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Action Plan to Eliminate Maintenance & Repair Backlog

Increased Staff and Efficiencies to Eliminate Backlog by End of 2013



Chairman John B. Rhea with Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, GM Cecil House and Hamilton Houses Resident Association President Barbara G. Barber.

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and Chairman John B. Rhea announced an aggressive Action Plan to eliminate the backlog of 420,000 maintenance and repair work orders for NYCHA properties by the end of this year, at a press conference held at Drew Hamilton Houses in West Harlem on January 31. The Plan calls for operational efficiencies and changes to processes that will:

- eliminate the entire backlog of repair requests by the end of 2013,
- permanently reduce the average wait time for repair work to one week for minor corrective repairs and two weeks for repairs needing skilled trades staff, and
- enable responses to all emergency repair requests within 24 hours.

NYCHA will provide quarterly reports on the status of the backlog reduction.

"No one has felt the impact of federal underfunding more than NYCHA residents, who have had to face long waits for repairs to apartments and public spaces," said Mayor Bloomberg. "Despite these severe funding challenges, we refuse to turn our backs on public housing – something we have seen other cities throughout the country do. Through better management of materials and equipment inventory, improved scheduling of skilled

trades workers and by hiring more workers to make repairs, NYCHA will tackle the backlog of old repairs and deal with new requests more quickly," the Mayor said.

"NYCHA understands and respects our residents' frustration over the current backlog of repair and maintenance work," said Chairman Rhea. "In spite of our budgetary constraints, we have a responsibility to work smarter and better with what resources we do have, which is why expediting maintenance and repairs has been a top priority in our strategic roadmap, Plan NYCHA. This Action Plan is our commitment to seeking solutions to enhance our residents' quality of life."

Noting the importance of NYCHA's collaboration process, GM Cecil House remarked, "This Plan is the culmination of input from a broad group of NYCHA stakeholders, including employees, unions, advocacy groups and residents." The GM further assured employees that they will have the "tools and resources that they need to eliminate the backlog."

(continued on page 3)

Sandy Brings Jobs for Residents



Training for approximately 400 individuals hired for post-Hurricane Sandy recovery work began at 250 Broadway on January 15. The temporary employees, half of whom are residents, will clean and sanitize buildings and conduct door-to-door surveys to assess residents' needs and refer them to community resources. (See story on page 4.)



EVP Raymond Ribeiro Honored

EVP for Capital Projects Raymond Ribeiro was honored with an Industry Leader Award for his work in the field of science and technology at the South Asian American Association's Scholarship Dinner on January 16, 2013. In presenting the award, Chairman John B. Rhea cited Mr. Ribeiro's accomplishments since joining NYCHA, where he ensures quality construction, on-time performance and within budget completion for all engineering, construction and construction management projects, some in excess of \$100 million. In addition, Chairman Rhea commended Mr. Ribeiro's work following Hurricane Sandy toward restoring vital services to 79,000 residents in 402 buildings. He also noted substantial progress made in meeting NYCHA's goals to install CCTV cameras and other security enhancements at 86 developments by the end of this year.

Melba Butler, Ph.D, was appointed Director for Resident Engagement in the Community Programs and Development Division, effective October 22, 2012. In close collaboration with Community Program's executive team and the NYCHA Board, Dr. Butler leads the revision and implementation of NYCHA's updated resident engagement approach. Prior to joining NYCHA, Ms. Butler was Principal of Butler Consulting, which provides project management, program development and other business support services. She previously served as Executive Director for more than 15 years at Harlem Dowling - West Side Center for Children and Family Services, a multi-service community-based child welfare agency.



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John Devine, formerly the Director of NYCHA's Customer Contact Center, was promoted to Director of the Enterprise Program Management Office (EPMO), effective October 9, 2012. Reporting to the General Manager, the EPMO provides enterprise wide oversight and monitoring of projects that are key to transforming NYCHA and delivering the major changes outlined in NYCHA's five year strategic plan, Plan NYCHA. The EPMO also assists the Vice Presidents and their project managers to ensure the successful planning and execution of NYCHA's key strategic projects. Mr. Devine joined NYCHA in 2009 as Director of the CCC, where his process improvements resulted in a 30 percent increase in productivity.

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Cornell Wisrby, MSW, was appointed Borough Director of the Queens/Staten Island Community Operations Department, effective October 9, 2012. The Borough Director is responsible for the overall administration and supervision of the Community Operations Department in the boroughs of Queens and Staten Island. Prior to joining NYCHA, Ms. Wisrby served as Director of Community Health Projects at Cicatelli Associates, Inc., where her primary responsibilities included budget management and monitoring of diverse federal, State and City contracts.



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Michael Johnson was appointed Senior Advisor to the General Manager, effective October 8, 2012. In this capacity, Mr. Johnson manages the daily operations of the General Manager's office, working directly with the General Manager and senior management to lead critical initiatives and priorities. Since joining NYCHA in 2011, Mr. Johnson has served as the Special Assistant to the EVP for Capital Projects.



