

The PHA Experience



Philadelphia Housing Authority
Building Beyond Expectations

Issue 29

A Community Newspaper for and About Residents

August 2013

PHA Raises \$2 Million at Scattered Sites Auction



PHA's recent auction of vacant scattered sites generated just over \$2 million for the agency. The auction also created some heartwarming stories for successful bidders.

More than 400 people showed up at First District Plaza in West Philadelphia to take part in the agency's third auction in two years to reduce its huge inventory of empty scattered sites. The average sale price was \$11,000 and the highest successful bid was \$170,000.

Max Spann Real Estate & Auction Company conducted the auction, just as it has twice before. Max Spann, Jr., said demand for the scattered site properties was strong. He thought that an improving economy and the possibility of an increase in interest rates helped to stimulate sales.

PHA will use the money raised at the auction to finance its "6 in 5" initiative that will develop 6,000 new housing units in five years.

"Are you ready to own a piece of Philly?" PHA President & CEO Kelvin Jeremiah asked bidders at the scattered sites auction. He thanked all those in attendance and said that the properties sold would soon be transformed to improve neighborhoods across the city.

"We're thrilled that these properties have gone back to private ownership where they can be renewed or redeveloped and added to the city's tax base," said PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah.

Before the auction, City Council

President Darrell Clarke expressed his appreciation to PHA because vacant properties strain the city budget. Most of the properties sold are located in North Philadelphia.

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Mark Beckham (center) won the first bid for a PHA scattered site during the auction at First District Plaza. He successfully bid \$12,500 for a property on the 2700 block of West Albert Street.

PHA Partnership with Norris Square Produces Results



PHA President & CEO Kelvin Jeremiah (left) speaks with Patricia DiCarlo, Executive Director of the Norris Square Civic Association, at one of the existing homes the agency donated for a homeownership development by the Association. Michael Johns, PHA Acting Chief Operating Officer, and PHA Chief of Staff Annie Cheng also attended the ribbon cutting ceremony.

On a bright, sunny Saturday in mid-June, PHA, along with the Norris Square Civic Association, celebrated the completion of a \$9 million, 30-unit homeownership development in the Norris Square neighborhood of North Philadelphia.

PHA sold five existing homes to the Association for one percent less than market value and donated four vacant parcels in the neighborhood with HUD approval. The development is a mix of new and rehabilitated homes at three different

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PhillySeeds, Inc. Awards \$160,000 in Scholarships to PHA Residents

PhillySeeds, Inc., a new PHA subsidiary dedicated to resident services, awarded \$160,000 in scholarships to 36 residents seeking higher education during the July Board of Commissioners meeting.

One of the happy recipients is Ayanna Wallace, a freshman at DeVry University. She says the scholarship means a lot to her because she will be able to get her education.

"The scholarship will help pay off some of the bills and loans that I just received from my school. Plus, I won't have to always rely on my mother to pay them. She works every day and tries her best to bring in money to just pay bills and help support me, grandmother, and herself," said Ayanna. "With the opportunity of getting the scholarship, I can help myself so that I won't have to bother my mother with money issues. This is why this scholarship, and other scholarships

that I might receive in the future, is so important to me."

Ayanna, a Greater Grays Ferry Estates resident, plans to study bioengineering.

"Empowering our residents with the education and training resources they need to succeed in life is a critical part of our mission and makes a real difference in their lives. These residents know, as I do, that education is the key—it's the real game changer," said PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah. "I want to commend our scholars on their academic achievement and wish them continued success in the new school year."

"These scholarship awards highlight PHA's commitment to residents, not just in regards to safe, decent, and affordable housing, but also PHA's commitment to supporting residents

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Message from the **CEO**



PHA is Moving *in the Right Direction*



*G*reetings! Over the last several months, PHA has gone through major changes, from re-organizations to layoffs and separations. Although we are out of receivership, PHA's recovery is still ongoing and we are still an agency in transition.

Even during these challenging circumstances we now face, I'd like you to know that every PHA employee is fully committed to the continued delivery of high-level services and resident support.

PHA continues to move in the right direction. The first major initiative underway is a plan to build an Organizational Culture of high performance. PHA continues to work on an organizational culture change which is a "process" and not an "event," and we are making significant strides in this regard.

Although change is hard, I am happy to report that there has been a significant positive shift in the culture. There have been more promotions from within the agency, residents are defending us against critics and there are even cheers during our board meetings. Although complete organizational change takes time, I firmly believe we are heading in the right direction.

Second, I have developed a Two-Year Management Improvement Plan that, when fully implemented, will transform the organization's ability to deliver a cadre of services optimally suited to fulfilling PHA's mission.

As PHA moves forward and becomes more PHA-Centric, we need to make a concerted effort to *focus on home*. This phrase means focusing our attention on our core business operations, such as collecting rent, which supply PHA with the funds that are essential for maintaining

our existing property portfolio, and for providing responsive, useful and efficient services to those we serve: the residents of PHA's developments and its Housing Choice Voucher holders. It also involves performing an organizational assessment of the condition of "our homes" both physically, through a comprehensive needs assessment, and through an assessment of the skills and needs of our residents, employees and our operations.

We also need to re-evaluate how we make decisions about our homes, such as getting input from our residents on key strategic initiatives and collecting the right data through our ISM systems to make fully-informed, data-driven decisions. Doing so allows PHA to be more outcome and performance driven.

Finally, we need to look around our homes and see who else is providing services in our communities and how we can work more effectively with them. This is critically important because I believe that PHA alone cannot address all of the needs of families, which I believe requires collaboration and partnerships.

I believe strongly that, together, we are the right team, and now is the right time to move this agency to the next level of success. I am happy to be doing this work and am proud to be a PHA employee. I am asking you, our residents, to work alongside us to help reclaim PHA's good name and its rightful place as a preeminent housing provider.

Sincerely,

KELVIN A. JEREMIAH
President & CEO

{ RESIDENTS' VOICES }

**We want
to hear
from you!**



Are you a resident with a talent for writing or art? Do you have questions about PHA?

Submit an entry to Residents' Voices for a chance to be featured in the PHA Experience.

Entries can be submitted by email at phanews@pha.phila.gov and by mail to **PHA Communications: 12 S. 23rd Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103**

Long Time PHA Employee Promoted to Acting Chief Operating Officer



Acting Chief Operating Officer Michael Johns.

In late May, the Philadelphia Housing Authority's President and CEO, Kelvin Jeremiah, appointed Michael Johns as the Acting Chief Operating Officer. After serving more than 20 years with PHA, Mr. Johns is no stranger to filling multiple capacities

within the authority. Previously, Mr. Johns was named PHA's Executive Vice President of Capital Projects and Development where he oversaw construction and design for the agency.

In 2012, Mr. Johns served as PHA's Acting Deputy Executive Director for Operations, supervising all property management activity for the authority, as well as the Housing Choice Voucher Program. As a licensed architect, Mr. Johns has also held the position of General Manager of Community Development and Design and was responsible for the master planning and design of over \$1 billion in new and renovated housing.

A native of Philadelphia, Mr. Johns is dedicated to contributing to the needs of his city. He served as a Commissioner on the old city Zoning Code Commission, where he helped rewrite and modernize the City's Zoning Code. Last year, Mr. Johns was

appointed by Mayor Nutter to serve on the City's first Civic Design Review Committee, which will advise the City Planning Commission as it reviews development proposals.

Despite his many accomplishments, the continued service to our residents is his number one priority.

"I am thankful for the opportunity to serve PHA and its residents in this new and more significant role," said Mr. Johns. "I have a strong commitment to the mission of the agency and will continue to strive for excellence."

In his new role, Mr. Johns will have supervisory responsibility over several PHA departments, including Housing Operations, Administration, Community Operations and Resident Development, Capital Projects and Development, Information Systems Management, and Public Safety.

PHA Receives Grant to House Homeless Veterans



Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter talks about ending homelessness for veterans following a meeting with HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan (right), Philadelphia Housing Authority President & CEO Kelvin Jeremiah (left) and one recently housed vet (far left).

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Shaun Donovan announced at a press conference on Monday, June 3 that the Philadelphia Housing Authority will receive a total of \$342,362 in grant funding to house homeless veterans.

Secretary Donovan served as a keynote speaker for the International Homeless Planning Research Conference in Philadelphia and took part in a roundtable discussion along with PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah, Mayor Michael Nutter,

and Congressman Chaka Fattah to discuss President Obama's goal to end chronic homelessness for veterans by 2015. The press conference took place at Pathways to Housing PA, a nonprofit group based in the Olney neighborhood of North Philadelphia.

"We at the Philadelphia Housing Authority understand the great need and, along with many other partners, have committed to serving our homeless veterans here in the city of Philadelphia," Mr. Jeremiah said at the press conference.

