



## NYCHA Residents Get Active to Save Public Housing

### Travel to Washington, DC; Rally at City Hall

By Eric Deutsch

**N**YCHA residents sent a very clear message to the federal government – we will not be silent and we are not going away. As Congress continues to consider a number of funding cuts to NYCHA and public housing authorities across the country, residents raised their voices louder and louder to tell Washington, DC, “Hands off our homes!”

More than 70 residents went to the nation’s capital on November 16 to meet with Congress members. The trip originally was going to focus on protesting against a House-proposed measure to eliminate funding for the 21 federalized developments. But the trip turned into a bit of a celebration, as the day before, that provision was removed from next year’s budget, thanks to the work of New York Senator Charles Schumer, Congress member Edolphus Towns and other members of New York’s delegation.

However, residents who made the journey are committed to keeping the pressure on. “NYCHA doesn’t have enough staff or supplies, and Congress keeps telling us all that we have to do more with less,” said Lilithe Lozano, the Parkside Houses (Bronx) Resident Association President. “How many times are they going to continue to tell us that? We are taxpayers. The federal subsidies are a necessity.”

Residents also gathered on November 10 to rally on the steps of City Hall.

“We have power in public housing!” exclaimed Reginald Bowman, the Chairman of the Citywide Council of Presidents, while standing in front of a banner that read ‘Vote 4 New Hope – Power in Public Housing.’ “There comes a time when you have to stand up and fight for your homes. The landlord for public housing – the federal government – has a moral obligation and a political commitment to our families.”

The Fiscal Year 2012 budget as adopted by Congress will leave NYCHA short \$200 million for operating expenses, will reduce capital subsidies from \$270 million to \$250 million and cut 25 percent of the fees used to administer the Section 8 program. These proposed federal funding cuts to NYCHA’s budget would be on top of reductions that have continued to occur over the past decade. (For more



NYCHA residents gathered in Washington, DC, on November 16, 2011, to protest federal funding cuts to NYCHA’s budget. They met with numerous elected officials, including shown in the center, from left to right, New York Congress members Yvette Clarke, Eliot Engel, Edolphus Towns and Nydia Velazquez.

details about these, please see Chairman John B. Rhea’s message on page 3.)

The City Hall rally drew support from elected officials, including Congress member Towns. “If living in public housing is not an option, the City will have to build more shelters for the tens of thou-

sands of people who would become homeless,” Congressman Towns said. “We must be for the needy and not the greedy.”

At the local level, members of the City Council’s Public Housing Committee are supporting *continued on page 2*

## Insects and Rodents and Vermin—Oh Yuck!

By Howard Silver

**R**ats, roaches and other pests lead most people to get grossed out. But for 20 ambitious NYCHA residents in the Pest Control Technician Certification program, they can lead to careers.

The new course was the latest one offered by NYCHA’s Resident Training Academy, with 11 men and nine women completing the class on December 12. They spent six weeks in the full-time, five-days-a-week program, with instruction focused on passing the state certification exam.

Baruch Houses (Manhattan) resident Dennis McLaughlin, 26, learned about the opportunity from NYCHA’s website. “This is a great learning experience that sets you up not just for a job but a career. Besides the technical aspect, you learn how to get a job and how to keep it,” said Mr. McLaughlin. “You have to understand that residents can be frustrated and when you enter their apartment, nobody wants to feel invaded.”

The technical training, by a Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) certified instructor from Brooklyn Workforce Innovations, fulfills the carefully monitored requirements of the DEC to meet certification standards. Part one of the training covered pesticide safety and application and part two prepared the trainees to apply pesticides within or around building structures.

Students also learned “soft skills,” such as customer relations and how to interact successfully with co-workers and supervisors. If graduates come work for NYCHA, their own experience as public housing residents can help them understand the needs and concerns of their customers.

Residents who completed the course and pass the certification exam can start work in NYCHA’s Pest Control Unit as Community Service Aides with an annual salary of \$24,750, leading to positions as Pesticide Technicians at a salary of \$31,972, when they receive their formal license.

“I see that [pests] are a problem for many people and I would like to help,” said 29-year old Yon Zhe Huang, a resident at Seward Park Extension in Manhattan. “It’s hard to find a job in this economy and a good city job with benefits and a pension would be nice.”

Every morning during the course, the students and instructor began with a discussion of a different quote that focused on their goals. One such quote was recalled by Christina Ramirez. “To whom much is given, much is required,” said the 26-year old Boulevard Houses (Brooklyn) resident. “What we learn in this course also teaches us about life.”

The NYCHA Resident Training Academy is run by the Office of Resident Economic Empowerment and Sustainability (REES). In 2012, the Training Academy plans to run 12 more courses for construction, janitorial and pest control training. REES anticipates enrolling up to 300 residents in the training courses and placing close to 200 residents in jobs. For more information call the REES hotline at **718-289-8100**.



Residents in the NYCHA Resident Training Academy’s first pest control course learn how to properly use a gas mask when applying pesticides.

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# NYCHA Board Meetings

Notice hereby is given that the New York City Housing Authority's Board Meetings take place every other Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. in the Board Room on the 12th floor of 250 Broadway, New York, New York (unless otherwise noted). The remaining meeting for Calendar Year 2011, and the meetings for Calendar Year 2012, are as follows:

December 21	March 28	July 5	October 10
January 4	April 11	July 18	October 24
January 18	April 25	August 1	November 7
February 1	May 9	August 15	November 21
February 15	May 23	August 29	December 5
February 29	June 6	September 12	December 19
March 14	June 20	September 27	

Any changes to the schedule above will be posted here and on NYCHA's website at [nyc.gov/nycha](http://nyc.gov/nycha) to the extent practicable at a reasonable time before the meeting.

