



City Council Awards NYCHA \$10 Million *Funding will help with repairs and hiring NYCHA residents*

City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn had an early Valentine gift for the New York City Housing Authority. On February 10, Speaker Quinn announced in her State of the City Address that NYCHA will receive \$10 million from the City Council to help fund repairs, which will reduce the current backlog. The money also will allow NYCHA to hire public housing residents to perform those repairs beginning this year.

"We have to find a way to get these repairs done in a reasonable amount of time," the Speaker said in her speech. "Part of the problem is NYCHA just doesn't have enough funding to make all the needed repairs. So this year, the Council is stepping up our commitment to NYCHA. Working with Council Member Rosie Mendez and NYCHA Chair John Rhea, we're going to add money to their budget so they can make more than 100,000 additional repairs in the next year."

NYCHA has lost nearly one billion dollars in funding since 2001. Working with the Council is part of *Plan NYCHA* which was developed over the past year to ensure the preservation of public housing. *Plan NYCHA* is a call to action that makes it clear that the Au-

thority cannot sustain itself alone, and efforts like the City Council's are critical for the future of NYCHA.

"Only through sustained, meaningful collaboration can we ensure that this invaluable resource will be available for future generations," said NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea. "With the \$10 million in funding from the New York City Council, we can work together to implement Plan NYCHA's imperatives of expediting maintenance and repairs, preserving the public and affordable housing asset, and connecting residents and communities to critical services such as job training and career-track employment."

With \$10 million in funding from the City Council, NYCHA anticipates filling an additional 116,000 work orders annually – reducing approximately 12 per-

cent of the maintenance work orders in the backlog. The Authority expects to create 176 new jobs that will be filled by NYCHA residents; half of the positions will be filled by graduates of the NYCHA Resident Training Academy (NRTA), and half will be filled by current residents working at NYCHA.

This funding from the City Council will help shape an innovative solution that will maintain and improve the infrastructure of NYCHA's affordable housing stock while creating new jobs with career pathways for public housing residents. The project significantly will increase the number of maintenance and repair work orders completed on an annual basis, as NYCHA hires qualified NYCHA residents and promotes current NYCHA resident-employees to assist maintenance workers in these



City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn

tasks. Moreover, NYCHA anticipates that residents not currently working at NYCHA will receive soft-skills and hard-skills training in basic maintenance through the NRTA.

NYCHA Talking Trash: When It Comes to Garbage, Do the Right Thing

A message to residents from Deputy General Manager Carlos Laboy-Diaz on behalf of Property Management staff

When residents don't place garbage in the proper disposal area, it is an issue that affects everyone who lives and also works at NYCHA. Leaving trash out in the hallway, stairway, lobby, elevator or in front of the building is not only unattractive, it also attracts rats and mice. Tossing trash in these areas can lead to other serious problems such as injuries for caretakers, who work to clean and maintain NYCHA buildings.

Each year, 50 percent of caretaker injuries are a result of handling garbage (cuts, sprains and punctures) that is not disposed of properly. When garbage is placed down the chute it is compacted into compactor bags. This enables the

caretaker to bring the bags out to the curb for pick up either by the Department of Sanitation or a NYCHA truck. When garbage is placed in front of buildings or in any other undesignated area, the garbage is not compacted, which makes it more dangerous for caretakers to pick up because it can contain glass, and other sharp or heavy objects.

"Garbage is a hazard for us as residents and caretakers," said Shekeiva King, a NYCHA caretaker at Ravenswood Houses and a resident of Queensbridge South in Queens. "It shocks me that some residents don't seem to care."

Ms. King mentioned that she and her fellow caretakers can fill up to 10 bags of garbage that is either thrown out windows, left in stairwells or placed in front of the building and this can take up most of the day. In addition to picking up the garbage, caretakers need to re-bag it and take it to the waste management area. Otherwise, Sanitation trucks will not pick it up. When residents put garbage in its proper place, caretakers will face fewer injuries and can spend less time picking it up. This leaves them with more time keeping the rest of the buildings clean and rodent-free.

Around 80 percent of garbage is disposed of between the hours of 4 p.m. and 8 p.m., according to Cesare Gentile, NYCHA Coordinator of the Waste Management Unit. If the garbage is left where it doesn't belong—in front of the building, on the stairs or even the lobby—it will sit there until the following morning when the caretakers report to work.

"As much as we exterminate, if you leave the garbage out, you are feeding the rats," said Gentile.

Both the NYCHA lease and Resident *continued on page 4*



Residents' discarded garbage piles up on a sidewalk, attracting rodents on the Lower East side.

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JOB AND TAX INFORMATION

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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 meetings for Calendar Year 2012, are as follows:

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

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 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 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.



Plan NYCHA Website is Live and Ready!

The new website dedicated to *Plan NYCHA: A Roadmap for Preservation* is now live and ready for your viewing and input. Plannycha.org complements the written report and gives an overview of NYCHA's strategic plan and key initiatives. It serves as a destination for receiving *Plan NYCHA* updates and progress reports, and the site connects users to NYCHA and partner resources.