The agency and the VA Medical Center in Philadelphia will provide permanent supportive housing services to veterans. PHA will provide rental assistance and the VA Medical Center will provide case management and clinical services to homeless vets.

HUD and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced in May that \$60 million will be provided to local public housing authorities across the country for permanent supportive housing services for homeless veterans.

Work Begins on Queen's Row Apartments



PHA's newest addition, the Queen's Row Apartments, are located on the 500 block of West Queen Lane, near a Regional Rail station.

PHA crews have begun renovating the agency's newest real estate acquisition in Germantown. The purchase of Queen's Row Apartments in the 500 block of West Queen Lane closed in early July and work began this month. PHA acquired this complex from the Hispanic Association of Contractors and Enterprises (HACE).

The agency will invest \$1 million to substantially upgrade the living quarters at this site, located just two blocks away from the Queen Lane Apartments and the Queen Lane Regional Rail station. The apartment complex will be a mix of 24 public housing units and five market-rate units. The redevelopment of this site is part of PHA's plan to develop 6,000 new affordable housing units in five years.

"We have made a solid commitment to add desperately needed affordable housing units in Philadelphia," said PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah. "The start of work on

Queen's Row shows that we're serious about our plans to add over 500 units through partnerships with public, private, and nonprofit groups, and well over 700 units with new construction and renovation. Despite federal budget cuts, we're moving forward and fulfilling our mission to develop quality, affordable housing that enhances the city's neighborhoods."

When completed, Queen's Row will have 16 one-bedroom units and eight two-bedroom units. A comprehensive rehabilitation of the development includes replacement of major systems, enhancements to the interior and exterior of the complex, site landscaping, lighting, and fencing improvements. Two handicapped-accessible units will be created, along with one hearing/sight-impaired unit.

Energy Star appliances, lighting, and fixtures will make PHA's newest acquisition as energy efficient as possible. The redevelopment of the site should be completed in seven months.



The Queen's Row Apartments are spread out over several buildings and were acquired from the Hispanic Association of Contractors and Enterprises (HACE).

Plans to Renew Historic Neighborhood Moves Forward



This dilapidated townhome at the corner of 33rd and Monument Streets is symbolic of the decay that has overtaken the historic Strawberry Mansion neighborhood. PHA's Strawberry Mansion-Oakdale development will renew the neighborhood and fill in the gaps on three blocks left after a number of decaying homes were demolished.

Residents of the historic Strawberry Mansion neighborhood in Philadelphia are eagerly anticipating PHA's planned redevelopment of the community between 32nd and 33rd Streets, next to Fairmount Park.

Anyone who walks Berks, Monument, and Arlington Streets can see why. Most of the homes that used to stand on those blocks are now gone, the byproduct of a long economic slide beginning in the 1950s. The homes that are left are decrepit and seemingly beyond repair. One grand, old townhome at the corner of 33rd and Monument Streets now boarded up with crumbling steps and peeling paint, still stands as a reminder of what was once one of the most prosperous neighborhoods in Philadelphia.

PHA's plan to redevelop the area will strike a critical balance between affordable housing and market-rate housing in a neighborhood that is beginning to experience interest from private investors. The agency plans to build 67 homes in the area next to Fairmount Park with another nine homes near the neighborhood's northern border, on Oakdale Street between 28th and 29th Streets, behind the Free Library of Philadelphia's Widener Branch.

"I am very excited about the Philadelphia Housing Authority's aggressive approach toward developing affordable housing in Strawberry Mansion," said City Council President Darrell Clarke. "The Oakdale Apartments development will

simultaneously help fill a need and help create demand, as this neighborhood becomes an increasingly attractive place to live, work, and raise a family. Personally, as a native son of Strawberry Mansion, I'm thrilled to see PHA be a team player in this neighborhood's revitalization."

PHA will invest over \$26 million in the Strawberry Mansion development, of which over \$10 million will come from Low Income Housing Tax Credits. The credit funding should be secured by this fall. The rest of the money to build the development will come from public housing funds already in the agency's possession. Planning and zoning approval will come once PHA picks a construction manager and groundbreaking should take place early next year.

"We're excited and passionate about

the challenges presented by the renewal of a neighborhood such as Strawberry Mansion," said Kelvin Jeremiah, PHA President and CEO. "It is somewhat surprising that renewal didn't occur sooner because the community is close to Center City and other redeveloping areas, and is near attractions such as Fairmount Park and the Philadelphia Zoo."

The new development will follow the Enterprise Green Communities standards, the first national green building program developed for affordable housing. This program was developed to provide a clear, cost-effective framework for all kinds of affordable housing. The Green Communities criteria are aligned with the LEED Green Building Rating System.

Strawberry Mansion-Oakdale will

be designed with sustainability and low energy usage in mind, with Energy Star-rated appliances and mechanical equipment, and compact fluorescent bulbs throughout. Additionally, the development will incorporate solar photovoltaic panels sized to generate at least five percent of the development's estimated electrical demand. All of the new homes will have access to back yards by rear porches and stairs. New streetscape and infrastructure improvements will be installed, including new trees, lighting, curbs and sidewalks.

The new homes will range in size from 617 square feet to 1,654 square feet in a mix of walk-up units and townhomes. There will be at least eight handicapped-accessible units, two units for the hearing/visually impaired and 29 units to meet the needs of families with disabilities.



The 2800 block of Oakdale Street at the northern edge of the Strawberry Mansion neighborhood will be redeveloped by PHA and contain nine units. This part of the development is located behind the Widener Library on Lehigh Avenue.

Public Housing Waitlist Update

This summer, PHA conducted an update of the public housing waitlist so the agency could secure an accurate count of those still in need of housing. Applicants were asked to update their information by calling a special hotline or submitting it online through PHA's website.

During the 23 business days that the call center was open, PHA staff answered 20,009 calls.

In total, PHA received 19,856 application updates. All applicants who did not respond to the update letter were withdrawn from the waitlist on August 1.

PHA would like to thank the Drexel co-ops who served as the primary call center representatives during the update period.

PHA Partnership with Norris Square Produces Results

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locations, with the centerpiece located at 168 West Diamond Street on the site of the old St. Boniface Catholic Church.

"This represented an incredible opportunity for PHA and the Latino community to partner together to rehab a lot of the scattered, vacant, blighted property across the city," said Kelvin Jeremiah, PHA President and CEO. "We'll be doing a lot more work with Norris Square and other Hispanic organizations, making sure that we can in fact transform and reposition some of those properties."

PHA Board Commissioner Rev. Bonnie Camarda, who lives in the Norris Square neighborhood, told those in attendance that PHA is committed to working with the Latino community.

PHA plans to secure partnerships with community-based organizations across the City to develop 6,000 units of affordable housing in five years. The agency is gradually reducing the size of

its scattered sites portfolio to get unused properties back on the tax rolls.

Patricia DiCarlo, Executive Director of the Norris Square Civic Association, said that her group and PHA have a shared interest. She gladly pointed out that the development was about more than just housing. It created jobs and gave Latino contractors a chance to grow, and she is thrilled that PHA wants smaller contractors to take part in developments.

Councilwoman Maria Quinones-Sanchez, whose district includes Norris Square, believes that more partnerships are critical to the renewal of the City's older neighborhoods.

"We understand that federal dollars are limited and that's why it's important that we leverage off of each other from the public and private sector," she said. "This development could not be done without the City's support, without PHA's involvement, and Norris Square leveraging these other federal dollars."

Funding for the development was secured by the National Association of Latino Community Asset Builders (NALCAB) under HUD's Neighborhood Stabilization Program 2. The Association wrote a successful grant application for \$137 million for 13 different partners across the

country, including the Norris Square Civic Association.

"Housing is important, but the job creation that comes from it is even more important, given the state of the economy," Christopher Sanchez, NALCAB's Program Director, said.



PHA President & CEO Kelvin Jeremiah and PHA Board Commissioner Rev. Bonnie Camarda (far right) take part in the ribbon cutting at the St. Boni's Townhomes in North Philadelphia. Councilwoman Maria Quinones-Sanchez and State Sen. Christine Tartaglione (third and fourth from right) were also present.

The New Norris Apartments Receives Second Award



The Philadelphia Housing Authority received a Commonwealth Award for its LEED Gold Norris Apartments development in North Philadelphia from 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania. Barbara Moore (center), PHA Sustainability Coordinator, received the award at a presentation in Harrisburg from Former Gov. Tom Ridge (left) and Jack Machek, President & CEO of 10,000 Friends of Penn. Photo Credit: Roger That Photography.

PHA residents know that in recent years the agency has replaced its old housing stock with developments that are special in both design and appeal. Now, they know that at least one of those new developments is really special.

Early this year, the new Norris Apartments received a LEED Gold certification from the United States Green Building Council, based on the development's materials and energy efficiency. Now, 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania, a group dedicated to smart growth and sustainability has conferred a Commonwealth Award.