These meetings are open to the public. Pre-registration at least 45 minutes before the scheduled Board Meeting is required by all speakers. Comments are limited to the items on the Calendar. Speaking time will be limited to three minutes. The public comment period will conclude upon all speakers being heard or at the expiration of 30 minutes allotted by law for public comment, whichever occurs first.

Copies of the Calendar are available on NYCHA's website or can be picked up at the Office of the Secretary at 250 Broadway, 12<sup>th</sup> floor, New York, New York, no earlier than 3:00 p.m. on the Friday before the upcoming Wednesday Board Meeting. Copies of the Disposition are available on NYCHA's website or can be picked up at the Office of the Secretary no earlier than 3:00 p.m. on the Thursday after the Board Meeting.

Any person requiring a reasonable accommodation in order to participate in the Board Meeting should contact the Office of the Secretary at (212) 306-6088 no later than five business days before the Board Meeting. For additional information, please visit NYCHA's website or call (212) 306-6088.

## Check out NYCHA's Facebook page!

Got a web-enabled smartphone? Now you can access NYCHA's Facebook page and bonus content in this issue by scanning or taking a snapshot of the QR codes. The QR code for NYCHA's Facebook page is on the right.

**Step 1:** Download a QR code scanner application from your phone's marketplace (many of these "apps" are free to download). **Step 2:** Point your phone's camera at the QR image.



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## Resident's Voices



**November 14, 2011**

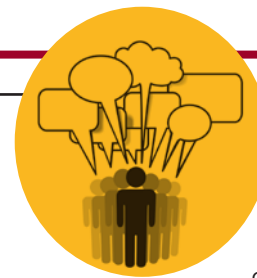
(sent via mail)

Photograph taken by Christina Hogan, Queensbridge North

**November 8, 2011**

(sent via mail)

Sometimes during our busy lives, we forget to thank those that help to make our lives a lot easier. I would like to thank our previous superintendent, Mr. Pedroso, who whenever I called with a problem at the building, he was there. Mr. Diaz, who is the manager and Mrs. Hanley, his assistant, always listen to our concerns, even though they manage four other sites. Our maintenance man Mr. McClam- keeps our building clean at all times, at times going beyond the call of duty. We have a new super, Mr. Hoffman, and a new



deputy director, Mr. Nieves. Both came on board answering our concerns. All of this has given us a sense of security. Thank

you all for doing a great job.

**Lovelle Watts, Robbins Plaza Resident Association President**

**October 15, 2011**

(sent via e-mail)

Just like to give a comment on Linda Thomas, a caretaker at the Langston Hughes/Woodson Housing Development in Brooklyn. Linda is a very responsible worker. She takes very good care of the section she is designated at. She is a very pleasant and caring person. We appreciate her!

**Deloris Harrell, Hughes Apartments**

**September 29, 2011**

(sent via Twitter)

I come home to found Law & Order: SVU filming around the corner from my development. How cool :)

**Tia C. Rucker, Drew-Hamilton Houses**

**November 18, 2011**

(sent via Twitter)

NYCHA Housing has the best heat in any apartment building when it's working.

**Kelvin Martin, Hope Gardens**

## Tell us what is on your mind!

*Residents' Voices* accepts letters, photographs, poems, drawings – anything that allows you to express yourself!

Please include your full name, development name, address and phone number. We will print only your name and development on our pages; we need your address and phone number for verification purposes only.

Please limit written submissions to 250 words.

The *Journal* reserves the right to edit all content for length, clarity, good taste, accuracy, etc. Because of space limitations, we must limit all contributors to one letter per person per issue.

There are many ways to share your thoughts with us at the *Journal*:

Send an e-mail to [Journal@nycha.nyc.gov](mailto:Journal@nycha.nyc.gov)

Send a snail mail to:  
**NYCHA Journal Letters to the Editor**  
250 Broadway, 12th floor  
New York, NY 10007

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If you have any questions, please send them to [Journal@nycha.nyc.gov](mailto:Journal@nycha.nyc.gov).

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## NYCHA Residents Get Active to Save Public Housing

the residents' efforts. "It is so important that we send a strong voice to the federal government that this is a national resource and a national treasure that we have to preserve," Council Member Margaret Chin told the crowd.

Because of the ongoing fight to save funding for public housing, resident leaders stress how important it is for all residents to get involved. "We have to keep going out on a citywide level to let residents know that if they're ready, willing and

able, they can join us and we will help them," said Ms. Lozano, who has experience working as a housing specialist for elected officials. "We are under attack and everyone needs to understand that."

"It is essential for every development to have its funding," said Laurine Berry, the Resident Association President at Monroe Houses in the Bronx. "I've been in public housing for more than 50 years and I'm fighting not just for my development, but for every development, for our children."



Reginald Bowman, the Chairman of the Citywide Council of Presidents, speaks at a rally at City Hall on November 10, 2011. Residents gathered to protest federal funding cuts to NYCHA's budget, and were joined by elected officials, including Congress member Edolphus Towns (near right).



## Message from the Chairman

The holiday season is a time for us all to enjoy the company of our family and friends. I hope everyone is warm and safe during these festive and valued moments – NYCHA strives to provide warmth to your homes and make them safer throughout the year. We recently received an early holiday present that allows NYCHA to do so. Thanks to the efforts of Senator Charles Schumer, Congress Member Edolphus Towns and the Obama Administration, a measure that would have eliminated funding for the 21 federalized developments was removed from next year's budget. The annual federalization money – up to \$70 million – will continue to come to NYCHA.

