

# New York City Housing Authority Journal

Vol. 36, No. 4

First Class U.S. Postage Paid — Permit No. 4119, New York, N.Y. 10007

nyc.gov/nycha

APRIL 2006

## Centralized Call Center Expands to Manhattan Thirteen Residents Hired As Customer Service Representatives



**YOUR CALL IS IMPORTANT TO US** Customer Service Representative Josefa Irizarry looks on as new employee Lannette Reese handles an incoming call at the Centralized Call Center in Long Island City.

By Eileen Elliott

THE NEW YORK CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY (NYCHA) IS SLATED TO EXPAND ITS INNOVATIVE CENTRALIZED CALL CENTER, OR CCC, PILOT PROGRAM TO INCLUDE 14 DEVELOPMENTS IN THE BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN BY THE END OF APRIL. It is estimated that when the entire borough of Manhattan is added to the mix, the amount of callers requesting appointments for routine maintenance repairs received by the CCC will more than double during regular business hours (8AM to 4PM). That's no small thing: the CCC already receives (conservatively) over 700 calls a day for Staten Island and Queens, where it is currently operational. Among the 28 new employees NYCHA has been busily training as Customer Service Representatives at its state-of-the-art facility in Long Island City, 13 are also NYCHA residents.

The CCC allows residents to call a single number (718) 707-7771, to schedule all routine maintenance repairs, or to report emergencies, 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week.

The program was first implemented in Staten Island in April 2005 and expanded to include Queens six months later, bringing the total number of apartments covered to 22,000. Once the entire

borough of Manhattan is covered, that number will jump to 53,000.

So far, the program has been a success. Before the CCC, work tickets were often duplicated because residents weren't home when the service provider arrived. Residents can now schedule appointments, and this has significantly reduced the number of "TNH," or "Tenant Not Home" incidents.

"As an agency we have to be as customer-oriented as we possibly can. To achieve that we must be as efficient as we can," said Deputy General Manager for Operations Robert Podmore. "If someone calls in and needs a repair, it's our responsibility to take care of it. The best way to do that is to make an appointment."

Referring to the fact that almost half of the new staff are residents, Mr. Podmore commented. "This is another win/win situation which will allow us to be more customer-oriented as well as help to improve the quality of life of the new resident employees."

## PLAN TO PRESERVE PUBLIC HOUSING Working to Close A \$168 Million Gap

THE NEW YORK CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY (NYCHA) FACES A BUDGET GAP OF \$168 MILLION CAUSED BY INCREASES IN OPERATING EXPENSES, ESPECIALLY ENERGY COSTS, WHILE FUNDING FROM WASHINGTON HAS DIMINISHED. We are at a critical juncture and are seeking ways to remain financially stable. Other cities, like Chicago and Newark, have demolished buildings in the face of funding shortages from Washington but NYCHA remains committed to preserving New York City's public housing. In the past four years, significant measures have been taken to reduce costs and tighten our belts, but additional changes in the way NYCHA operates, and more sacrifices, will be required to ensure the viability of public housing in New York City for future generations.

The existence of budget gaps, or deficits, is nothing new for NYCHA or many other agencies. For the past five years, NYCHA has self-funded these deficits through use of our reserve fund in the amount of \$357 million. But this has been a temporary measure that cannot sustain NYCHA in the long run.

### Revenue vs. Expenses

NYCHA's new fiscal reality is due largely to Washington's diminishing funding of public housing. This has resulted in expenditures of almost \$146 million between FY 2001 and FY 2005 for day-to-day operations, which NYCHA will not be reimbursed for by HUD. For 2006, the

(Continued on page 4)

## THE PROPOSED FEE INCREASES

NYCHA is proposing fee increases for the costs of fixing damages caused by residents, as well as modest increases in surcharges associated with the use of certain heavy-duty appliances installed by residents.

The increased fees for materials and labor will affect very few residents. *These fees have always been in place*, and are only for damages caused by residents. In other words, if you didn't break it, you won't have to pay for it. It is worth noting that these fees have not been raised in more than a decade and the increases are based on actual costs to NYCHA for materials and labor. *There is no charge whatsoever for routine maintenance and service in NYCHA apartments.*

Likewise, *surcharge fees* have always been in place for the use of heavy duty appliances installed by residents: namely, air conditioners, dishwashers, and freezers. NYCHA is now adding washing machines to the list. The modest increases proposed will only partially offset the rising utility costs NYCHA pays for residents' use of these appliances. The proposed monthly fees are as follows: air conditioner

— \$10.00; washing machine — \$5.75; freezer — \$10.00; and dishwasher \$5.00.

Our mission is, as always, to maintain 345 developments throughout the five boroughs. Costs continue to rise, our buildings continue to age, funding continues to diminish and the Authority is currently faced with a structural budget gap of \$168 million for Fiscal Year 2006. These fee increases will help generate needed revenue to allow NYCHA to continue to provide essential services.

NYCHA is currently evaluating comments received during the period of the 30-day Notice regarding these fees. The new fees will be implemented on May 1st.

Please note: In the March issue of the Journal the fee for parking spaces for seniors and the disabled was mistakenly listed as \$65.50; it is \$67.50.

### Summer Jobs Available In the Summer Youth Employment Program

Participants, ages 14 to 21, needed to work on the grounds at NYCHA developments:  
Monday — Friday 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Counselors-in-Training positions at NYCHA Community Centers also available for participants aged 16 to 17:

Monday — Friday 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.  
(Hours may be flexed due to trip schedule.)

Both programs are 25 hours per week.  
(1 hour unpaid lunch)

Applications Available at your Management Office/Community Center/ Receptionist Desk or at Resident Employment Services Dept., 350 Livingston Street, 6th floor, Brooklyn, NY  
Completed applications must be returned to the Management Office by Tuesday, May 30, 2006.