PHA designed the new Norris in the footprint of the old high-rise building to meet the strict requirements of the LEED for Homes certification program, which focuses on eight key areas of environment and human health. The housing authority made a bold decision to take a leading role as an agent of change in the neighborhood and worked in conjunction with Temple University and the City Planning Commission.

"We are honored and thrilled to receive this recognition as a leader in sustainable development and smart growth," said PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah. "The new Norris Apartments complements ongoing private development in the neighborhood and has attracted positive attention from students and private citizens who inquired as to whether they could live at the new

development. Sustainable, energy saving developments such as Norris Apartments are critical to both physical and economic health. Norris Apartments is a landmark project for Philadelphia."

"This project won the Commonwealth Award for residential projects for one fundamental reason: its catalytic impact on the surrounding community," said Jack Machek, President of 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania. "By replacing an outmoded, blighted high-rise with low-rise town houses, coordinating with transit and maximizing green and open space, the Norris Apartments project is spurring meaningful neighborhood revitalization."

Before construction and throughout the construction phases, PHA had the Energy Coordinating Agency (ECA), a LEED for Homes Provider and an independent third party, conduct a labor intensive audit of the buildings on the site. As a LEED development, all materials used were local, recycled, or lumber certified by the Forest Stewardship Council. All other materials come from within a 500 mile radius, reducing PHA's carbon footprint.

The contest judges said that Norris Apartments is an outstanding example of transit-oriented development that builds on existing transportation infrastructure, while increasing open space and improving the streetscape.

"By any measure, this is a sustainable, green project. Its closeness to transit, cutting-edge storm water management system and energy conservation features among other environmentally sound design elements, insure that the city's natural resources will be conserved and scarce public dollars used in the most efficient, cost-effective manner," the judges said.

Energy savings for the apartment units at Norris Apartments are projected at 29 to 39 percent versus conventionally built units. For the townhomes at the site, the projected savings as certified by the United States Green Building Council run from 38 to 45 percent.

Norris Apartments features a small pocket park in the center courtyard that provides green space and a handicapped-accessible playground to residents while limiting rainwater runoff into the city sewer system. The new homes at Norris also have solar hot water panels on the roof, Energy Star windows, equipment and appliances, low flow plumbing fixtures, compact fluorescent light (CFL) fixtures, and native landscaping.

The design of the new development features cross ventilation. And all the topsoil at the site is recycled post-consumer compost, made from recycled food scraps and yard waste, which helps reduce landfill waste that creates harmful greenhouse gases.

The new development complements and encourages private housing and commercial development in the Temple neighborhood. Not long after its completion, construction began on a private housing complex for students at Temple University on an adjacent site. Diamond Green Apartments now offers 92 modern living units that border Norris Apartments on what was once a vacant location. Another private housing development is taking place just east of the Regional Rail station that serves the university.

Ted Dillon, an energy analyst for ECA, believes that the new Norris Apartments are a template for future development in Philadelphia.



Norris Apartments features a small pocket park in the center courtyard that provides green space and a handicapped-accessible playground to residents while limiting rainwater runoff into the city sewer system.

PhillySeeds, Inc. Awards \$160,000 in Scholarships to PHA Residents

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achieve the ultimate goal of self-sufficiency through higher education," said Lynette M. Brown-Sow, PHA Board of Commissioners Chair.

To qualify for the scholarship, students must be a current PHA resident and admitted to an accredited two or four-year college, university, or trade/technical school with a minimum GPA of 2.5.

A committee composed of PHA employees, student residents, and a resident leader reviewed the applications. They considered the applicants' essays, community service, extracurricular activities, internships, recommendation letters, and academic transcripts in making their selections.

Rosemarie Bryant, a resident leader at Lucien E. Blackwell Homes who served on the scholarship committee, called it an honor to listen and read the applicants' stories. "We have intelligent

kids and I am happy to help them get farther," she said.

Scholarships were awarded in the amounts of \$1,000, \$3,000, and \$5,000 based on GPA. The scholarship recipients represent PHA developments around the City, as well as the Housing Choice Voucher Program. Sixteen students are currently enrolled in post-secondary school, while the rest are recent high school graduates. Twenty-eight of the 36 scholarship recipients were awarded \$5,000 scholarships because they had a GPA of 3.3 or higher.

Scholarship applications for next year will be made available in the spring. PhillySeeds, Inc. is a charitable, nonprofit corporation that seeks to promote the welfare of public and assisted housing residents through philanthropic activities, community-based partnerships, and special initiatives.

PHA Raises \$2 Million at Scattered Sites Auction

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One of the winning bidders at the auction bought her childhood home on North Etting Street in North Philadelphia. Laverne Simms had heard that the empty home was up for sale from her daughter. She bought it for \$9,000 and has plans to renovate the home and rent it to a family. Simms inspected the property two days before the auction to make sure she wanted to buy it.

A homeless woman, Jess Meyers, bought a home on the 5100 block of Funston Street for \$8,000. Meyers raised the money to buy the home through crowd funding and a donation from a friend. She plans on making some renovations and to create a nonprofit group to help other homeless people become homeowners.

Youth Summer Employment Program

This summer, PHA engaged in a Work Ready Summer Employment program that offered educational work opportunities to PHA residents between the ages of 14 and 21. The initiative gave teens and young adults from various developments, scattered sites and those in the Housing Choice Voucher Program the opportunity to earn income while developing Service Learning Projects.

PHA's Summer Employment program employed a Service Learning model, in which participants address real-world issues that are relevant to their community. This summer they explored complex issues, such as smoking cessation, financial literacy and health and nutrition.

One of the projects was the "smoke-free housing" initiative. The Health Federation of Philadelphia collaborated first-hand with

participants by providing training on different aspects of smoking, including the chemical composition and its addictive qualities. The project also included preparing a survey and interviewing residents on their smoking habits.

"PHA and the Philadelphia Youth Network kids at the Boys and Girls Clubs had a great opportunity to educate themselves and create tools to help educate the community," said Harold Reed, Director of Relations and Programs for the Boys and Girls Clubs. "They have been empowered with the task of creating a successful anti-smoking campaign which will complement PHA's new smoking policy."

As part of their service-learning experience, all 68 participants showcased their work-readiness and academic skills by completing a project

connected to the community activity. These projects were featured at the Philadelphia Youth Network's annual Work Ready Expo.

An essential outcome of this experience was for youth to understand the correlation between work experience, skills attainment and high school completion. Organizers also hoped to show how those variables impact their potential for future college and career success.

"These young adults will benefit by acquiring personal, educational and professional development skills that will last a lifetime," said Joyce Harrison, PHA Director of Community Operations.

The six-week program was funded by the Philadelphia Youth Network and facilitated by the Ramsey Education Development Institute and the Boys and Girls Clubs of Philadelphia.

PHA Updates ACOP and HCV Admin Plan

PHA is amending the Public Housing Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP) and the HCV Administrative Plan.

A public comment period began on May 8 and was initially scheduled to end on June 26. It was then extended to July 31.

Copies of the proposed amendments and current versions of the ACOP and Admin Plan were available online at PHA's website; interested parties could also pick up copies at the PHA Admissions Office and the Housing Choice Voucher Office. PHA held a public session at the John F. Street Community Center on June 26.

PHA met extensively with the Resident Advisory Board and Community Legal Services to discuss the changes. Most of the amendments are technical changes that are required by federal statutes.

Some important amendments to the HCV Admin Plan include changes related to utility allowances and special housing programs. Other changes will clarify eligibility requirements for the portability process. Generally, households wishing to use their voucher outside of the city must verify a need to support their move.

The biggest change to the ACOP is related to utility allowance payments that some scattered sites tenants currently receive. Under the new policy, PHA will receive tenants' utility bills and pay the utility companies directly on behalf of residents. This change will help the agency avoid costly liens on its properties that the utility companies impose when bills are not paid. It is also in line with the agency's policy to conserve energy and reduce costs.

The PHA Board of Commissioners considered adoption of the revised ACOP and Admin Plan during the August Board Meeting.

Haddington's Garden Cultivates the Community



Veggie Kids Avery Smith and Kashif White.

In 2001, Skip Wiener, Executive Director of Urban Tree Connection, spotted a dumping site on a neglected street near Haddington Homes in West Philadelphia. He started working with kids there to build a garden. The successful urban farm is now known as Conestoga Pearl Gardens.

"Month by month and year by year, it just took over the entire street. All of sudden some of the women from the houses came out and started to help," Wiener said.

The Urban Tree Connection, which began in 1989, assists urban, low-income communities to revitalize their neighborhoods by transforming abandoned open spaces into safe and

functional places that inspire and promote positive human interaction. Currently, the nonprofit is focusing most of its time and resources in the Haddington area that is bounded by 52nd to 63rd Streets and Market Street to Girard Avenue.