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Bulletin Board

Congratulations

Michael S. Zunno, CPA, CGMA, appointed Vice President for Finance, effective November 13, 2012. Mr. Zunno is responsible for leading the activities of the Budgeting & Financial Planning and the Accounting and Fiscal Services Departments. In this dual role he oversees the continued transformation of NYCHA's financial planning and analysis as well as accounting and reporting functions, while ensuring that the Authority's working capital is managed effectively. Mr. Zunno, a Certified Public Accountant in the State of New York, has worked in public accounting and major organizations in private industry across a broad range of industries, including Altria, Kraft Foods and Terex Corporation.



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NYCHA Employee Bulletin

- Chairman..... John B. Rhea
- Vice-Chair..... Emily A. Youssouf
- Member..... Margarita López
- Member..... Victor A. Gonzalez
- Corporate Secretary..... Vilma Huertas
- General Manager..... Cecil House
- Chief Communications Officer..... Lynn Godfrey
- Communications Officer..... Sheila Stainback
- Editor..... Howard Silver
- Senior Photographer..... Pete Mikoleski
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A Message on NYCHA's Action Plan from GM Cecil House

January 31, 2013



Dear Colleagues,
Earlier today, I joined with Mayor Bloomberg, Chairman Rhea, resident leaders, and local elected officials to announce an Action Plan to completely eliminate our backlog of maintenance and repair work by January 2014. This aggressive plan is the culmination of many months of collaboration, including input from many of you. We began with the development of Plan NYCHA,

took action with the implementation of the Work Order Task Force, and continued with the working groups we convened on maintenance and repairs last fall. Each of these efforts included employees from across NYCHA's Departments, from executives to staff at the developments. Throughout this process, your input, feedback, and honesty about the challenges that we face have been invaluable. This plan is stronger because of our work together.

In addition to eliminating the repair backlog, the Action Plan also calls for NYCHA to establish a service level expectation that all repairs will be addressed in an average of 7-15 days. We would also expect to continue our record of responding to all emergency repairs within 24 hours. We know that this is an ambitious goal, but by making important improvements – many of which were sug-

gested by employees on the ground – we know we can get it done.

We will work to ensure the availability of important equipment and materials; more effectively schedule workers and maintenance crews; improve communications between key NYCHA Departments; enhance our performance management efforts in order to ensure that employees have the tools to carry out their duties; and optimize the processes that help us do our work.

While residents will not see an immediate difference today, a measurable turnaround will be evident over the next six months. In the meantime, we are already taking important steps: we have launched NYCHA Alerts on service outages for each development on our website, so that residents can access the status of elevator, heat and hot water, and other systems outages at their individual developments. You will learn of more changes soon.

I will continue to update you regularly on the exciting work taking place all over the Authority as we make progress on the Plan NYCHA agenda. I also want to encourage you to continue to provide your ideas and input to me. If a process or procedure is not working let me know. If changes work well, let me know. The more feedback I get from you, the more successful we will be.

Thank you for your dedication and service to NYCHA's residents and communities.

Sincerely,
Cecil House

Action Plan *(continued from page 1)*

In addition to the massive, sustained cuts in federal funding, factors contributing to the backlog were inadequate materials and equipment; inefficient coordination of skilled trades work; and the need for additional staff.

NYCHA began tackling the issue of the repair backlog beginning in 2010 by laying the groundwork in its strategic roadmap Plan NYCHA, released in December 2011. In June 2011, NYCHA launched a rapid repair team, grouping maintenance and skilled workers to help reduce significant repair backlogs at buildings with the highest number of repair work orders per apartment. The repair team has addressed 102,000 outstanding repairs.

"This plan looks good on paper and could well work," Local 237 President Gregory Floyd, who represents 7,000 NYCHA workers, said. "Our members

have always done this best and will continue to do so. We will evaluate the plan's progress over the next quarter."

"I commend NYCHA for endeavoring upon an ambitious and essential plan to reduce the persistent work



order backlog entirely by the end of this year," said City Council Member Rosie Mendez, Chair of Council's Public Housing Committee. "I am proud to

partner with NYCHA on this initiative, which is a natural outgrowth of the \$10 million in funding the City Council provided in the FY 2013 Budget to hire 176 residents in new jobs to address over 100,000 work orders in the current queue."

NYCHA is executing the Action Plan with savings created from Plan NYCHA initiatives that include a reduction in administrative costs of \$40 million, which were reinvested in this frontline effort. The Action Plan was devised with input from all levels of employees throughout the organization, including Property Management staff such as maintenance workers; Customer Contact Center staff who handle maintenance requests and complaints from residents and staff; skilled trades employees; and staff from all other NYCHA departments.

A Groundbreaking Plan for NYCHA

Chairman John B. Rhea announced last fall a major initiative to lease underutilized land at NYCHA developments for the private construction of market rate and affordable housing. The long-term leasing of underutilized land will bring a steady and dependable revenue stream of hundreds of millions of dollars to help maintain and preserve public housing at a time when federal funding cuts have challenged NYCHA's ability to maintain its aging public housing portfolio. The unprecedented leasing plan stipulates that no NYCHA buildings will be demolished and no residents will be displaced.

Calling the plan "a landmark in the evolution of NYCHA," Chairman John B. Rhea told the Association for a Better New York (ABNY), where the program was unveiled on September 24, 2012, that "a decade ago, [this] would not have been possible, because developers would have considered our sites off-limits. But thanks to Mayor Bloomberg's leadership, and the improvements that have been made citywide in terms of safety and quality of life, we have an opportunity to integrate private and public housing in a way that will benefit residents of both communities."