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HOUSING



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MEET DREAMER  
MAKIDA JORDAN



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NEW MEDICARE RX  
DRUG PROGRAM



**MAYOR'S MESSAGE**

**THE NATION'S LARGEST MUNICIPAL HOUSING PLAN — AFFORDABLE HOMES FOR 500,000 NEW YORKERS**



ON FEBRUARY 23RD I JOINED DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT (HPD) COMMISSIONER SHAUN DONOVAN, NEW YORK CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY (NYCHA) CHAIRMAN TINO HERNANDEZ, AND HOUSING DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (HDC) PRESIDENT EMILY YOUSOUF, TO ANNOUNCE THE EXPANSION OF MY NEW HOUSING MARKETPLACE PLAN. Launched three years ago, the New Housing Marketplace has grown from a \$3.4 billion plan to build and preserve 68,000 units by 2008, to

a \$7.5 billion plan to build and preserve 165,000 units by 2013. This is the largest municipal affordable housing plan in the nation's history and will provide affordable homes for 500,000 New Yorkers.

Affordable housing is critical to New York's future. As our City grows and continues to attract people from around the world, it is a challenge for working New Yorkers to find quality, affordable housing. New York began using property foreclosures to build affordable housing and revive neighborhoods with Mayor Koch's Ten Year Housing Plan. Now that stock of city-owned property is nearly gone, our neighborhoods are back and we have another major challenge: affordability.

As part of my extended plan, HPD will pioneer new tools and incentives to create affordable housing. These new strategies are part of our larger goal to shift the focus of New York's affordable housing community from preserving the properties taken into city ownership through tax foreclosure, to developing unprecedented levels of new affordable housing. The City also hopes to leverage the power of the public and private sectors and increase the number of units created on private land or preserved in privately-owned buildings by nearly 20 percent.

The key goals of the plan are to: preserve 73,000 units of affordable housing for 220,000 New Yorkers, with a special emphasis on preserving units where subsidies are set to expire in the near future; create 92,000 units of affordable housing for 280,000 New Yorkers; and acquire the space we need to build these new units by pursuing innovative strategies that maximize one of New York's most precious resources—land. NYCHA is a strategic partner in this component. HPD and NYCHA will develop housing on NYCHA sites as part of the rezoning in West Chelsea and the Hudson Yards. This will generate 435 units of housing for New York's working families, which will be completed and occupied by 2009.

Preserving public housing is a critical part of my overall housing strategy. Last February I joined Chairman Hernandez to announce the most comprehensive plan in the City's history to modernize and preserve thousands of public housing units, through a historic \$600 million bond issuance which will accelerate the modernization of NYCHA's aging housing stock. The first phase will finance much needed exterior brickwork, roofing and major structural repairs in 129 developments with over 500 buildings in all five boroughs.

NYCHA continues to develop other underutilized properties within its portfolio, which will yield 210 units at the University Macombs Apartments in Morris Heights in the Bronx. NYCHA is in the process of rehabilitating 121 units at Brook Willis Apartments, also in the Bronx, and is working with HPD to redevelop Markham Gardens in Staten Island as a mixed income and intergenerational development, with a total of 350 units.

Since I took office, the City has funded the construction and preservation of 56,000 units of affordable housing, which means we are well ahead of schedule towards meeting my initial goal of 68,000 units by 2008. NYCHA continues to successfully maintain its aging housing stock, in addition to the contributions the Housing Authority makes to my affordable housing plan. I am confident that by mobilizing all of our partners in the affordable housing and real estate communities, we will secure our future as a city of opportunity where all New Yorkers can afford to live and pursue their dreams. For a full description of the Ten Year New Housing Marketplace Plan, please visit [www.nyc.gov/hpd](http://www.nyc.gov/hpd). To learn more about NYCHA's role, please visit [www.nyc.gov/nycha](http://www.nyc.gov/nycha).

*Michael R. Bloomberg*

**PROFILE**

**Success, It All Begins with a Dream...  
One NYCHA 'Dreamer' Who Is Giving Back — Makida Jordan**



By Heidi Morales

ON THE 30TH OF JANUARY 2006 THE WORLD LOST CORETTA SCOTT KING, WIDOW OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. For decades Mrs. King was a champion in the fight for equal rights. Sadly, Mrs. King lost her fight against ovarian cancer and the effects of a stroke, dying at age 78. But despite the loss of the Kings, the "dream" lives on.

**The Dream Lives On**

Indeed it does live on, especially for Makida Jordan, Project Coordinator for the new DeHostos-Wise "I Have A Dream" (IHAD) program. IHAD is a long-term educational program, which helps underprivileged students meet their educational and career goals. The participants, or "Dreamers" as they are called, make a commitment to stay in school from elementary school through their senior year in high school. Upon graduation the Dreamers receive a college scholarship or financial assistance from private sponsors.

What is unique about Ms. Jordan is that while today she runs the DeHostos-Wise Program, several years ago she was an IHAD Dreamer herself. Ms. Jordan is a graduate of the Chelsea-Elliott IHAD program of 1994, sponsored by Ted and Paige Ashley.

Ms. Jordan was introduced to the IHAD program during her fifth grade graduation but like most kids her age, little Makida was just anxious to get out of the crowded auditorium.

"But the parents were so excited. I felt like they won the Lotto or something," Ms. Jordan said. It's probably fair to say they did, considering what it costs to put a child through college.

Ms. Jordan explained that the IHAD program had an impact on the quality of education that she received early on. In fact, when Ms. Jordan was having

difficulties while attending a public high school, her Sponsor and Project Coordinator took it upon themselves to make sure this lucky Dreamer received a good education. With her mother's consent, they transferred Ms. Jordan into a private Catholic high school. All costs associated with attendance were paid by her Sponsor, Mrs. Ashley. "All I had to worry about was my uniform," said Ms. Jordan.

Growing up with five siblings and an absent father was very difficult. "I saw my mother struggling and I said 'that's not going to be me. I don't have to do the same thing.' My mother had to work several jobs at a time to make ends meet."

As the oldest, Ms. Jordan was expected to look after her siblings and help out with chores around the house while her mother worked. But Ms. Jordan

did not want the role of "substitute mom." In fact, she escaped those responsibilities by participating in the IHAD program.