However, our efforts to maintain a high level of service continue to be challenged by recent legislative actions in Washington, D.C. I wrote last month about how residents and NYCHA must join together to save public housing, and you can read about some of these efforts on page 1 of this issue. The reversal on federalization funding does not end the need for our partnership. There is no question we continue to face serious and significant setbacks.

NYCHA relies on federal subsidies for 80 percent of the funding needed to complete its repairs and renovations. Almost three-quarters of NYCHA's buildings are more than 40 years old. Older buildings require capital improvements to fix roofs, elevators and brickwork; major upgrades on a regular basis are necessary to ensure that heating, cooling, plumbing and other systems continue to function properly and that residents' apartments are well-maintained. But this funding source has been reduced steadily for decades. As buildings age and repair needs

multiply, Washington's solution has been to cut funding in half.

Congress has approved the Fiscal Year 2012 Appropriations act and it has been signed into law. NYCHA will have nearly \$200 million less in funds available to meet operating expenses. Capital funding in New York City and nationwide will be at its lowest level in history, and NYCHA's share of this funding will drop from a high of \$410 million received in 2001 to \$250 million in 2012 to meet our capital needs. This level of funding can have consequences in terms of jobs, apartment repairs and other major capital investments.

In addition to public housing, NYCHA administers nearly 96,000 Section 8 vouchers. There also are more than 140,000 applicants on the Section 8 waiting list whose needs we cannot attend to. In the Appropriation act, Congress has provided sufficient money to ensure that all families currently under lease will continue to receive assistance. However, Congress has cut deeply the fees public housing authorities receive to administer their Section 8 programs, adding to our challenges for running Section 8 effectively.

We understand that everyone has to take on their share of budget reductions in the current economic climate. But I want to be very clear – funding for public housing has been under assault for more than 10 years, since long before the current federal budget problems began. We must continue to work together until the federal government stops balancing the budget on the back of public housing and low-income Americans.

It was this spirit of residents and NYCHA joining together that ultimately led to the federalization funds being preserved. This is your victory, and I thank you for giving a holiday present to the more than 600,000 New Yorkers who call public housing and Section 8 housing home.

*John B. Rhea*  
John B. Rhea

## Clean Energy Corps Graduates Plan to Lead Environmentally Responsible Lives

By Zodet Negrón

For the 23 members of this year's Green City Force – all NYCHA residents – the Clean Energy Corps Graduation Ceremony held on November 10 did not just represent the culmination of their green-collar job training program. It also marked the start of a new lifestyle: a newfound commitment to build a better future.

"A few years from now, I will be having a discussion with friends about moments in life that changed me. Green City Force will be one of the moments I speak about," said Justin Alston, age 23, from Wyckoff Houses. "This program has inspired me to live better, do better and be a better person. This isn't just a

program; it's also a lifestyle."

As part of NYCHA's Green Agenda, the Authority has been working with the non-profit Green City Force (GCF) for the past two years to connect residents between the ages of 18-24 with green training and job opportunities in the emerging green economy. Through GCF's Clean Energy Corps program, the young corps members learn about the field of weatherization and energy efficiency up close, through a variety of activities and community services. Graduates receive a fellowship to go to college and/or are placed in green jobs.

During the six-month program, the Clean Energy Corps members participated in the NYC Cool Roofs campaign and built an urban green space at Lillian

Wald Houses in partnership with Planters and The Corps Network, among other community activities. Corps members were trained in job readiness, eco-literacy, outreach and energy efficiency auditing for homes and small businesses. They received a monthly living allowance, MetroCard and AmeriCorps educational award that can be used for college.

For Maurice Davis, age 21 from Rutgers Houses, Green City Force has afforded him many life lessons. "The information about the environment, working alongside Corps members and staff with different personalities, and my improved work ethic make me well equipped for life beyond," he said. "I have a vision now, something that I lacked prior to Green City Force."

## Bronx River Houses Green Infrastructure Project Completed

City Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Carter Strickland and NYCHA Board Member Margarita López announced the completion of the \$1 million green infrastructure pilot project at the Bronx River Houses on November 16. The date proved to be fitting, as it rained all day. The joint project between NYCHA and DEP, which beautifies the buildings while reducing pollution, includes a blue roof, rain gardens, storm water chambers and a perforated pipe system to slow and capture storm water runoff to avoid combined sewer overflows into the Bronx River. The project will capture more than 32,000 gallons of storm water during a single rain event.

"This is the first time I see something [a green project] like



NYC Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Carter Strickland shows NYCHA Board Member Margarita López and Bronx River Houses resident Cecilia Rivera how the rain gardens constructed as part of the joint green infrastructure project between DEP and NYCHA capture storm water runoff to avoid sewer overflows into the Bronx River.

this at NYCHA," said resident Cecilia Rivera, who praised NYCHA and DEP for engaging residents throughout the entire process. "I hope we can have more projects like these."



Clean Energy Corps members celebrate their graduation from the program on November 10, 2011.

## Join Green City Force!

Green City Force is recruiting now for the next GCF Clean Energy Corps! The Clean Energy Corps provides young City residents with training and leadership opportunities related to greening the economy. NYCHA residents between the ages of 18-24, who have a high school diploma or GED and are interested in joining the GCF Clean Energy Corps can visit [www.greencityforce.org](http://www.greencityforce.org) and complete the interest form, or call (718) 923-1400 x.279

## THE NYCHA NOT WANTED LIST

Below is a partial list of names of individuals who have been excluded permanently from NYCHA's public housing developments. This list keeps residents informed of the Authority's ongoing efforts to improve the quality of life for New Yorkers in public housing and to allow for the peaceful and safe use of its facilities. The following are the people, with their former addresses, excluded as of November 3, 10, 17 and 24, 2010.