Other features on this "microsite" include a feedback form for residents/supporters to give their comments about the Plan and the site; a translation of the Executive Summary in Chinese, Russian and Spanish; an opportunity for site visitors to vote on which imperative is most important

to them; and frequently asked questions and answers about quality of life and funding matters.

The site also includes video testimonials from residents and NYCHA employees who participated in NYCHA's Community Conversations. There also is a short overview video that 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 78-year history. NYCHA encourages all residents and supporters to share the site with their friends on social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Pinterest, etc.

The screenshot shows the PLANNYCHA website with a navigation menu (HOME, MAYOR'S MESSAGE, THE PLAN, MISSION, CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE, TRANSFORMING NYCHA, GET INVOLVED) and a search bar. The main banner features a photo of a young girl with the text "Will NYCHA still be here when I grow up?" and "A CALL TO ACTION". Below the banner is a "NEWS" section with a link to "NYCHA Unveils Strategic Plan - Plan NYCHA: A Roadmap for Preservation". At the bottom, there are five small images with captions: "we are homes", "securing our communities", "plan nycha is survival", "we are a developer", and "engaging the community".

Resident's Voices

Editor's note: For this issue only, Residents' Voices has been moved to page 4.

CCOP Member Attends State of the Union Address

Ann Cotton-Morris, the City-wide Council of Presidents Queens District representative and Woodside Houses Resident Association President, attended President Obama's State of the Union address on January 24. She was the guest of Queens Congressman Joseph Crowley.

"It was an amazing opportunity to experience an historical event such as this," Ms. Cotton-Morris said. "Sitting in the gallery witnessing the State of the Union speech, gave me a new perspective on how great our country is and how our existence as a country is shared by so many different government agencies."

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Message from the Chairman

NYCHA continues to work hard day and night to preserve public housing for the future – but we know that the key to that future lies in our youth. As home to roughly 120,000 New Yorkers under 18, we have an obligation to give young residents the resources and support they need to live successful, independent and fulfilling lives.

That's why when Mayor Bloomberg announced the citywide Young Men's Initiative (YMI) last year to break down the barriers to success facing young black and Latino men in our city, we knew NYCHA would be at the center of the effort. Since then we've been working tirelessly with partners across city agencies to find more ways to help young men overcome obstacles and get ahead. From expanding Jobs-Plus employment services in community centers, to introducing the NYCHA Fatherhood Initiative, which provides parenting programs for fathers and opportunities for them to connect with their kids, NYCHA remains fully committed to being a strong source of support for young black and Latino men.

Now, as part of the Young Men's Initiative, NYCHA is engaging in an all-out multi-agency effort to address a simple problem with potentially serious consequences for many young people: a lack of official identification. Not having any of the three official forms of ID – a driver's/non-driver's license, Social Security card, or birth certificate – may not seem like a big deal, but in fact it very much is. Official government-issued ID is an essential part of the employment process, since employers are prohibited by law from hiring applicants without identification. ID is required by law for participation in benefit programs like food stamps, cash

assistance and Medicaid. It also is absolutely necessary for opening a bank account, renting an apartment, applying for college and much more. And yet, many young people around our city – especially young black and Latino men – lack a valid ID.

Starting in February, NYCHA will be providing information about obtaining the three basic forms of ID at all Property Management Offices, Customer Contact Centers and Community Centers, as well as on the NYCHA website at www.nyc.gov/nycha. Staff at community centers also will be available to assist in the application process. I strongly encourage any NYCHA resident who lacks one of these documents to take advantage of this resource by visiting any of these sites.

In this month's journal, you will read about another initiative NYCHA is rolling out at Washington Houses, Armstrong Houses, and Mill Brook Houses aimed at engaging young people in positive activities and getting them more involved in the well-being of the community. In partnership with the NYPD, we're providing a venue where young residents can speak their minds about the issues they face and what kinds of programs they would like to have access to. The initiative also aims to get more young people involved in Resident Watch programs, putting their skills and energy to work making communities safer.

I invite you to read more about these and other initiatives throughout this issue. Building a bright future for young New Yorkers requires all of us to lend a hand. I'm confident that working together, we can ensure that all NYCHA youth have the opportunity to become tomorrow's role models and community leaders. Thank you for being a part of this important work.

John Rhee

NYCHA's Garden and Greening Program is Golden

Celebrating 50 years of planting, growing and building community

By Heidi Morales

"If it wasn't for this garden I don't know if I would be alive. I really enjoy the gardening," said 81 year-old Marian Dolphus of South Jamaica Houses. She is one of hundreds of NYCHA residents who have made the Authority "green" before the rest of the city caught on.

Since 1962, NYCHA's Garden and Greening Program has demonstrated through its value, enrichment and involvement of residents, that it is worth its weight in gold. NYCHA is celebrating a major milestone this year—50 years of helping residents improve and beautify their communities while also expanding their personal knowledge of gardening and the environment.

One of the first efforts where NYCHA and public housing residents were able to make this happen was at the Chelsea-Elliott Houses in Manhattan. Although the original garden is no longer there (there are

now five!), that little patch of green has morphed into 650 vegetable and flower gardens in approximately 200 of the 334 developments.