Ms. Jordan said that although her mother placed a lot of importance on education, it was the support of IHAD that backed those ideals up with know-how. Ms. Jordan received a bachelor's degree in forensic psychology from John Jay College of Criminal Justice, and in 2004 a master's degree in urban planning from Queens College, also financed by her Sponsor. "If somebody tells you they are going to pay for something you better jump on it. And, I did it; scared and all, I did it."

**Still an Active Dreamer**

Currently, there are 25 boys and five girls in the DeHostos-Wise IHAD program. And although these Dreamers are

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**The Housing Authority Journal**



ESTABLISHED 1970 • CIRCULATION 200,000

Published monthly by the New York City Housing Authority  
Department of Public and Community Relations  
250 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10007  
Tel. (212) 306-3322 • Fax (212) 577-1358  
[nyc.gov/nycha](http://nyc.gov/nycha)

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**CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE**

**Get Ready For Spring!**



EACH YEAR AT THIS TIME I LIKE TO REMIND NEW YORK CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY (NYCHA) RESIDENTS OF A NUMBER OF OPPORTUNITIES THE WARMER WEATHER BRINGS. Recreational, educational, cultural, health or finance-related — NYCHA is sure to have a program or initiative that will be of interest to you.

The first that comes to mind is the 44th Annual Garden

Competition. Last year, residents entered 552 gardens in the competition for Citywide titles in the Flower, Vegetable and Children's Theme Category.

Registration this year begins on March 31st and will continue through July 7th. Pick up some extra tips, as well as seeds, at the Garden and Greening Conference, which will be held on April 7th at the King Towers Community Center in Manhattan. For more information or to register your garden, call (212) 306-3501.

On April 12th and 13th, NYCHA's Performing Arts Unit will be staging a "Hip Hop Teen Musical" at the Fashion Institute of Technology's Haft Auditorium on 27th Street and Seventh Avenue in Manhattan, starting at 7:00 PM. The program is free and features 60 teens from all five boroughs. For information and tickets, call: (212) 306-3368, 3398 or 3479.

Speaking of shows, did you know that NYCHA provides special discount coupons for the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus? There are 20,000 coupons available. Pick one up at your Management Office or Community Center and see the Greatest Show on Earth for only \$10.00! The coupons are good for all weekday and weeknight performances, except Friday evenings, through April 17th. For more information, call: (212) 306-3306.

If you are looking for work, you should know that NYCHA's Resident Employment Services Department (RES) is hosting an "Empowerment Through Employment" Job Fair and Career Resource Information Expo on April 27th. Employers from all sectors of the economy will be looking to hire from the valuable resource pool of NYCHA residents. Attendance at the Job Fair is by invitation only. Please call the RES hotline at (718) 250-5904 to find out more.

Young residents who want to work this summer should take note of the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) advertisement on page 1 of this issue. Each year, NYCHA hires youth between the ages of 14 to 21 to work on grounds or as counselors-in-training. Last year, 1800 jobs were filled through this program. It's a great way for young residents to obtain valuable work experience.

All seniors reading this column should turn to page 10 for information on the new Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Benefit. If you are a senior who qualifies for Medicare than you qualify for the new Prescription Drug Benefit. However, you must enroll by May 15th, or you won't have the opportunity again until January 2007.

Did I mention that April is National Fair Housing Month! See NYCHA's Fair Housing Anti-Discrimination Policy on page 5.

Finally, few people can think of April without remembering the tax deadline —April 17th! Whether you are filling out your own tax form, using one of the free sites around the City, or a paid tax preparer, don't forget the Earned Income Tax Credit. Many NYCHA residents are eligible for free tax assistance at a number of sites around the City, thanks to a partnership led by Mayor Bloomberg and the Department of Consumer Affairs. See page 4 of this *Journal* for more details.

Please log onto [www.nyc.gov/nycha](http://www.nyc.gov/nycha) for more information about ongoing programs and special events and initiatives, and take advantage of the many opportunities April has to offer.

*Tino Hernandez*

**BOROUGH DIGEST**

**THE BRONX:**

Grounds renovations should be completed by the end of the month at Mott Haven Houses in the Mott Haven section of the Bronx. The complete grounds improvement, which totals more than \$2.5 million, includes new concrete walkways, seating areas with benches and games tables, four playgrounds, a spray shower area, new fencing, two full basketball courts and landscaping.

**BROOKLYN:**

Each Thursday night from the end of January through the end of May, the Carey Gardens Community Center has been hosting "Books and Cooks" classes in collaboration with the Brooklyn Public Library. The goal of the program is to foster literacy among children in kindergarten through the 3rd grades and enable parents, guardians and/or caregivers to take part in building their children's literacy and math skills. The books are read aloud and feature ethnic cuisine and craft themes. The final session (May 25th) will feature a professional chef who will prepare a special meal for participants. The Carey Gardens Community Center is sponsored by the Madison Square Boys and Girls Club.

**QUEENS:**

*The New York Times* reported that on February 21st the owners of Silvercup Studios in Queens announced a plan to build a six-acre development known as Silvercup West, one block from Queensbridge Houses, on the shoreline just south of the bridge. The project would cost \$1 billion and include eight soundstages, and three towers for offices, stores and apartments. In making the announcement, Alan and Stuart Suna, owners of Silvercup, said that if the project is approved it will bring 3,900 permanent jobs to the area.

**MANHATTAN:**

On the evening of February 24th, the Clinton Community Center in East Harlem was transformed into the wonderful land of Oz, in a musical production of "The Wizard Of Oz" performed by children and teens from both the Clinton and Johnson Community Centers. The beautiful scenery made the Center unrecognizable as Dorothy, Toto, the Tin Man, the Cowardly Lion and the Scarecrow, in a total cast

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**DEBORAH'S DIARY**

*By Deborah Williams*



**Pen Pals**—Remember in school when you wrote to your pen pal? Well 28 girls from the Farragut Community Center in Brooklyn have been doing just that and a little bit more. It began in September of 2005 with an idea that Farragut Community Center Director Kisha Jackson had.

