Hope Baptist Church, a strong

neighborhood anchor in the Port Richmond community for many years.

The development includes 16 two-bedroom units, 16 three-bedroom units, and 4 four-bedroom units with options for eventual homeownership. They are the first homes to be built on land owned by the Community Justice Land Trust, which will ensure that the homes remain permanently affordable.

WCRP is committed to social and economic equity for low income women and their families by developing affordable housing and providing appropriate supportive services. They will provide various services for residents at Grace Townhomes including health care, food, clothing, utilities and safety.

The Port Richmond section of Philadelphia has a median household income ranging from \$21,707-\$26,892. Shopping and neighborhood services such as public transportation, a park and a library are within a half mile of the new development. The area is serviced by six different hospitals and several pharmacies within 3 miles of the complex.

Grace Townhomes is now PHA’s fifth Project Based contract with WCRP. In total, PHA has awarded this nonprofit group 136 Project Based vouchers since 2004 with a current annual payment of over 1.5 million dollars.



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### Certified Nursing Assistant/First Aid

#### Qualifications

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6th Grade Adult Basic Education (TABE) scores in Reading and Math

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6th Grade Adult Basic Education (TABE) scores in Reading and Math

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