"The program is a true testament of NYCHA and the residents' commitment to their broader community," said Board Member Margarita López, who is also NYCHA's Green Agenda Coordinator. "It is through this partnership that this program has been able to succeed for so long; both parties are putting into the pot to make this happen. The residents invest a lot of time and resources into their gardens; in return, NYCHA adds to their capacity with both technical and physical resources."

NYCHA initiated a Citywide Resident Garden Competition from which NYCHA's current Garden and Greening Program was born. It was first a Flower Garden Contest, and then expanded to include the Vegetable and Theme Gardens categories. To recognize the efforts of these gardeners, NYCHA hosts an annual Garden and Greening Awards Competition. In 2011, 622 gar-



Marian Dolphus tends to the garden at the South Jamaica Houses.

dens registered as part of the annual competition

Ms. Dolphus is one of the many NYCHA residents who put her heart and her hands into enriching the earth—and entering the competition. This grandmother of 12 has been gardening and competing in the Garden and Greening Competition since 1975 and has won more than 100 trophies in the process. "[NYCHA staff] told me to enter and I did and I've been winning ever since," chuckled

Ms. Dolphus who has lived in NYCHA for 50 years. When she moved to the South Jamaica Houses, all she wanted was to use the vacant site on the grounds to grow vegetables and herbs for her four sons and her to eat. She had no knowledge of a competition nor did she intend on entering it. Since winning her first trophy, it's been life-changing for her—and for the ground that she tends.

"I had one person ask me if they could have a wedding

in my garden," Ms. Dolphus said. It's wonderful! I love it! You have to love doing this! I wish I could garden all year round."

For this special 50th year, NYCHA's Garden and Greening Program hopes to launch the season with the Midas touch and make it one of the more fruitful years it has seen to date. Look for dates and upcoming events celebrating the program, along with more profiles of NYCHA's resident gardeners.

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 www.nyc.gov/nycha. The following are the people who were excluded as of January 2011, listed below with their former addresses.

Prohibited as of January 5, 2011

Obafemi Adedapo Langston Hughes Houses, 301 Sutter Ave., Apt. 17B, Brooklyn
Wallace Green Marcy Houses, 464 Marcy Ave., Apt. 1B, Brooklyn
Malcolm Hogue Butler Houses, 1458 Webster Ave., Apt. 6L, Bronx
Eric Leonard, Jaquan Cowan, and Sanae Elfaquire Wagner Houses, 350 East 124th St., Apt. 16F, Manhattan
Andre Muller Jefferson Houses 228 East 115th St., Apt. 10C, Manhattan
Maria Rodriguez Douglass Houses, 60 West 104th St., Apt. 9A, Manhattan
Jonathan Ryals Tompkins Houses, 65 Tompkins Ave., Apt. 4A, Brooklyn
Kevia Spivey and Charisse Jolly Ocean Bay Apt. Houses, 54-81 Almeda Ave., Apt. 2F, Queens
Kerri Watts, Timothy Wilfield, and Alfred Thomson Gowanus Houses, 417 Baltic Ave., Apt. 4D, Brooklyn
Emir Williams a/k/a Emir Cunningham Amsterdam Houses, 216 West 63rd St., Apt. 5A, Manhattan

Prohibited as of January 12, 2011

Tony Jones Williamsburg Houses, 92 Maujer St., Apt. 4A, Brooklyn
Geovani Mercado a/k/a Giovanni Mercado Castle Hill Houses, 2245 Randall Ave. Apt. 11B, Bronx
Reginald Ridley Manhattanville Houses, 3250 Broadway, Apt. 8F, Manhattan
Joey Rivera Grant Houses, 55 LaSalle St., Apt. 18B, Manhattan
Peter Roman Wilson Houses, 405 East 105th St., Apt. 8G, Manhattan
Juan Vila Throggs Neck Houses, 2705 Schley Ave., Apt. 5A, Bronx

Prohibited as of January 19, 2011

Fred Brown Mill Brook House, 640 East 137th St., Apt. 13F, Bronx
Marisa Brown Webster Houses, 1260 Webster Ave., Apt. 7E, Bronx
Henry Carbonell Grant Houses, 3150 Broadway, Apt. 21E, Manhattan
Andre Harper Ocean Bay Apt. Houses, 414 Beach 58th St., Apt. 7D, Queens
Bryant Hodge Throggs Neck Houses, 505 Calhoun Ave., Apt. 1C, Bronx
Rashah Holmes and Cortelee Wood Gowanus Houses, 423 Baltic St., Apt. 10E, Brooklyn
Michael Johnson and Andrew Hill Penn-Worthman/Vandalia Houses, 155 Wortman Ave., Apt. 3B, Brooklyn
Alton Maggette Melrose Houses, 321 East 153rd St., Apt. 1J, Bronx
Lynn Nieves Straus Houses, 224 East 28th St., Apt. 4B, Manhattan
Roger Patrick Louis Armstrong Houses, 346 Clifton Place, Apt. 00A, Brooklyn
Roger Reid LaGuardia-Two Bridges Houses, 280 Madison St., Apt. 13B, Manhattan
Sashawn Simpson Ocean Bay Apt. (Oceanside) Houses, 440 Beach 54th St., Apt. 6C, Queens
Juan Soriano a/k/a Juan Forte Morrisania Air Rights Houses, 285 East 156th St., Apt. 14B, Bronx
Darren Washington Gravesend Houses, 2729 West 33rd St., Apt. 4B, Brooklyn