"I wanted the girls to work on their social skills and have the opportunity to venture past the boundaries of the city, because some children never get away," said Ms. Jackson. So, Ms. Jackson began reaching out to other cities and surfing the net searching for a way that the girls could interact with their peers in other cities. Finally, she stumbled upon the Teen Youth Connection, a program located in the heart of Syracuse, New York, founded by the City of Syracuse Department of Parks and Recreation. After numerous conversations with Teen Youth Connection Director Denise Moore, Ms. Moore and Ms. Jackson launched the Young Sisters Unite (YSU) program. YSU is open to girls between the ages of 10 and 14, and meets twice a week on Thursdays and Fridays from 6 PM to 8 PM at the Farragut Community Center. The program's objective is to enhance youth development and academic achievement, provide life skills training through activities, lessons, and events, and foster communication between youth from different cities in New York State. YSU, which began in October of 2005, led the girls to newfound friendships. Through the use of the Internet, the girls began sending e-mails to one another entitled, "Getting to Know You." They even exchanged Christmas gifts. Ms. Moore and Ms. Jackson continued corresponding, creating monthly program activities for both groups and comparing the results. But the most exciting thing for the girls happened on January 14, 2006 when 24 of the 28 girls enrolled in the Farragut Community Center's YSU program gathered their sleeping bags and blowup beds and headed for a weekend trip to meet their pen pals, or sisters, as they refer to each other, at the Cannon Street Community Center in Syracuse, for the very first YSU Conference. The conference covered topics from substance abuse prevention to identifying your passion. Weekend activities included roller skating, African dancing and drumming, quilting, sightseeing and a pajama party. It was a weekend that Yanibel Abrue, Cierra Bennett, Ausha Brown, Tiona Brown, Chelsea Christmas, Zyasia Floyd, Shanise Footman, Cyndria Johnson, Sharkea Long, Althiya Matas, Tiera Moody, Alexis Perez, Tania Peterson, Jewlissa Pettie, Jamie Raines, Shadasia Riggins, Garibela Ruiz, Juaneice Stanley, Shaniquae Stanley, Malaysia Thomas, Angel Thompson, Dayshell Victor, Brianna Williams, and Janae Williams will always remember. "At the end of the day, I felt the trip was very successful. My girls seem more confident, have better self-esteem and have developed their communication skills," said Ms. Jackson. And, I am sure the girls can't wait until they see their sisters again on June 24, 2006 when the girls from the Cannon Street Community Center's YSU program visit the Farragut Community Center for the second YSU Conference! **Wow! I'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate everyone involved in getting this program up and running. Girls, learn from your sisters as they will learn from you, and remember to keep yourself open to change.**



**CULTURE CLUB** This young boy was one of approximately 1,000 NYCHA residents who attended a Black History Month Celebration at the Bronx Zoo on February 22nd. Children came from all five boroughs to see dancers with the Harambee Dance Company, create traditional masks, participate in a scavenger hunt, hear the Youth Chorus and see the wild animals on an African Safari via the Bronx.



## MORE RESIDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EXEMPTION

THE NEW YORK CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY (NYCHA) HAS EXPANDED THE LIST OF EXEMPTIONS FOR THE FEDERALLY MANDATED COMMUNITY SERVICE REQUIREMENT. The requirement — that certain adult residents of public housing perform voluntary work or other activities that are of a public benefit or enhance self-sufficiency, for eight (8) hours each month — is a provision of the federal Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act (QHWRA) signed into law in 1998. NYCHA implemented Community Service in 2004 and 2005, incorporating each tenant's status with regard to the program into the annual recertification process.

Since its inception, NYCHA has worked with residents, advocates and members of the City Council to expand the five exemption categories listed in the federal statute into 21 distinct categories. These exemptions have been expanded as follows:

—The age for a permanent exemption was lowered from 62 to 60;

—Both adults are now considered exempt, if they live in a two-adult family with at least one child below age 13 living in the household, even if only one adult works, provided earnings are at least \$9,373 per year or where the adult works a minimum of 35 hours per week. Formerly, both adults were required to work for both to be exempt.

—An exemption was added for all authorized family members living in the same apartment if at least one family member receives public assistance and complies with the program;

—A resident who is pregnant receives a total credit of 8 hours towards Community Service requirements upon proof of pregnancy. With correspondence

from her physician, NYCHA will exclude a pregnant individual for the period of her pregnancy recommended by her physician; and

—A resident receives a credit of 8 hours for every 30 days of illness in which they are unable to work.

As a result of these and additional exemptions and credits, the vast majority of NYCHA's residents (approximately 80%) are not required to perform Community Service at all, while others have had their required hours reduced.

Most NYCHA residents are exempt because they are working, are in school, are participating in a work experience program, are of a certain age or have a disability. The remaining have been asked to meet with their Housing Assistants to determine whether they can qualify for an exemption or whether they will be required to perform Community Service.

NYCHA remains open to considering new suggestions that might qualify under the law as Community Service exemptions.

## HUD's New Assistant Secretary Visits NYCHA



U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing Orlando J. Cabrera made his first visit to the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) on February 9th. He is shown here with NYCHA Executive Staff and HUD's Regional Director Mirza Negrón Morales, at Brooklyn's Ingersoll Houses. Completed in 1944 with more than 3,000 apartments combined, Whitman and Ingersoll Houses are undergoing an extensive renovation.

## THE TAX DEADLINE IS APRIL 17TH — DON'T FORGET THE EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT

THE DEADLINE FOR FILING YOUR INCOME TAXES WILL BE HERE BEFORE YOU CAN SAY, APRIL 17TH. REMEMBER, WHEN YOU PREPARE YOUR TAXES, OR HAVE THEM PREPARED, DON'T FORGET TO SEE IF YOU'RE ELIGIBLE FOR THE EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT (EITC).

The New York City EITC Coalition, a partnership of more than 100 government, corporate and nonprofit and community organizations, encourages working families and individuals to file for the EITC.