### Prohibited as of November 3, 2010

**Nadia Alvarez** Jacob Riis Houses, 1141 F.D.R. Drive, Apt. #5C, Manhattan  
**Verice Kelly** Stapleton Houses, 29 Warren St., Apt. #2N, Staten Island  
**Jaquan Morton** Stapleton Houses, 29 Warren St., Apt. #2N, Staten Island  
**Mariano Rivera** Cary Garden Houses, 2007 Surf Avenue, Apt. #10L, Brooklyn  
**Larome Robinson** Pomonok Houses, 155-24 Jewel Avenue, Apt. #3D, Queens  
**Juan Santos** Mott Haven Houses, 380 East 143rd St., Apt. #18A, Bronx  
**Ronald Thomas** Stapleton Houses, 29 Warren St., Apt. #2N, Staten Island

### Prohibited as of November 10, 2010

**Anthony Edmonds** Smith Houses, 40 Madison St., Apt. #4G, Manhattan  
**Edison Guerrier** Taft Houses, 1694 Madison Ave., Apt. #16A, Manhattan  
**Rocky Haris** Red Hook West Houses, 100 Dwight St., Apt. #2B, Brooklyn  
**James Malloy** Eastchester Garden Houses, 3010 Yates Ave., Apt. #4G, Bronx  
**Matthew Melendez** Morrisania Air Rights Houses, 3204 Park Ave., Apt. #2G, Bronx  
**Shawn Rambert** Lincoln Houses, 2130 Madison Ave., Apt. #2J, Manhattan  
**Heriberto Rivera** Jefferson Houses, 2225 First Ave., Apt. #1D, Manhattan  
**Sal Sanchez** Mariner's Harbor Houses, 177 Continental Place, Apt. #2A, Staten Island  
**Everton Sterling** Edenwald Houses, 1141 East 229th St., Apt. #6B, Bronx  
**Ernest Tucker** Farragut Houses, 202 York St., Apt. #10C, Brooklyn  
**Guy Williams** Stapleton Houses, 51 Hill St., Apt. #3L, Staten Island  
**Michael Williamson** Ocean Hill/Saratoga Houses, 55 Saratoga Ave., Apt. #3H, Brooklyn  
**Melvin Willis** Van Dyke I Houses, 372 Blake Ave., Apt. #9A, Brooklyn

### Prohibited as of November 17, 2010

**Kareem Blackledge** Soundview Houses, 1676 Seward Ave., Apt. #6A, Bronx  
**Raheem Clarke** Red Hook East Houses, 16 Mill St., Apt. #4E, Brooklyn  
**Wesley Dixon** Mariner's Harbor Houses, 150 Brabant St., Apt. #1A, Staten Island  
**Samuel Edmunds** Webster Houses, 421 East 168th St., Apt. #8B, Bronx  
**Shawn Moore** Linden Houses, 245 Cozine Ave., Apt. #8C, Brooklyn  
**Pedro Pagan** Straus Houses, 344 East 28th St., Apt. #21D, Manhattan  
**Fred Shepard** Queensbridge South Houses, 41-07 10th St., Apt. #1D, Queens  
**Tavon Sinceno** and Sally White Millbrook Houses, 530 East 137th St., Apt. #7A, Bronx  
**Marvin Villegas** a/k/a Marlon Villegas a/k/a Marvin Quinones Pelham Parkway Houses, 2225 Bronxwood Ave., Apt. #2B, Bronx  
**Sally White** Millbrook Houses, 530 East 137th St., Apt. #7A, Bronx

### Prohibited as of November 24, 2010

**Carlos Almonte** Grant Houses, 55 LaSalle St., Apt. #41, Manhattan  
**Raul Baez** Marlboro Houses, 2220 West 11th St., Apt. #5A, Brooklyn  
**Amos Boone** Mariner's Harbor Houses, 331 Grandview Ave., Apt. #1A, Staten Island  
**James Boone** Mariner's Harbor Houses, 331 Grandview Ave., Apt. #1A, Staten Island  
**Devin Campbell** Grant Houses, 430 West 125th St., Apt. #2E, Manhattan  
**Eric Casseus** Pink Houses, 2628 Linden Blvd., Apt. #5D, Brooklyn  
**Samuel Coard** Bushwick Houses, 390 Bushwick Ave., Apt. #13G, Brooklyn  
**Kevin Collado** Laguardia/Two Bridges Houses, 286 South St., Apt. #22E, Manhattan  
**Tony George** Unity Plaza Houses, 391 Georgia Ave., Apt. #1B, Brooklyn  
**Jesse Harrell** Ocean Bay Houses, 54-74 Alameda Ave., Apt. #7C, Queens  
**Leroy Hart** Pink Houses, 1305 Loring Ave., Apt. #31, Brooklyn  
**Lavar Hilson** Justice Sonia Sotomayor Houses, 1810 Watson Ave., Apt. #2G, Bronx  
**Ricky Hollins** Kingsborough Houses, 241 Kingborough 2nd Walk, Apt. #4A, Brooklyn  
**Bianca Roberson** Adams Houses, 721 Tinton Ave., Apt. #10G, Bronx  
**Naiomy Rodriguez** Bronx River Houses, 1575 East 174th St., Apt. #1G, Bronx  
**James Rogers** Tilden Houses, 330 Dumont Ave., Apt. #13C, Brooklyn

## A Message from the NYPD

### NYPD Housing Bureau Cadet Corps – Get your career started with an exciting Police Internship



The NYPD Housing Bureau Cadet Corps provides qualified college men and women with a chance to experience the challenges and personal rewards of a career in the NYPD. The Police Cadet Program is a **paid** internship which offers benefits, varied work assignments and unlimited opportunities. Working full-time in the summer and a flexible part-time schedule during the school year, you will be assigned to a Police Precinct, Housing Police Service Area or Transit District. You will be working with some of the best personnel in the Department, helping to resolve real life problems. Upon graduation from the Police Cadet Corps, you will have the opportunity to be promoted to a NYC Police Officer.