Prohibited as of January 26, 2011

Angel Alvarez Polo Grounds Houses, 2979 8th Ave., Apt. 26M, Manhattan
Luis Bermudez Polo Grounds Houses, 2937 8th Ave., Apt. 21E, Manhattan
David Boyd and Bobby Hopson Fiorentino Plaza Houses, 2165 Pitkin Ave., Apt. 2B, Brooklyn
Pedro Cotto Metro North Rehab House, 310 East 102 St., Apt. 10G, Manhattan
Jerome Collins Butler Houses, 1428-1430 Webster Ave. Apt. 10A, Bronx
Flor Forte Jackson Houses, 301 East 156th St., Apt. 2D, Bronx
Derick Graham Mott Haven Houses, 340 Alexander Ave., Apt. 10D, Bronx
Walter Moore Clinton Houses, 1485 Park Ave., Apt. 7G, Manhattan
Ronald Tillman and Jesus Reyes Tompkins Houses, 744 Park Ave., Apt. 4C, Brooklyn

A Message from the NYPD

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

COME JOIN US! For more information, call 212-NY CADET or go to www.nypdcadets.com.

Resident's Voices

Editor's note: For this issue only, Resident's Voices has been moved to page 4.

◀ continued from page 1

NYCHA Talking Trash: When it comes to Garbage, Do the Right Thing

Handbook state that as a tenant, it is a resident's obligation to dispose of all garbage, rubbish and other waste in a sanitary, safe and lawful manner. Residents must comply with the rules and obey all regulations stated in their lease agreement. Failure to do that can be subject to lease termination.

Household trash must be placed in the compactor chutes located in the hallway of each floor in a building. Large items such as mattresses, furniture and other bulky materials must be placed in the designated trash collection areas of a development. NYCHA staff encourages residents to make it a goal to work together to be good neighbors and help make NYCHA a home everyone can be proud of.

Resident's Voices



January 8, 2012

(via mail)

I am a Pomonok resident for many years. I would like to commend a few people who work here. First and foremost, Gail, the manager's secretary. She is always willing to help the tenants. Second, the housing assistant, Ms. Johnson, also always there to help whether you are her tenant or not. Third, our wonderful exterminator, Cheryl, courteous, friendly and does the job well. Last, but never least, our caretaker, Reggie. He goes above and beyond to keep our building clean and smelling fresh. Reggie has been a God-send; no trash is around our building when he's at work. Thanks to all of them for making Pomonok Houses the "JEWEL" of NYCHA.

Marilyn Velazquez, Pomonok Houses

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.

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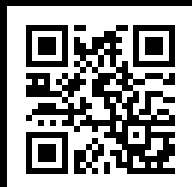
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Michael R. Bloomberg
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'Wizard's Corner' Will Help NYCHA Youth Get Ahead in Their Studies

By Eric Deutsch

The elderly gentleman sat comfortably on the couch, enjoying a leisurely conversation with several NYCHA youth. "Do you have homework every day?" he asked one of the children.

"I wish I didn't ever have any homework," the child responded.

"What subject do you have the most homework in?"

"Math," the child fretted, hanging his head down. "But I'm good at it!" he exclaimed as he brightly perked up.

This conversation between real estate executive Joseph Rosenblatt and 10-year old Julian Figueroa of the Berry Street-South 9th Street Houses was one of the highlights of the opening of the Wizard's Corner. This new afterschool effort at the Independence Towers Community Center was funded by Mr. Rosenblatt's \$250,000 donation to the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City. Wizard's Corner provides quiet, private space for public housing youth to do homework and study in space designed for this very use. It also will be in place at Williamsburg Houses and Taylor-Wythe Houses.

Mr. Rosenblatt was inspired to make this happen after a tour of an apartment building where he noticed that families had no place for kids to do homework. "In the half-dozen apartments I was in, there were three or four kids living in each one, and I didn't see one book, one table, one desk or one chair [in any of them]," the lifelong New Yorker said. "I said to myself, 'I have to do something about this.'"

Eligible children, aged 5-11 in the Williamsburg area, will now receive desks, lamps and chairs from Wizard's Corner to use in their homes in the three Brooklyn developments. The funding also will provide dedicated study spaces in the community centers that recreate the setup the children will have at home.

"Mr. Rosenblatt's wish to provide the most basic necessities to help our children learn the proper practices and habits of studying and completing assignments emphasizes the importance of education, and will help to prepare them for lifelong learning and success," said NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea. The program, whose name came from a suggestion by Chairman Rhea, will accommodate 400 children in its first year—and hundreds more afterwards.

Children who use the community center spaces will have access to the Wizard's Corner each weekday after school from 3:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. "It looks nice and beautiful," said 9-year old Keyana Loggins from Independence Towers, as she looked at the newly red painted walls. "And it's my favorite color!"



Donor Joseph Rosenblatt talks to youth at Independence Towers where they'll enjoy a newly furnished study space.