So, what is the EITC? It is a federal, state and city tax credit paid to qualifying workers that can be claimed either as a credit on your taxes or as a cash refund. It can be as high as \$5,940. NYCHA estimates that as many as 30,000 residents, or one in six families who live in public housing, may be eligible for the EITC when they file their 2005 Income Tax.

With an average payment of \$2,355 to qualifying New York City households in 2004, the EITC helps hard-working families make ends meet and contributes millions of dollars to the city's economy.

The EITC can mean a maximum combined federal, state and city credit of up to \$5,940 for families with a maximum income of \$35,263 and more than one qualifying child. Families with a maximum income of \$31,030 and one qualifying child can receive up to \$3,594 credit, and individuals with a maximum income of \$11,750 can receive a maximum \$539 credit.

The EITC does not count as income in determining NYCHA rent, so it will not affect other government benefits such as public assistance; nor is it counted as income in calculating entitlement to Medicaid, Food Stamps, and SSI. However, the payment may have to be spent by the end of the month following the month it is received in order to retain eligibility for these government benefits.

There are more than 100 New York City EITC Coalition sites around the City that provide tax assistance. NYCHA families with dependents and incomes under \$40,000 in 2005 are eligible for this free tax preparation. You are also eligible if you have no dependents and your household income was less than \$20,000. Volunteers at these sites are trained by the Internal Revenue Service. To find the nearest location, or for further information, call 311.

## PLAN TO PRESERVE PUBLIC HOUSING

(Continued from page 1)

estimated amount is \$93 million, bringing the grand total to almost \$240 million in unreimbursed costs that NYCHA must absorb. NYCHA's total revenue for this period has remained stagnant, losing pace with inflation and rising costs.

During this same period NYCHA's spending on things like pensions, health care and insurance has increased by approximately 50%. Utility costs have soared by 70% between FY 2002 and FY 2005. Such non-discretionary spending accounts for 43% of the Authority's expenses. Moreover, NYCHA receives no government subsidy whatsoever to manage and maintain 21,000 units in non-federal developments. These units account for more than half of the expected budget gap.

In addition, HUD's new funding formula will not recognize NYCHA's higher costs due to building age and other factors. This is expected to result in even further funding reductions.

### The Plan To Preserve Public Housing

Given this financial reality and the looming \$168 million gap for this year, NYCHA has embarked on an aggressive plan to preserve public housing in New York City. This will have to be done in partnership with residents and the community.

As reported in the February *Journal*, NYCHA's 2006 preliminary spending plan, which was approved by the Board on December 28, 2005, allows for the provision of on-going core services for public housing residents. The plan also provides for community, recreational, and employment programs, as well as social services. Finally, the preliminary spending plan includes new management initiatives to control spending that achieve an estimated savings of \$13 million.

### Ensuring Vital Construction

The Plan to Preserve Public Housing also means taking measures to preserve the actual physical structures of our aging buildings. Aggressive steps have been taken in this area as well. In February 2005 Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and NYCHA Chairman Tino Hernandez announced the most comprehensive plan in the City's history, to modernize and preserve thousands of public housing units. This initiative is made possible thanks to an unprecedented four-year plan to sell up to \$600 million in bonds, and an anticipated capital allocation of \$1.4 billion from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The first phase will be used to

accelerate repairs at 129 developments by funding 155 individual capital projects focusing on stabilizing and waterproofing the exteriors of over 500 buildings in all five boroughs through brick and roof work. The second phase will focus on the buildings' infrastructure including heating and plumbing, the installation of automated boilers, and elevator replacement. Such timely capital improvements prevent unnecessary operational expenses in the future.

### Savings Initiatives/ Belt-tightening

Savings initiatives NYCHA departments have identified for 2006 include salaries and expenditures for goods and services. For example:

- We will continue to reduce personnel by eliminating staff vacancies and maintaining a 50% hiring freeze;
- We are consolidating management offices in the field, saving \$1.3 million;
- We are implementing computer infrastructure savings of \$1 million;
- As we bring new and renovated community centers online, we will identify community-based organizations to operate these facilities in a cost effective way; and
- We will work to reduce the administrative costs of our capital program by \$1.9 million.

### Generating Revenue

To generate revenue in 2006, NYCHA will increase:

- Surcharges for the use of certain heavy-duty appliances installed by residents. The surcharges only partly cover the additional utility costs NYCHA must pay for the use of these appliances. (See article, page 1.);
- Fees for the actual costs for materials and labor associated with fixing damages caused by residents. (See article, page 1.); and
- Parking fees, as reported in last month's *Journal*.

In addition, NYCHA will work to expand leasing of commercial spaces on NYCHA grounds and continue to seek creative means to streamline service delivery.

### Becoming More Efficient

The innovative Centralized Call Center has expanded from Staten Island to Queens and will soon encompass Manhattan. The Centralized Call Center is a seven-day-a-week, 24-hour-a-day service geared to improve customer service and accelerate response time. The main benefit to residents is that they are now able to schedule specific appointments. This pilot program has already

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## BRONX SOUTH COP INSTALLATION

### Joanne Smitherman Elected For Third Term

THE BRONX SOUTH COUNCIL OF PRESIDENTS (COP) HELD ITS INSTALLATION CEREMONY ON THE EVENING OF FEBRUARY 13, 2006 AT THE CLASSIC CENTER IN THE MELROSE SECTION OF THE BRONX. City Council Member Maria del Carmen Arroyo led the COP in the traditional candlelighting ceremony, during which each member voiced his or her commitment to the three-year COP terms.

Highbridge Houses Resident Association President Joanne Smitherman was installed for her third term as the Bronx South COP Chair. The rest of the Council includes: Vice-Chair Eric Crawford of Davidson Houses, Recording Secretary Celia Cruz-Acevedo of Site 402/Caldwell, Corresponding Secretary Linda Ballou of Mill Brook Houses, Treasurer Daphne Roberts of Melrose Houses, Financial Secretary Eva Bender of Forrest Houses, and Sergeant-At-Arms Cornelius Foster of Franklin Avenue.