Lisa Ransome-Barkley, a Haddington Homes resident and president of Conestoga Pearl Gardens, firmly believes the garden has brought people together and has made a major impact on the kids who live in the neighborhood.

"It gave them something else to do that they care about," she said. "It does my heart good to see something positive like this happening to the



Conestoga Pearl Gardens near Haddington Homes.

children. We have a community now with this garden."

The garden provides access to fresh food not readily available in the area. Over time, the plot began producing a surplus of food, leading to the creation of the Veggie Kids Program. Kids in the program harvest, clean, package and sell the food they grow for a profit.

11-year-old Avery Smith enjoys planting and says it's a good way to really learn about photosynthesis, and may even lead to a career choice when he gets older.

"If I still plant, I want to be a farmer," Smith said.

His planting partner, 13-year-old

Kashif White, enjoys seeing things grow, but thinks he'd like to be a lawyer with a garden in front of his home.

The boys say they have made a tidy sum from the past sales of their produce. They give some money back to the program while the rest of their profits afford them pocket change for snacks.

Wiener believes that Conestoga Pearl Gardens is an incubator for a neighborhood co-op business, and that more local gardens hosted by PHA residents would benefit many communities.

HCV Program Changes

The Housing Choice Voucher Program recently combined all of its offices at one central location. HCV clients and landlords should now visit the Warnock facility at 2850 Germantown Ave. to conduct business.

The consolidation and move will save the agency money and help PHA better serve its customers. PHA has also reorganized the HCV Departments.

The Eligibility, Transfers and Special Programs Department determines eligibility for applicants, issues vouchers, processes transfers, coordinates lease signings, and oversees portability, Project-Based vouchers, and special programs such as Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing and Homeownership.

Continued Occupancy manages regular and interim recertifications and verifies family and income information. The Inspections Department conducts Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspections, enforces standards, and takes action for violations.

The final department is Owner Services, which serves as liaison between PHA and landlords, conducts reasonable rent determinations, and processes housing assistance payments.

New PHA Department Head to Work with Residents



Erik Soliván, Executive Vice President of Community Operations and Resident Development.

The Philadelphia Housing Authority recently named Erik Soliván the new Executive Vice President of Community Operations and Resident Development (CORD).

Mr. Soliván joins PHA after tenures in both the public and private sectors.

Prior to PHA, Mr. Soliván worked as a Senior Analyst in the Management Consulting Group at Public Financial Management, Inc. (PFM). PFM is a Philadelphia-based financial advisory firm which focuses on asset

management and financial services. He has also worked at the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development as the Special Assistant to the Deputy Secretary for Community Affairs and Development. In that role, Mr. Soliván worked with nonprofit service providers, community development organizations, workforce investment boards, and economic development professionals across the state to build better communities.

Mr. Soliván joined PHA in December 2012 as the Vice President of the Office of Policy, Research, and Enterprise Planning (OPREP). While overseeing OPREP, he worked to build an office that serves as a research and analytical resource to all departments throughout PHA. In his new role, Mr. Soliván will use similar techniques to offer resources to residents.

Enthusiastic about his new position, Mr. Soliván expressed the need to create every opportunity possible to guide residents towards independence.

When asked about plans for his new department, he explained, "We are looking to restructure the entire program in order to move our residents towards self-sufficiency."

His goal is to offer a full cycle of services through CORD, which will assist residents with their transition to self-sufficiency. The cycle consists of five stages, which include providing various educational opportunities, access to job training, assistance with job placement, job retention, and ultimately moving residents towards homeownership.

While residents are engaged in these various stages, they will be assigned Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) and Resident Opportunities and Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) coordinators to guide them each step of the way.

"We have to completely reshape how we deliver opportunities," said Mr. Soliván, who plans to unveil these revamped programs to residents early next year.

Mr. Soliván acknowledges that providing opportunities is only half the battle. Residents must also take the initiative to control their future.

"Residents now need to make the positive choice to engage in these opportunities and, in doing so, we can provide them the support they need in transitioning out of PHA," he said.

PHA Introduces New Grievance Procedure

Beginning September 1, there will be an innovative new grievance procedure for public housing that will allow for unprecedented resident participation. One change will be to have trained resident council representatives act as advocates and assist tenants in the grievance process.

Another change is establishing the role of a resident Assistant Hearing Officer to act impartially, along with the Hearing Officer, in the decision-making process. These changes address concerns by tenants about impartiality, as the current Hearing Officers are all PHA employees. These new modifications to the grievance procedure will ensure that residents are educated and involved in the grievance process.

The Office of General Counsel (OGC) will educate resident council representatives on how the grievance process works, so any resident who wants to file a grievance or learn more about the process can come to a resident council designee for assistance. The designee can also act as an advocate for the tenant and attend the grievance hearing.

In addition, the Resident Advisory Board (RAB) will designate five of

these resident council representatives to be trained by OGC as Assistant Hearing Officers. These officers will participate in the hearing process only if the person who asked for the hearing agrees in writing. If they agree, the Assistant Hearing Officer will sit in on the hearing in an impartial capacity and give feedback to the Hearing Officer who will make the final decision.

The procedure also conforms to the Code of Federal Regulations requirement, which states that an informal settlement conference be held before there can be a grievance hearing, unless good cause is shown for not doing so. This means that before the grievance hearing, the property manager and the grievant have to sit down together and discuss the issue to see whether an agreement can be reached.

PHA Corporate Secretary Andrea Bowman heads the independent Hearing Office in the Office of General Counsel. "This new procedure not only covers all of the requirements under the Code of Federal Regulations, but also creatively provides for enhanced and meaningful resident participation, due to the collaboration between PHA, the resident councils and RAB," she said.

PHA Urges Participation in Resident Council Elections

PHA is still holding resident council elections. Each development and scattered sites area will have the opportunity to elect at least five residents to their resident council, including president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary. For many sites, this is their first time electing a council to represent their community. To date, there have been 22 successful elections.

Revonne Watson is the newly re-elected resident council president for Holmecrest Homes, a senior site in Northeast Philadelphia. Ms. Watson chose to run again because she felt strongly about bringing in different activities to empower the residents to grow old gracefully.

"The election process was different [from before], but thorough," said Ms. Watson. "The election committee did a good job of getting material out to residents and getting input. It was well put together, well managed and well carried out."

During her new term, Ms. Watson plans to continue focusing on health initiatives.

PHA is working with two independent third party monitors to ensure fair, free resident council elections. The Urban Affairs Coalition and its subcontractor, the League of Women Voters, are monitoring elections for PHA's conventional and PAPMC sites. JCK Legal is monitoring elections for scattered sites and Alternatively Managed Entities or AMEs.

To run for a position on your resident council, you must be at least 18 years of age, in full compliance with the lease and have no rental delinquency. You must also be on the lease for at least one year at the time of seeking office and only one candidate per household may run.

Eligible voters must be at least 18-years-old, on the lease and show a photo ID at the polls.

Congratulations to the newly elected and sworn-in resident councils at:

- Abbottsford Homes
- Holmecrest Homes
- Norris Apartments
- Haddington Homes
- Johnson Homes
- Suffolk Manor
- Herbert Arlene Homes
- Wilson Park Family
- Warnock Village
- Mt. Olivet
- Nellie Reynolds Gardens
- Whitehall Apartments
- Spring Garden Apartments
- Scattered Sites 901 - Haddington/Overbrook
- Scattered Sites 902 - Mantua
- Scattered Sites 906 - Francisville
- Angela Court
- Richard Allen Homes/ Gladys B. Jacobs Manor
- Katie B. Jackson
- Parkview Apartments
- Germantown House
- Blumberg Seniors

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Mother's Day Makeovers



Twenty-nine PHA seniors were invited to participate in a Glam Mom Makeover Day sponsored by State Senator Anthony H. Williams, 8th District. In celebration of Mother's Day, seniors received free pampering and hair and makeup services at Empire Beauty School.

PHA Youth Take a Stand



Boys and Girls Club members held an Anti-Bullying Campaign on June 29 at Wilson Park. PHA residents and local youth supported nonviolence with a Love Peace march and a Peace Pole ceremony.

World Changers Renovate Four PHA Developments



Volunteers from World Changers, a faith-based group that promotes community service, did painting, landscaping and other maintenance work at Raymond Rosen (shown here) and three other PHA sites. The group donated over \$100,000 in labor during a four day visit to Philadelphia.

The Philadelphia Housing Authority received over \$100,000 in labor as a result of the volunteer efforts of its new community service partner, World Changers. Volunteers from across the U.S. worked at four public housing developments from July 16 through July 19.