### With the NYPD Cadet program you can qualify for up to \$20,000 in Tuition assistance.

Once you reach 45 credits, you are eligible for up to a \$5,000 tuition assistance loan per semester, for up to \$20,000 that will be considered "paid-in-full" after two years of service as a Police Officer. In addition, cadets who participate in the Police Cadet Program can earn a substantial amount in total compensation through full-time summer and part-time school year employment.

**For the Housing Cadet Program, candidates preferably should be NYCHA residents with 15 credits, carrying a minimum 2.0 GPA and taking 12 credits per semester.**

To qualify for the NYPD Housing Bureau Cadet Corps you must be:

- ◆ A resident of New York City at the time of appointment
- ◆ 18-33 years old at time of appointment
- ◆ A U.S. Citizen or a permanent resident who will become a citizen within two years after being appointed
- ◆ Enrolled in an accredited college within New York City or Nassau or Westchester Counties
- ◆ For the Police Cadet Program, you must be a full time, matriculated student. To qualify for tuition assistance, you must have between 15 and 95 credits.

**COME JOIN US!** For more information, call 212-NY CADET or go to [www.nypdcadets.com](http://www.nypdcadets.com).

## Eye on Housing Fraud

Through the quarterly feature "Eye on Housing Fraud," the New York City Department of Investigation (DOI) provides names of residents, as listed below, who have been convicted and sentenced for defrauding NYCHA. In these cases, restitution is collected through a payment schedule until fully paid, including wage and asset garnishments, if necessary. Anyone with information regarding fraud or wrongdoing should call DOI's NYCHA Inspector General Hotline at **(212) 306-3356**.

**Yolanda Cuadrado** – sentenced to five years supervised release and ordered to pay \$90,942 in restitution for failing to report her husband's employment with the City Department of Transportation and his presence in her Section 8 apartment.



Department of Investigation Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn

**Janice McMillan** – sentenced to 60 days home confinement, five years supervised release and ordered to pay \$59,004 in restitution for residing as an unauthorized tenant in her friend's Louis H. Pink Houses apartment in Brooklyn.

**Julienne Sialeu** – sentenced to six months home confinement, three years supervised release and ordered to pay \$36,250 in restitution for failing to report her property ownership and income, and her son's presence and NYPD income, in association with her Coney Island Houses apartment in Brooklyn.

**Omo Soulemane** – sentenced to a conditional discharge, five hours of community service, and ordered to pay \$15,261 in restitution for failing to report her employment with and income from the City Health and Hospitals Corporation in association with her St. Mary's Park Houses apartment in the Bronx.

**Ana Torres** – sentenced to three years supervised release, and ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$11,724 for double-dipping by illegally obtaining a NYCHA apartment and a Section 8 apartment simultaneously.

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A Coordinated Care plan with a Medicare Advantage contract and a contract with the New York Medicaid Program. The service area includes the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, Staten Island, Nassau and Westchester counties. Plans may vary by county.

## Johnson Houses Community Center: The Wait is Over

By Heidi Morales

"It was a long time coming!" That was the general sentiment at the ribbon cutting ceremony of the James Weldon Johnson Community and Children's Center in Manhattan on December 2. The ceremony, held inside the shiny regulation-size gymnasium, was attended by Johnson Houses residents, neighborhood youth and community leaders, NYCHA officials and staff and elected officials – all who have been committed for years to making the community center a reality.

"It's an exciting moment. The fight for this center was a long struggle, but now it's here," said Ethel Velez, the Johnson Houses Resident Association President and Manhattan North Chair of the Citywide Council of Presidents, who was at the forefront of the efforts to open the center. "We wanted to have an impact on our community and now I'm so happy this center is finally opening."

The facility combines a children's center with a larger community center, including a gymnasium with locker rooms; performance stage with a movie screen and outdoor amphitheater; exercise room; computer laboratory; game room; and commercial kitchen.

NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea welcomed the crowd, thanking them for their persistence and patience, and assured the residents and community members that "Good things come to those who wait. It is our hope that the Johnson Houses Community Center will be a safe haven and an anchor for children, parents, grandparents and families of all backgrounds and walks of life."

Joining Chairman Rhea and Ms. Velez in de-



On hand to cut the ribbon at the opening of the James Weldon Johnson Community and Children's Center on December 2, 2011, were, from left to right, CCOP Chairman Reginald Bowman, NYCHA Board Member Victor A. Gonzalez, City Council Member Melissa Mark Viverito, CCOP Member Ethel Velez, NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea, DYCD Commissioner Jeanne B. Mullgrav, Supportive Children's Advocacy Network Executive Director Lew Zuchman, State Assemblyman Robert Rodriguez and State Senator Bill Perkins.

living remarks were Department of Youth and Community Development Commissioner Jeanne B. Mullgrav; State Senator Bill Perkins; State Assemblyman Robert Rodriguez; City Council Member Melissa Mark Viverito; Supportive Children's Advocacy Network Executive Director Lew Zuchman; Children's Museum of Manhattan Executive Director Andy Ackerman; and Time Warner Vice President Bobby Amirshahi.