Chairman John B. Rhea announces land lease initiative at the Association for a Better New York.

The new affordable housing will include at least 1,000 units for low- and moderate-income families. In some cases, development may also include retail and community facilities.

The private development, built on land not occupied by public housing — such as parking lots, walkways, and open spaces — will create thousands of construction and permanent jobs in public housing neighborhoods. The new construction will integrate the public housing developments with the surrounding community, and bring the City's vitality to NYCHA's doorstep.

"It is clear that we have to solve our financial challenges, which drive down resident quality of life, ourselves," Chairman Rhea said. "The federal cavalry just isn't coming." The

Chairman later noted on the Chairman's Blog, "[T]he stable and predictable cash flow from the long-term leases ... will enable NYCHA to maintain its buildings and strengthen its workforce, which as many of you know, has declined by 30 percent in the past seven years."

"A Bold and Large Scale Project"

The leasing program will begin in Manhattan, where land values are highest. While revenues will be reinvested primarily at the developments where construction takes place, the program is designed to benefit all of NYCHA's residents.

In a *Bulletin* interview (see next page), EVP for Development Fred Harris remarked, "This is a bold, large-scale project that will create market and affordable housing on a scale rarely seen in recent years in this City. We expect more than 4,000 new apartments will be created over two to three years, beginning in 2014. This will make a measurable blip on the City's overall economy and a gigantic blip on NYCHA's, generating tens of millions of dollars of highly secure cash flow for years beginning in 2014. See p. 5 for an interview with EVP Fred Harris.

Jobs for Residents from Sandy

NYCHA has begun hiring almost 400 employees, approximately half of whom are residents, to begin post-Hurricane Sandy recovery work at developments impacted by the storm. Their hiring was made possible by a \$7.1 million National Emergency Grant from the U.S. Department of Labor.

"NYCHA welcomes these new employees who will provide great assistance to our residents in returning their communities and lives to a safe living environment," Chairman John B. Rhea said.

Many of the newly-hired workers themselves either lost employment as a result of Sandy, or were directly impacted by the storm.

"The temporary workers... will perform repair, restoration, and outreach work at developments impacted by Hurricane Sandy, helping families and seniors regain full control of their lives," said General Manager Cecil House.

Employees performing outreach work will accompany teams comprised of Family Services and Community Operations staff that will knock on all 19,000 apartment doors in low-lying Zone A areas to survey residents' needs and refer them to community resources. The outreach workers will work later in the day and on Saturdays in an effort to contact every family.

"I thought this was a great opportunity to help my neighbors and people

in distress," said Jefferson Houses resident Benardo Castro, during a break in a training session on January 15. "Everyone is very enthusiastic and is looking forward to putting into action the training that we have received."

As part of the recruitment process, NYCHA's Office of Resident Economic Empowerment & Sustainability, in partnership with the New York State Department of Labor and New York City Department of Small Business Services, hosted pre-screening events for residents in Red Hook, Coney Island, the Rockaways and the Lower East Side to interview and process applicants to expedite hiring.

EVP Harris: “Bold, Large Scale Project”



What is the prospective impact on NYCHA and New York?

This is a bold, large-scale project that will create market and affordable housing on a scale rarely seen in recent years in this City. We expect that more than 4,000 new apartments will be created over two to three years, beginning in 2014. This will make a measurable blip on the City's overall economy and a gigantic blip on NYCHA's, generating tens of millions of dollars of highly secure cash flow for years beginning in 2014.

How are the sites to be offered at NYCHA developments being selected?

We are guided by four criteria. First, the sites must have no negative impact on residents' quality of life and will not displace a single existing apartment. Actually, we believe the impact overall will be quite positive. Second, we want areas where the long-term land leases will generate the most income. Third, the building sites must be near enough to the sidewalk so they are capable of having their own street address. We don't want to build another “tower in the park” without direct street access. And fourth,

the sites must be “as of right,” so there is no need for rezoning or waivers or special permits.

What are the positive impacts for public housing residents, in addition to more funds for capital work and repairs?

In general, we want to reduce the sense of difference between NYCHA and the rest of the City. There will be more income variety, and the new full-service, attractive buildings, with a healthy mix of affordable and market-rate rentals, will bring new commerce and job opportunities to neighborhoods. We're also hoping that new housing will bring a safety bonus for NYCHA residents, through such anti-crime measures as outdoor lighting, security cameras, security staff and more eyes on the street. There will be new construction jobs and specific physical improvements tailored to each NYCHA development.

What are some major steps toward implementing the leasing plan?

First, it is very important to adequately explain the program to residents and the public. This involves listening to and addressing the needs of residents and neighbors, and ultimately winning the City's and HUD's approval and support. Attracting qualified developers, which is the next requirement, should not be difficult because the real estate market for

private resident development has never been stronger. We are confident that attracting developers to lease, and then collecting the rent for the sites, are tasks at which we will ultimately succeed after we first meet and address the needs and concerns of our stakeholders.

What departments will be involved?