Seventy volunteers from World Changers, a group that promotes youth mission projects among Southern Baptists and other evangelical churches, took part in landscaping, painting and other general maintenance work at Raymond Rosen Manor, Bartram Village, Spring Garden Apartments, and Johnson Homes. Members of the building trades unions employed by the agency worked with volunteers and supervised their activities.

The partnership with World Changers was spearheaded by PHA Board Commissioner Rev. Bonnie Camarda, the Director of Partnerships for the Salvation Army of Eastern Pennsylvania and Delaware.

“My hope is that PHA will become a cornerstone agency joining community service and volunteer resources. I see this as a long-term partnership that will benefit both PHA and World Changers,” Camarda said. “Part of community service is showing others that you care and that’s what PHA residents will see right in their own back yard.”

The Commissioner also believes

that a group such as World Changers can inspire PHA residents to give their time in community service.

PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah welcomed the partnership and any future partnerships between the agency and groups like World Changers.

“Partnerships are more important than ever, given the fiscal challenges that we face today,” he said. “More importantly, partnerships build a sense of ownership and community that is necessary for a city and its neighborhoods to stay vibrant, vital, and to thrive.”



World Changers volunteers Monique and Carlos Smith receive certificates of appreciation from PHA President & CEO Kelvin Jeremiah and PHA Board Commissioner Rev. Bonnie Camarda at the Taste of Philly luncheon at Nellie Reynolds Gardens.

Hands-on projects such as the effort at PHA sites are exactly what World Changers is about. Volunteers donate a week of their summer working in conjunction with cities, churches and community agencies to provide renovations at no charge. The group is focusing on the nation’s cities to have a longer and greater impact.

PHA kicked off the volunteer effort with a press conference at Raymond Rosen Manor.

“We appreciate the opportunity to be here,” said Blu Berner, Project Coordinator for World Changers.



PHA Board Commissioner Rev. Bonnie Camarda (right) speaking at Raymond Rosen Manor. Listening to her are World Changers Coordinators Johnny Wesevich and Blu Berner.

“We appreciate the opportunity to interact with all the residents here in Philadelphia. We look forward to coming back not only next year, but in the many years to come.”

Raymond Rosen Manor Resident Council President Shirley Spencer thanked World Changers for their

generosity and said she and her fellow residents would be glad to have them back next year.

On the last day of service, World Changers volunteers enjoyed a Taste of Philly luncheon at Nellie Reynolds Gardens and received certificates of appreciation.



Philadelphia Housing Authority
Building Beyond Expectations

Free Financial Services for PHA Residents
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What are Financial Empowerment Centers?



Financial Empowerment Center

Philadelphia's network of Financial Empowerment Centers offer free one-on-one professional financial counseling in multiple languages. The City's Centers help clients take control of their debt, deal with debt collectors, improve their credit, create a budget, find safe and affordable financial products, and much more.

Financial counselors provide sessions on the following financial topics:

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- Banking and Basic Financial
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- Credit Reports
- Using Credit Wisely
- Consumer Protection and Debt

- Collection
- Student Loans
- Bankruptcy
- Negotiation
- Investments and Future Planning

Where are the Financial Empowerment Centers located?

<p>Congreso Headquarters 216 W. Somerset Street Philadelphia, PA 19133 Hours of Operation Monday: 8am – 6pm Tuesday: 9am – 7pm Wednesday: 8am – 6pm Thursday: 8am – 7pm Friday: 8am – 5pm</p>	<p>The Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians 1617 John F. Kennedy Boulevard Suite 555 Philadelphia, PA 19103 Hours of Operation Tuesday: 11am – 8pm Friday: 9am – 5pm</p>	<p>Community College of Philadelphia Main Campus 1700 Spring Garden Philadelphia, PA 19130 Hours of Operation Monday – Wednesday: 8am – 5pm</p>
<p>Municipal Services Building 1401 John F. Kennedy Boulevard Concourse Philadelphia, PA 19103 Hours of Operation Monday – Thursday: 9am – 7pm Friday: 8am – 5pm Saturday: 9am – 3 pm</p>	<p>People's Emergency Center Families First Building 3939 Warren Street Philadelphia, PA 19104 Hours of Operation Tuesday – Thursday: 9am – 6pm Friday: 8am – 5pm</p>	<p>Community Legal Services 1410 W. Erie Avenue Philadelphia, PA 19140 Hours of Operation Monday: 9am – 6pm Thursday: 8am – 5pm Friday: 8am – 5pm</p>
<p>Germantown Life Enrichment Center 5722 Greene St. Philadelphia, PA 19144 Tues – Thurs: 9am – 6pm</p>		

www.phila.gov/financialempowerment

Philadelphia Financial Empowerment Centers are powered by The City of Philadelphia and Clarifi with a grant provided by Living Cities' CFE Fund.

The Faces of Summer Food

PHA's Summer Food Program is more than just the meals. It's about people; those young people who receive healthy breakfasts and lunches and the seasonal workers who serve them. Without these seasonal workers, running the program would be impossible.



Shiree Davis

32-year-old Shiree Davis, who lives at Hill Creek, works as a Site Monitor for her development along with Oxford Village and Whitehall. She supervises the paperwork and the functions of the program, making sure that it runs smoothly. 2013 marks her fourth year working for the Summer Food program. Ms. Davis is charming,

thoughtful, and vibrant. She also loves serving the children and helping to provide the healthy, safe activities that are part of the program.

She also prepares income tax returns during tax season, is good with math and feels confident about her accounting skills. With four kids ranging in age from two to 12, she's making some long-term plans. Ms. Davis is currently enrolled at Pierce College and working toward an Associate's degree in Business Management.

"I do want to own my own business," she said. "I have a lot of things that I want to work through and gain knowledge on before I make the actual decision of what type of business field that I want to go into. Ever since I learned about the word entrepreneur, I wanted to be an entrepreneur."

Ms. Davis plans on interning with various businesses, ideally those related to the medical field. Eventually, she would like to obtain a Bachelor's degree in medical administration. Ms. Davis also dreams of owning her own home, too, with two bathrooms.

Right now though, Summer Food is what helps her pay the bills and take care of her family. It also lets her spend plenty of time with her 2-year-old twins.



Shalai Smith

19-year-old Shalai Smith has a dream of living and teaching in Japan.

"It's just something I always had a passion for since the age of 10," she said. "I want to learn the culture, the lifestyle, how the people are in their homes."

Ms. Smith, who is easygoing, warm, and friendly, supervises the Summer Food program at Champlost Homes, where she also resides. She attends Lincoln University, the United States' first degree-granting historically black university, which is located in Chester County.

She has studied Chinese, but finds it more difficult to learn than Japanese,

and enjoys Japanese music very much.

"They have their own style," she said. "It's not all about their looks. It's all about the way they produce music, the pop, the energy."

She eventually wants to be a translator and teach English in Japan and plans on living there for at least several years. In October, she is going overseas to study in Japan for the semester.

For Ms. Smith, employment in PHA's Summer Food Program provides money for school, but that is not all. She has also met a lot of kids from the neighborhood that she never knew before and that has helped her build a sense of community. Perhaps, she will do that on an international level someday.

Tanaja Lloyd, who runs the Summer Food program at Mantua Square, plans on becoming an orthodontist.

"I had braces before and I watched them do everything. I really like it," she said.

Ms. Lloyd, who is 18-years-old, graduated from Central High School and is a biology major at North Carolina A & T, a historically black university located in Greensboro. When she is not in school, she lives with her mother at Richard Allen Homes. Employment through the



Tanaja Lloyd

Summer Food Program helps her to pay for books and tuition.

Ms. Lloyd, who has her own bright smile, is a quiet person, but knows how to raise the volume when the kids get a little too antsy. In other words, she knows how to be firm in a quiet way.

"The kids are so energized...not worried about adult problems," she said.

Ms. Lloyd also says she enjoys helping and serving kids.

Clearly, a life of service is in Tanaja Lloyd's long-term plans.

PHA Helps Young Adults Transition to Self-Sufficiency

PHA and the City's Department of Human Services (DHS) have begun a pilot program to help young men and women who are legally adults and aging out of foster care. The goal of the program is to provide permanent and stable housing for young adults as they complete their education or other training and become self-sufficient.

This summer, three young men between the ages of 18 and 20 signed leases and received keys to PHA apartments. They met the agency's eligibility criteria for admission and are subject to all PHA rules and regulations, as well as any commitments to DHS. Youths referred to PHA must go through a special screening and interview process by the department's Achieving Independence Center, which also offers case management services.

"We are thrilled to begin this pilot

program that we think will help young men and women become full-fledged contributing members of society with fulfilling jobs and careers," said PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah. "We, along with our partners at DHS, will closely monitor the progress made by the young men with the expectation of success for them."

This new program was made possible through a special agreement between PHA and DHS that was signed last November. The PHA Board approved a resolution last August that authorized the agency to offer up to 50 housing opportunities. Program partnerships such as this one are an important facet of the agency's Moving to Work Annual Plan.