Mary DuBose, a Resident Watch Captain and resident of Johnson Houses for 50 years, plans to take full advantage of all the programming for seniors. "It's beautiful. After waiting this long, it would be very hard not to participate in the programs," she said.

Part of the day care center will house exhibits by the Children's Museum of Manhattan, which will offer hands-on educational programs and workshops for families and professional development programs for parents, caregivers and public housing educators.

Georgina Garcia plans to bring her five and four-year-old children to the center. "I'm so excited about the museum coming here. I'm loving it!" she said.

## Jobs-Plus Program Plans to Expand



Van Dyke Houses Resident Association President Lisa Kenner speaks during the Jobs-Plus presentation on November 17, 2011.

### Up to Eight New Sites to be Added

By Eric Deutsch

NYCHA's Jobs-Plus program, which provides job training and work experience for public housing residents, is planning to expand into more developments. Jobs-Plus participants are eligible for employment placement, retention and advancement services, training and education, including pre-GED, GED and ESL classes and financial counseling, among other services.

Jobs-Plus currently is in three locations in the Bronx, Manhattan and Queens. REES will be seeking proposals from contractors to operate Jobs-Plus sites in as many as eight new locations to be determined across the city. Any new location will have to be located either within a NYCHA development or within a quarter of a mile of a development.

Two community forums were held on November 14 and 17 to gather residents' feedback on the proposed expansion. Mickey Reid, the Red Hook Houses Association Vice President, attended one of the forums. "This definitely would be accepted at Red Hook," said Mr. Reid. "I had hurt my back but I want to get back to work and am really looking forward to this program expanding."

The program is run by NYCHA's Office of Resident Economic Empowerment and Sustainability (REES), and in partnership with the Center for Economic Opportunity, CUNY, and the Human Resources Administration (HRA), provides comprehensive services to support job training and placement, as well as community support to ensure that families have opportunities to increase financial stability and economic growth. A national study about Jobs-Plus found that participants increased their earnings by 16 percent. The program expansion comes on the heels of Mayor Bloomberg's recently announced Young Men's Initiative.

## Work Order Task Force Concludes Work at South Jamaica Houses

Nearly 3,000 work orders completed

By Howard Silver

NYCHA's Work Order Task Force continues to complete needed repairs at a rapid rate. At South Jamaica Houses, the Task Force completed almost 3,000 work orders in 737 apartments, making the Queens development the first one where the entire backlog in maintenance and repairs has been completed. The South Jamaica Houses Resident Association joined NYCHA executive staff and elected officials at a celebratory breakfast on November 18 to salute the Task Force.

"We have a lot to be thankful for," said Resident Association President Marlene Reed. "Some



South Jamaica Houses residents, including Resident Association President Marlene J. Reed (rear, far left) joined NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea (center), Deputy General Manager for Operations Carlos Laboy (rear, right of center) and Acting General Manager Atefeh Riazzi (rear, near right) in commemorating the completion of all work orders at the development on November 18, 2011.

The federalized developments spread out across the city also have been the focus of targeted maintenance and repairs. Since January 2011, NYCHA has completed more than 189,000 work orders at the 21 developments.

residents were waiting for repairs scheduled for 2013, but when the task force arrived, they

got all the jobs done and were polite and courteous."

The specially-assembled task

force of maintenance workers, plumbers, carpenters, electricians, plasterers and painters was deployed at South Jamaica Houses in June as part of a pilot program designed to reduce the maintenance and repair backlog at developments with the highest number of work orders per apartment. To date, five task force teams that continue to work citywide have completed more than 23,300 work orders in 6,488 apartments.

"In spite of our budgetary constraints, we have a responsibility to work smarter and better with what resources we do have," said NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea. "The Work Order Task Force working throughout the city is our commitment to our residents to continue seeking solutions to enhance their quality of life."

Task Force teams work sequentially to complete all apartment repairs without the need for follow-up appointments. In addition to expediting long-awaited repairs, this comprehensive approach minimizes disruption to residents. The innovative program began with five developments and has since expanded to eleven more developments in Manhattan, the Bronx, Brooklyn and Queens.

Resident Leander Walker noted that her grown children's apartment "needed lots of work, like painting, plastering, removal of mildew, and repair of the stove. They waited five years but once [the task force] came, they had all that done in one week," she said. "The staff were helpful, respectful, and pleasant to have around."

# Community Service Requirement: What it Means

**N**YCHA is engaging with residents to assist them to perform the community service required to live in public housing. Community service can be performed at NYCHA or non-NYCHA facilities. It includes participating in any Resident Association activity, working with a Resident Green Committee or Resident Watch, or volunteering at any community program, whether it is NYCHA-based, school-based or faith-based.



One way residents can fulfill the community service requirement is to participate in their development's Resident Green Committee.

Almost anything that helps the community can count, as long as there is a group to verify that the service has been done.

Residents also can fulfill their obligation by taking part in programs that help their family become economically self-sufficient. This includes NYCHA's Resident Employment Services (RES) or Resident Economic Empowerment & Sustainability (REES) programs, going to school, taking a GED or ESL program or participating in financial management counseling.