NYCHA General Manager Douglas Apple congratulated Ms. Smitherman on her re-election, as

well as the other members of the Council. He also announced that 72 of the 79 proposals submitted through the TPA or Tenant Participation Activities program, were approved for a total amount of \$859,000. TPA allocates federal funding for resident programs designed to enrich residents.

There are 32 developments represented by the Bronx South COP district, which is one of nine COP districts throughout the city. Each Council works with the Housing Authority to address the concerns of the residents it represents. Elections for the Bronx South COP were held on January 9, 2006 at the Davidson Community Center.

## NEW YORK CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY

### FAIR HOUSING NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the policy of the New York City Housing Authority to provide equal housing opportunities for all qualified applicants and residents. In the selection of families and in the provision of services, there shall be no discrimination against any person on the grounds of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, familial status, marital status, partnership status, military status, disability, lawful occupation, alienage or citizenship status. This policy also prohibits retaliation.

This policy is in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Fair Housing Act of 1968, as amended by the Fair Housing Amendment Act of 1988, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the New York State and City Human Rights Laws.

Any resident or applicant who wishes to report housing discrimination or retaliation MAY FILE A DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT (NYCHA 036.024) by contacting the Department of Equal Opportunity from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday or their development management office between 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM:

**New York City Housing Authority  
Department of Equal Opportunity  
250 Broadway, 27th floor  
New York, NY 10007  
Telephone (212) 306-4468  
Fax: (212) 306-4439  
TTY: (212) 306-4845**

Or by contacting any of the following federal, state or city human rights agencies listed below:

**New York City Commission on Human Rights  
40 Rector Street, 9th floor  
New York, NY 10006  
(212) 306-7500**

**New York State Division of Human Rights  
20 Exchange Place, 2nd floor  
New York, New York 10005  
(212) 480-2522**

**United States Department of Housing and Urban Development  
Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity  
26 Federal Plaza, Room 3532  
New York, New York 10278  
(212) 264-1290 Extension 7534**

## BOROUGH DIGEST

(Continued from page 3)

of 35, followed the yellow brick road on their way to the Wizard. The special production was staged in honor of Black History Month.

### STATEN ISLAND

The Bahamas came to P.S. 18 on February 24th in honor of Black History Month, with a traditional Bahamian Junkanoo Festival á la NYCHA. Junkanoo, similar to Rio de Janeiro's Carnival and New Orleans' Mardi Gras, takes place each year in the Bahamas on December 26th and January 1st, beginning at 2 AM and ending at dawn. The highlight of the Staten Island Junkanoo Festival was a fashion show featuring authentic costumes modeled by Resident Association Presidents and NYCHA staff. (Photo below.)



### PLAN TO PRESERVE PUBLIC HOUSING

(Continued from page 4)

shown increased efficiency, as the incidents of repair people showing up when residents aren't home have diminished. This allows NYCHA to better use its resources and improve service.

NYCHA estimates a significant annual savings in costs associated with heat/hot-water consumption when its new Computerized Heating Automated System (CHAS) is fully implemented in 2007. CHAS provides remote access to the Authority's 180 major boiler plants and connected buildings. CHAS enables enhanced monitoring of heating systems, allowing property managers to identify and prevent potential problems and contain energy.

Closing the budget gap will require tough choices and creative initiatives. NYCHA will continue to keep residents informed as the Plan to Preserve Public Housing progresses.

## The NYCHA "Not Wanted" List

In this issue we continue our editorial policy of publishing the names of individuals who have been permanently excluded from our public housing developments. This list is part of NYCHA's effort to keep residents informed of the Housing Authority's ongoing effort to improve the quality of life for all New Yorkers in public housing and to allow for the peaceful and safe use of our facilities. Here follows a list of the people excluded after hearings were held on April 27, and May 4, 11, 18 and 25.

**Please note: These exclusions are based on NYCHA's Administrative Hearing Process and should not be confused with the recently implemented Trespass Notice Program under Mayor Bloomberg's Operation Safe Housing Initiative.**

### REMEMBER,

**IF YOU SEE ANY OF THESE INDIVIDUALS ON HOUSING AUTHORITY PROPERTY, PLEASE CALL YOUR MANAGEMENT OFFICE OR NYCHA'S SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT AT (212) 306-8595.**

#### Prohibited as of April 27, 2005

Jose Suarez Case 2529/05 formerly associated with the eighth floor of 1817 Story Avenue, Monroe Houses, the Bronx.

Pietro Williams Case 2883/05 formerly associated with the first floor of 2922 Avenue V, Sheepshead Houses, Brooklyn.

#### Prohibited as of May 4, 2005

Wesley Lucks Case 2809/05 formerly associated with the first floor of 550 East 147th Street, Betances Houses, the Bronx.

Devon Williams Case 2849/05 formerly associated with the fourth floor of 51-32 Beach Channel Drive, Ocean Bay Houses, Far Rockaway.

Kizzy Green  
True Womack

Jose Perez Case 6030/04 formerly associated with the eighth floor of 370 E 153rd Street, Melrose Houses, the Bronx.

Adrian Rosario Case 2930/05 formerly associated with the second floor of 550 Cauldwell Avenue, Saint Mary's Park Houses, the Bronx.

#### Prohibited as of May 11, 2005

John McCovery Case 29760/05 formerly associated with the twelfth floor of 826 Columbus Avenue, Frederick Douglass Houses, Manhattan.

Carmen Ortiz-Keels Case 4963/00 formerly associated with the sixteenth floor of 826 Columbus Avenue, Frederick Douglass Houses, Manhattan.

Bruce Knox Case 3062/05 formerly associated with the sixth floor of 424 Morris Avenue, Patterson Houses, the Bronx.

Juan Quiles Case 10745/04 formerly associated with the first floor of 251 W. 3rd Street, Lower East Side II Houses, Manhattan.

#### Prohibited as of May 18, 2005

Rafael Padilla Case 3160/05 formerly associated with the eighth floor of 1345 Fifth Avenue, Taft Houses, Manhattan.