In an agency of this size, a project of this magnitude depends on the work of many departments. However, the primary impacts will be on the Law Department, for Requests for Proposals; the Department for Real Estate Development, to identify sites and review RFP responses; Finance, to work with the Development team to insure that proceeds are most effectively deployed; Capital Projects, to coordinate upgrades at developments with new construction and elsewhere; Operations, whose front line and support staff will need to work through the difficulties inherent in any construction project; and Communications, to get the news out to residents and other stakeholders. Community Programs and Development will play a key role as resident engagement is a critical part of insuring that the offering serves the needs of residents and is favorably reviewed by HUD. This is a very exciting undertaking and there will be challenges and rewards for many individuals.

Did You Know?

This feature helps readers keep up with NYCHA's changes, challenges and accomplishments.

• *NYCHA Alerts*

Residents are now able to learn about service disruptions and service restorations at their development from a new resident notification system that launched on January 31. Through *NYCHA Alerts*, residents may log on to NYCHA's website to easily access the status of elevator, heat and hot water systems at their development and receive updates. Residents may also subscribe on the web site to receive that information via email alerts. The initiative to strengthen NYCHA's communication with residents was developed at the behest of General Manager Cecil House and was implemented through collaboration between the Emergency Services, Information Technology and Operations Departments.

• *Roll-out of New Intranet Web Site*

The IT Department's rollout of NYCHA's new Intranet web site called *Portico* will soon be complete. The rollout began

in December 2012 with employees at 250 Broadway and 90 Church Street and was soon after extended to NYCHA's Long Island City location. Rollout to Borough Management offices and all frontline locations will follow.

The product of intense collaboration amongst departments and with input from employees, *Portico* offers employees a new and improved way to find and share information about their own work and the overall work at the Authority. *Portico* contains all the content previously found in the old employee portal, plus some important additions, including an employee NYCHA news story, a daily rotating portrait of a NYCHA development, and a more accessible NYCHA Calendar of Events. Many enhancements will be added incrementally, making *Portico* an interesting and indispensable tool for employees.

Comments may be emailed to Webmaster in the Outlook address book, with the Subject “Portico.” Take time to explore and enjoy *Portico*. There is a lot you will find!

NYCHA Life Staff Citations

Staff Citations at Rutgers Houses



Property management staff at three Manhattan developments – Rutgers Houses, Strauss Houses and Vladeck Houses – were honored with special citations for outstanding service during Hurricane Sandy, at appreciation luncheons held at the developments on December 21, 2012.

“This was long overdue and well deserved,” wrote Vladeck Houses Resident Association President Nancy Ortiz, who organized the event on the Friday before Christmas. “[It] was the best gift I could have received when I witnessed the smiles, gratitude and surprise of the staff,” she said in an email message sent to the *Bulletin* along with the photos.

At right, in center, are Council Member Rosie Mendez and Member Victor A. Gonzalez, with Vladeck Houses staff holding citations. Also present are representatives from the offices of Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer, Council Member Margaret Chin, Senator Daniel Squadron, and Assemblyman Sheldon Silver (not in photo). In above photos, staff at Rutgers Houses and Strauss Houses are honored by Member Victor Gonzalez, Council Member Rosie Mendez and legislative liaisons.

Staff Citations at Vladeck Houses



Staff Citations at Strauss Houses



“Only I and the Supervisor of Caretakers knew, just one day in advance, about the luncheon, and the citations were a complete surprise,” said Rutgers Houses Property Maintenance Supervisor Steven Gonzalez. The citations were presented to staff by Council Member Rosie Mendez and liaisons from four other elected officials (see below caption).

“Our staff was really excited and pleased,” said Vladeck Houses Property Manager Patricia Reid, who praised Ms. Ortiz for organizing the event. “It is really great when residents show their appreciation because it means so much to staff, especially for their outstanding efforts during Hurricane Sandy.”

NAACP Awards



At left are NAACP NYCHA President Lynn Spivey and NAACP NYS Conference President Hazel N. Dukes with EVP & Chief Administrative Officer Natalie Rivers (center). At right are Member Victor A. Gonzalez and Chairman John B. Rhea with Community Operations Borough Coordinator Paul J.Q. Lee (center).

EVP & Chief Administrative Officer Natalie Rivers was honored for Distinguished Leadership and Community Operations Borough Coordinator Paul J.Q. Lee was honored as a Community Activist, at the Awards Dinner for NYCHA’s Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), held in Manhattan on October 11, 2012. The festive awards ceremony and dinner also included the presentation of a Proclamation by Congressman Charles Rangel to NAACP NYCHA President Lynn Spivey in recognition of community service.

Note: Coverage of this event was postponed due to the *Bulletin*’s special issue on Hurricane Sandy.

Post-Sandy Recovery and Restoration Efforts

NYCHA's heroic response to the destruction of Hurricane Sandy is well known to *Bulletin* readers. However, key roles by some departments are still unheralded. And challenging work is ongoing to provide vital services to residents with temporary equipment, while ensuring that public housing and Section 8 families have the support they need to fully recover from such a massive natural disaster.

Several days before the storm struck, Capital Projects Division (CPD) senior managers deployed at borough offices organized staff to brace NYCHA for the onslaught. "Field staff prepared all 400 temporary sidewalk sheds and 55 construction sites citywide," said Project Director Doug McNevin. With the storm in progress, those managers took calls from developments on wind and water damage to the structures and reached contractors for emergency repairs.



Technical Services Department Supervisor of Painters Daniel Hermina checks for mold with two contract mold remediation workers at LaGuardia Houses on December 11, 2012.