NYCHA Plans Laundry Room Expansion

Residents at Manhattanville Houses and Wise Towers have a much shorter walk now to wash their clothes—laundry rooms in both Manhattan developments recently re-opened. The washers and dryers at Manhattanville and Wise Towers use smart cards instead of cash. NYCHA also plans to open more laundry rooms in other developments.

In addition to providing a convenience for residents, the



Manhattanville resident Colleen Dowell loads her laundry into one of the new dryers in her development's recently re-opened laundry room.

laundry rooms have a tie-in to Plan NYCHA, the Authority's strategic roadmap to preserve public housing. When NYCHA rents out space in developments to vendors who manage and maintain the space, such as

laundry rooms, this will generate money for use throughout the Authority. To meet the Plan NYCHA directive to ensure financial stability, NYCHA is exploring additional ways to supplement its funding sources.

New Executive VP for Development to Lead NYCHA's Expansion Plans

Frederick S. Harris has joined NYCHA as its new Executive Vice President for Development. Mr. Harris' appointment underscores the increasing importance of NYCHA's efforts to develop mixed-use and mixed-income housing on land owned by the Authority, as outlined in its strategic Plan NYCHA. Mr. Harris most recently served as Senior Vice President for Development for AvalonBay Communities, Inc., where he oversaw the development of more than 5,000 apartments.

"Fred's expertise in development, community reinvestment and specific knowledge of the New York City market will be an incredible asset to me and the executive team," said NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea. "With Plan NYCHA we are embarking on a period of innovation and ambitious partnerships; Fred's demonstrated track record of creativity and success makes him perfect for the job."

NYCHA's inventory of vacant land and available development rights provide it with significant opportunities for new construction. The Authority also can generate revenue that can be reinvested to preserve public housing and to fund its ongoing operations.

As part of Mayor Bloomberg's New Housing Marketplace Plan to produce and preserve affordable housing, NYCHA intends to accelerate the production

of units on its land. To date, the development pipeline has resulted in the completion of 1,365 units, with another 939 units under construction and approximately 1,845 units in pre-development for a total of 4,149 units through 2011.

In addition to his work at AvalonBay, Mr. Harris has served as Vice President of The Trotwood Corporation and as the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's Director of Real Estate. He also was a founding director of the not-for-profit National Urban Reconstruction and Housing Agency in Johannesburg, South Africa, which accelerated



the production of housing for the poor through the use of financial guarantees and targeted equity investments.

Mr. Harris started at NYCHA on February 13.

Are you between the ages of 16 and 24? Do you live in Jamaica, Hollis or St. Albans, Queens?

Have you had involvement with the justice system in the last 12 months?

Young Adult Justice Program at LaGuardia Community College

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NYCHA Seniors Find a New Place to Live—Right Next Door

For many people, growing older may mean slowing down or being shut away from the community, family and friends. For 90-year old Laretta Fodera, a former Pomonok Houses resident, now is a new beginning for her as she moved into Met Council's new senior housing in Queens—Council Tower VI.

"I am glad they gave me this opportunity to live with dignity and pride in a beautiful development," said Mrs. Fodera at the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new 78-unit development on February 21, 2012.

Thanks to a partnership between NYCHA and the Departments of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and the Housing Development Corporation (HDC), the construction of Tower VI was not only made possible but became a reality. The development was built on a former NYCHA parking lot at the Pomonok Houses and seniors residing in NYCHA public housing received preference for 19 units.

It was developed under Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg's New Housing Marketplace Plan, a multi-billion dollar initiative to finance 165,000 units of affordable housing for half a million New Yorkers by 2014.

"This is an excellent example of how all of us—government agencies and non-profit organizations—can combine our unique strengths and resources to better serve New Yorkers," said NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea. "This development for our senior population shows how working together, even in tough economic times, we can find innovative solutions to meet the demand for affordable supportive housing."

Met Council's CEO and Executive Director William Rappogel said these partnerships help his organization better serve vulnerable New Yorkers. "We are so grateful to HUD, the Housing Authority, HPD, HDC and other government agencies and elected leaders that support our mission of bringing affordable housing to communities in need." The new senior

development was created to serve as supportive affordable housing for low-income residents 62 years and older.

Ms. Fodera has been living in the community since the public housing development was built in 1952. She raised five sons and several grandchildren in the development and felt that she and her husband were ready to downsize and move into a place where they would be with peers and also receive assistance with their daily living. Sadly, Ms. Fodera's husband didn't live to transition into their new home and start anew with his wife of 69 years. "I'm only sorry that my husband who passed away isn't here to share this blessing with me," she said.

She added that she is also happy because her move to a more appropriately-sized unit in Council Tower VI will give another family a new beginning. Now her old apartment in Pomonok Houses has been made available to accommodate a large family either awaiting a transfer to a larger apartment or will be selected from NYCHA's grow-



New Met Council Towers resident Laretta Fodera (center), with NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea and HUD Deputy Regional Administrator Mirza Orriols.

ing waiting list, which currently stands at 161,000.