Ralph Brown

Corey Medina Case 3173/05 formerly associated with the fourth floor of 2173 King Towers, Manhattan.

#### Prohibited as of May 25, 2005

Raymond Olavarria Case 1016/05 formerly associated with the second floor of 805 Taylor Avenue, Monroe Houses, the Bronx.

Shaquan Parker Case 3499/05 formerly associated with the fourth floor of 466 Columbia Street, Red Hook West Houses, Brooklyn.

Jorge E. Zayas Case 3380/05 formerly associated with the thirteenth floor of 2175-85 Reed's Mill Lane, Boston Secor Houses, the Bronx.

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**Makida Jordan**

(Continued from page 2)

only in the third and fourth grades they're already preparing to go on their first college tour this summer. "We're [also] going to create a career awareness piece to this where we'll have professionals come in and talk about what they do for a living. When I experienced that it was really good."

Ms. Jordan and her staff, 90% of whom are volunteers, have been working since July 2005 to prepare for this academic year. She says a lot of the successes they've had so far are due to the committed parents and volunteers. "They are dedicated; sometimes I forget that they are not paid. They are here on time, ready to work, eager — that just opened up my eyes. People do care about other people," she said. And because she cares, Ms. Jordan has made a ten-year commitment to IHAD as Project Coordinator at the DeHostos-Wise site.

**Big Thinker**

Ms. Jordan is already thinking about innovative ways to get the whole family involved in the program. "What we'd like to start here is a Saturday program where we'd run activities with families so parents and siblings can partake... [and] do something fun and creative together," she said. Ms. Jordan not only dreams big, she thinks big too. "This summer we are [also] planning to work on grants. We need new computers. I'd like to offer parents a computer class and invite the families on trips during the summer. But those things cost money; you have to raise additional monies to do stuff like that." But the IHAD motto has taught her that, "Success begins with a dream."

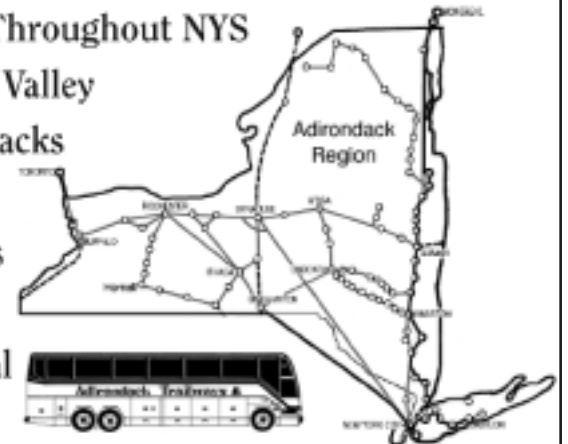
Ms. Jordan urges all NYCHA youth in the I Have A Dream program to, "Be a part of it; take advantage of this program; get to know your Sponsor and your Project Coordinator and use your resources. Life is about what you do to prepare for it and that's what I Have A Dream taught me," she added.

**DREAMERS  
NEEDED!**

The I Have A Dream (IHAD) Foundation needs Dreamers for the IHAD Project located at Ravenswood Houses in Long Island City, Queens. For more information, please contact Karlisle Honore, Project Coordinator, at (718) 472-5589.

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- (a) **CALL 311** for the location of a DFTA *Enrollment & Information Center* near you where trained staff will assist you. Or;
- (b) Review and follow instructions contained in the booklet *Medicare & You 2006* that was mailed to all Medicare recipients last November. Or;
- (c) If you have access to a computer, log onto [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) and click on *Enroll in a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan*.

2.



**Program: Medicare and Medicaid (Dual Eligible)**

**Action:** No action required. You have been automatically enrolled. If you have any questions call 1-800 633-4227 and say "Agent." Service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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**Program: Medicare Advantage Plan (HMO or PPO)**

**Action:** Call your plan's Customer Service Representative for information or if you have concerns.

4.



**Program: Medicaid only**

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**Prevent Animal Cruelty! Have Your Pet Neutered or Spayed**

The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) is working with the Mayor's Alliance for New York City's Animals to get the word out about low-cost spaying and neutering for cats and dogs through a program called Maddie's Spay/Neuter Project. In order to qualify, you must be a New York City resident and have a valid Medicaid card. The fee is just \$10.00 for each cat and \$20.00 for each dog.

NYCHA's pet policy allows each household to register either one cat or one dog, with a size limit of 40 pounds for dogs when full-grown, based on a veterinarian's estimate. Dog and cat owners must register their pets with NYCHA and pay a one-time registration fee of \$25.00. Registration includes a form that must be signed by a veterinarian showing that the animal has been spayed or neutered, has its current rabies vaccination, is licensed by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and wears the license in public. (Call 311 to find out more about licensing.)

NYCHA strongly encourages eligible residents to take advantage of Maddie's Spay/Neuter Project. Here's how:

- 1) Locate a participating veterinarian from the list below.
- 2) Call the veterinarian and make an appointment. Be sure to mention Maddie's Spay/Neuter Project in NYC.
- 3) Bring your Medicaid card and photo ID with you when you take your cat(s) or dog(s) in for the appointment. The veterinarian will photocopy your card.
- 4) The veterinarian will perform the surgery.
- 5) You pay \$10.00 for each cat, \$20.00 for each dog.\*

\*These fees apply to the spay or neuter surgery only. If your pet requires additional care, such as pre-surgery testing of an older pet or other procedures, those costs will be in addition to the above fees. The veterinarian will inform you prior to the surgery if additional costs will be incurred.