As major damage to buildings and building systems became apparent, the managers set up specialized survey teams to inspect NYCHA property and equipment. Within one week, all 2,600 buildings in the five boroughs were checked for wind damage and 333 reports were filed for repairs to chimney tops, compactor chutes, roof fences, sidewalk sheds and other structures.

Once the massive effort to pump out flooded basements by Operations

and Technical Services was complete, CPD mechanical survey teams for Zone A checked all 444 boilers, electrical meter rooms, and related equipment.

Confronted with the task of replacing 20 boilers and electrical service equipment flooded by salt water, CPD, Operations and Technical Services began a nationwide search, through contractors, for mobile boilers and generators and hired contractors to install them.

New Challenges

With vital services restored using temporary equipment to 80,000 residents by November 18, 2012, CPD and other staff in field units faced new challenges.

"Our unit oversaw installation of all nine temporary boilers in Coney Island and we have been intensively monitoring them ever since," said Construction Field Supervisor Frank Smieya, when the *Bulletin* visited the CPD Coney Island unit on January 24.

"We don't have spare parts or backup systems for temporary equipment that are running 24/7, so preventive maintenance is essential," said Construction Project Manager Maksim Kordysh.

"If a contractor says it takes one week to get a part, that is unacceptable. We have to get equipment running any way we can, even by adapting a part to make it work until a new part arrives," added Technical Services Assistant Superintendent Glenn Rueda.

With determined attitudes like this, staff at CPD field units in Rockaway, Red Hook and Coney Island, are managing restoration contract work to maintain vital services for residents.

"CPD continues to run a seven-day-a-week operation, with more than 50 percent of our staff involved in continuing recovery work," said EVP for Capital Projects Raymond Ribeiro. At present, temporary generators are being replaced with transformers that will more efficiently bring the heat and hot water from the temporary boilers to residents. The 20 mobile boilers will also be replaced with more reliable, clean and efficient natural gas boilers that NYCHA will purchase as backups to avoid future service disruptions.

Restoring Buildings and Homes

The current phase of NYCHA's recovery involves ensuring "a safe living and working environment for our residents and employees," as Chairman John B. Rhea stated. CPD and Operations took the lead in providing staff and managing contracts for hundreds of workers to clean and sanitize flood-impacted building basements, common areas and apartments, including extensive mold and mildew remediation efforts.

However, other departments played key roles in providing residents in all 26 flood-damaged developments with the services they need to cope with the storm's aftermath or resume their normal lives. Staff from Family Services, Operations and many other departments went door-to-door in all 26 Zone A developments to inspect apartments and provide cleaning services. When necessary, Operations and Family Services staff worked with residents to identify temporary housing during the cleaning and repair process. In some cases, temporary or permanent transfers were arranged for residents, including some of the 437 first-floor apartments that sustained water damage. In these cases, Family Services staff worked with residents to coordinate services including child care and assistance linking children to schools.

Leased Housing

The Leased Housing Department (LHD) conducted an early assessment to identify voucher holders residing in hurricane evacuation zones and worked in close collaboration with the Customer Contact Center (CCC) to ensure that displaced Section 8 tenants would quickly receive assistance. Immediately after the storm, the CCC began tracking requests for emergency transfers made by phone or in person, obtained important information from tenants, and provided this information to LHD teams who processed the requests as quickly as possible. As a result, the department was able to refine the emergency transfer process to issue more than 300 storm-related emergency transfer vouchers on the same day requests were made.

(continued next page)

Tragedy Averted: Bushwick Houses Caretakers Honored for Heroism



At center and far left are Caretakers Rodney Golden and Dwane Simmons with certificates for heroism. With them, from left, are Caretaker Debra Gee, Caretaker Tawana Floyd, Property Maintenance Supervisor Leroy Gibbs, SOC Grace Watson, PM Administrator Gerard Wheeler and PM Hector Hernandez.

Twenty stories up on a building at Bushwick Houses, Caretaker Rodney Golden had a firm grip from behind around the waist of a resident. Between them was a thin metal fence that the man had climbed to stand on the ledge of the roof, ready to jump. With the fence firmly between them, Mr. Golden held his lifesaving grip tight for what he said was the longest 10 seconds of his life.

Recounting the events with fellow

Caretaker Dwane Simmons prior to the Brooklyn development's Resident Association meeting on January 10, 2012, where they were honored for their heroism, Mr. Golden pointed to the top of the tall building he rushed to on November 29, 2012. While patrolling the grounds, Mr. Simmons felt a few pebbles hit his hardhat and, looking up, saw the man hovering near the edge of the roof. He immediately radioed in the startling report that Mr. Golden had responded to.

"I was just being human and wanted to see what was happening," said Mr. Golden, who found the elevator ready on the ground floor when he arrived. Without hesitation, he took it to the top of the building and ventured out onto the roof.

Guided only by what he had seen on television police shows, Mr. Golden spoke calmly with the man, while slowly edging closer. Eventually, he was able to grab onto him. For 10 terrifying seconds Mr. Golden strained to hold his grip until Emergency Medical

Services staff arrived and helped him pull the man over the fence to safety.

"I felt good that a life was saved and a family didn't have to spend Christmas without a loved one," Mr. Golden said.

