



NYCHA Makes Progress on Streamlining Costs, Strengthening Workforce, Improving Financial Outlook

Plan NYCHA Brings Positive Results

Plan NYCHA, the Authority's five-year strategic roadmap to preserve public housing, has led to positive

results. Developed in the face of severe funding cuts, Plan NYCHA focuses on finding new ways to improve the Authority's financial outlook. So far in 2012, NYCHA has identified more than \$30 million in administrative personnel

savings through attrition and strategic redeployment which are reflected in its current Operating budget.

"NYCHA is undertaking a major transformation needed to preserve the precious public housing asset in New York City," said NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea. "Our 11,000-plus employees work creatively and tirelessly every day to improve services for residents and ensure that public housing and Section 8 remain vital resources for the future. We are again calling on all public housing stakeholders – residents, NYCHA employees, policymakers, advocates and all New Yorkers – to join in this fight."

NYCHA, with assistance from the Boston Consultant Group, who the Authority hired in 2011 to assist in assessing and revamping operations, performed an extensive review of its Central Office and administration costs. Plan NYCHA initiatives were put in place to find new investments and redirect resources to strengthen frontline operations, including maintenance and

repair work and other property-level services where they are needed most. The Work Order Task Force has allowed NYCHA to complete nearly 70,000 repair work orders in more than 15,000 apartments since it began one year ago.

By applying the savings made through cost reductions, NYCHA hired more than 290 frontline workers. The Authority plans to hire an additional 148 maintenance employees and 75 skilled trade workers to strengthen its workforce by the end of the year. In addition, more than 175 residents will be hired as Caretakers with the help from \$10 million in funds from the City Council. Some of these positions already have been filled, most of them graduates of the NYCHA Resident Training Academy.

Other Plan NYCHA successes include:

- A reduction in NYCHA's General Fund deficit, amounting to approximately \$35 million in annual savings by 2016. NYCHA expects to have balanced budgets by 2015.

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Among the initiatives Plan NYCHA will put in place to improve conditions for residents is hiring more Caretakers, including some residents.

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Resident Leaders: NYCHA Security Efforts Make a Difference



Reginald H. Bowman, President, Citywide Council of Presidents

By Reginald H. Bowman, President, Citywide Council of Presidents, and John Johnson, Bronx South District Chair, Citywide Council of Presidents

A version of this column previously appeared in the Amsterdam News on July 26, 2012.

Recently, local media published a series of articles on the Public Housing Community and The New York City Housing Authority, and the efforts to install security cameras and systems, in the more than 2,600 residential buildings that 400,000 New Yorkers call home.

Public housing residents and leaders are keenly aware of the need to have safe and secure developments. That is why in 2009, resident leaders initiated the effort to join with NYCHA management in creating the Safety and Security Task Force. The Task Force has helped to identify ways to



John Johnson, Bronx South District Chair, Citywide Council of Presidents.

reduce crime, apprehend and remove perpetrators, and increase overall safety – both real and perceived – for residents. We were also joined by top law enforcement officials from the NYPD and District Attorneys Offices to work on these issues, including the development of a strategic plan to create and install a state-of-the-art security system designed to be functional and monitored by residents, NYCHA and the NYPD. At the time of this writing, the infrastructure of this system is being installed.

Installing the security system began years ago and was funded by HUD, until Congress cut funds for security cameras. However, it has continued over the years, and NYCHA has installed nearly 6,680 cameras in 538 buildings, with the help of funding from the NYC Council members, NYS Senate and Assembly members and Borough Presidents. These

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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 meetings for Calendar Year 2012 are as follows:

August 1	October 24
August 15	November 7
August 29	November 21
September 12	December 5
September 27 (Thursday)	December 19
October 10	

Any changes to the schedule above will be posted here and on NYCHA's website at 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 Corporate Secretary at 250 Broadway, 12th 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 Corporate 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 Corporate 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.

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Resident Leaders: NYCHA Security Efforts Make a Difference

efforts have contributed to a one-third reduction in crime in public housing over the past decade (crime is down more in public housing than the city as a whole). These cameras were installed over a period of time on an ad hoc basis, and technology for these devices has changed rapidly. NYCHA has had to keep pace as these cameras approached their useful life.

The Public Housing Resident leadership and NYCHA realized that we needed a plan to build a cost-effective system and we called for a review of current practices. The Task Force developed a plan for capital investments in safety and security measures that included technologically improved cameras; rugged door locks; electronic access; and improved intercom systems. The plan is currently being implemented with \$51 million allocated from elected officials for 80 developments. This is all a matter of public record, and is being piloted at Mott Haven Houses, in the Bronx.

There's not enough funding available to bring security cameras to all 334 developments. There

are 2,600 buildings and 3,300 elevators citywide. When you multiply it by the number of entryways, stairwells and hallways, you can quickly grasp the magnitude of the problem. An ideal network of cameras alone would cost at least \$200 million. This doesn't even account for the cost to monitor and maintain the equipment.

We are asking all elected officials, public and private stakeholders and all New Yorkers to join with the residents and NYCHA in taking a careful, deliberative approach in putting cameras in place with the funding that has been provided. We feel strongly that the end result of investing in the capital infrastructure of Public Housing, will make residents feel safer, and ensure that the best security systems are available, serving as important eyes and a credible deterrent to criminal activity. Without these tools and adequate funding, the public will continue to point the finger at NYCHA. In reality, the blame has many more owners, but having a plan, in the long run, is the right way to serve residents in public housing.

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

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

Send a Tweet on Twitter at twitter.com/NYCHA_Housing

Post a message on Facebook at www.facebook.com/NYCHA

Send a fax to 212-577-1358

If you have any questions, please send them to Journal@nycha.nyc.gov.

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.



Many NYCHA Families Need More Space

Rightsizing is a Key Aspect of Plan NYCHA

By Zodet Negrón

Mouhamadou Kane and Nogaye Sylla live in a tiny studio with their son, Alhassane (seven years old) and daughter, Mame Diarra (three years old). When Mr. Kane first moved into the WSUR Brownstones in Manhattan, he was by himself. His wife moved in with him in 2004 and when their son was born, they put in for a transfer into a larger apartment. Four years later, their daughter was born, making their need for a larger apartment more pressing.

"We put in for a transfer in 2005 and since then we have



Mouhamadou Kane and Nogaye Sylla live in a studio apartment at WSUR Brownstones in Manhattan with their daughter, Mame Diarrason, and son, Alhassane.

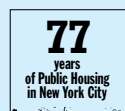
been waiting," said Ms. Sylla. "We're overcrowded. With our bed, our daughter's toddler bed and our son's bed by the door blocking part of the entrance, we hardly have any room to walk around. We have to eat on the floor because there is no

room for a dining table." Rightsizing is a key aspect of Plan NYCHA. The Kane family is one of more than 15,000 NYCHA families currently living in overcrowded units. Like thousands more who await

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Message from the Chairman

As NYCHA continues to proceed with Plan NYCHA, our five-year strategic plan, we are moving forward on putting many new programs and procedures in place to help address continued funding cuts and rising costs (see page 1 for more details). Plan NYCHA stresses the need to find new ways to do business that allow us to maintain our aging buildings, make needed repairs and fund supportive resident services, while still meeting the high demand in New York

City for public housing and rental assistance. And we need your collaboration to make it work.

During the meetings held for our 2013 Annual Plan earlier this summer, we spoke about making changes to NYCHA's rent policy, to ensure greater fairness while also increasing revenue. For years, the highest-income residents generally have borne a lesser rent burden than the lowest income families. Almost a third of NYCHA residents pay only 20 percent of their income towards rent, and families with the highest income pay less than 15 percent of their income towards rent.

In total, more than 47,000 NYCHA households currently pay less than 30 percent of their income in rent, as generally required by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This is a regressive policy that disproportionately affects households with lower incomes, and it is inconsistent with public housing's basic mandate to provide assistance in relation to need.

To make sure all residents are subject to the same standards, NYCHA will increase rent maximums and gradually raise rents on these 47,000 households, by up to 30 percent of their income based on HUD's affordable fair market rent. This is consistent with what housing authorities in other cities do. Most residents at the Annual Plan meetings supported this change and many spoke out in support of it.

The vast majority of you – more than 70 percent – already pay 30 percent of income in rent and will not be affected. The rent increases will be phased in over the course of five years to ensure stability for those of you who are affected. The increases will begin in May 2013, based on annual reviews beginning in January 2013.

The increased rents are crucial to closing our budget gap and will allow us to rely less on the ever-decreasing federal subsidies. Over the course of the five-year phase-in, NYCHA estimates it will retain an additional \$135 million. This means more money for us to provide a better maintained home and services to you at the level you deserve.

Rent maximums for 2013

Studio	\$946
1 bedroom	\$1024
2 bedrooms	\$1139
3 bedrooms	\$1402
4 bedrooms	\$1576
5 bedrooms	\$1813
6 bedrooms	\$2049

Resident Green Committees Improve Environment

NYCHA's Resident Green Committees (RGC) stay busy looking for ways to improve their surroundings at developments and in the larger community. A number of recent events at different locations showcase the many different methods they use, such as planting flowers and cleaning up grounds.



Pomonok Houses, Queens

The Pomonok RGC used part of a grant that they received from the Citizens Committee for New York City to help an elementary school adjacent to the development beautify its main entrance on June 4. Among the residents taking part were Mahari Dillon and her grandmother Wanda Paysour. The school, P.S. 201, implemented a stewardship corps so a different class each week will be responsible for watering and taking care of the flowers.

Photo credit: Princess Dillon



Linden Houses, Brooklyn

On June 2, the Linden RGC held its first event – "Clean-Up Day." Nineteen residents were joined by members of Green City Force, a service corps for young NYCHA residents, and NYCHA staff, who provided extra bags, gloves and other supplies. Shown is Geneva Nealy, who along with her neighbors picked up 15 garbage bags worth of litter in two and a half hours.

Photo credit: Elena Tenchikova



Woodside Houses, Queens

Memorial Day – May 28 – served as the backdrop for the Woodside RGC's "Flowers for Our Fallen Heroes" event. More than two dozen residents of all ages beautified and dedicated gardens to local veterans for their service. RGC member Christine Leale (shown) maintains a memorial garden dedicated to neighbors who honorably served and were lost. NYCHA staff joined with the residents, along with volunteers from the Citizens Committee for NYC, NYC Service and Home Depot.

Photo credit: Padmi Ranasinghe

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 full list can be viewed at on.nyc.gov/nychanotwanted. The following are the people, with their former addresses, excluded as of February 29, March 7 and March 21, 2012.

Prohibited as of February 29, 2012

Reggie Canady Boulevard Houses, 817 Schenck Avenue, Apt. 2C, Brooklyn

Corey Coleman Polo Grounds Towers Houses, 2955 8th Avenue, Apt. 25C, Manhattan

Crystal Rivers Astoria Houses, 2-04 Astoria Boulevard, Apt. 4A, Queens

Daquan Tela Pomonok Houses, 67-29 Kissena Boulevard, Apt. 4A, Queens

Prohibited as of March 7, 2012

Hodaviah Dunn Marlboro Houses, 2369 West 11th Street, Apt. 7F, Brooklyn

Derick Hutcherson Kingsborough Houses, 207 Kingsborough 2nd Walk, Apt. 3E, Brooklyn

Johnny Reyes Baruch Houses, 130 Columbia Street, Apt. 0GB, Manhattan

Willie Robinson Wyckoff Houses, Warren Street, Apt. 6N, Brooklyn

Prohibited as of March 21, 2012

Danique Chandler Samuel Houses, 148 West 144 Street, Apt. 5D, Manhattan

Daquan Chandler Samuel Houses, 148 West 144 Street, Apt. 5D, Manhattan

Marty Davis Ingersoll Houses, 46 Saint Edwards Street, Apt. 8G, Brooklyn

Curtis King Ocean Bay Apts Houses 51-15 Almeda Avenue, Apt. 3B, Queens

Mocha Ross Drew-Hamilton Houses, 2698 8th Avenue, Apt. 21A, Manhattan

Antwaun Scott Langston Hughes Houses, 301 Sutter Avenue, Apt. 14F, Brooklyn

Justice Vick Stapleton Houses, 181 Gordon Street, Apt. 7H, Staten Island

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GED not required • New class starting soon!

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Install Air Conditioners Safely

Prior to installation of an air conditioner in an apartment, the tenant(s) of record must sign NYCHA form 150.110 Appliance Agreement, that has been executed by the Housing Manager or the latter's designee. The Agreement requires that residents notify NYCHA within three (3) days after installation of the air conditioner has been completed. Air conditioners must be installed at your own expense in accordance with the following specifications:

- Except as otherwise provided below, the air conditioner unit must fit the entire width of the window. There cannot be any open unguarded spaces greater than 4 1/2 inches.
- Two "L" shaped stops are required in the window track when the space between the air conditioner and the fully raised window sash is greater than 4 1/2 inches.
- "L" shaped stops must be installed in both sides of the inside window track to prevent the window from lifting upward.
- The air conditioner is to be permanently attached into the window opening.
- Structurally sound barriers must be installed on one or both sides of the air conditioner when the air conditioner does not fill the entire width of the window and the unguarded space or spaces would otherwise exceed 4 1/2 inches.
- Bricks, wood, insulation, or any other object, other than the manufacturer's specified brackets, placed under the air conditioner, are prohibited.

You must immediately notify the Management Office or the Centralized Call Center at **718-707-7771** when any air conditioner is to be removed from any window. Upon this notification, you must schedule an appointment during business hours for a maintenance worker to be present when the air conditioner is removed, in order to immediately replace the air conditioner with a window guard.

If, during an inspection, it is determined that your air conditioner is improperly installed and presents a clear and present danger of falling out of the window, it will be immediately removed, and a window guard will be installed in its place. If you are not home to provide access, staff is authorized to enter your apartment on an emergency basis to correct the hazard.

It is vital to the safety and well being of you, your family and your neighbors that window guards and air conditioners are installed in compliance with New York City law and the rules of the New York City Housing Authority. Please make every effort to help us help you!

A Comprehensive Approach to Safety

By Eric Deutsch

NYCHA's efforts to improve the quality of life for residents in specific developments through a wide-ranging approach are expanding. The WAM Initiative now is in place at Edenwald Houses in the Bronx, Marlboro Houses in Brooklyn, and Polo Grounds Towers and Rangel Houses in Manhattan. It supports the Plan NYCHA imperative to improve safety and security, particularly by coordinating efforts among numerous stakeholders.

NYCHA staff and representatives from the New York City Police Department met with residents in June at the four developments to outline what the program includes, such as 24-hour availability of emergency services, youth programs, proper outdoor lighting and anti-graffiti efforts. "Having this program is a step up," said Bernadette McNear, the Resident Association President at Rangel Houses, at a meeting on June 12 at the Polo Grounds Community Center. "We all want a better home. We raise our families here. Everybody needs to join hands and be in



Residents from Polo Grounds Towers and Rangel Houses attend a WAM Initiative kickoff event at the Polo Grounds Community Center on June 12, 2012. (Photo credit: Eric Deutsch)

this together."

Karla Alonso, the Resident Association Secretary and a member of the Resident Watch at Polo Grounds Towers, came to the meeting with her thoughts focused on a long-term view. "My concern is for the future," she said as she motioned to her 19-month old daughter.

The program already operates at Washington Houses in Manhattan, Armstrong Houses in Brooklyn and Mill Brook Houses in the Bronx.

NYCHA Board Member Margarita López, who led the presentations, encouraged the more than 65 residents at the

Polo Grounds kickoff to each bring a few more people with them the next time there is a meeting. "Criminal activity in our developments is conducted by a handful of people," she said. "That handful of people are not stronger than the people who live in and work at our developments!"

To which a resident shouted back, "Yes!"

Residents who want to report any criminal activity at one of the developments involved in this program can do so anonymously by calling the NYCHA Inspector General at **212-306-3355**.

Victor Gonzalez: Reflections on My First Year

When I was chosen to be the first public housing resident to serve on NYCHA's Executive Board in July 2011, my goal was to reach out to you my fellow residents and make sure that your voice and concerns were taken into account in decisions the Authority made because like you I am a resident and NYCHA is my home. As I look back at my first year, I have to say, that while I have done precisely that, I still have my work cut out for me.

As a former resident leader, my focus has always been to reach out and support my fellow residents. That has not changed. The difference is that now I represent over 400,000 residents citywide. I made it a priority to make myself available to residents and go to many resident meetings and events to hear your concerns and see what

can be done to address them. Wherever I go, I am approached by my fellow residents, who now look up to me as their representative at NYCHA; their link to the Authority. I am happy to say that they still see me as one of them. I may sit on the Executive Board, but I'm still a proud resident of public housing.

It is equally important for me to let my fellow residents know what happens at NYCHA. What I have learned this past year is that NYCHA is a very complex agency with a lot of rules and regulations that govern it; from the way we receive our funding to how we can use that funding to address the issues at hand. I have seen that our budget constraints and difficulty in obtaining more funding continue to hinder our work, but I have also seen that we have the people and the will to do more with

what we have. I have a clearer view of what is going on and why things are not getting done and I communicate that wherever I go. Good or bad, I want my fellow residents to know why things are the way they are.

Serving on the Board also means I vote on issues that affect us all. I am honored to have voted on NYCHA's five-year Capital Plan, which includes many much needed roof repairs, brick work and other capital projects that will enable NYCHA to preserve our homes. I particularly am proud of the Board's approval of the development of new affordable housing, including public housing units, at 1070 Washington in the Bronx. Earlier this year, it was my honor to attend the groundbreaking for this development, which will not only provide 21 new public housing units but supportive



NYCHA Board Member Victor Gonzalez (right) speaks with residents at one of the Plan NYCHA Community Conversations.

services for people with special needs and veterans like myself.

This year has been rewarding, challenging and much more than I expected but I've gotten my feet wet and am now ready to dive in. I want to go out and

visit every development so that I can reach out to more residents and leaders so that they get involved. Resident engagement is a critical part of Plan NYCHA and that is what my focus is and will continue to be.

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Many NYCHA Families Need More Space

their first chance at the promise of public housing, they are on a waiting list of more than 161,000 people. Meanwhile, there are more than 56,000 households – nearly one-third of NYCHA's total households – living in under-occupied housing units, meaning they have too many rooms for their family size.

"I love NYCHA. They are good to us but we need more space. This is an emergency," said Ms. Sylla. "A lot of (NYCHA) buildings in this area have two-bedroom apartments and only one person living there."

NYCHA residents are required to live in apartments that are the correct size for their family compositions. This means requiring under-occupied residents to move to smaller apartments, which allows NYCHA to offer larger apartments to the families who have grown and are overcrowded in their home or are on the public housing waiting list.

NYCHA makes every effort to make the transition as easy and stress-free as possible for residents. Under-occupied families who are asked to

move, regardless of age, are given an almost unlimited choice of where they can move to – they may choose to stay in their current development or move to almost any other NYCHA development. The Authority is not looking to have families move away from their friends, neighborhoods and support systems.

At Vladeck Houses in Manhattan, Miguel Ramos and Damaris Rosario live in a one-bedroom apartment with their twin daughters, Destiny and Isabella, who are almost two years old.

"I put in for a transfer after they were born. I had one crib and a play pen in our bedroom when they were babies," said Ms. Rosario. "I didn't

have enough space, so my husband and I converted the living room into the girls' room. We had to throw out the couch, the TV stand and drawers to fit everything."

Ms. Rosario, who has been living at Vladeck for five years, feels thankful to have a roof over her head but with two cribs in the living room, plus their clothes, toys and double stroller that blocks part of their hallway, they barely can move around, and have no place to put anything else. "I feel frustrated. It's irritating to know that there are some people taking up the space that others need. Apartments should go accordingly with the family's needs," she said.



Damaris Rosario and Miguel Ramos live with their twin daughters, Destiny and Isabella, in a one-bedroom apartment in Vladeck Houses in Manhattan.

Milbank Frawley Houses Reclaims Grounds for Residents

NYCHA, the Manhattan District Attorney's Office and the New York City Police Department joined Milbank Frawley Houses residents on June 23 to celebrate the reclamation of the development. "Summerfest" was held to mark the busting up of a drug ring that used to operate out of public spaces at Milbank Frawley. The event included carnival games, a barbecue, face painting, a tree planting and resource information tables. Among the attendees were NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea and Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance, Jr.



To see more photos from Summerfest, point your smartphone's camera here.

A New York City Police Officer helps a NYCHA youth scale a rock wall at Summerfest at the Milbank Frawley Houses in Manhattan on June 23, 2012.

NYCHA Honors Senior Volunteers for Their Service and Commitment

By Ryan Dicovitsky

NYCHA celebrated the volunteer service of its senior residents at the Excelsior Grand in Staten Island on June 22. Nearly 830 residents from 53 developments joined in an afternoon of recognition, refreshments and entertainment to mark the occasion.

The Annual Senior Volunteer Floor Captain Luncheon, in its 32nd year, was held to acknowledge participants of four invaluable NYCHA programs: Senior Resident Advisors; Service Coordinators and Companions; Elderly Safe at Home; and Resident Watch Programs. Many of those present serve as Floor Captains in a "buddy system" on behalf of their fellow senior neighbors, meeting monthly to discuss health and safety issues.

These programs make it possible for senior residents to remain living independently in their homes for a long as possible.

"I love it. It's my life and I will be doing this as long as I live," said Connie Harper, a resident of Reverend Brown Houses in

Brooklyn who has been a volunteer for 27 years.

To see more photos from the luncheon, point your smartphone's camera here.



Residents rock the dance floor at the Annual Senior Volunteer Floor Captain Luncheon on June 22, 2012.

NYCHA, with City and State Partners, to Create Supportive Housing for Special-Needs Populations



NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea (second from left) joined New York State Homes and Community Renewal Commissioner Darryl Towns, New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development Commissioner Mathew Wambua and New York State Supportive Housing Network of New York (SHNNY) Board Chair Bill Taylor at the 12th Annual SHNNY conference on June 7, 2012.

In an effort to better serve New York City's special-needs population, NYCHA has partnered with the New York City Department of Preservation and Development (HPD) and the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal to increase the number of supportive housing units made available each year. The partnership was announced during the 12th Annual New York State Supportive Housing Network of New York (SHNNY) conference on June 7.

NYCHA for the first time will set aside rent subsidy vouchers for supportive housing. It is committing 200 vouchers annually as part of Mayor Michael Bloom-

berg's New Housing Marketplace Plan. Half of the vouchers will be for disabled and elderly NYCHA residents, and the other half will be for people experiencing homelessness. Additionally, the Authority hopes to spur development on underused NYCHA property in an effort to increase the availability of supportive housing units.

Plan NYCHA places an emphasis on providing the proper housing and supports to NYCHA's population. The Authority is committed to right-sizing apartments, ensuring seniors and disabled populations have the support they need, and to using NYCHA land to create new hous-

ing opportunities for New Yorkers and NYCHA residents. "This collaboration is setting a standard for the future creation of supportive housing – the precious lifeline for so many individuals and families in need," said NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea.

Supportive housing combines permanent, affordable housing with services and helps people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless achieve housing stability and independence. Tenants have leases and pay one-third of their income toward rent. Staff provide support such as help with getting an education, finding a job and building a day-to-day routine.

SENIOR NEWS



Cooling Centers

Cooling centers are places that are air conditioned and open to the public. When it gets dangerously hot outside, these cooling centers stay open late, and can be open on weekends also. To find a cooling center near you, call 311.

Tips to Avoid Mosquito Bites

- Use an insect repellent with at least 15% DEET whenever you are outside
 - Always follow directions on the label before you apply insect repellent
- Limit your time outside during dusk and dawn
 - Most mosquito bites occur at these times
- Wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts and socks when outside
- Repair any holes in your window screens

Serious viruses such as the West Nile virus can come from mosquito bites. The West Nile Virus can cause serious or fatal illness in people older than 50. If you have questions call 311 and ask for information on West Nile Virus.

Eye on Housing Fraud



Department of Investigation Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn

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.

Latisha Johnson – sentenced to six months in jail and five years probation for defrauding NYCHA of approximately \$14,000 for failing to report the presence of her boyfriend in her Section 8 apartment in Queens and the income he earned.

Bonnie Diaz – sentenced to five years probation, and ordered to pay \$24,519 in restitution to NYCHA for failing to report the presence of an unauthorized occupant in her Section 8 apartment in the Bronx and the income he earned.

Eva Taylor – sentenced to a Conditional Discharge, paid \$500 in restitution, and signed an agreement to pay NYCHA \$7,982, the amount she illegally

received for failing to report the presence of her husband in her Butler Houses apartment in the Bronx and the income he earned working for the United States Postal Service.

Clesha Pratt – sentenced to a Conditional Discharge and signed an agreement to pay NYCHA \$41,652, the amount of Section 8 subsidies she illegally received for concealing the presence of her boyfriend in her Section 8 apartment in Brooklyn and the income he earned working for the City Human Resources Administration.

Monica Zavala – sentenced to a Conditional Discharge, paid \$950 in restitution, and signed an agreement to pay NYCHA \$38,084, the amount she illegally received by failing to report the presence of her boyfriend in her Section 8 apartment in the Bronx and the income he earned.

Kim Jenkins – sentenced to a Conditional Discharge and ordered to pay NYCHA \$14,346, the amount she illegally received for failing to report the presence of her husband in her Section 8 apartment in the Bronx and the income he earned.

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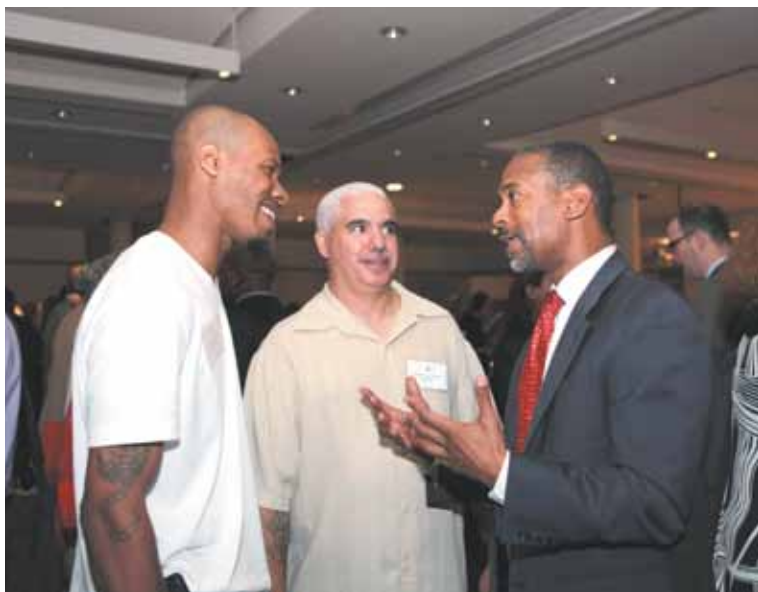
NYCHA Resident Training Academy Honored with 'Opportunity Award'

By Howard Silver

NYCHA's efforts to assist residents become self-sufficient through access to job opportunities were recognized by a local workforce development organization. The NYCHA Resident Training Academy (NRTA) was honored on June 20 with a '2012 Opportunity Award' by the New York City Employment and Training Coalition (NYCETC).

In attendance to share in the honors were Melek Marcelle, a resident of O'Dwyer Gardens in Brooklyn, and Daniel Lopez Maza, of Ocean Bay Apartments in Queens. They were singled out by NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea as exemplary graduates of NRTA whose training led to full-time employment at NYCHA. Eighty-three percent of NRTA graduates have been placed in jobs at NYCHA, its contractors or other employers. "It's a humbling feeling to be here now," said Mr. Lopez Maza. "I am so grateful for everyone who taught and devoted time for us."

The NRTA is the result of a collaboration between NYCHA and community based organizations who provide training and funding, including Robin Hood, Brooklyn Workforce Innovations, St. Nicks Alliance, Nontraditional Employment for Women, New York City College of Technology and the Center for Family Life in Sunset Park. As part of the Plan NYCHA imperative to connect residents and communities to critical services, NYCHA works with partners to take advantage of innovative and high-quality programming, ensuring that residents receive the maximum benefit from critically-needed services.



NYCHA residents Melek Marcelle from O'Dwyer Gardens in Brooklyn, and Daniel Lopez Maza from Ocean Bay Apartments in Queens, speak with NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea at the New York City Employment and Training Coalition's Opportunity Awards on June 20, 2012.

◀ continued from page 1

NYCHA Makes Progress on Streamlining Costs, Strengthening Workforce, Improving Financial Outlook

- A 50 percent reduction in worker injuries at 25 developments with especially high injury rates. This means workers remain on the job, keeping developments at full staff to serve residents.
- Developed a plan to consolidate more than 600 employees and vacate 116,000 square feet of leased space at the two primary central office locations. The space will be offered for sublet on the commercial office market to add revenue.
- Shortened the deadline period for application interviews, which makes the procedure for applying for public housing better and more efficient.
- Implementation of the WAM Initiative (see page 4), with NYCHA and the New York City Police Department engaging residents in safety initiatives.

Pomonok Twins: "Your Beginnings Don't Define Your Destination"

By Heidi Morales

If Kavell and Ronald Brown could have people remember one thing, it is that "coming from humble beginnings is not an excuse to not do well in life."

The Brown brothers are 18-year old identical twins from Pomonok Houses in Queens, who already have accomplished much. Both volunteer at the Boys and Girls Club of New York and are members of the National Society of Black Engineers, among several other organizations. They also co-founded Empower My Hood, which offers college planning workshops and lectures by college-access professionals, such as high school counselors. People can receive help on topics such as preparing for the SAT, writing a college essay and learning to fill out college and financial aid applications.

"Take the opportunities that are presented to you because at some point in your life, someone is going to try to help you," said Kavell.

The brothers agreed that



growing up in public housing is just the beginning and not the end of their journey. "Some kids have never left the state, let alone left Queens; they've never even left their block," said Ronald. "My brother and I have been exposed to so much."

Although they look alike and have many of the same interests, Kavell and Ronald are two very distinct individuals. But their bond is very strong. "Being a twin is something unique that no one else can ever experience because you have a best friend and a close sibling for the rest of your life," Ronald said.

"It's like living one life with two people. I wouldn't change it for the world," said Kavell.

Kavell will attend Syracuse University where he plans to study civil engineering. Ronald will attend Howard University. Both brothers are receiving scholarships. "To me, public housing is a stepping stone for you to get on your feet; it's not a place where you can reside and raise kids for generations," said Ronald as Kavell nodded in agreement.

For more information on Empower My Hood and navigating through the college application process, visit www.empowermyhood.com.

Brooklyn NYCHA Residents Gather for Jobs at Barclays Center

By Ryan Dicovitsky

Hundreds of NYCHA residents lined the sidewalk outside the Ingersoll Community Center on July 2, with hopes of getting a job at the soon-to-open Barclays Center in Brooklyn. The residents, along with other people from the surrounding community, were attending a job fair to fill positions in management, security, concessions and guest services.

Almost 2,000 people registered for the job fair, nearly half of them NYCHA residents. As reported in the June *Journal*, an agreement among NYCHA, Public Housing Communities, Inc., Forest City Ratner, AEG, Levy Restaurants, and the NYC Department of Small Business Services gives public housing tenants priority status in the Barclays hiring process. "I like

the fact that they gave us this opportunity and first dibs at the new positions," said Vernell King from Breukelen Houses, who interviewed for a position in guest services.

Similar job fairs for the Barclays Center are being held across Brooklyn throughout the

summer. An estimated 30,000 people have registered for them.

Aiesha Kelly, an Ingersoll Houses resident who was applying to work in security, was thankful for the opportunity. "I'm glad they're building this stadium," she said.



NYCHA residents line up outside the Ingersoll Community Center in Brooklyn on July 2, 2012, for a job fair for the new Barclays Center.

NYCHA Annual Resident Art Show



Shanya Sims, Seward Park Community Center, youth, *Self-Portrait as Squirrel*



Michaëlle Cotini, Shelton Senior Center, senior, *The Umbrella*

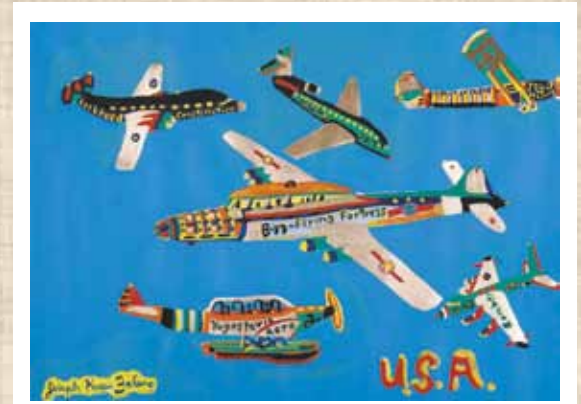
NYCHA's Annual Resident Art Show displayed the exceptional artistic talents of residents. The artwork was shown at the Rutgers Community Center in Manhattan in June.



Barbara Babb, Independence Senior Center, senior, *My Boyfriend*



Laila Quintana, O'Dwyer Community Center, youth, *Laila's Beach*



Joseph Falero, Richmond Terrace, Adult, *Flying USA Objects*



Julian McGrew, Richmond Terrace Community Center, youth, *Race Way*



Kulwant Bains, Pomonok Senior Center, senior, *African Elephants*



Waiming Lau Pun, LaGuardia Houses Senior Center, senior, *Self-Portrait with Rainbow*



Alice Anderson, International Towers Senior Center, senior, *Bread and Wine*



Anthony Gilmore, Boston Secor Community Center, youth, *Black Horse*

Residents Come Out for Draft Agency Annual Plan Meetings

By Eric Deutsch and Tischelle George

NYCHA continued its new process for a second year of holding town hall meetings with residents in advance of releasing its Draft Agency Annual Plan. NYCHA's Annual Plan is a comprehensive guide to the Authority's policies, programs, operations and strategies for the coming fiscal year. It is required by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). NYCHA is required to hold one public hearing regarding the Annual Plan (held this year on July 25), but in advance, the Authority also holds one in every borough. NYCHA believes the meeting format of roundtable discussions with NYCHA staff is an important way to involve residents and be a transparent agency.

A recurring theme at this

year's town hall meetings was residents becoming more involved in NYCHA processes, especially in light of the Authority's call for collaboration with residents in light of continued funding cuts. At the Bronx meeting, held at Melrose (Classic) Community Center on June 18, Gloria Anderson, from Patterson Houses, said, "I wish a lot of people from my complex were here at the table to talk about the issues. So many things are going wrong with housing. Maybe if more people were here it would make a difference."

Patricia Charles from Eastchester Gardens echoed that feeling. "We need to bring the right people to the right table so we can work together hand in hand," she said. "I'm here now so I can inform some people and bring information back to my building and to my

mother's building."

Geraldine Parker, the Resident Association President at Stapleton Houses and Staten Island District Chair, was pleased to see new faces at the town hall held in Staten Island on June 14 at the Gerard Carter Community Center. She said that NYCHA's message of taking action to save public housing was heard. "A lot of them don't come to our meetings, so it's good they'll be fully informed," Ms. Parker said. "Their eyes are open and they see what's going on and will not put this aside."

More than 370 residents attended the five roundtable discussions. While the public comment period for the Draft Annual Agency Plan has closed, the plan can be viewed on NYCHA's website at www.nyc.gov/nycha in the 'Resources' section.



Residents gather at the Draft Agency Annual Plan town hall at the Johnson Community Center in Manhattan on June 7, 2012.

Building a Community Meant to Last

By Ryan Dicovitsky

This is the latest in a series of Journal profiles of NYCHA's resident gardeners as part of the celebration of the 50th year of the Authority's Gardening and Greening Program



Residents at the Milbank-Frawley Houses in Manhattan

always were friendly to each other, but according to Alex Reynoso, never really engaged with one another. "Oh hi, good morning. That's pretty much it," he said.

Now, thanks to 15-year-old Mr. Reynoso's initiative and determination, an expansive series of gardens have become the center of attention at the development. Soon after he began working on the gardens with the assistance of NYCHA, residents rushed to join the effort. "A lot of people liked it. They really started gardening," Mr. Reynoso said.

Alex started working on the gardens with a purpose: raise awareness about food alternatives. While taking an elective in school, Mr. Reynoso learned about how the majority of food is produced in the United States and felt uncomfortable. "It's all corn. One alternative is to create a community garden," he said, noting that by growing his own food, he hopes to counteract the growing list of artificial foods derived from corn products.

The garden at Milbank-Frawley took off in March, and now six residents are committed to helping Mr. Reynoso tend its plants and vegetables. He continues to invest a lot of his own time, spending at least 30 minutes every day watering and caring for the garden. And the garden has become popular enough that Mr. Reynoso had to organize a meeting so the volunteers could split up duties efficiently.

Mr. Reynoso strongly believes his experience shows how residents who are focused on tending to their community's greenery will support each other as well. "The best thing about having a community garden is it helps a community unite and understand differences," he said.

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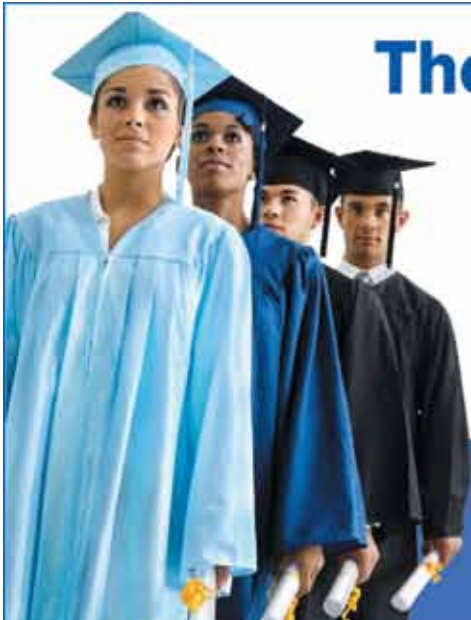


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Resident Watch Volunteers Receive Safety and Victim Training

By Ryan Dicovitsky

NYCHA Resident Watch volunteers are learning more about how to help keep their developments safe. The Family Services Department and the New York City Police Department (NYPD) are holding training sessions across the city this summer, for volunteers to learn more about how to observe a crime scene and suspects; how to interact with victims; and how to diffuse potentially volatile situations.

At the training held on July 9 at NYCHA's offices on 90 Church Street, residents expressed optimism that increased training and coordination would improve their communities' safety. Veronica Parra, a resident of Chelsea Houses in Manhattan,

said the training would be useful should something unfortunate occur on patrol. "It's helpful," she said. "It's explaining how to observe a situation, and how to deal with it if it happens."

NYPD officers start the training session by explaining how volunteers should observe a criminal or suspicious situation. For example, a useful description of a person's eyes goes far beyond color to include size, shape, the style of glasses worn and whether or not their eyes were bloodshot. Residents also learned how to observe someone's age, size, mannerisms, clothes, weapons and method of escape.

Resident Watch volunteers also get tips on how to interact with others while on patrol.

NYCHA staff explained what to do – and not do – while interacting with a victim of a crime, stressing the importance of restoring a sense of dignity to a victim and patiently expressing a desire to help. In order to prevent incidents at residences, NYCHA explained how to notify Family Services of any concerns, including anonymous referral of residents who may be in need of assistance.

Chelsea Houses resident Marion Gonzalez said the training's true value would be evaluated in NYCHA communities. "I think if it comes to pass, sure," she said, adding that she hoped to see the training bring positive results to her community.

An initiative that is part of the NYCHA Safety and Security



Resident Watch volunteers are getting trained by NYCHA and the New York City Police Department throughout the summer.

Task Force, the training sessions are an integral component of the Resident Watch program's future as outlined under Plan NYCHA. The Plan

calls for increased resident participation, cooperative training with local police and better cooperation among Resident Watch teams.

East River Community Center Gets a Teen-Centric Makeover

By Ryan Dicovitsky and Zodet Negrón

For many teenagers who live in NYCHA residences in East Harlem, the East River Community Center is like a second home. The center is a one-stop shop for teens to study, play games, dance and safely spend time with their friends. These teens now have a specific space to call their own thanks to the generosity of Bloomberg L.P., the media company, and The Alpha Workshops, a non-profit that provides HIV-positive individuals with access to the decorative arts industry.

Bloomberg sponsored an essay contest in cooperation with the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City for teens at NYCHA residences to describe

why their community center would most benefit from a new, teen-oriented "Club House." After youth who gather at the East River Community Center won the contest, two rooms at the center now include stylish furniture, books, a kiln and craft supplies.

"We are delighted. We learned about art and even the stock market. We worked alongside volunteers from Bloomberg and The Alpha Workshops to get these rooms ready," said local Teen Council president Brandi Roberts at the unveiling ceremony on July 10. "The rooms aren't just for teens but for everybody who uses this center."

In their winning essay, the teens wrote about how the Club House will provide them with a place where they can

relax and feel free to develop their minds and skills in a stress-free environment, while having fun with their peers. "We have an incredible team of youth re-envisioning their space and their communities, and it shows the potential and leadership our youth has," said NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea. "We need to give our youth more opportunities like these to create better environments."

Juan Rivera, an active youth leader, helped give the rooms their new look, including its paint job. "Before, the rooms didn't look as attractive. Hopefully now the kids will want to use the space because the colors are so vibrant and inviting," he said. "This is great."



What one of the rooms at the East River Community Center looked like before (left) and after (right) being renovated.

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