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Residents add their thoughts on NYCHA going smoke free to a banner.

SMOKE-FREE NYCHA: COMING JULY 2018

THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HUD)

requires all public housing authorities (PHA) to go smoke-free by July 30, 2018. Here's what you need to know.

What does HUD require?

HUD wants every PHA to prohibit the use of cigarettes, cigars, pipes, and hookah pipes inside apartments, in indoor common areas, and within 25 feet of buildings. NYCHA is required to update every tenant's lease to state that smoking by household members and their guests is a violation of the lease. NYCHA residents will receive revised leases to sign in 2018. Smoking is already

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The New Year Brings A New Senior Center to Red Hook



Cutting the red ribbon to open the new Red Hook Senior Center, from left to right: Red Hook Houses West RA President Lillie Marshall; Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez; NYCHA Chair Shola Olatoye; Red Hook Houses East RA President Frances Brown; Commissioner for Department for the Aging Donna Corrado, Assistant Speaker of the State Assembly Felix Ortiz; Lisette Sosa-Dickson, Executive Director of RAICES; Red Hook Houses East resident Candida Delgado; City Council Member Carlos Menchaca; and Red Hook Houses East resident Gertrude Holzendorf.

RED HOOK EAST Houses residents Gertrude "Trudie" Holzendorf, 94, and Candida Delgado, 88 had been

anxiously waiting for this moment for five years. On December 15, they got a sneak peek at the new

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8)

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

A FRESH START



WELCOME TO 2018. I hope your holidays were joyous and provided time for rest and relaxation.

NYCHA's New Year's resolution: Continue to work tirelessly on our NextGeneration NYCHA commitment to create safe, healthy communities for our residents and connect them to exceptional services and programs throughout the five boroughs.

You may have heard about NYCHA's issues with compliance with local and federal lead-based paint regulations. Please know that your health and safety is our top priority and we have taken immediate action to improve our lead-based paint inspection program and ensure our residents have lead-safe homes. Read more about what we're doing on page 3.

In 2018, we'll continue our work to improve resident quality of life. Crime was down at NYCHA developments citywide in 2017, thanks to the work of the NYPD and capital improvements like new exterior lighting, CCTV cameras, and more secure entryway doors.

What are your New Year's resolutions? If you're having trouble deciding what to do, this issue of *The NYCHA Journal* is full of articles that can inspire you to achieve important goals. For example, there's

no time like right now to quit smoking. In July, NYCHA, along with public housing authorities across the country, is going smoke free. Read about one NYCHA resident's triumph over this habit (page 5).

If your resolution is to start exercising, biking is a great exercise and a speedy way to travel around the city. Whitman Houses resident Shaquana Boykin has gotten healthier since she started biking with Citi Bike in 2016, thanks to the discounted NYCHA resident Citi Bike membership (page 6).

Maybe your resolution is to start your own business. Or do you want to go back to school or get a better job in 2018? Now, you can take advantage of opportunities that will open doors, thanks to REES's Opportunity Connect (page 13).

I look forward to continuing to work in partnership with you on the Authority's NextGen goals. As we start 2018, I promise to you and our 500,000 residents that NYCHA will continue working hard every day until we've achieved safe, clean, and connected communities for this generation and the next.

Best wishes for a happy, healthy, prosperous new year,

Shola Olatoye
Chair and CEO

NYCHA BOARD MEETINGS

NYCHA'S BOARD MEETINGS, open to the public, generally take place on the last Wednesday of each month at 10 a.m. in the NYCHA 12th floor conference room at 250 Broadway. People who wish to speak during the public comment period must pre-register at least 45 minutes before the meeting is scheduled to begin and can only comment about items on that meeting's agenda. Each speaker's time is limited to three minutes. The public comment period concludes either when all speakers are finished or after the 30 minutes allotted by law for public comment, whichever comes first.

Copies of the calendar for the upcoming board meeting are available on NYCHA's website or can be picked up at the Office of the Corporate Secretary, 250 Broadway, 12th floor, after 3 p.m. on the Monday before the meeting. Copies of the dispositions of prior meetings are available on NYCHA's website or can be picked up from the Office of the Corporate Secretary no earlier than 3 p.m. on the Thursday after the board meeting. Any person requiring reasonable accommodation in order to participate in the meeting should contact the Office of the Corporate Secretary at **212-306-6088** no later than five business days prior to the meeting. For additional information regarding the calendar of meetings, dispositions, dates, and times, please call **212-306-6088**.

For those unable to attend the board meetings, please visit <http://on.nyc.gov/boardmeetings> at the time of the meeting to watch live. You may also watch past board meetings by visiting NYCHAnnel, NYCHA's YouTube page at <https://www.youtube.com/c/nycha>.

Upcoming Meetings:

January 31, 2018	May 30, 2018	October 31, 2018
February 28, 2018	June 27, 2018	November 28, 2018
March 28, 2018	July 25, 2018	December 19, 2018
April 25, 2018	September 26, 2018	

The NYCHA JOURNAL

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December 20, 2017

Dear Residents,

In recent weeks, you've likely heard news reports about lead-based paint and compliance at NYCHA. All residents, particularly parents and grandparents of young children, understandably have many questions about what the Authority is doing to address potential lead-based paint hazards.