Young men and women who take part in this program are issued a Program Contract that sets the terms and conditions they must follow;

failure to comply with these terms will result in the loss of their PHA home. Program participants must be employed part-time or full-time or enrolled in an apprenticeship, training, or educational program with the goal of living independently.

Participants in the program receive housing for one year, but can receive a renewal for up to two years. PHA and DHS plan to work along with participants to begin an orderly and smooth transition to permanent housing, starting six months before program completion.

**Text4baby
State Enrollment
CONTEST!**

Pennsylvania Competes in National Contest to Help Pregnant Women and New Mothers Have Healthy Babies



Text4baby is a free service that provides women with important health information during pregnancy and until their baby's 1st birthday. Pregnant women and new mothers who text "BABY" (or "BEBE" for Spanish) to 511411 receive three weekly messages, timed to their due date or their baby's birth date. They'll learn about labor and delivery, nutrition, breastfeeding, safe sleep, developmental milestones, smoking cessation, immunization and more. And it's free!

The State Enrollment Contest is a national competition that aims to reach more pregnant women and new moms with important health information through **text4baby**, by encouraging healthy competition between the states. The contest will run from May through October. The top states that enroll the highest percentage of pregnant women, mothers and fathers in the **text4baby** service during the contest period will be the winners and offered national exposure. The **text4baby** State Enrollment Contest is a great way for states to actively participate in making sure that pregnant women and new moms across the country get the most important information they need to ensure their child's healthy development.

Go to www.text4baby.org to sign up and learn more about **text4baby** and the contest.

Let's spread the word about **text4baby**. You'll be giving a mom and her baby the gift of a lifetime!

Share text4baby with friends and family!

Help PA promote **text4baby** and win the contest!

Summer Fun for PHA Residents



Kids enjoy fun games, puppet shows and field trips with Rose's Club House Summer Camp Program.

Close to 30 children are having the time of their life this summer, playing, eating and learning at the home of Rosemarie Bryant, resident leader of Lucien E. Blackwell Homes and Director of Rose's Club House.

The camp started three years ago as a place for neighborhood kids to stop by for a free lunch or snack. And while they ate, she had fun things for them to do. The problem was the kids had so

much fun, they would not go home. As the word spread, more children came. Soon, she realized she needed help.

The next year, Ms. Bryant received that help from a number of places. The Archdiocese of Philadelphia supplied the food. The City's Work Ready Program supplied the young adults to work with the kids. She even had Evon Delee, Pastor of The Church Down the Way, get involved by organizing community events, art and crafts and self-esteem programs.

And the help did not stop there. Karen Mao, the organizer for the Children Evangelism Fellowship, also brought supporters for two weeks during the summer to put on puppet shows, read bible stories and play games.

Ms. Mao says her group is there to help shape young minds. "It's about educating them, and to let them know they are important, that they mean something and that they are as good as anyone else."

Ms. Bryant's larger staff made it

possible this year to take the children on several road trips; this summer, children in her program have visited the Mann Music Center, Waterworks, the library and Clarion University.

PHA President and CEO, Kelvin Jeremiah, paid a visit to Rose's Club House this summer. "I think it's great," he said. "You have kids that are engaged in enrichment programs. I'm thankful to Ms. Bryant who used her many resources to make this camp happen. Resident leaders like Ms. Bryant remind all of us that we can make a difference in a child's life."

Ms. Bryant says she is trying to catch the children while they are still children. "Many children get into trouble with the law or have problems in school and at home. We hope to steer them in the right direction while they are still young," she said.

She is glad the camp has expanded so nicely and hopes to be with the children again next summer.

Another PHA development with active summer camps is West Park

Apartments. Council President Andrea Foster runs a fun day camp that includes arts and crafts and vacation bible study. In addition, the children have taken trips to the movies, the Please Touch Museum, the Zoo and the Mann Music Center. Sixty-five children are involved in the program.

"We provide positive activities to

deter the negative activities in the community," Ms. Foster said.

PHA has also contracted with EducationWorks to facilitate summer programs at Raymond Rosen Manor, Norris Apartments and Norman Blumberg. The summer camps include recreational activities such as swimming, arts and crafts, gardening, reading, and field trips.



The Children Evangelism Fellowship volunteers exercise with kids from Rose's Club House.

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NUTRITION LINKS at the Philadelphia Housing Authority

Registration is required, please call Carla Fleming at 215-684-3959

Proud PHA Resident Graduates High School

If you ever drive around the Courtyard Apartments at Riverview development around 5th and Washington in South Philadelphia, you might notice an attractive window display complete with pictures of a smiling young man in a cap and gown celebrating his high school graduation.

Elijah Huntley is proud he graduated with good grades from Charter High School for Architecture and Design.

He says staying focused was the key. "Don't be the class clown. And stop being the one who always chases the girls, because when it comes time and you can't get a good job, the girls are gone."

His mother, Ternessa Tabb, says it was a struggle keeping Elijah on track. "He wanted to be out and about in the streets and all that, but he maintained his grades. He is into music and concerts, but he stayed in school. He is the oldest of my four boys and I am so proud of him."

The window display will stay for a few more weeks to let Elijah enjoy the compliments from folks passing by. His mother hopes the display will also encourage others to pursue academic



Elijah Huntley with his mother Ternessa Tabb in front of their home at the Courtyard Apartments at Riverview in South Philadelphia

achievement. Elijah's mother also hopes that more young black men are inspired to stay in school and achieve the skills to take care of themselves and their families.

Elijah's advice to others is to pay attention and be the guy who is

successful. "Work hard and the girls will come to you."

Elijah is attending the Community College of Philadelphia this summer and will then move on to Albright College with a full scholarship.

Resident Chargebacks Reminder

The Philadelphia Housing Authority recently implemented an improved process for assessing "chargebacks," which are charges assessed to tenants for intentional or negligent damage to their units, outside of normal wear and tear. Chargeback items have been listed in the PHA lease for over a decade and this initiative was geared towards uniformly and fairly assessing the charges.

Wear and tear is generally damage that occurs over time and naturally results from normal aging. Examples of wear and tear include fading paint, matting carpet, loose hinges on doors, etc.; these are not considered items for which a tenant could be assessed charges. Chargeback damages, however, would include damage such as large holes in the walls, burned or stained carpets, clogged toilets, etc. A detailed list of chargeback items can be found on pages 16 and 17 of the resident lease.

Residents are informed of potential chargeback items at the time of move-in as a part of the lease review process. Residents can also be issued a chargeback during a routine unit inspection or while completing an emergency or other service order.

In September 2012, PHA's Office of Audit and Compliance (OAC) Compliance Division created a cross-functional team from various departments within PHA to collaboratively improve the chargeback process. These departments included Housing Operations, Information Systems Management (ISM) and Maintenance. The team met twice a week to make systematic changes and to implement monitoring strategies that would ensure charges are assessed fairly and consistently across all PHA sites.

Notice of New Management Office Hours

PHA management offices for conventional and scattered sites are closed to the public every Wednesday from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. PAPMC offices are closed to the public every Wednesday and Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

System changes include maintenance staff reminders before closing service orders and service order detail reports geared towards specifically identifying areas within the unit where the damage has occurred. Additionally, an approval process was added, allowing site managers to review all potential charges before final assessment. Most importantly, a comprehensive training was conducted for staff on how to properly identify and assess chargebacks using the updated system.

Also among the changes was the inclusion of grievance hearing information. Once residents are notified of the chargeback, they are given a 10 day period to request a grievance hearing to challenge the charges. This grievance process is not new to PHA; however, what is new is that the grievance request process is now tracked within the service order system to ensure fairness to our residents.

On March 5, the project team initiated these changes with hopes that it will bring awareness to residents around the importance of maintaining their units as stipulated in the lease, and help hold residents accountable to their commitment to properly maintain their housing.

The improved system will also help to reduce the amount of routine service orders to allow maintenance staff to focus on emergency cases.

"The project team is confident that this improved process for assessing chargebacks will ultimately reduce the amount of repairs for chargeback damage, allowing PHA Maintenance to have more time to respond to tenant wear, tear and emergency needs," said PHA Compliance Specialist Sandahl Parrish, who served as the Project Team Lead for the system changes.

Interested in Homeownership?



The Scattered Sites Homeownership Program (Section 5H) is coming to a close.

The program will conclude on March 1, 2014.

For more information, please contact the PHA Homeownership Division

215-684-4112



Philadelphia Housing Authority
Building Beyond Expectations

Kids Get the Right Stuff at PHA's Summer Food Program

When school is out, kids who depend upon the school lunch and breakfast program flock to PHA's Summer Food Service Program to receive a healthy, balanced meal. The annual program served its first meals this year on June 24 and will run through August 23.