There are nearly 50,000 people in NYCHA housing units who are not living in properly sized apartments—they have

too many rooms for their family size. NYCHA continues to work with partners such as the Met Council and its sister agencies and residents to explore how best to meet *continued on page 8* ▶

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NYCHA Youth Nominated for Scholarships for Public Housing Residents

The New York City Housing Authority is committed to helping public housing residents achieve their goals of higher learning and actively seeks and promotes opportunities for NYCHA residents to afford a college education. The Scholarship Committee at NYCHA has nominated three outstanding public housing high school seniors for consideration of college scholarships offered by the Public Housing Authorities Directors Association (PHADA) and the New York State chapter of the organization (NYSPHADA). The awards range in value from \$1,000 up to \$7,000 and honor academic excellence, as well as community responsibility among high school students.

Sadia Nusrat, who resides in Brooklyn's Gowanus Houses with her family, and attends Midwood HS, also in Brooklyn, submitted two exceptional applications and received nominations for both the PHADA and NYSPHADA scholarship programs. Sadia's fellow-nominees are Joshua El-Bey, who lives in the Red Hook Houses and attends Edward R. Murrow HS in Brooklyn; and Ronald Brown, who lives in Queens' Pomonok Houses and attends Brooklyn Technical HS in Brooklyn.

All three will compete against other public housing graduating seniors throughout New York State for the NYSPHADA scholarship. In the case of the PHADA scholarship, they face nationwide competition. NYCHA wishes Sadia, Joshua and Ronald the best of luck, and consider them all to be fine representatives of the hard-working spirit of public housing families.



Gowanus Houses resident Sadia Nusrat is a double-nominee for public housing authority scholarships.

Here is Sadia Nusrat's nominated essay:

President Carter once said, "We become not a melting pot but a beautiful mosaic: different people, different beliefs, different yearnings, different hopes, and different dreams." His idea best describes the atmosphere of New York City, my home. The Big Apple, the city that never sleeps, captures the hearts of international believers. New York City is the capital city of the world; the home of fashion, entertainment, and architecture but most importantly cultural diversity.

It was here that I learned to mature, to experience, and to live. This city bestowed me with various opportunities to explore my interests and prosper my skills. Additionally, NYC has many programs to aid its civilians and enhance their lives. For example, the New York City Housing Authority provided my family with an affordable apartment through public housing, a form of assistance for families with low income. My family and I moved into the Gowanus community two years ago. The first few days in my new neighborhood were apprehensive but as time progressed, I began to

interact with my neighbors easily. My neighborhood was multifarious, vivid, and beautiful.

Suddenly, my shy personality was overtaken by my energetic stamina to learn more about the different cultures I was amidst. Public housing gave me the chance to embrace the values of equality, identity, and originality. From seeing the distinct traditions of my fellow neighbors, I realized that I too can follow my native traditions while living in a foreign nation. The Gowanus community emphasized the beauty of cultural diffusion. By understanding the importance of multiculturalism, I was able to unite with people from different backgrounds and develop meaningful bonds. To my surprise, I eventually became oblivious to their skin color and accented language.

My experience in public housing helped me to establish a better personality at school. I became more involved in clubs like the Environmental Club, through which I was able to capture the bountiful beauty of my city and its people and do something positive for my school and community. Additionally, I started to occupy my free time by doing community service at hospitals, medical offices,

festivals, and tutorials. Usually I would travel with the same people, but living in Gowanus showed me that meeting new people can be an enriching experience. Thus, I became more socially independent and less socially awkward.

In High School I also began to comprehend the values of diligence, patience, failure, and creativity. From taking extensive AP courses, I realized that even the best fall down sometimes. Through my research class and Microbiology Lab, I learned to be a critical thinker. I understood that my knowledge shouldn't be limited to books; I had to use my imagination to explore beyond what I read, heard, or saw. A few years back I was a timorous freshman but today, after learning relevant lessons about friendship, hard work, and perseverance, I walk through the hallways in a confident and satisfied manner. Both public housing and high school experiences have showed me that the only way to truly live my life is to look beyond the obvious, try new things, believe in others, and be amazed by what I can accomplish by simply stepping outside that door.

Mayor's Young Men's Initiative: Find Help Getting ID

In August 2011, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg launched the Young Men's Initiative to tackle disparities between young black and Latino males and their peers. As part of the Mayor's Young Men's Initiative, NYCHA has engaged in NYC Executive Order 150, which aims to help New Yorkers obtain government-issued identification.



NYCHA realizes that having government-issued identification often is necessary to participate in various activities. They include access to government benefits and services, such as opening a bank account; cashing a check; renting an apartment; applying for college; and getting a job. Starting in February, NYCHA will provide information about how to obtain the three basic forms of ID – a birth certificate, Social Security card and non-driver State ID – at all Property Management Offices, Customer Contact Centers, Community Centers and on the NYCHA website, www.nyc.gov/nycha. Assistance with the process of applying for such identification can be provided upon request at NYCHA-sponsored community centers.



Barbie's Closet

Around 60 NYCHA girls got a taste of the glamorous world of Mattel's Barbie: The Dream Closet event at Lincoln Center on February 11, 2012, where they got the star treatment with new hairstyles and a manicure. The event was part of Mercedes Benz Fashion Week.

◀ continued from page 7

NYCHA Seniors Find a New Place to Live—Right Next Door

their needs and assist other families who can be better accommodated by these under-utilized apartments when they become available, which is in line with NYCHA's strategic Plan NYCHA.