There are several ways residents can find community service activities that are right for them:

- Check the NYCHA website at [www.nyc.gov/nycha](http://www.nyc.gov/nycha)

- Check the NYC Service website at [www.nycservice.org](http://www.nycservice.org) or call **311**

- Check the New York Cares website at [www.NYcares.org](http://www.NYcares.org) or call them at **212-402-1101**

Federal law requires all public housing residents who are not exempt to perform community service or economic self-sufficiency activities for eight hours every month. Starting after January 2012, residents' compliance with the community service requirement will be part of the Annual Review. Currently, approximately 90% of residents are exempt or perform community service. This means approximately 40,000 residents do not comply – this will result in their tenancies being terminated.

There are many exemptions that allow residents not to perform community service. An exemption excuses residents for the length of their current one-year lease term, unless the exemption is permanent. The most common exemptions include being younger than 18 or older than 60, having a job and making a minimum salary, being disabled or caring for someone who lives in public housing and is disabled. Some of these exemptions are based on the information provided during the Annual Review; for other exemptions residents must provide the information and/or submit a properly filled out form.

For more information about the requirement, the forms for

exemptions and to verify service, residents can go to the NYCHA website at [on.nyc.gov/CSrequ](http://on.nyc.gov/CSrequ).

Residents can use computers in all NYCHA Community Centers on regular business days, Monday-Friday, from 6:00-9:00 PM to find opportunities to volunteer and other community service information.

Residents with questions can visit their Property Management

Office or call their Borough Social Services Office at one of the numbers below.

- Bronx– **718-409-8699**
- Brooklyn– **718-498-3243**
- Manhattan– **212-334-2506**
- Queens– **718-206-3286**
- Staten Island– **718-816-1521**

There also will be meetings scheduled in many developments for residents to have their questions answered.

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<p><b>Bronx</b> Parkside Senior Center 644 Adeo Avenue Nov. 18 at 10 am</p>	<p><b>Brooklyn</b> Park Plaza Restaurant 220 Cadman Plaza West Nov. 22 at 3 pm</p>	<p><b>New York</b> Carver Senior Center 55 East 102nd Street Nov. 10 at 10:30 am</p>	<p><b>Brooklyn</b> 5th Ave Diner 432 5th Ave Nov. 16 at 10 am</p>	<p><b>Queens Village</b> SNAP Senior Center 80-45 Winchester Blvd. Nov. 18 at 10 am</p>
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Dates	Days	Times
October 15, 2011 to February 14, 2012	7 days a week	8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
February 15, 2012 to October 14, 2012	Monday through Friday	8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
October 15, 2012 to December 31, 2012	7 days a week	8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

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### CCOP Chair Wins National Award

On November 29, 2011, Reginald H. Bowman, Chairman of the Citywide Council of Presidents, received the National Organization of African-Americans in Housing's (NOAAH) highest award, "The Terry Duvernay Leadership Award," at the Annual NOAAH conference. The award is given annually to the individual who most exemplifies the leadership qualities of Terry Duvernay, a national leader of housing and community development. Mr. Bowman (left) is shown here with the conference's Keynote Speaker, Congressman Emanuel Cleaver, II.

### NYCHA and Laborers' Local 79, MTDC Celebrate Addition of 200+ Residents to Union

NYCHA recently joined with Laborers' Local 79 of the Mason Tenders District Council (MTDC) of Greater New York to celebrate the addition of more than 200 NYCHA residents into the union. A luncheon was held on November 15 at Johnson Houses in Manhattan, where 35 NYCHA laborers, members of MTDC's Laborers' Local 79, currently work. Eleven of the laborers got their jobs through NYCHA's Section 3 program, which requires recipients of certain HUD funding to provide job training, employment and contract opportunities for low-

or very-low income residents in connection with projects and activities in their neighborhoods.

"One of NYCHA's assets is the creation of and access to jobs either directly or through the agency's contractors and

vendors. We appreciate our collaboration with Local 79 and our contracting partners as we continue to help our residents achieve their financial goals," said NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea.



### New Yorkers for Better Neighborhoods Grants Available

Resident Green Committees (RGCs) are encouraged to apply for New Yorkers for Better Neighborhoods Award grants, which are administered by the Citizens Committee for New York City. Grants of \$500 to \$3,000 are available for volunteer-led groups that work on projects that bring neighbors together and have a positive impact on their community. Many RGCs have received New Yorkers for Better Neighborhoods Awards in the past.

The application deadline is January 31, 2012.

For a grant application, go to [www.citizensnyc.org/grants/NYBN.html](http://www.citizensnyc.org/grants/NYBN.html). For more information, contact Emi Wang at 212-822-9563 or [ewang@citizensnyc.org](mailto:ewang@citizensnyc.org). If an RGC contacts the Citizens Committee to request an extension at least one week before the deadline, it will be granted.

RGCs can request a workshop led by the Citizens Committee on how to properly fill out the application. To set up a workshop, contact Wilfredo Florentino at 212-822-9568 or [wflorentino@citizensnyc.org](mailto:wflorentino@citizensnyc.org).

### Safe Horizon Provides Assistance to Domestic Violence Victims

Safe Horizon provides legal services citywide through its Domestic Violence Law Project (DVLP) and the Immigration Law Project (ILP). DVLP provides advocacy and representation to low-income and indigent victims of domestic violence in orders of protection, custody, support and divorce proceedings. DVLP also advocates for clients within the criminal justice system, in public benefits and housing related matters. DVLP operates a legal helpline that provides information, referrals, and assistance to victims of domestic violence. The phone number is 718-834-7430, ext. 10. This helpline is available in English and Spanish.