**Maddie's Spay/Neuter Project in NYC Participating Veterinarians**

<b>BROOKLYN</b>	<b>Street Address</b>	<b>Phone</b>
Animal Clinic of Bay Ridge	689 86th St.	718-833-0700
Animal Clinic of Marine Park	3616 Quentin Rd.	718-382-8100
Animal Kind Vet. Hospital	365 7th Ave.	718-832-3899
Dr. Linda Jacobson, PC	291 Kings Highway	718-376-8957
Dr. Sinha's Animal Clinic	1946 Bath Ave.	718-449-7800
*Canarsie Animal Hospital	8423 Flatlands Ave.	718-444-8798
Grand Animal Clinic	518 Grand St.	718-388-4746
*Mid-Brook Animal Hospital	1899 Coney Island Ave.	718-645-7666
Pet Haven Animal Hospital	290 McDonald Ave.	718-435-6900
Prospect Park Animal Clinic	105 Prospect Park W.	718-768-6125
Williamsburg Vet. Services	80 North First St.	718-388-1172
*CATS ONLY		
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Lurling Animal Clinic	3004 Lurling Ave.	718-881-1000
<b>MANHATTAN</b>		
Ansonia Vet. Center	207 W. 75th St.	212-496-2100
City Veterinary Care	220 W. 72nd St.	212-799-7000
East Side Animal Hospital	321 E. 52nd St.	212-751-5176
Feline Health (Cats Only)	1533 First Ave.	212-879-0700
Gramercy Park Animal Hospital	37 E. 19th St.	212-477-4080
Lenox Hill Veterinarians	204 E. 76th St.	212-879-1320
Midtown Animal Hospital	256 East 33rd St.	212-683-0309
Park East Animal Hospital	52 East 64th St.	212-832-8417
Rivergate Veterinary Clinic	403 E. 37th St.	212-213-9885
St. Mark's Vet. Hospital	348 E. 9th St.	212-477-2688
Washington Hgts. Animal Hosp.	2414 Amsterdam Ave.	212-927-6070
West Chelsea Vet. Hospital	203 Tenth Ave.	212-645-2767
West Side Animal Hospital	733 9th Ave.	212-247-8600
<b>QUEENS</b>		
Animal Clinic of Woodhaven	76-23 Jamaica Ave.	718-296-0500
Animal Hosp. of Rockaways	114-10 Beach Channel Dr	718-474-0500
Flushing Vet. Med. Hospital	44-24 College Point Blvd.	718-886-4416
Howard Beach Animal Clinic	163-11 Cross Bay Blvd.	718-848-6803
Lawrence Animal Hospital	77-23 Queens Blvd.	718-458-0500
Noah's Ark Pet Clinic	85-05 37th Ave.	718-396-2111
Queens Midway Animal Hosp.	77-46 164th St.	718-591-9223
Steinway Court Veterinarian	32-41R Steinway St.	718-728-2822
<b>STATEN ISLAND</b>		
Malihan Animal Hospital	3135 Victory Blvd.	718-982-1640
Northside Animal Hospital	733 Post Ave.	718-981-4445
Richmond Valley An. Hosp.	4915 Arthur Kill Rd.	718-948-3331



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ID Badge Holder (retractable reel) Silver or Gold \$5.

**NEW**



Long Sleeve Polo. Navy Blue only. S-M-L-XL-2X \$30.

**NEW**



NYCHA Short Sleeve Polo. White/Green/Black S-M-L-XL-2X-3X \$20.

**NEW**



NYCHA Microwave Safe Ceramic Mug. White/Maroon \$10.

**NEW**






NYCHA Hats. Black/Maroon /Khaki \$7.

**NEW**



NYCHA Tees. Black/White /Gray/Light Blue/Ash \$10.

240 East 123<sup>rd</sup> Street  
New York NY 10035  
(212) 230-1100  
(877) 787-4834 Toll Free  
Ask for Alonzo De' Shazo or Edwin Espinal

### Are you over 18? Without a High School Diploma or GED? Interested in a career in the construction trades?

If you answered yes to all of the above, STRIVE can help you to obtain your GED, as well as put you on the path to a successful career in construction.

A few months of your time can put you on the path to self-sufficiency. To better assist you with your career, STRIVE will provide the following:

- Daily carfare and weekly stipend
- Opportunity to participate in a construction pre-apprenticeship program
- Preparation for GED Testing
- On Site Social Services support for referrals
- Job readiness training /Job placement assistance

**STRIVE/EAST HARLEM EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**  
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## RESIDENT EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

THINKING ABOUT YOUR FUTURE ?  
BECOME A PAINTER



### FREE TRAINING!

CLASSES STARTING IN APRIL 2006

RES is now accepting applications for a ten-day painters pre-apprenticeship training program offering: Paint Basics, Paint Application and Applicators, Paint Troubleshooting, Safety, HUD Lead-Safe Work Practice, HUD Healthy Homes, hands-on and spray application techniques

Selected Candidates will receive:

- Free meals and transportation
- Hands-on experience

**APPLY NOW!**

- ONLY 20 SLOTS AVAILABLE

**TO QUALIFY YOU MUST BE:**

- A legal NYCHA resident in good standing
- Between the ages of 18 and 25
- Have a High School Diploma or GED

CALL (718) 250-5904 TODAY TO SCHEDULE AN ORIENTATION AND INTERVIEW

## BECOME A TRADESWOMAN!



Are you looking for a career with excellent pay and benefits?

Are you in good physical shape and not afraid of hard work?

**NEW** – Nontraditional Employment for Women, a nonprofit job-training organization, provides FREE training and support services for careers in construction and skilled blue-collar trades.

To register for an information session, call 212-627-6252 or visit our website [www.new-nyc.org](http://www.new-nyc.org).

Don't miss this opportunity! Call today!

To qualify for our services you must:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Have your high school diploma or GED
- Be willing and able to do physical work
- Read and understand course materials




PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE WAS AN ERROR IN THE MARCH 2006 JOURNAL ARTICLE REGARDING PARKING FEES.

THE NEW ANNUAL FEE FOR A PARKING SPACE FOR SENIOR CITIZENS IS \$67.50.

## NEW YORK CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

TOLL-FREE TERRORISM HOTLINE REPORTS MAY BE MADE ANY TIME TO:  
**1-800-NYC-SAFE**  
**1-888-692-7233**

ALL CALLS WILL BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL.