



# NEW YORK CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY Journal

First-Class  
U.S. Postage  
Paid  
New York, NY  
Permit No. 4119

Vol. 42 No. 1

www.nyc.gov/nycha

January/February 2012

## Message from the Chairman



NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea speaks with residents at one of the Authority's Community Conversations held in 2011 to develop *Plan NYCHA*.

The next chapter of our shared story has begun. The impressive effort you put forth in letting NYCHA know your thoughts, hopes, expectations and concerns about living in public housing – in Community Conversations, surveys and meetings with staff – has paid off. The result is *Plan NYCHA: A Roadmap for Preservation*. This ambitious

plan is a call to action to NYCHA residents, employees, city agencies, elected officials, activists and stakeholders to work together to ensure that public housing remains available for current and future generations of New Yorkers. We are finished planning, and now we have begun to act.

*Plan NYCHA* reflects what YOU told us. As the Authority developed *Plan NYCHA*, we engaged thousands of residents, resident leaders including the Citywide Council of Presidents, staff and partners across the City and country in a transparent and inclusive planning process to solicit ideas and seek guidance.

I highly encourage everyone to view *Plan NYCHA* on our dedicated website at [www.plannycha.org](http://www.plannycha.org). Not only can you download the full report and executive summary from the website, there is additional content, including video testimonials from residents and staff. You also can read the complete text of the executive summary on pages 6-7 of this issue.

We will succeed only through partnerships and new strategies to provide tailored support to our residents. We want to be flexible enough to deal with today's realities of our more diverse customer needs, but not lose sight of our fundamental goals: to see families move on and not continue to need our services. For those we do serve, we need broad-based support from all public housing stakeholders in government, in the non-profit community, and in the private sector to maintain our commitment to our core mission.

While we are releasing *Plan NYCHA* now, we already have been acting to improve life for public housing residents, even within severe budget constraints. We accomplished this by being more efficient and utilizing partnerships, two foundations of *Plan NYCHA*.

The Work Order Task Force targets developments with the highest number of work orders per apartment. There were 90,000 more work orders completed in 2011 than in 2010, a 6 percent improvement.

Based on recommendations by NYCHA's Safety and Security Task Force, the Authority will enhance building access controls and incorporate updated closed-circuit TV cameras (CCTV) at select developments, with \$40 million in funding from the City government.

The NYCHA Resident Training Academy, developed in partnership with and funding from Robin Hood, offers employment-linked training to best position participants for future careers. There was an 89 percent job placement rate in 2011, the program's first year, and Robin Hood and NYCHA have increased their investments in the initiative.

Together we have accomplished so much to enhance our communities and support NYCHA's families. Our progress is significant, but our work is ongoing. As we move forward we will need unwavering and broad-based support to ensure that the transformative vision outlined in *Plan NYCHA* is realized.

As laid out in *Plan NYCHA*, we are prepared to do our part. We hope you will join us as we embark on this collaborative journey to support New York City's families.

John B. Rhea  
Chairman



The cover for *Plan NYCHA: A Roadman for Preservation*.

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Following is the text of Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg's introductory letter from *Plan NYCHA: A Roadmap for Preservation*.



## Mayor's Message

Dear Friends:

New York City is proud to be the home of the country's oldest, largest, and best public housing system. Like most public housing authorities, NYCHA has faced extraordinary challenges over the past decade. However, thanks to Chairman John Rhea's energetic and innovative leadership, our Administration has continued to provide quality affordable housing for low- and moderate-income New Yorkers.

This mission is at the core of *Plan NYCHA*, an ambitious call to foster partnerships and maintain and improve NYCHA services. With both local and federal government budgets tight, nonprofit and private sector organizations can help public housing achieve fiscal stability and strengthen our communities. Through these efforts, we are confident we can increase economic opportunities and improve the quality of life for NYCHA's more than 600,000 residents.

Our Administration is committed to investing in public housing. Together with Chairman Rhea and NYCHA, we look forward to *Plan NYCHA* helping us deliver more of the affordable homes that hard-working New Yorkers deserve.

Michael R. Bloomberg  
Mayor

# 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 meetings for Calendar Year 2012, are as follows:

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

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

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## Resident's Voices



January 12, 2012

(via e-mail)

Dear Public Housing Family and Friends:  
**Happy 2012!** The Citywide Council of Presidents (CCOP) believes in starting off the New Year with an agenda for Resident Engagement and Empowerment, and to ensure that every member of the NYCHA family is included in the future growth and development of the NYCHA community. Topping this year's agenda is the Inclusion of Public Housing as Economic and Social Infrastructure, Job Creation through Economic Development, Increase in Education Opportunities, Equal Access to All Resident Services for Youth, Families and Seniors, BUT most importantly, full funding for NYCHA Public Housing.

To achieve these goals we must be fully engaged as residents and resident leaders in a strategic plan that includes **EACH OF US**, and be informed about how our government is working to meet our community needs. **It is OUR RESPONSIBILITY to ensure our government knows the NEEDS OF PUBLIC HOUSING RESIDENTS IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK.**

CCOP has pledged to support all residents associations and community-based organizations to work towards the registration of thousands of Public Housing Residents for the 2012 Election Year. Let's all make a New Year's resolution **TO WORK TOGETHER FOR AN IMPORTANT CAUSE**; it is the only way in which our public housing families can be successful in making a REAL difference in our communities! We will be continuing this effort this year as we work together to rebuild and restore all aspects of the NYCHA Public Housing Community. Yours in Resident Empowerment,  
**Reginald H. Bowman, Chairman, Citywide Council of Presidents, Seth Low Houses**

January 4, 2012

(via e-mail)

Fellow residents get your tools oiled and your backs in shape, the NYCHA Gardening program will be 50 years old this year. Let us all plant a flower or vegetable garden for 50 years of service to the families of NYCHA and all its children.  
**Joseph Cotton, Gun Hill/Parkside Complex**

December 29, 2011

(via Twitter)

But at the end of the day ain't nuffin like #NYCHA heat lol  
**Joseph K., Brownsville Houses**

Following are quotes from residents that appear in the *Plan NYCHA: A Roadmap for Preservation report*.

"There is not enough housing for everybody here in this city. And when we consider the cost of living in certain areas of this city, the purpose is to maintain the public housing we have, so that more tenants can live in a clean, safe place; a place where they can raise their families without worrying about their cost."  
**Victor A. Gonzalez, NYCHA Board Member, Wise Towers resident**

"We want to create a new image of public housing, where we are engaged in a conversation and we are contributors to a community and we are an economic engine and we are also a part of building the future of this great city as we always have been."  
**Reginald H. Bowman, Chairman, Citywide Council of Presidents, Seth Low Houses**

"The first things that come to mind when I hear the word NYCHA are community, affordable housing, outreach, involvement, and just helping people afford a place to live."  
**Donovan Mendoza, Walt Whitman Houses**

"We want to raise children in a safe environment. We are still scared. We want a more secure environment – patrols, cameras, better screening."  
**Resident at Queensbridge Houses Community Conversation**

"It's about lobbying more for funds – in Washington, writing the governor – to make sure we try to get more money for NYCHA citywide, not just one development, but for everybody."  
**Lisa Kenner, Van Dyke Houses I Resident Association President**

"If repairs are made on time, major damages can be prevented or can save more money."  
**Resident at West Brighton Houses Community Conversation**

"If someone has problems, NYCHA has social workers; in the event that things get bad, there is someone there for you. There isn't another housing community that has that."  
**Cheryl Uzamere, Pink Houses**

"The more we stay involved, the more we have an opportunity to keep ourselves informed."  
**Inez Turpin, Campos Plaza**

## 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

Send a Tweet on Twitter at [twitter.com/NYCHA\\_Housing](http://twitter.com/NYCHA_Housing)

Post a message on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/NYCHA](http://www.facebook.com/NYCHA)

Send a fax to 212-577-1358

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

## NEW *Plan NYCHA* Website

**P**lannycha.org is the new website dedicated to *Plan NYCHA: A Roadmap for Preservation*. The website complements the written report and gives an overview of NYCHA's strategic plan and key initiatives. It serves as a destination to get *Plan NYCHA* updates and progress reports, and connect users to NYCHA and partner resources. The 'microsite' features video testimonials from employees and residents who participated in NYCHA's Community Conversations, and a short overview video, which brings to life the planning



stages, community outreach efforts and the pressing need to develop a roadmap that will guide NYCHA through some of the most challenging times the organization has faced in its more than 76-year history.

## NYCHA Initiatives Highlighted in State of the City Address

**M**ayor Michael R. Bloomberg mentioned NYCHA during his State of the City speech on January 12, 2012. Below are excerpts as prepared.

"Mayor Koch showed that investment in affordable housing is a key element of a successful economic development agenda. Over the past decade, we've created or preserved 30,000 units of affordable housing here in the South Bronx alone and more than 150,000 units across the city.

"This year, we'll take steps to bring more affordable housing to the Lower East Side around Delancey Street to a site that has sat largely vacant for a half-century. We'll begin building new affordable housing and retail space on

Livonia Avenue in East New York, at Hunter's Point South in Queens, at Randolph Houses in Central Harlem and across the entire NYCHA system, we will significantly reduce the backlog of repairs that has resulted from sustained Federal budget cuts. This is a key part of our strategic plan to improve services to NYCHA's residents and preserve public housing for generations to come.

"A NYCHA community will also be the site of one of our newest waterfront reclamation projects. Using land that now lies mostly vacant, we'll begin working to create 2,300 units of housing, a waterfront park and a supermarket next door to the Astoria Houses on the East River."

## Electric Trucks Steer New Course for NYCHA

By Howard Silver

**T**wo shiny utility trucks surrounded by many proud faces stood in the loading dock of NYCHA's Long Island City facility on December 13, at the official launch of NYCHA's Electric Truck Pilot Program. More than one year in the making, the pioneering initiative, partially funded by a grant from the New York Power Authority (NYPA), marks the first time that a New York City agency is adding the all-electric, emissions- and noise-free trucks to its vehicle fleet. The vehicles join other all-electric, non-polluting equipment already utilized by NYCHA, including lawn mowers and leaf blowers.

Operation of the trucks by two different NYCHA departments will be carefully monitored and compared with two "control" trucks which perform similar tasks, carry the equivalent weight, travel the same distance and operate under the similar conditions. The purpose is to determine if the electric vehicles that help save natural resources and the environment can also save NYCHA money.

"NYCHA has a moral obligation to engage in greening this city," said Board Member Margar-

ita López, NYCHA's Environmental Coordinator. "But if public housing is to survive, it must also become sustainable by reducing costs. We need to prove that this investment [in electric trucks] will work, so we can continue in this direction to save public housing and the environment."

"NYCHA has been an important customer for NYPA in various energy initiatives," said Guy Sliker, Director of Renewable Energy Resources and Technology at NYPA. The fuel cost per mile for the electric trucks, he noted, is expected to be less than for the diesel trucks they would replace.

"The Emergency Services Department will be using this truck to respond to emergencies, so we can make sure it can meet NYCHA's field conditions before we expand the pilot," explained Shaun Hession, Deputy Director of NYCHA's General Services Department. The other truck will be used by the Supply Chain Operations Department to deliver goods to NYCHA developments throughout the five boroughs.

The pilot program will run for 12 months before the data is evaluated.



NYCHA's new electric trucks are emissions- and noise-free.

## How YOU Can Live Healthier!

NYCHA has tips that residents can make in their homes for living green, which leads to a healthier living environment.

### Reduce Asthma Triggers

- Report pest problems by calling NYCHA's Customer Contact Center at **718-707-7771**
- Keep the home clean
- Use baits or gels, NOT sprays
- Reduce moisture and mold by using bath and kitchen fans and reporting leaks to NYCHA's Customer Contact Center at **718-707-7771**
- Consider smoke-free living in the apartment

### Save Energy

- Turn lights off when not in use
- Replace incandescent lighting with compact fluorescent (CFL)
- If possible, avoid space heaters as they are very inefficient and become a fire hazard if something is placed on them
- Buy appliances that have a blue Energy Star label
- Turn off computers when not in use, instead of just putting them into sleep mode
- Use smart strips – they sense when a master appliance is turned off and switches peripherals off

### Use Green Cleaning Products

- Unscented, concentrated, biodegradable
- Non-toxic
- GreenSeal Certified

### Green Laundry Tips

- Only wash full loads of laundry
- Wash in cold water
- Clean lint after dryer use

For more tips like these, download NYCHA's "Green Guide: The Power is in Your Hands" on the 'Green Agenda' page on the Authority's website at [www.nyc.gov/nycha](http://www.nyc.gov/nycha).

## 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 December 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29, 2010.

### Prohibited as of December 1, 2010

**Christian Anderson** Marcy Houses, 642 Park Ave, Apt. 4C, Brooklyn  
**Jasmin Bonet** Bronx River Houses, 1609 East 174th St., Apt. 9E, Bronx  
**Jacob Cedeno a/k/a Anthony Hernandez** Pelham Parkway Houses, 2384 Paulding Ave., Apt. 5F, Bronx  
**Rasheed Crochan** Ocean Bay Apt. Houses, 56-10 Beach Channel Dr., Apt. 7E, Queens  
**Christopher Cruz** Baruch Houses, 605 F.D.R. Dr., Apt. 3A, Manhattan  
**Troy Daniels** Bushwick/Hylan Houses, 370 Bushwick Ave., Apt. 5C, Brooklyn  
**Oscar Garcia** Albany Houses, 180 Troy Ave., Apt. 12A, Brooklyn  
**Sharef Graham** Queensbridge North Houses, 40-12 12th St., Apt. 6D, Queens  
**Jamel Holiday** Breukelen Houses 107-02 Farragut Rd., Apt. 1A, Brooklyn  
**Matthew Martin** Wagner Houses, 438 East 120th St., Apt. 6E, Manhattan  
**Rondell McIver** Melrose Houses, 305 East 153rd St., Apt. 14B, Bronx  
**Rick a/k/a Ricky Seabrook** Washington/Lexington Houses, 183 East 98th St., Apt. 9C, Manhattan  
**Joseph Tyrrell** Parkside Houses, 2955 White Plains Rd., Apt. 1D, Bronx  
**Venus Vega a/k/a Venus Soroseo** Marcy Houses, 552 March Ave., Apt. 3B, Brooklyn  
**Eugene Washington** South Jamaica Houses, 107-48 160th St., Apt. 1B, Queens  
**Robert White** Ravenswood Houses, 12-15 36th Ave., Apt. 5F, Queens  
**Melvin Whitehead** Pelham Parkway Houses, 2384 Paulding Ave., Apt. 5F, Bronx  
**Kelsey Williams** Lincoln Houses, 2110 Madison Ave., Apt. 5C, Manhattan

### Prohibited as of December 8, 2010

**Henry Johnson** Brownsville Houses, 350 Blake Ave., Apt. 21, Brooklyn  
**Christopher Mitchell** Boulevard/Belmont Houses, 455 Barbey St., Apt. 3C, Brooklyn  
**Colyn Needham** Tompkins Houses, 212 Throop Ave., Apt. 2K, Brooklyn  
**Jermaine Simon** Richmond Terrace Houses, 476 Richmond Terrace, Apt. 6F, Staten Island

### Prohibited as of December 15, 2010

**Esteban Bello** Cooper Park Houses, 330 Frost St., Apt. 4C, Brooklyn  
**Tony Flores** Castle Hill Houses, 530 Olmstead Ave., Apt. 13E, Bronx  
**Javis Hallums** Boulevard/Belmont Houses, 459 Barbey St., Apt. 3B, Brooklyn  
**Derell Mickles** Hughes Apartment s Houses, 301 Sutter Ave., Apt. 17D, Brooklyn  
**Steven Ponce** Baruch Houses, 130 Columbia St., Apt. 12B, Manhattan  
**Angel Sostre a/k/a Angel Garcia a/k/a Eddie Ortiz** Stapleton Houses, 45 Warren St., Apt. 5F, Staten Island  
**Raymond Waxter** Adams Houses, 710 Tinton Houses, Apt. 8B, Bronx

### Prohibited as of December 22, 2010

**Larry Davis** Sheepshead Houses, 3661 Nostrand Ave., Apt. 1D, Brooklyn  
**Matthew Deas** Tompkins Houses, 46 South 9th St., Apt. 1A, Brooklyn  
**Sonny Flatts** Tompkins Houses, 46 South 9th St., Apt. 1A, Brooklyn  
**Eugene Goodwin** Throggs Neck Houses, 2774 Dewey Ln., Apt. 1C, Bronx  
**Isiah Knowles** St. Nicholas Houses, 217 West 127th St., Apt. 12A, Manhattan

### Prohibited as of December 29, 2010

**Hector Bonilla a/k/a Hector Torres** Bushwick/Hylan Houses, 869 Flushing Ave., Apt. 9G, Brooklyn  
**Curtis Congress** Van Dyke Houses, 390 Sutter Ave., Apt. 4B, Brooklyn  
**David Echols** Howard/Tilden Houses, 80 Osborn St., Apt. 1C, Brooklyn  
**Eric Escalera** Campos Plaza II Houses, 641 East 13th St., Apt. 7E, Manhattan  
**Abou Cisse** Issouf Astoria Houses, 27-10 8th St., Apt. 4E, Queens  
**Victor Oliveras** Morris Houses, 1372 Washington Ave., Apt. 18E, Bronx  
**Louie Raosto** Riis Houses, 118 Avenue D, Apt. 13 H, Manhattan  
**Milton Washington** St. Nicholas Houses, 230 West 131 St., Apt. 12G, Manhattan

## Fixing the Intercoms

Residents who have a telephone entry system and have their phone service through a cellular or cable provider will find that their intercoms do not work, because of the wiring system. NYCHA will install intercom

phones in the apartments of residents who do not get their phone service through a telephone company to fix the problem. Residents should call the Customer Contact Center (CCC) at (718) 707-7771 to set up the

installation, or if their intercom is not working for any reason. Ensuring that all intercoms work can improve safety and security in NYCHA developments, as the failure of intercoms can lead to the vandalism of main entrance doors and locks.

## New Inspector General for NYCHA Named

Kevin R. Smith is the new Inspector General for NYCHA. He has spent the past 18 years in the city Department of Investigation's (DOI) Housing Authority Inspector General Office, including serving as the Acting Inspector General of NYCHA since August 2011. DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn promoted him to the permanent post. "Kevin Smith's in-depth knowledge of NYCHA's operations coupled with his investigative skills will serve him well as Inspector General," Commissioner Hearn said.

Mr. Smith has worked on investigations throughout his career that have resulted in prosecutions, financial recoveries for NYCHA and procedural recommendations for improvements of practices and procedures. "Kevin Smith is a thorough professional whose leadership and oversight will be of great importance to NYCHA," said NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea.



## Together We Can Put Garbage in Its Place

NYCHA is committed to keeping our developments clean and safe but we need to work together to do so. We need you to help us make sure trash is placed in the proper disposal area. Proper trash disposal not only helps keep our developments cleaner and safer but it helps keep vermin away.

Household trash must be placed in the compactor chutes located in the hallway of each floor in your building and large items such as mattresses, furniture and other bulky materials must be placed in the designated trash collection areas of your development. If you are not sure where to dispose of such items, contact your Management Office. Trash never should be left in the hallway, stairway, lobby, elevator or outside on the sidewalk.



Residents should use small kitchen bags to throw garbage out in the chutes located in building hallways.

Please help us by disposing of trash properly.

### DO...

- Use small kitchen bags
- Place all household garbage in the garbage chute located in the hallway of each floor
- Take the trash out every night
- Remove large bulky items such as old furniture and mattresses Monday through Friday between 8:00 A.M. and 11:00 A.M.
- Place bulk garbage in designated areas

### DON'T...

- Throw garbage out windows
- Leave bulky garbage in the hallway, stairway, lobby, elevator, near exits or on the sidewalk
- Leave household garbage bags in front of the building entrances, walkways or exits

If you see large amounts of trash or discarded furniture please report the condition to your Management Office. Let's work together to be good neighbors and help make NYCHA a home we all can be proud of!

## A Home of Their Own

By Sheila Stainback

**M**ore than 50 NYCHA residents gathered in a packed house for an information session in Brooklyn on December 14. They came in desperate need of a home – but one that they could own. The homeownership workshop was the first of several information sessions the non-profit Habitat for Humanity New York is conducting specifically for NYCHA residents. Those attending were hoping to buy one of the more than 100 condominiums that will be under construction in Bedford-Stuyvesant and Brownsville over the next two years. The condos are available only to low-income buyers.

“I am so, so ready for this,” enthused Carolyn Williams, a 12-year resident of Samuel Houses in Manhattan. The medical transcriber was eager to learn what it will take to move out of NYCHA housing and into a home of her own.

“In order to become a Habitat home owner, you must be willing to partner with us, do the sweat equity and commit to a family savings program,” said Rich-

ard Winslow, Homeownership Manager for Habitat. He told those gathered that this willingness to partner with Habitat also included need, and the ability to pay. The program is designed to reach a family earning in the 50 percent Area Median Income (for a family of four, this is \$40,900 a year). Every prospective buyer and all adults in the household also must commit to 200 hours of “sweat equity,” which includes contributing to light construction of a housing unit and community service – approximately eight and a half hours per week.

“It would be great to be able to say that I own something,” said Cristiana Franco, a Woodside Houses (Queens) resident who was born and raised in Manhattan’s LaGuardia Houses, where her mother still resides. “I see this as a great opportunity to grow and learn new things and to teach my daughters that there’s more than living in the ‘projects.’” Franco plans to apply with her mother and also have her two grown daughters move in. “It’s like a dream for me.”

Applicants must have a FICO



NYCHA residents learn about condominiums that Habitat for Humanity New York will build in Brooklyn that will be available only to low-income buyers.

credit score of at least 620, and must provide documents including pay stubs, W-2 forms and others. The housing units will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis, and they’re open to all New Yorkers who are eligible, not just NYCHA residents. Habitat is holding workshops over several months to work

with prospective applicants to get financially sound as the units are being built through 2013. They conduct no criminal background checks, but permanently registered sex offenders are not eligible to apply for or live in the Habitat homes.

“This program requires a lot of work on your part,”

Christopher Ilum, a Habitat Homeowner Associate, told the crowd. The homes are financed through “stimulus” funds. Successful applicants will go through an eight-hour, first-time homeowner class and a five-week class in maintenance. For more information and applications, go to [www.habitatnyc.org](http://www.habitatnyc.org).

## ARE YOU BILINGUAL?

MAKE A DIFFERENCE WORKING FROM HOME AS AN

## INTERPRETER

Language Line Services is hiring over-the-phone interpreters who are customer service oriented to work from the comfort of their homes. We offer professional training and exciting interpreter career growth opportunities. For more information or to apply visit [www.LanguageLine.com/Careers](http://www.LanguageLine.com/Careers) job requisition 002725 “Telephone interpreters that reside in New York”.



[www.languageline.com/careers](http://www.languageline.com/careers)

# Plan NYCHA Executive Summary

The Executive Summary for *Plan NYCHA* provides an overview of the Authority's vision for the next five years. The full text of the Executive Summary is presented below, along with several photos that appear in the report. The complete version can be viewed as a PDF on NYCHA's dedicated website at [plannycha.org](http://plannycha.org). The full report also can be viewed on the site, along with additional content, including video testimonials from residents and staff.

## A Call to Action to Preserve New York City Public Housing

*Plan NYCHA: A Roadmap for Preservation* is a call to action to ensure that public housing remains available for current and future generations of New Yorkers. Despite facing unprecedented challenges – from overwhelming funding shortages, to an aging and decaying housing stock in desperate need of repair, to a growing wait list of almost 161,000 families for public housing, and about 125,000 waiting for a Section 8 voucher – the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) is leading the charge to meet these obstacles head on. We need to overcome these challenges together; only through sustained, meaningful collaboration can we ensure that this invaluable resource will not be diminished. With recognition that a major transformation is needed both within the NYCHA organization and throughout the supporting environment, we are calling on all public housing stakeholders – residents, policymakers, advocates, NYCHA staff, and New Yorkers at large – to join the fight to preserve New York City public housing.



Martinez family, Rutgers Houses

## Strong Headwinds: Major Challenges Facing NYCHA

Recent years have brought unparalleled fiscal challenges for NYCHA, as we strive to preserve the 178,000 units of affordable housing and create new stock. In addition, we are now serving a broader population – seniors aging in place, individuals with disabilities and the chronic unemployed and underemployed – with needs that go well beyond housing. Major challenges facing NYCHA today include:

- *Unprecedented financial crisis.* Since 2002, NYCHA has received \$700 million less in operating subsidies than its federal funding formula requires. Similarly, despite an escalating need for funding to repair and maintain apartments and buildings, NYCHA's capital subsidies have been cut by a third over the past decade. These crises have resulted in a structural operating deficit and a \$13 billion capital shortfall through 2015.
- *Families hanging in the balance.* With vacancy rates in New York City remaining at an all-time low, the most impacted are low- to moderate-income families. Nearly 161,000 families are on the waiting list for public housing, and approximately 125,000 families are on the waiting list for Section 8 housing.
- *Increasing reliance of NYCHA residents on a wide range of community and social service programs.* Our programs and services are often a lifeline to residents, especially children, teens, single parent households, seniors, and families in crisis; thousands of residents use these services that directly cost NYCHA more than \$75 million, only \$12 million of which is funded by grants. Rather than retreating from these challenges, NYCHA is tackling them creatively with new determination.



Community Conversation, Manhattanville Community Center

## Our Vision for the Future

Through a transparent and inclusive planning process, NYCHA has engaged thousands of staff, residents, and resident leaders, including the Citywide Council of Presidents; as well as partners across the City and country to solicit ideas and seek guidance, as we develop our ambitious roadmap for the future. As we move forward, NYCHA must:

- Evolve the model for public housing and rental assistance in New York City to make it financially, socially, and environmentally sustainable;
- Provide or enable better access to decent, safe, and affordable housing for current customers;
- Increase the number of New Yorkers we serve;
- Support positive outcomes for NYCHA residents and communities;
- Transform into a high-performing organization that excels at customer service.

This bold and transformative vision to preserve public housing for New York City will require NYCHA, along with all of its stakeholders, to work collaboratively and unceasingly.



Highbridge Houses

## Plan NYCHA: the Imperatives, the Challenges, the Plan and the Call to Action

Plan NYCHA was developed in a truly collaborative fashion – involving a wide range of participants from public housing residents and resident leadership (including the Citywide Council of Presidents) to community advocates and NYCHA employees. While Plan NYCHA will continuously evolve, it has ten core critical imperatives that NYCHA and its stakeholders will champion over the next five years and beyond. These imperatives are each accompanied by a specific plan, respective challenges and a **call to action** for the various public housing stakeholders.

- 1. Preserve the public and affordable housing asset**  
NYCHA will clearly prioritize its capital needs, improve capital operations, and pursue creative public-private funding solutions to close the gap on unmet capital improvements.
- 2. Develop new mixed-use, mixed-income housing and resources**  
NYCHA will analyze financing options to develop new affordable housing as part of the Mayor's New Marketplace Housing Plan, and to create community and commercial facilities to serve residents and employ New Yorkers. NYCHA will also explore options for building mixed-income and market-rate housing, and for monetizing land and development rights to fund existing NYCHA capital needs.
- 3. Ensure financial stability**  
NYCHA will diversify its government funding, increase earned revenue, and create new business-development capabilities and public-private partnerships to ensure a balanced budget.
- 4. Expedite maintenance and repairs**  
NYCHA will ensure that all units are in a state of good repair and that all future needed repairs are scheduled and completed in a timely manner.
- 5. Strengthen the frontline**  
NYCHA will become an efficient, high-productivity organization with a strong focus on serving all its properties. NYCHA will be capably staffed with an adequately resourced professional corps of frontline employees. NYCHA will incorporate the best practices from property management companies to provide excellent service and high-quality management throughout its portfolio.
- 6. Improve safety and security**  
NYCHA will work with residents and law enforcement to create secure, healthy neighborhoods where residents, employees, and their visitors feel safe, both on NYCHA grounds and inside buildings.
- 7. Optimize apartment usage and ensure rental equity**  
NYCHA will transition families to housing units appropriate for their needs; maximize the number of families served by Section 8; phase in rent increases to households paying less than 30 percent of their income; and encourage higher-income families to transition out of public housing.
- 8. Connect residents and communities to critical services**  
NYCHA will seek funding from and collaborate with new and existing partners who offer high-quality and results-oriented programming, ensuring that residents receive the maximum benefit from critically-needed community and social services.
- 9. Excel in customer service**  
NYCHA must communicate more effectively with its customers in order to streamline service and meet their needs. NYCHA will become a customer-focused organization that strives to make each interaction a positive experience.
- 10. Create a high-performing NYCHA**  
As a high-performing organization, efficiency, operational excellence, and continuous improvement will be championed. Empowered employees will be capable of and held accountable for helping NYCHA achieve its goals, and NYCHA will celebrate and reward outstanding performance.



Mercedes Ruiz, Lower East Side I Infill



Taylor Cranston, Soundview Houses resident and Section 3 employee



NYCHA Brooklyn Customer Contact Center



Community Conversation, Rutgers Community Center

## Conclusion and Call to Action

Despite today's challenges, NYCHA's original 1934 mission remains unwavering: to increase opportunities for low- and moderate-income New Yorkers by providing safe, affordable housing and facilitating access to social and community services. Over time, NYCHA's ability to fulfill this mission has been stretched, and we are now being asked to do more than ever before. We are rising to this new call of duty, but we cannot do it alone.

We will succeed only through partnerships and new strategies to provide tailored support to our residents. We want to be flexible enough to deal with today's realities of our more diverse customer needs, but not lose sight of our fundamental goals: to see families move on and not continue to need our services. But for those we do serve, we need broad-based support from all public housing stakeholders in government, in the non-profit community and in the private sector to maintain our commitment to our core mission. We are asking for your support. As laid out in this Call to Action, we are prepared to do our part, and we hope you will join us in this noble effort to support NYC's families.

## Redevelopment of Prospect Plaza Closer to Reality

By Zodet Negrón

Former residents of the Prospect Plaza development in Brooklyn are excited to see that NYCHA is moving forward with redevelopment plans. The Request for Proposals (RFP) has gone out, the developer is scheduled to be chosen this year and construction is scheduled to start in 2013.

"Before there was a lot of talk and now I see that they are moving forward," said Joseph Hayes after the latest update meeting held at the Van Dyke Community Center in Brooklyn on January 11. "I feel that they are moving in the right direction."

In 2003, the development was vacated for rehabilitation as part of a HOPE VI Revitalization Plan sponsored by NYCHA and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In

2007, the project was suspended after it was determined that it was financially infeasible to renovate the towers. NYCHA went back to the drawing board and, with input from former residents and community stakeholders, developed the *Re-Vision Prospect Plaza Community Plan* in 2010.

"It's been a long road but it seems now that things are moving in a positive direction," said Arnold Pierce. "I look forward to the new apartments."

The RFP, jointly issued by NYCHA and the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, calls for the demolition of the remaining vacant towers and the construction of new mixed-use buildings with public housing and affordable housing units, ground floor retail space, open space and a

community center. There will be a minimum of 80 NYCHA public housing units and approximately 280 affordable housing units.

The project will be developed in three phases. The public housing units will be included in the first two phases, expected to be completed in 2015 and 2016 respectively. The third phase, which includes the community center and ground floor retail space, should be completed in 2017.

"I thought this meeting was going to be more of the same, but now that I see this new plan and what NYCHA is doing, I'm thinking of coming back," said Sabrina Williams.

Former residents and any new applicants who choose to return to the new development will have to undergo a credit check as part of the application



Former residents of Prospect Plaza listen closely to the latest news from NYCHA's Department for Development on the redevelopment plans underway during an update meeting at the Van Dyke Community Center in Brooklyn on January 11, 2012.

process. NYCHA offers free credit counseling services to former residents through non-profit groups Credit Where Credit Is Due and the Brownsville Partner-

ship. Many residents are taking advantage of this opportunity. For more information, go to [www.revisionprospectplaza.com](http://www.revisionprospectplaza.com).

## News from the Office of Resident Economic Empowerment and Sustainability (REES)

### New Pilot Program Connects Residents to Employment Opportunities

When Joshua Stevenson walked into NYCHA's Family Investment Center (FIC) at St. Nicholas Houses, he wasn't necessarily expecting to find a job. "My grandmother actually sent me to the Center to see if there were ways we could work together," said Mr. Stevenson, a 26-year old resident at the Manhattan development. "But when the staff recommended that I speak with the Office of Resident Economic Empowerment and Sustainability about potential jobs, I jumped at the opportunity."

Mr. Stevenson benefitted from a new pilot program from NYCHA's Office of Resident Economic Empowerment and Sustainability (REES) that refers

NYCHA residents to financial counseling, workforce development and adult education and training service providers. REES collaborates on the program with the Departments of Family Services, Property Management and Community Operations.

For Mr. Stevenson, a new father, his new position as a Consultant with the City University of New York's (CUNY) Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) isn't just a job – it's the beginning of a career. "I know this new position will set me on the path toward my goals for the future and enable me to provide for my family," Mr. Stevenson said. "This is the beginning of something great!"

The FIC, where social service

professionals provide support to St. Nicholas residents, made a direct referral to REES, who assessed Mr. Stevenson's skills and interests before referring him to an opportunity through NYCHA's Community Programs and Development department. As part of the referral pilot, FIC staff also referred Mr. Stevenson to financial counseling services with his local Financial Empowerment Center, a REES partner.

The referral pilot operates in Upper Manhattan and the South Bronx, and will run through March. By building on routine activities such as rent collection, community center programming and social service delivery, the referral system empowers NYCHA staff to identify, inform and connect residents to REES programs and local providers more effectively. The pilot period will allow REES to use feedback from residents, staff and local providers to inform the planned launch of a larger program later this year.

For more information on the pilot, or on how REES partners with residents to reach their economic and financial goals, call (718) 289-8100 or e-mail [REES@nycha.nyc.gov](mailto:REES@nycha.nyc.gov).



Joshua Stevenson has a new job - and career - thanks to assistance from a pilot program run by NYCHA's Office of Resident Economic Empowerment and Sustainability (REES).

### FREE Computer Training, Career and Education Enhancement, for NYCHA Residents!

NYCHA residents 13 and older can take free classes to improve their computer skills or to receive career or education assistance through the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program, run by the Department of Community Operations. The classes run through March 16.

- Computer Classes including a Microsoft Office Certificate Program
- Career Assessments and Job Readiness Training

(18 years of age and older)

- GED Preparation and Literacy Training (18 years of age and older)
- Computer Training for Teens (13-19 years of age)
- Goal-Setting Workshops

For more information, including locations and schedules, please contact the NYCHA Educational Services Unit at (212) 306-2880, (212) 306-3232 or (212) 306-3246 or go to [on.nyc.gov/nychabtop](http://on.nyc.gov/nychabtop) on NYCHA's website.

### Kidde, Manufacturer of Home Safety Products, Donates 60,000 Carbon Monoxide Alarms to NYCHA

A manufacturer of home safety products donated 60,000 carbon monoxide alarms to NYCHA. Kidde announced the donation along with Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg when he signed a bill on December 27 that requires all newly installed carbon monoxide alarms to have an audible signal that alerts residents when they expire and requires the replacement of carbon monoxide alarms when they expire. Carbon monoxide alarms have a useful life of five to seven years.

"I want to thank (Kidde) for their enormous contribution to the safety of residents in public housing," said Mayor Bloomberg.

The most important way residents can prevent

exposure to carbon monoxide gas is to not use ovens or stoves to heat their apartments. Carbon monoxide poisoning may result in nausea, headaches, dizziness and eventually unconsciousness and death.

"Kidde commends Mayor Bloomberg and city officials for their commitment to public safety, and is pleased to donate 60,000 carbon monoxide alarms to the New York City Housing Authority," said Jim Ward, General Manager and President of Kidde. "Our mission is to provide solutions that protect people from the effects of fire and carbon monoxide, and we will continue to support this initiative and others that will help keep New York families safe."



## NYCHA Continues to Expand its Social Media Presence

By Brent Grier

With websites like Facebook and Twitter enjoying more than 800 million and 100 million active users respectively, social media is a crucial part of how people interact with friends, family and their community. As part of the larger goal of keeping residents and all New Yorkers connected, NYCHA fully has incorporated social media into its day-to-day activities.

NYCHA has been an active participant in the recent push by New York City government to engage more than 25 million people a year through social media, which can help large organizations form deeper relationships with the people they serve, gain valuable feedback and share information about services. Unlike a web page, services like Facebook or Twitter allow users to pose questions and comments to NYCHA – with a good chance to receive a prompt, accurate response.

Twitter enables its users to send and read text-based posts of up to 140 characters – known as “tweets” – and was NYCHA’s first foray into social media. Since joining in March 2010, NYCHA’s Twitter account “@NYCHA\_Housing” has amassed more than 3,400 followers while sending out more than 2,500 tweets. Followers get information about issues such as repairs and maintenance, safety and security and career training opportunities.

NYCHA’s Facebook page receives between 15,000 and 20,000 views per month and offers users more details about key initiatives. Users have inquired about the status of repairs and housing applications on NYCHA’s “wall” as well as sharing inspiring stories about their NYCHA experiences.

Another key example of user participation in social media is the location-based service,



A screen shot shows NYCHA’s main Facebook page.

foursquare, which allows users to “check-in” at various venues using their phone while collecting points and virtual badges. Before NYCHA’s participation, many users created and checked-in to developments and Community Center locations citywide. Striving to reward that active participation, NYCHA now manages nearly 200 locations around the city.

The image-hosting website Flickr has helped NYCHA share more than 2,700 photos from events such as development anniversaries and Community Center ribbon cuttings, and has had nearly a quarter million views since May 2010.

The video platform YouTube has helped the Authority, re-post content from various events and even contributed to the NYCHA Sports Unit gaining a significant sponsorship from a sports apparel company for its current and future basketball seasons.

## Resident Associations Benefit from Becoming Nonprofit Organizations

By Eric Deutsch

Resident Associations have the ability to become legally recognized nonprofit organizations, sometimes called 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organizations. Diane Blackwell, the Resident Association (RA) President at Samuel Houses in Manhattan, said they achieved the status last July. “It allows us to reach out to organizations for funding,” Ms. Blackwell said. “We can become an economic engine for residents because we can apply for grants that would allow us to create clerical jobs.”

There are many benefits for an RA to attain 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status:

- Eligible to apply for government and private grants
- Donations to the RA are tax-deductible
- Some stores and businesses give discounts to nonprofits
- Some publications give an advertising discount to nonprofits
- Lower postage rates for mailing of more than 250 identical pieces of mail
- Tax-exempt status is permanent and does not have to be renewed

The Samuel Houses RA is in the planning stages of how to best utilize their new nonprofit status. “We still are seeking opportunities,” Ms. Blackwell said. “We want to work with the surrounding community too.”

Resident Associations can use their Tenant Participation Activity (TPA) funds to cover the costs associated with applying for nonprofit status. For more information, contact Colin Murray in the Department of Community Operations at (212) 306-3396 or [colin.murray@nycha.nyc.gov](mailto:colin.murray@nycha.nyc.gov).

## ‘Tis the Season...

NYCHA’s Senior Chorus gets into the spirit of the season at the tree lighting ceremony at St. Nicholas Houses in Manhattan on December 20, 2011.



### NYCHA social media sites:

	Facebook	<a href="http://www.facebook.com/NYCHA">www.facebook.com/NYCHA</a>
	Twitter	<a href="http://www.twitter.com/NYCHA_Housing">www.twitter.com/NYCHA_Housing</a>
	foursquare	<a href="http://www.foursquare.com/nycha_housing">www.foursquare.com/nycha_housing</a>
	Flickr	<a href="http://www.flickr.com/NYCHApics">www.flickr.com/NYCHApics</a>
	YouTube	<a href="http://www.youtube.com/NYCHAhousing">www.youtube.com/NYCHAhousing</a>



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Call us at 718-363-5024

Several of our schools offer an admissions preference for families living in NYC Public Housing.

## NYCHA Pays Tribute to VASH Veteran Participants

By Zodet Negrón

More than 50 veterans at a holiday luncheon for participants of the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program on December 16 shared their triumphs and struggles, but most of all their gratitude, for having found a home at NYCHA.

"Being here fills me with so much joy, to see other veterans going through what I'm going through and knowing that I am not alone means a lot," said Anita Manners, a veteran who lives in Frederick E. Samuel Houses in Manhattan, as she told her emotional story. "I have been in 11 shelters with my two children. HUD-VASH was a blessing for me. My prayers were answered after all that I went through serving my country."

The U. S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) VASH program connects homeless veterans from local Veterans Affairs

Medical Centers (VAMC) with HUD rental assistance vouchers provided by local public housing agencies like NYCHA. Since the program's inception in 2008, NYCHA's Leased Housing Department has placed more than 1,400 veterans through VASH. The Authority's Family Services VASH Unit assists veterans from the moment the voucher is issued until the completion of the rental process at one of NYCHA's 21 mixed finance locations. Since its creation in March 2011, the NYCHA Family Services VASH Unit has helped 75 veterans complete their rentals within NYCHA developments.

"If it weren't for NYCHA I would probably still be on the streets," said John Watson, who served in the Army Reserve for 23 years and now lives at St. Mary's Park in the Bronx. "There are a lot of good success stories here and I think



NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea speaks with veterans who have benefitted from the HUD-VASH program at a holiday luncheon on December 16, 2010.

NYCHA is doing a great thing."

The NYCHA Family Services VASH Unit works closely with VA case managers to ensure veterans stay linked to services in order to maintain stability in their new homes and achieve self-sufficiency.

"We all owe you an incredible debt of gratitude," said NYCHA

Chairman John B. Rhea. "The least we can do for you, our veterans, is to work together to give back to you so much that you have given to us."

NYCHA Board Member Victor Gonzalez, a U.S. Air Force veteran, honored the attendees with an official salute. "I am a veteran just like you

and a proud resident of public housing," he said. "This is the land of the free because of the brave (people like you)."

HUD Regional Administrator Adolfo Carrión also was in attendance to celebrate this pivotal moment in the veterans' lives as they transition into independent living.

## NYCHA Youth Have a Ball at Holiday Bash

Nearly 500 children from NYCHA developments city-wide rung in the holiday season during NYCHA's 21st Annual Holiday Toy/Food Drive at the Manhattanville Community Center on December 14. The young NYCHA residents celebrated and received donated toys from retailer JC Penney, and even had the opportunity to take a traditional Christmas photo with Santa and Mrs. Claus. The children also were treated to performances by members of NYCHA's Performing Arts Program and the Youth Chorus and Senior Choir.

Additionally, keeping with the holiday spirit of sharing, more than 1,100 pounds of canned food were collected for hungry New Yorkers during the Food Drive to benefit needy families, gathered on behalf of the Food Bank of NYC. Every participating child donated at least one can of food.

Woodside Community Center in Queens was recognized as bringing the most canned goods from any individual center, with 225 cans of food donated. Overall, 15 NYCHA community centers from all five boroughs embraced the wonderful tradition of giving to those less fortunate during the holiday season.

The celebration included a performance by the Gowanus Wildcats, a group of energetic young steppers from Brooklyn; a skit performed by an inter-generational cast of residents and guest performers expressing the joy of the holiday season; and a lively dance number by KGB, the winners in the teen category in the 2011 NYCHA Talent Show.

There were plenty of smiles to go around as the kids joined in on a sing-a-long with Mrs. Claus, and Santa did his part as he sat and posed with the kids making them merry with the warmth and joy of the season.

NYCHA Chairman John B.

Rhea, Deputy General Manager for Community Programs and Development Sharon Myrie and Assistant Deputy General Manager for Community Programs Deidra Gilliard, among others, did the honors of playing Santa for a bit and distributed to every child the donated toys, books and matching hat and scarf sets courtesy of the event sponsors, as the celebration came to an end.

To see more photos from the Toy/Food Drive, point your smartphone's camera here.



NYCHA youth show off the gifts they got from the big man himself, Santa Claus, at the NYCHA Annual Holiday Toy/Food Drive on December 14, 2011.

## NYC Public Schools Upcoming Important Dates

For more information on any of the activities listed below, parents can contact the Parent Coordinator at their child's school or call 311.

Kindergarten Admissions Period	Monday, January 9, 2012 – Monday, March 2, 2012
Mid-Winter Recess (Schools Closed)	Monday, February 20, 2012 – Friday, February 24, 2012
Middle School Parent Teacher Conferences	Tuesday, February 28, 2012 – Afternoon Wednesday, February 29, 2012 – Evening
Pre-Kindergarten Admissions Period	Monday, March 5, 2012 – Friday, April 6, 2012
Elementary School Parent Teacher Conferences	Tuesday, March 13, 2012 – Afternoon Wednesday, March 14, 2012 – Evening
District 75 Parent Teacher Conferences	Monday, March 19, 2012 – Evening Tuesday, March 20, 2012 – Afternoon
Pre-Kindergarten Non-Attendance Day	Friday, March 23, 2012
Forums for Pre-Kindergarten Families	Wednesday, March 28, 2012 – Bronx Tuesday, March 27, 2012 – Brooklyn Thursday, March 29, 2012 – Manhattan Tuesday, March 27, 2012 – Queens Wednesday, March 28, 2012 – Staten Island
High School Parents Teacher Conferences	Thursday, March 29, 2012 – Evening Friday, March 30, 2012 – Afternoon



### Trouble hearing? Did you know...

One in three adults in the United States experiences some degree of hearing loss.

- Hearing loss is common among those 70 and older
- Men are twice as likely as women to experience hearing loss in one or both ears
- Smoking, high blood pressure and diabetes increase the chances of hearing loss

If you or a member of your family needs information about hearing loss, contact the Center for Hearing & Communication at **(917) 305-7700** or [www.chchearing.org](http://www.chchearing.org). They are open Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

## Right-Sizing NYCHA

By Heidi Morales

The need for safe, decent and affordable housing continues to be a challenge in New York City and at NYCHA. More than 56,300 NYCHA apartments are under-occupied – the number of bedrooms exceeds the number of family members living there. Half of these units are occupied by seniors who live alone after

their adult children have moved out. In addition, nearly 13,000 NYCHA families live in overcrowded conditions, and need more bedrooms to accommodate them.

“NYCHA’s waiting list contains almost 161,000 families and is growing,” said Deputy General Manager for Operations Carlos Laboy. “To assist the greatest number of families and lessen the wait time for families in need of larger apartments, we must consistently enforce our policies

on rightsizing apartments, which will ensure a more equitable use of public housing units.”

The Property Management and Family Services Departments will work with families to transition to right-sized apartments. During residents’ annual income reviews, Property Management staff will send notification letters to residents living in under-occupied apartments informing them of the transfer options available to them to transition to right-sized apartments.

Mr. Laboy said NYCHA’s goal is to serve more families in need and not to displace anyone. “We want to work with the people who have been living in under-occupied apartments. We don’t want to move anyone out of their

neighborhood, but we need to maximize the use of our public housing,” said Mr. Laboy.

Empty bedrooms in an apartment also can increase the chance of a unit being used for unauthorized residents and illegal subletting, which are violations of NYCHA rules and regulations. This allows unauthorized residents to get around the waiting list, and to avoid mandatory background checks and screenings. It also is a financial strain for the Authority, as unauthorized residents drain resources and are not contributing rent.

Residents living in under-occupied apartments can visit or call their Management Office to discuss transfer options to transition to right-sized apartments.

## NYCHA Social Services Department Renamed to Family Services

NYCHA’s Social Services Department has been renamed the Family Services Department. The new name represents a broadening of the social services function and the Authority’s commitment to improve the quality of life for residents and to increase safety and security at developments, one family at a time. It also reflects the realignment of the department into Operations in 2011.

The Family Services Department will work closely with Property Management to assess the needs of residents and to provide services that will help sustain and stabilize NYCHA’s families and communities. Through Family Services, community-building and resident engagement will be strengthened by programs such as “one-stop-shopping” family service centers and Resident Watch, which now is a part of Family Services.

## MILESTONE ANNIVERSARY



### Astoria Houses Celebrates 60th Anniversary

Astoria Houses in Queens turned 60 on November 9, 2011. Gathering to celebrate the occasion were, from left to right, Catherine Lyles (resident), Mary Mosley (resident), Gina Williams (Assistant Property Maintenance Supervisor), Claudia Coger (Resident Association President), Almeda Rodman (resident), Jane Martin (Property Manager), Quentin Cooper (Caretaker), Kevin McNerney (Borough Operations Deputy Director), Hung Chen (Assistant Property Manager), Thomas Wagner (Property Maintenance Supervisor), and Jean Toussaint (Supervisor of Caretakers).

## Community Service Requirement

Starting this year as part of residents’ annual review process, NYCHA is providing resources to support compliance with the federal Community Service law. NYCHA will be expanding its efforts to ensure that everyone complies with the law and meets the Community Service requirement.

Many residents earn hours by assisting at government or community organizations like church or faith-based run programs, schools, libraries, non-profit organizations, hospitals and nursing homes. Residents can check the following

websites for opportunities in their neighborhoods:  
[www.volunteermatch.org](http://www.volunteermatch.org),  
[www.NYCSservice.org](http://www.NYCSservice.org)  
or call **311** and ask for volunteer opportunities.  
NYCHA’s borough Family

Services offices also offer assistance:  
Bronx **718-409-8699**,  
Brooklyn **718-498-3243**,  
Manhattan **212-334-2506**,  
Queens **718-206-3286**,  
Staten Island **718-816-1521**.

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Info: [www.sipa.columbia.edu/empa](http://www.sipa.columbia.edu/empa)

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Katori Hall. Photo by Gregory Costanzo

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Hurt Village is the recipient of an Edgerton Foundation New American Play Award.

It's the end of a long summer in Hurt Village, a housing project in Memphis, Tennessee, and a government Hope Grant means relocation for many of the project's residents. A bold, gritty and devastating work, *Hurt Village* earned Katori Hall the prestigious Susan Smith Blackburn Prize, given annually to an outstanding female playwright.

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