ILP provides free and low-cost services to victims of domestic violence, crime and torture in immigration proceedings. ILP has represented clients in Violence Against Women Act self-petitions, adjustment proceedings, U visa applications, family petitions, applications for permanent residency and asylum claims. For the ILP intake line, the phone number is 718-943-8632.

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Michael R. Bloomberg  
Mayor  
Thomas Farley, M.D., M.P.H.  
Commissioner



# Homeless Veterans Call NYCHA Home

By Zodet Negrón and Howard Silver

**M**ore than 1,400 homeless veterans have found permanent housing in New York City thanks to a federal program that provides rental housing and support services to needy veterans. NYCHA, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) help homeless veterans secure a home through HUD's Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Program (HUD-VASH).

Alvaro González, a 47-year old retired Army sergeant who was honorably discharged, said he is extremely grateful to NYCHA, the VA and the HUD-VASH program for helping him find not only a home but the tools to succeed. "This has been a great opportunity because I went from being homeless to having my own home and a job," said Mr. González, who found out about VASH at a local VA hospital. "Programs like these help underprivileged veterans get back on their feet."

Mr. González was able to obtain a housing voucher, a decent affordable apartment at St. Mary's Park in the Bronx and employment assistance. When he told his case manager he was interested in working at NYCHA, he received



Austin Pinckney, a former Marine and NYCHA employee, received assistance with his HUD-VASH voucher from NYCHA Community Coordinator Johnnymae Robinson.

assistance to secure a position as a caretaker at Adams Houses.

HUD-VASH connects homeless veterans from local Veterans Affairs Medical Centers with HUD rental assistance vouchers provided by local public housing agencies like NYCHA. VA Medical Centers identify eligible candidates for public housing authorities, which administer the vouchers.

"NYCHA is honored to be able to serve the men and women who proudly served our country," said NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea. "Through the HUD-VASH program and our collaboration with the Department of Veterans Affairs, we have managed to secure housing for

1,424 homeless veterans, who have found a home throughout our developments and citywide."

For homeless veteran Austin Pinckney, a 50-year-old former Marine, a HUD-VASH voucher helped him move from a homeless shelter into his own home in Staten Island's Stapleton Houses. Mr. Pinckney, who unexpectedly lost his job during the application process, also was able to obtain employment at NYCHA and now has a caretaker position at Richmond Terrace. "People need to know there are such wonderful things going on here at NYCHA," said Mr. Pinckney. "I came here for an apartment, almost lost it, then the next thing I know I was filling out a job application."

## Senior News

### Social Security Benefit Increases

Beginning in January, your Social Security benefit will increase by 3.6% due to a cost-of-living adjustment. This increase will be automatic. For answers to questions and more information about Social Security, call **800-772-1213** or go to [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov).

### New Medicare Disenrollment Period

If you currently are enrolled in a Medicare Advantage Plan (Medicare HMO) you may disenroll and switch to Original Medicare during the new disenrollment period which runs from January 1-February 14. You must contact your plan to make a direct request to be disenrolled. You may also join a Medicare Part D (Prescription Drug Plan) during this same period. Your new coverage will begin the first day of the month after your request has been received. Call **800-633-4227** to get more information about your Medicare options. This service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. To speak to a live person, say "Agent."

## Scholarships for College-Bound High School Seniors

**T**hrough NYCHA, the Public Housing Authorities Directors Association (PHADA) and the New York State Public Housing Authorities Directors Association (NYSPHADA), NYCHA residents may be eligible to apply for college scholarships ranging from \$1,000 up to \$7,000.

Residents must:

- ◆ Live in a NYCHA development or receive Section 8 housing assistance from NYCHA
- ◆ Be a college-bound high school senior (12th grader)
- ◆ Have a minimum B average

To get an application, residents can go to NYCHA's website at [on.nyc.gov/nychascholarships](http://on.nyc.gov/nychascholarships) or their Management Office or Community Center. Essays, recommendations and other requirements also must be submitted along with the application. The deadline to apply is **January 14, 2012**.

## DEVELOPMENTS COMMEMORATE MILESTONE ANNIVERSARIES



### First Houses Turns 75



First Houses in Manhattan, the first public housing development ever built in the United States, turned 75 years old on May 31, 2011. Celebrants of the landmark date included NYCHA Board Member Margarita López, Resident Association President Maria Nazario, and Resident Association Vice-President Brendaliz Santiago.



### Rangel House Turns 60



Rangel Houses in Manhattan reached its 60th anniversary on October 8, 2011. Among the residents and staff on hand to commemorate the occasion were Sara Nanton, Manhattan Community Operations Borough Administrator; Tanisha Borden, Supervisor of Caretakers; Pedro Carrion, Property Maintenance Supervisor; Bernadette McNear, Resident Association President (holding plaque); Debra Barnes-Hinnant, Assistant Property Manager; Leroy Williams, Manhattan Community Operations Deputy Director; and Reginald Davis, Assistant Property Maintenance Supervisor.



### Kingsborough Houses Turns 70



Kingsborough Houses in Brooklyn became 70 years old on October 31, 2011. At the celebration were, from left to right, Marguerite Mann, Brooklyn Borough Director; Donald Robinson, Jr., Assistant Property Maintenance Supervisor; Harel Brown, Property Maintenance Supervisor; Victor A. Gonzalez, NYCHA Board Member; Michael Gaines, Resident Association President; William Green, Brooklyn Borough Deputy Director; Colleen Williams, Property Manager; and Jose Vazquez, Supervisor of Caretakers.

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