Hilda Aviles, a nearly 20-year resident of Pomonok Houses, said moving into Council Tower VI was an incredible opportunity. "I like it [the building] a lot. It's quieter, cleaner and a better environment for me," she said. Ms. Aviles added that she is excited to be among her peers and have access to activities and programming. On-site services for the seniors also include Meals-on-Wheels,

case management, housekeeping assistance, individual and group counseling, healthcare referrals, and social and recreational activities.

Ms. Fodera expressed how uncertain of the future and bewildered she was when her husband passed away and she was left by herself. "When I got this apartment I knew that I would live and be happy because I wouldn't be afraid," she said. "This is why I want to thank everybody responsible for giving a senior citizen like me and all the senior citizens in the south of Queens the opportunity to live with dignity and pride and not be afraid."

A NYCHA-NYPD Collaboration Looks to Reduce Crime

Teens discuss issues that matter to them

By Eric Deutsch and Zodet Negrón

The latest collaboration between NYCHA and the New York City Police Department (NYPD) focuses on improving the quality of life for residents in three developments through a wide-ranging approach to reducing crime and improving the quality of life for the residents of these developments. NYCHA staff in several departments – Community Operations, Property Management, Security, Family Services, Emergency Services and Law – are targeting specific programs for residents in Armstrong Houses (Brooklyn), Mill Brook Houses (Bronx) and Washington Houses (Manhattan), and the NYPD is committed to providing additional resources to the developments.

The initiative places much of its focus on NYCHA youth, including engaging teenagers in upcoming forums to better understand their needs. The Police Service Areas (PSAs) that serve each development also hosted a holiday toy drive in December. “A lot of the altercations at our development are because young people have nowhere to go, no programs to congregate together,” said Marietta Palmer, the Washington Houses Resident Association President. “Most developments have a similar problem.”

The Office of Resident Economic Empowerment and Sustainability (REES) is meeting with residents to let them know about the NYCHA Resident



Youth gather at the Louis Armstrong Community Center in Brooklyn to talk safety.

Training Academy, which provides job training and employment opportunities—important aspects of crime reduction. “The job program is a very good thing. Many residents can’t afford to go to college,” Ms. Palmer said. “They’re really coming out for this program.”

Property Management teams have surveyed outdoor lighting to ensure that it is sufficient and are surveying landscaping to ensure it enhances crime prevention. NYCHA’s work order system for the three developments classifies security and life safety repairs as priorities, including vandalism to building entrances.

NYCHA has set a goal to increase participation – especially among younger residents – in Resident Watch at Armstrong, Mill Brook and Washington.

As part of the program’s outreach to youth, 30 young NYCHA residents from Brooklyn gathered for a Teen Forum

at the Armstrong Community Center on February 2 to find answers to this question. The goal of these forums is to better understand the needs of youth between the ages of 13 and 19 for community center programming, job training and homework assistance, among other things. The event’s goal was to improve the quality of life and the safety of residents within high-crime areas. This is a crucial part of the joint NYCHA-NYPD Washington, Armstrong and Millbrook Houses Initiative and the latest of three teen summits held for the youth of these developments.

The informal discussion, led by Eric Cumberbatch of NYCHA’s Community Operations, covered topics such as community programs, jobs and educational opportunities. When asked what kind of programming they would like to see in their community center, the teens mentioned

sports such as martial arts, basketball, football and even double-dutch, dancing and recording music.

“I would like a basketball program here,” said Kamel Williams, 14, of Armstrong Houses. “It would give me something to do after school.”

Personnel from the New York City Police Department’s Police Athletic League also discussed after-school and recreational opportunities for teens such as the Explorers program for teens ages 14 to 19 for which focuses on the areas of career, service, leadership, social, fitness and outdoors, and the Cadet program for college students, which offers them financial aid for tuition and employment. The teens also heard from NYCHA’s Office of Resident and Economic Empowerment and

Sustainability (REES) regarding job training and employment in community centers or with NYCHA partners.

“I would like the opportunity to help get a job,” said Sidney Selby, 15, of Armstrong Houses. “I think a job can help keep you off the streets.”

In an effort to help make their communities a better place to live, the teens were urged to become more active and get involved in NYCHA’s Resident Watch program.

NYCHA will gather the feedback from the teens who participated in the forums and via a survey in each community center to make youth programming and other activities available more accessible for them.

Be sure to check future issues of the Journal for more coverage of this initiative.



NYCHA Community Operations Director Eric Cumberbatch touches base with one of the youth in attendance at the Armstrong center.

Comments? Questions? E-mail Journal@nycha.nyc.gov.



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

Jobs and Taxes Information

Sara, a resident of Brooklyn's Marcy Houses, is excited to be starting a new career as an Executive Assistant with a company located at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. "My supervisor is providing on-the-job training," she says, "and I'm learning a lot in my new role."

Opportunities like Sara's (who asked that her last name be omitted) are a result of NYCHA's Office of Resident Economic Empowerment and Sustainability (REES) and its new partnership with the Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation (BNYDC) and Robin Hood. The BNYDC is actively recruiting NYCHA residents for a variety of job opportunities available with employers in the Brooklyn Navy Yard and surrounding community. The Navy Yard is in the midst of its largest expansion since World War II, and BNYDC and NYCHA want to make sure that residents have access to the available jobs.

The open positions range from security/public safety, customer service, bookkeeping, maintenance and many other areas. In order to prepare NYCHA residents for these opportunities, REES is holding pre-screening appointments with interested residents to review job opportunities, provide resume revisions and make direct referrals to staff at BNYDC's Employment Center. NYCHA is also working with CUNY's City College of New York (CCNY) through NYCHA's Broadband Technology Opportunities Program to host a series of Employ-

ment Fundamentals Workshops tailored to the job opportunities at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. These monthly workshops are open to all NYCHA residents by appointment.

For Sara, her new opportunity means renewed confidence and a newfound financial independence. "I plan to pay for all my student loans with this job!" she exclaimed.

This partnership is a prime example of the ways in which NYCHA is working to connect residents to local employment and economic opportunities. For more information on employment opportunities with employers at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, or to learn more about the upcoming Employment Fundamentals Workshops, call **718-289-8100** or e-mail **REES@nycha.nyc.gov**.

Many Options at Tax Time for NYCHA Residents

Eligible New Yorkers have several options to file their taxes for free or at a very low cost, and can get help to access tax credits, thanks to several City programs. New York City's Tax Credit Coalition Campaign, which NYCHA is a partner of, helped more than 72,000 New Yorkers file their taxes for free in 2010.

New Yorkers who earn less than \$57,000 a year can file their taxes online for free through the City's tax-prep website at **www.nyc.gov/taxprep**. For people who want a professional to prepare their taxes, there are free and low-cost options. Volunteer Income

Tax Assistance (VITA) sites have certified volunteers who will prepare taxes for free. To be eligible, residents with children must earn less than \$50,000 a year and those without children must earn less than \$18,000 a year. Visit **www.nyc.gov/taxprep** for a listing of free tax preparation sites citywide.

In addition, H&R Block will prepare taxes for \$29 for residents with children who earn less than \$41,000 a year; and for filers who do not have children and who earn less than \$31,000 a year. To take advantage of the H&R Block offer, go to **www.nyc.gov/taxprep** and follow the instructions to print a coupon that can be turned in at participating sites.

New Yorkers also can find out if they qualify for important tax credits, including the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the New York City Child Care Tax Credit. Working New Yorkers with children earning up to \$49,078 a year could be eligible for up to \$7,476 from the EITC. Working New Yorkers with no children earning up to \$18,740 a year could be eligible for up to \$603. A working family earning up to \$30,000 a year who pays child care costs for children up to age four could be eligible for up to \$1,733 from the New York City Child Care Tax Credit.

"With the EITC and other tax credits, many of our residents are able to receive a refund that helps them to stabilize their finances and makes it a little easier to put something aside to save," said NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea. "NYCHA is committed to making sure residents have access to free and affordable high quality financial products and services."

The effort to ensure that residents have access to tax preparation is part of NYCHA's new strategy to connect residents to high quality financial resources. For more information, including tax preparation locations, eligibility for tax credits and which documents are required, call **311** and ask for tax preparation assistance or visit **www.nyc.gov/taxprep**.



Senior News

Earn 50% Interest on your Tax Refund!

File your taxes for free at a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site and you may get the opportunity to open a SaveUSA account. SaveUSA is a special account that will pay you an interest rate of 50 percent if your tax refund remains in the account for one year. A minimum tax refund of \$200 and maximum of \$1,000 can be deposited. Example: Deposit \$600...collect \$900 in one year. Remember, the SaveUSA program is only offered to those who file their taxes at Volunteer Income Tax Assistance sites. Call **311** for information about VITA sites and ask about New York City's SaveUSA program

MILESTONE ANNIVERSARY



Monroe Houses Celebrates 50th Anniversary

Monroe Houses turned 50 in November and residents and staff gathered to mark the occasion. From left to right, Terry Swan (resident), Norma Flores (Caretaker J), Victor Cortes (Caretaker X), Cheryl Keys (Property Manager), Laurine Berry (Tenant Association President), Robert Chestnut (Property Maintenance Supervisor), Jeffrey Rosario (Supervisor of Housing Grounds), George Ramirez (Maintenance Worker) and Genise Guerrero (resident).



Find a Job at the Public Libraries

NYCHA residents looking for assistance with their resumes or in finding a job now can get assistance at the City's public libraries. Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and Small Business Services Commissioner Robert W. Walsh announced a partnership between public libraries and the City's Workforce1 Career Centers. The two newest Workforce1 Centers are in Long Island City and on Staten Island. Workforce1 Career Centers also have opened in the Queens Library in Flushing, the Brooklyn Public Library Sunset Park branch, and one will open in the New York Public Library in the Bronx later this year, marking a partnership with all three public library systems. The public library Centers have placed New Yorkers in more than 500 jobs since launching this fall. Workforce1 Career Centers offer one-on-one appointments with jobseekers to review their resume, screen for jobs and match candidates with available jobs. Go to **www.nyc.gov** for Workforce Centers locations throughout the City.

2012 22nd ANNUAL RESIDENT ART SHOW CITYWIDE ART COMPETITION OPEN TO ALL NYCHA RESIDENTS



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