PHA has conducted the Summer Food Service Program for over 30 years. The agency is one of several large sponsors of the program in the city. Last summer, PHA served over 38,000 meals to children 18-years-old and younger, while also providing safe activities close to home.

"We take the opportunity to serve the people of Philadelphia seriously," said Kelvin Jeremiah, PHA President and CEO. "When times are tough and finances are strained, people can do without a lot of things, but food is not one of them. So, we're happy to do our part to ensure that kids have access to good food that helps them live healthy and active lives."

Philadelphia has the highest poverty rate among large cities in America at 28.4 percent; it also has the highest rate of deep poverty at 12.9 percent, according to surveys by the Census Bureau.

This year, PHA believes that the number of kids served will increase over last summer with the addition of two more sites, Mantua Square and Paschall Village. These additions bring the total number of participating PHA locations to 20. The hours of operation are 8:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m. for breakfast and 12:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. for lunch, Monday through Friday at the following sites:

- Abbottsford Homes
- Arch Homes
- Bartram Village
- Blumberg Apartments

- Champlost Homes
- Fairhill Apartments
- Haddington Homes
- Harrison Plaza
- Hill Creek Apartments
- John F. Street Community Center
- Johnson Homes
- Mantua Square
- Morton Homes
- Norris Apartments
- Oxford Village
- Paschall Village
- Raymond Rosen

- Spring Garden Apartments
- West Park Apartments
- Whitehall Apartments

The Summer Food Service Program features a number of healthy activities for kids, including computer classes, the Eagles Book Mobile, Penn State's nutrition workshops, arts and crafts, drama classes, the Free Library of Philadelphia's reading program, fitness activities, smoke-free workshops, water safety workshops, fire safety workshops, and gardening through the Temple Community Gardening Program.

PHA Swears in New Police Officers and Celebrates Safety and Security Accomplishments



The Philadelphia Housing Authority added nearly 50 new police recruits on Tuesday, July 2, during a special ceremony at Norman Blumberg Apartments in North Philadelphia. Shown here (l-r) are Inspector Edward Geiger, Acting Police Chief James Mitchell, Commissioner Dr. Leslie Callahan, PHA President & CEO Kelvin Jeremiah, Board Chair Lynette M. Brown-Sow, Commissioner Shellie Jackson, Commissioner Rev. Bonnie Camarda, City Council President Darrell Clarke, Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell, Director of Public Safety City of Philadelphia Michael Resnick, Philadelphia Police Deputy Commissioner Richard Ross, Councilman Curtis Jones, Jr., and Commissioner Hon. Nelson Diaz.

The Philadelphia Housing Authority celebrated the success of its S.A.F.E. Program, which stands for Safe, Affordable Housing For Everyone, at the PHA Police Department (PHAPD) swearing in ceremony on Tuesday, July 2 at Norman Blumberg Apartments in North Philadelphia. Nearly 50 new police recruits took their oaths of office, marking the first expansion of the PHAPD in over a decade.

The Department will add 10 additional public housing residents to the force as well; those officer candidates will begin training in August at the Philadelphia Police Academy. Increasing the police force is just one of the many strides PHA has made regarding safety and security. These changes were established with

the help of resident leadership after PHA conducted an agency-wide resident survey.

"The S.A.F.E. Program shows our full effort to provide the highest quality of decent, affordable, and safe public housing," PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah said. "Through this program, PHA developed ways to improve the quality of life for residents by implementing strategies to increase safety and reduce crime."

The PHAPD has now adopted a community-policing model, which will ensure that the officers are engaged with the residents, city and the broader community.

City Council President Darrell Clarke said the new officers will

have a special relationship with the community.

"We want to see young people look up to you, to walk up to you, and talk to you about things in their lives and possibly someday saying I want to be in the profession that you have chosen," Clarke said. "I want to congratulate you for being a part of the solution in a lot of these communities."

Councilman Curtis Jones Jr., who was born in public housing, told officers they have a very special mission as they patrol PHA developments.

"Your charge is to keep courageous people safe. The price you pay for the space you occupy is service. We expect that of you. We are proud of you. We hold you to that standard."

PHA has invested about \$10 million dollars for access control equipment in its buildings and is adding more than 600 pan, tilt and zoom security cameras. This will bring PHA's total camera presence to nearly 800; the cameras will be monitored through closed circuit televisions at the PHAPD command center.

Congressman Chaka Fattah told the assembly that he will ensure that federal money is available to PHA to make safety improvements in the future. He also commended the newly-minted officers.

"There are many people who see service, but are not willing to bear the brunt of the challenges, to wear this uniform, to go in the dark of night in places where there could be and may be danger, to provide safety for the residents of public housing," he said.

The S.A.F.E. Program is made up of four committees. They include policing and enforcement, house rules, security measures, and resident engagement. These committees began meeting in fall of 2011. The program has officially concluded, although some committees will remain engaged.

"PHA's progress regarding public safety could not have been achieved without the support of the City and especially the Philadelphia Police Department," said Mr. Jeremiah.

PHA's policy is to deploy officers based on reported crime data. The PHAPD strongly encourages residents and members of the community to partner with the department to increase safety in neighborhoods by reporting crimes. To file a report, please call PHAPD's anonymous tip line at (215) 684-3350.



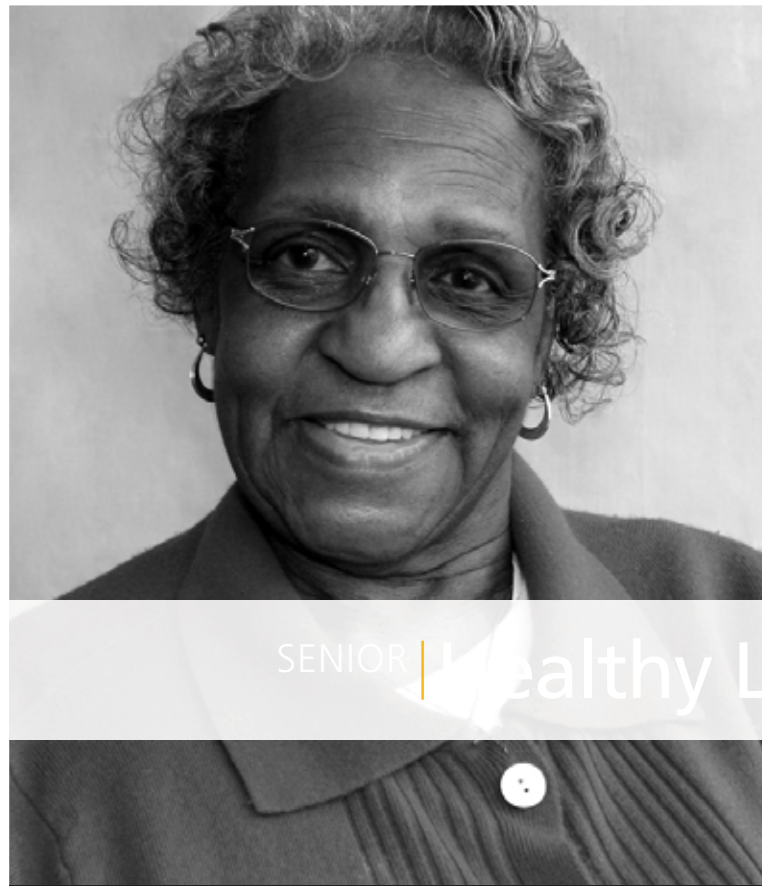
PHA President & CEO Kelvin Jeremiah and PHA Board of Commissioners Chair Lynette M. Brown-Sow congratulate new PHAPD Patrol Officer Jackie Hampshire.

PHA Encourages Sustainability with Energy Saving Tips

In August 2012, PHA's Board of Commissioner adopted a sustainability policy to formalize the agency's commitment to conserving energy and becoming more environmentally responsible. PHA will soon roll out new initiatives including programs to inform and train residents and staff about reducing energy costs.

Residents can help with this effort starting today by keeping the following tips in mind:

- Look for the Energy Star Label when replacing appliances. These appliances will help you save energy and money.
- When replacing your light bulbs, please try to switch to compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs).
- Turn off your computer, radio, television or other appliances completely when not in use.
- Keeping your freezer at least half full will help your entire refrigerator run more efficiently. With more food in the freezer, the air stays colder longer and the unit has to work less to keep the air cold.
- Turn off all lights when not in use or you are not at home.
- Use ceiling fans when possible, they can make you feel cooler while reducing air conditioning costs by as much as 40 percent in summer.
- This winter, turn back your heat thermostat just a few degrees when you are at home, and even more when you are out of the house, and pocket the savings.
- Avoid delinquent utility bills by using less energy, enrolling in utility assistance programs, and paying on time.



WHEN
Thursday, August 29, 2013
10am-2pm

WHERE
John F. Street Community Center
1100 Poplar Street
Free to all seniors

- Nutrition and health information
- Blood pressure, diabetes, and other health screenings
- Lunch will be provided
- Live Entertainment

SENIOR | Healthy Living Fair

For additional information or to reserve transportation call
215.684.2460

WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF FIRE

DO NOT USE ELEVATORS

IF YOUR HALL IS CLEAR

- Leave your residence
- Go to the stairwell
- Walk down the stairs to the ground floor and exit the building

IF YOUR HALL IS CLEAR BUT YOU CAN'T WALK DOWN STEPS

- Leave your residence
- Go to the stairwell
- Remain in the stairwell until the alarm is off
- A firefighter will find you in the stairwell

IF YOUR HALL IS SMOKY, OR YOUR DOOR IS HOT, OR YOU ARE DISABLED

- Remain in your residence
- Call 9-1-1 and tell them your location
- Seal crack under door with a towel
- A firefighter will come to your residence



PHA Promotes Fire Safety

On June 18, the Philadelphia Housing Authority began performing practice fire drills at all high-rise developments. The goal of the drills is to help promote resident safety in the event of a fire or an emergency occurrence where evacuation of units and the building are necessary.

Letters were distributed to all PHA residents living in high-rise developments notifying them of the upcoming fire drills and requesting resident participation.

"We are looking for full resident participation," said Gerald Kaewell, PHA's Chief Electrician. Mr. Kaewell

has partnered with Advanced Facilities Management, Risk Management and the Operations Department at PHA to coordinate and schedule fire drills.

"Residents are so used to false alarms in their buildings, they ignore them and don't leave their apartments," he explained.

The goal is to educate residents about fire safety and what to do in case of an emergency. PHA not only plans to have quarterly fire drills, but will also implement a system to make evacuation routes available on the back of the front door of each unit in all high-rise developments.

PHA kicked off the fire drills with Harrison Plaza as the first site and concluded with West Park Apartments on August 15.

"We want residents to know that fire safety is a priority of PHA," said Mr. Kaewell. "We want to prevent any kind of loss, whether it is property or someone getting hurt."

If you missed your sites' fire drill, please see your site manager to become familiar with the emergency evacuation route. PHA encourages all families to create their own safety plan to protect themselves in case of a fire.

Bed Bugs Still Linger

Do you see small, pin prick-sized, dark brown or black specks (drops of blood) on your sheets or mattress?

Are you getting bug bites while you sleep?

If you answer yes to any of the questions above, please take the following steps:

1. Call your site manager immediately if you see or suspect bed bugs. The sooner you call, the quicker we can work to get rid of them.

2. Keep your mattress or other infested items. Do not throw them away yourself because the bugs will drop off and infect another unit. Contact your site manager to remove.

3. Do not buy bed bug spray because it does not work. What works on roaches does not work on bed bugs.

4. Never pick up discarded furniture on the street. Check used or rented furniture for bed bugs.

5. Vacuum your mattress, headboard, box spring, bed frame, and floors daily if you find bed bugs. Put the vacuum bag in a closed plastic bag and in the trash immediately.

6. Avoid clutter, because it gives bugs a place to hide, and protects them from control efforts.

Bed bugs can be difficult to control and can easily spread. For more information, please review the bed bug booklets provided by PHA.

PHA Resident Programs and Services

Entrepreneurship Training, Entrepreneur Works

This program will offer classes, individualized coaching, and a professional and nurturing environment. Students will gain valuable, marketable skills and the resources to start a business. By the end of the program, students are prepared to begin their own business venture. Classes include: Business Communication, Business Plan, Marketing Principles, Financing and Capital Development, Legal Environment, Placement, Networking, Mentoring, as well as Post Program support.

Welding, PAT School Welding

In this program, students will learn how to safely set up, operate, and maintain welding equipment. All training and testing is performed by welding professionals. Classes include: Welding Overview, Safety, Welding Math, Basic Welding Terminology, Design and Assembly Processes, American Welding Society Test Prep, ADA Code Compliance, ISO 9000 Requirements, and Job Placement.

Phlebotomy, Pathways PA, Inc.

The Phlebotomy Technician Program prepares professionals to collect blood specimens from clients for the purpose of laboratory analysis. Students will become familiar with all aspects related to blood collection and develop comprehensive skills to perform venipuncture completely and safely. Classes include: Terminology, Anatomy and Physiology, Blood Collection Techniques, Venipuncture Techniques, Safety, Live Blood Draws, and an opportunity to take the National Health Career Association's (NHA) Certified Phlebotomy Technician (CPT) exam.

Medical Billing and Coding, Metropolitan Career Center

This training program will prepare students for the Certified Patient Account Technician (CPAT) credential awarded by the American Association of Healthcare Administrative Management for entry into the health care patient accounts/revenue cycle profession. Classes include: Employer Expectations, Goal Setting, Time Management, Interpersonal Communications, Adaptability, Resumes, Interviews, Job Search, Customer Service Training, Conflict Resolution, Anatomy and Physiology, Medical Terminology, Third Party Billing, Basic Billing and Coding, CPAT Exam Prep and a student internship.

Family Self Sufficiency (FSS)

FSS is a savings program designed to help public housing and HCV residents build financial assets and realize long-term goals as household earned income from wages increases. PHA works with local partners to help residents achieve goals in education, job training, job placement, career advancement, transitioning out of PHA, and homeownership.

PHA Financial Literacy Improvement Program (FLIP)

This program utilizes material created by the FDIC, such as Money Smart, to help adults and children enhance their financial skills and create positive banking relationships. Classes include: Money Matters, Pay Yourself First, Bank On It, Check It Out, Borrowing Basics, Charge It Right, To Your Credit/Keep It Safe, and Loan To Own/Own Your Home.

PHA Adult Basic Education/GED Testing

In this program, students will gain basic skills in math, reading, and writing. Also offered are GED preparation and testing.

Section 3 Opportunities

This is a HUD program and policy that requires PHA to provide job training, employment, and contract opportunities for low-income residents in connection with projects and activities in their neighborhoods. To better serve residents, PHA has enhanced definitions of new hire, community, performance standards, compliance metrics, tracking and compliance checks, streamlining forms and reports, Section 3 Responsibilities, and qualifications for Section 3 vendors and contractors.

Boys and Girls Clubs of Philadelphia (BGCP)

The BGCP provides programs and activities at two of PHA's community centers, Wilson Park Community Center in South Philadelphia and John F. Street Community Center in North Philadelphia.

Senior Programs

PHA Eldercare Initiative service available through HUD-funded Elderly/Disabled Service Coordinator Program.

Senior Centers

PHA provides centers for entertaining, feeding and assisting seniors in their daily lives. Senior centers are located at Wilson Park, Cassie L. Holley, and Emlen Arms.

Congregate Housing Service Program (CHSP)

This program is located in Bentley Hall and provides supportive services to frail or temporarily disabled elderly persons and non-elderly persons with disabilities for the purpose of promoting independence.

Adult Day Center

Community partner Ridge Avenue Eldercare Services is an adult day center designed to provide care and companionship for seniors 60 years or older. This program is located at Nellie Reynolds Gardens.

Healthy Café

This program promotes healthy nutrition for seniors by providing nutritious breakfast meals and food choices at a low cost to residents and guests. This program is located at Wilson Park.

With Every Heartbeat Is Life

This program promotes healthy eating and lifestyle education, and provides quality health education to residents to combat hypertension, diabetes, cholesterol, smoking, heart disease and other common illnesses.

Health Clinics

PHA provides affordable health care with health clinics at the following locations:

- 11th Street Family Health Services of Drexel U College of Nursing & Health Professions
850 N. 11th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19123, 215-769-1100
- PHMC Rising Sun Health Center
500 Adams Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19120, 215-279-9666

Cooling Centers

PHA has established resources to address heat-related emergencies and threats. When notified by the City of a heat advisory or heat wave, supplies will be distributed by PHA to keep residents and community members cool and safe.

Pre-Apprenticeship Program

This improved comprehensive job training program teaches participants skills to be a maintenance mechanic, laborer or painter. Upon completion of the program, graduates will become full-time Apprentices at PHA. Graduates will also have the opportunity to become members of either the Painters Union DC 21, Maintenance Mechanics Local 32BJ, or Laborers Local 332. For more information, please contact Edison Carerra, Acting Program Manager, at 215-684-8052.

Youth Enrichment Program

The Youth Enrichment Program is a year round after school and job training program for PHA residents ages 14 to 22. The program will consist of after school education and recreation activities and job training opportunities in various fields. More program details will be announced in September 2013. For more information, please contact Oddess Blocker, Program Manager, at 215-684-5300.



Philadelphia Housing Authority
Building Beyond Expectations

For more information about resident services and programs, please call 215-684-5300