Mr. Simmons was glad that he had carefully investigated the source of the falling pebbles.

Bushwick Houses Property Manager Hector Hernandez arrived on the scene just in time to hear Mr. Golden calling for help while holding on to the struggling man. "He could have pulled Rodney over the rail," Mr. Hernandez said after honorary plaques from the Resident Association had been presented. "I commend him for saving a family and a community from a tragedy that would have affected a lot of people. I am proud of what both men have done."

At the heartfelt plaque presentations, Bushwick Houses Resident Association president Lohoma Shipman expressed the sentiments of many when she said, "We should take time and pride to acknowledge what these employees have done."

Post Sandy *(continued)*

In addition, LHD's Quality Control Inspectors conducted site visits throughout the City to validate the City's Department of Buildings list of condemned or unsafe buildings and



Coney Island field staff are: Asst. Supv. Glenn Rueda, Construction Field Supv. Frank Smieya; Construction Proj. Mgr. Maksim Kordysh and Construction Field Supv. Robert Visciano.

advise tenants of their option to transfer. When inspectors found, in mid November, that 150 buildings had not restored essential services, landlords were given the standard 30-days to

complete repairs, and follow-up phone calls were made by staff.

Staff were also on hand at the 12 City Evacuation Shelters to provide information to impacted families and assist with emergency transfer requests. They also maintained a presence at the City's Resource Centers to provide assistance.

Resident Engagement

Residents are informed of NYCHA's overall progress and the work status at their development through NYCHA Restores newsletters published by the Department of Communications. Meetings coordinated by the Office of Resident Engagement at Coney Island, Red Hook and Rockaway developments further updated residents on progress in their area. At these meetings, residents have the opportunity to discuss and receive assistance, with interpreters available, for their individual recovery problems. Specialized

information and follow-up is available from representatives from Resident Engagement, Operations, CPD, Family Services, Community Operations and other departments. Issues discussed include mold remediation, extermination, transfers, access to facilities, job opportunities and the upgrading of temporary equipment. These meetings provide a vital link between residents and the many NYCHA departments that are actively engaged not only in maintaining vital services but in fully restoring residents' quality of life.



Acting Brooklyn Borough Administrator for Family Services Karen Patterson speaks to residents at O'Dwyer Community Center in Coney Island.

Language Bank Volunteers Speak from the Heart



Some of the 40 Special Language Bank Honorees stand with Chairman John B. Rhea (left of center) and HUD administrators Mirza Orriols and Luigi D'Ancona (to the Chairman's left and right). From far left are Board Member Victor A. Gonzalez, Chief Communications Officer Lynn Godfrey, Senior Manager for Resident Communications and Language Services Yvette Andino, EVP & Chief Administrative Officer Natalie Rivers and Corporate Secretary Vilma Huertas.

Some of the most important words in any language – “thank you” — were spoken to 158 employee volunteers at NYCHA’s 17th Annual Language Bank Recognition Ceremony. The appreciation breakfast was held at District Council 37 headquarters in Lower Manhattan on October 15, 2012.

These generous, multilingual employees provided translation and interpretation services, from May 1, 2010 to April 30, 2012, to ensure that NYCHA residents, applicants and Section 8 voucher holders with limited English proficiency have equal access

to NYCHA information and services in compliance with federal, state and local fair housing laws.

During the ceremony, Chief Communications Officer Lynn Godfrey recognized 40 special honorees (see box) who have responded to an exceptionally high volume of requests for language assistance during the specified period. Noting the “challenges of getting NYCHA’s message out to more than 400,000 residents,” Ms. Godfrey termed the special honorees “Unsung Heroes,” as she called them forward for a group photograph (above).

Special Honorees

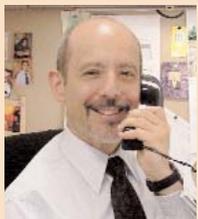
Amir Akhlag	Shahid Khan
Irving Anglada	Suk Kim
Patricia Argueta	Igor Kripak
Carmen Burgos	Betty Lee
Roxana Calinescu	Wendy Liang
Cecilia Cruz	Leon Michel
Eramis Cruz	Ashgan Mousa
Avik Das	Ana Ortiz
Alan Davis	Doris Ortiz
Teresa DeSchamps	Rosa Ramos
Cliff Diakos	Doris Rivera
Rudolpho Donawa	Maly Rosefort
Sabina Debois	Tatyana Scharfstein
Maria Espinoza	Chaim Schwartz
Marie Francois	Marisol Sempritt
Margarita Geller	Larry Sit
Raisa Gorovaya	Brunilda Tise
Lai Mei Ho	Premananda Vittal
Raffaella Irace	Wo-Po (Doris) Wan
Anna Karpman	Siu (Flora) Yung

Employees who require interpretation or translation services to assist NYCHA’s customers may contact the Language Services Unit Hotline at (212) 306-4443 from 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Employees who may be interested in becoming a Language Bank volunteer may reach the LSU Unit at:

Language.Services@nycha.nyc.gov.

Note: Coverage of this event was postponed due to the Bulletin’s special issue on Hurricane Sandy.



You may contact Wayne Shapiro and his ASK HR staff at (212) 306-8000.

Ask HR

This article concerns the broad topic of annual leave. In this segment, we set out some helpful guidelines for Supervisors in reviewing and approving vacation requests by staff.

- Have a clear plan of your staffing needs. Don’t forget that unforeseen circumstances can negatively impact staffing levels. Therefore when positioning requests, don’t shortchange yourself by planning for the absolute minimum staffing levels.
- Once staff members submit their vacation requests, Supervisors should respond in a timely manner by either approving or disapproving the request.
- Employees should ordinarily not be approved for vacation time totaling or exceeding their entire yearly leave accrual, to ensure that ample time is retained for sick and personal absences during the year.
- Kindly remember that annual leave is always to be taken at NYCHA’s convenience, as supervisors must ensure that sufficient staff is on duty at all times in order to carry out the functions of the unit. However, dispositions should not be arbitrary, but based on the specific work needs of the department.
- Once the vacation schedule is finalized for the year, leave of absence forms should be submitted for each vacation period planned for the year. These should be dispositioned on a timely basis.
- If an emergency situation arises that necessitates the canceling of vacations or reduction of approved leave, reasonable judgment should always be exercised, especially in those cases where unchangeable reservations are involved. While the vacation schedule should be maintained as approved, additions or modifications can be made to it by supervisors upon employee request if adequate advance notice is provided, sufficient staff coverage is still maintained, and the requested days do not otherwise present a conflict with the previously approved schedule.
- If you need further assistance, call ASK HR! You can reach us at 212-306-8000 or email us at: askhr@nycha.nyc.gov.

NYCHA Nuggets

To thank and congratulate staff for their accomplishments, please email the *Bulletin* at: SilverS@NYCHA.nyc.gov.

Mitch Nat, Charlie Friedman, Carmen Pacheco, Andrea Morgan, Stephanie Thompson, Su Chung, Tie "Steve" Chen

We want to extend special thanks for all members of the Utility Revenue and Monitoring Division within the Department of Energy Finance and Sustainability Management. Your efforts monitoring utility expenses in 2012 have saved NYCHA over \$1.2 million — money that has been returned to the developments to assist in meeting the needs of our residents.

Congratulations on a job well done! We especially want to acknowledge Carmen Pacheco whose efforts saved NYCHA over \$530,000. We look forward to a repeat performance in 2013!

Rory Christian, Director
Chris Haun, Deputy Director
Dept. of Energy Finance and Sustainability Management

SOC, SOG, Maintenance Workers, Caretakers & HPT
South Beach/New Lane Shores Management Department

Our staff is always going the extra mile for residents. I am privileged to be Supervisor of a great team. When a job needs to get done, we all act as one big family. Keep up with the good work.

Glen Garuccio, Asst. Property Management Supv.
South Beach/New Lane Shores

Ruth Verbit, Associate Staff Analyst (Ret.)
Victor Franco, Community Associate
Meenakshi Abbi, Housing Assistant
Inspection Coordination Unit, Leased Housing Department

Thank you for your hard work and commitment in the Unit, including meticulous daily data entries of inspection information into the computer system, and great team efforts in tracking and overseeing the completion of all inspections and re-inspections on time at the 21 Tax Credit & Non-Tax Credit developments, to meet HUD SEMAP requirements. Furthermore, the creation and use of an efficient tracking system for inspections with team efforts have enabled the Unit's assignments to be accomplished in an effective and timely manner. Finally, to Ruth: "Happy Retirement!"

Nancy Lam, Chief
Leased Housing Department

Anthony Passaniti, Jacqueline Broner, Rajat Lala, Douglas Heyward, IT; Gilbert Mazon, HR; Tischelle George, DOC

Thank you for making Portico, NYCHA's new Employee Portal, happen. You have taken an outmoded repository of forms and are turning it day-by-day into a mechanism for collaboration and getting the job done here at NYCHA. Keep it up and we will soon have one of the best government intranets anywhere.

Jonathan Fisher, Chief, Analysis & Techno-Communications
John Saggese, VP for Enterprise Technology Portfolio Management
Bob Marano, VP for Business Solutions Technology
Rudy Kurkjian, VP & Chief Technology Officer
Information Technology Department

Property Manager and Property Maintenance Supervisors

Borinquen Plaza, Breukelen, Cooper Park, Hope Gardens, Marcy, Sumner, Tompkins and Williamsburg Houses

I wish to thank each and every one of you for the tremendous amount of effort and dedication that you bring to work each day. Your tireless work ethic helps me and the Brooklyn Borough achieve the many goals that are assigned to us. Rent collection, annual reviews, move out preparation and turnaround, PHAS and priority work orders, are just a few of the many challenges we face daily. Your total dedication and professionalism make it a pleasure to be your supervisor.

Philip Calandrillo
Borough Deputy Director
Brooklyn Property Management

How NYCHA's New Transitional Return to Work Program Affects You

NYCHA has implemented an innovative **Transitional Return to Work (TRTW)** program for injured employees on Workers' Compensation. The TRTW program is a temporary assignment that requires employees, whose physicians indicate they are able, to return to work while taking into consideration the employee's physical abilities and skills. Key benefits of this program include continuation of the employee's full salary and resumption of pension credits. Studies show that most workers heal faster when they are more active and productive. Other benefits of the program include higher retention of our valued employees and fewer lost workdays. The following Q & A's provide additional information about the program. Please feel free to direct any questions you may have to ASK HR at (212) 306-8000.

Question: *Am I eligible to participate in the TRTW program?*

Answer: All NYCHA employees who have suffered an on-the-job-injury or illness are eligible to participate in the program after their treating physician indicates they have some work capacity. However, you will not qualify for this program if your injury or illness is not compensable under Workers' Compensation.

Q: *Is participation in the program mandatory?*

A: Yes, participation in the TRTW program is mandatory if you are an 'eligible' employee (see above box).

Q: *Why do I need transitional work?*

A: In most cases, it is important to stay active while recovering from an illness or injury. In addition, by taking part in the program, you are likely to:

- maintain your income;

- retain your annual leave accruals;
- earn pension credits;
- get back to your regular job sooner.

Q: *Why can't I recover at home?*

A: Staying at home with restricted activities may be necessary to recover from certain injuries or illness. However, studies show that injured employees often recover faster when they stay active. By returning to work on temporary, transitional duty, you will maintain your physical and mental stamina which will allow you to return to full duty when your doctor says you are ready.

Q: *Will I hurt myself if I go back to work too soon?*

A: NYCHA is committed to creating a safe work environment for all of our employees. Both NYCHA and you can reduce your chances of further on-the-job injuries by working in the pre-

scribed assignment that fulfills your physician's recommendations.

Q: *Will I go back to my same title?*

A: Yes, you will return to the job title you were in before you were injured; however, you may be assigned to a different location. Your transitional assignment will be based on your physical abilities, as described by your physician. NYCHA's Human Resources Department will advise you of your assignment.

Q: *Will I be required to work full-time and will I receive the same salary?*

A: Yes, you will be required to work full-time and you will receive your full salary. Your participation is contingent on NYCHA being able to assign you a full-time assignment.

Q: *How long can I stay in the program?*

A: The length of participation is different for each employee. Your medical provider will discuss with you your recovery goals and how long you will require a transitional assignment. However, program participation cannot exceed six months.

Q: *What if NYCHA cannot develop a suitable transitional assignment?*

A: You will not be able to participate in the program. However, after you have recovered more fully, NYCHA may be able to find a transitional assignment.

Focus on Employee Organizations

"Without employee organizations, our connection to the workplace would be less fulfilling." - Chairman John B. Rhea.

NYCHA's branch of the **National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)** traces its origin to April 1969. During the past few years, the Branch has established a very effective Life Membership Program recruiting more than 300 life members.

Each year the Branch coordinates the following projects: Black History program, Juneteenth program, Back to School drive, toy drive, and an annual awards dinner. In addition, the Branch has recently reactivated its NYCHA Youth branch and started a "More than Just Basketball Tournament," where more than 50 boys compete and attend NAACP workshops.

This year, in recognition of the 100th anniversary of the Women's March, the NYCHA NAACP Branch will host a special awards dinner. Save the date: April 6, 2013. For more information about activities or membership, please contact NYCHA's NAACP Branch at (347) 669-2421 or nychabranchn@gmail.com.

As the Bulletin goes to press, NYCHA and its NAACP Branch are preparing a Black History Month Celebration on Feb. 26, 2013, with Keynote Speaker Richard Buery, Jr., President and CEO of the Children's Aid Society. Look for full coverage in the next *Bulletin*.





Letters

Letters are most welcome. Employees, what's new or noteworthy about your life or work location? Retirees, what are your memories of NYCHA and your current exploits? See our address on page 2.

Dear Editor,



My name is Alan Stone and I worked at NYCHA from June 1973 through December 2011 as a Housing Assistant, Assistant Manager and Housing Manager in seven developments and the Leased Housing Department. Throughout my career I met many wonderful people and did not get a chance to say goodbye to

many of my co-workers. I would like to especially thank the staff at Leased Housing where I spent 30 out of my 38 years for helping me to serve the people of New York City who qualified for Section 8 vouchers.

Section 8 is such a great program and gets so little publicity, and it gave me great pleasure to help the deserving people who qualified in obtaining affordable housing in the neighborhood of their choice. I especially enjoyed participating in the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program, which enabled homeless veterans to obtain affordable housing in either NYCHA developments or private buildings. The cooperation between Leased Housing and the Veterans Administration was an example of the two agencies working on behalf of our veterans who have made the sacrifice in serving our country and have often been ignored upon completion of their service.

I miss the NYCHA family and will remember you always!

Sincerely,
Alan Stone



From left, former and current NYCHA employees are: Borough Administrator Larry Ginsberg, Operations Deputy Director Anthony Porcelli, Borough Administrator Tony Mincielli (ret.), Technical Services Asst. Director Bob Mallamo, Borough Administrator Joe Porcelli (ret.), Borough Administrator Michael Gray (ret.), Administrator Mike Steinfeld, (ret.), Administrator Richard O'Connor (ret.), and Deputy Director Bob Gerenstein (ret.).

Dear Editor,

On October 5, 2012, a large turn-out of friends and family celebrated the retirement of Joe Porcelli, Manhattan Borough Administrator, after 36 years of dedicated service to residents. The above photo shows a rare breed. These are former and present employees in the Civil Service title of Administrative Superintendent. This gathering was a nice opportunity to see everyone again. We all wish Joe well on his life's next chapter.

Sincerely,
Bob Gerenstein