Here are the facts about lead paint from the New York City Department of Health:

- Lead dust from peeling lead paint is the most common source of lead exposure for young children. Normal child behavior, like putting fingers and objects in their mouths, can result in ingestion of lead dust.
- Lead paint poisoning is at an all-time low in New York City. Children in public housing have lower rates of lead poisoning than those in private housing.
- If the paint is intact and is not, for example, chipped, peeling or flaking, the lead-based paint is not a hazard.

One child impacted by lead-based paint is one too many; so NYCHA is taking immediate and comprehensive steps to come into compliance and create lead-safe homes, including:

- ***Apartment Inspections:*** NYCHA has inspected more than 8,000 apartments with children under the age of 6. If you have any questions, please contact the Customer Contact Center at 718-707-7771.
- ***NEW Common Area Inspections:*** Starting this month, NYCHA is also inspecting residential common areas, such as entrances and stairwells, at more than 250 developments. This is part of our comprehensive approach to improve health and safety. These inspections have not been systematically conducted since Local Law 1 was passed in 2003.
- ***Training:*** A certified vendor is conducting the visual inspections for 2017. We are working to ensure the workers inspecting, remediating (painting any potential hazards), and abating (removing any future hazards) of lead-based paint have proper training.
- ***Compliance:*** NYCHA is working to urgently correct the gaps in compliance. We are creating a centralized Compliance Department to understand NYCHA's compliance obligations, to create processes to ensure compliance and to monitor NYCHA's ongoing performance.
- ***Monitor:*** NYCHA fully embraces accountability, oversight, and the appointment of an independent federal monitor.

Over the past few years, we've worked together to improve NYCHA. We were proud to stand in partnership in 2015 to launch NextGen NYCHA, a 10 year strategic plan to drastically change the City's public housing to improve quality of life. We made a lot of progress. There's more to be done.

A big part of our success has been rebuilding trust between NYCHA and our residents. I understand the frustration and the fear many are feeling. We will continue to improve and we will need your continued partnership to do so.

As the Chair, the leader of this organization, the health and safety of our community—**our residents, our families, our employees**—is at the forefront of my mind and the work the Authority is entrusted to do on behalf of the 1 in 14 New Yorkers who call NYCHA home.

We will continue working every day until we've achieved our goal to create safe, clean and connected communities for this generation and the next. We'll continue to keep you informed.

Onward,

Shola Olatoye, Chair & CEO
New York City Housing Authority



SMOKE-FREE NYCHA: COMING JULY 2018

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)
SMOKE-FREE NYCHA: COMING JULY 2018

prohibited in management offices, lobbies, hallways, stairwells, and elevators.

Why go smoke-free?

It's about your health! NYCHA residents deserve safe, clean, and healthy homes and communities. Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in the USA. There is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke, and it can lead to stroke, heart disease, cancer, and asthma. Children and seniors are most at risk, but everyone is affected. Plus, NYCHA residents have higher levels of chronic diseases made worse by smoking and secondhand smoke.

"Many times in my house you would think that I was the one smoking but it's coming from outside my apartment," says Castle Hill Houses resident Carrie Sealy, member of NYCHA's Advisory Group on Smoking and Health. "It'll be interesting to see the number of asthma episodes that will go down because children are not being exposed to second hand smoke. School attendance may increase; overall quality of life and quality of health will get better. A lot of people want to stop smoking and this could help them do it, as long as there's support."



Some of the members of NYCHA's Advisory Group on Smoking and Health at one of their meetings.



Residents shared ideas and input on NYCHA going smoke free at various engagement events, which included interactive activities such as this smoke-free poetry table.

A 2012 citywide survey found that most NYCHA residents say smoke enters their apartment on a regular basis; and 70 percent would prefer to live in a smoke-free building.

How is NYCHA developing its smoke-free policy?

Going smoke free at the largest PHA in the country won't happen overnight. NYCHA has worked for more than a year to create its policy, *Smoke-Free NYCHA*, gathering input from residents, employees, and partner organizations, including the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH).

NYCHA's Advisory Group on Smoking and Health includes residents and partners who work in the developments to spread the word on the new policy. Carrie Sealy, member of the Advisory Group, says having residents on an advisory group is important because "you're hearing the voice of the people the policy is actually going to affect, people who are non-smokers and people who are smokers. One woman is still a smoker and I like that her voice was heard and then there are people like myself who've never smoked, my voice was heard as well."

In addition, in March and April of last year, community meetings were held in all five boroughs with DOHMH representatives, and the

Authority is currently meeting with Resident Associations to provide an update on the policy. NYCHA and DOHMH staff talked to over 1,500 residents at Family Days about going smoke free.

How will NYCHA enforce the smoke-free policy?

Though the policy is still being developed, NYCHA will use graduated enforcement, addressing violations with a series of warnings and specific, progressive enforcement actions, while also educating residents and providing resources or referrals to residents who want to quit smoking.

"Smoke-Free NYCHA is one of many NextGeneration NYCHA initiatives underway to create healthier and more comfortable homes," said Andrea Mata, NYCHA's Director of Health Initiatives. "Change will be gradual but we're excited to help reduce exposure to secondhand smoke and connect residents who smoke and want to quit to resources that support their efforts."



SMOKE-FREE NYCHA: COMING JULY 2018

How I Quit Smoking



Dawn Burgess, *Morrisania Air Rights Resident*

I WAS A SMOKER for almost 38 years. I stopped smoking in March 2016. What made me stop smoking? I have asthma. I got sick and had to be admitted to the hospital. I couldn't get any air in. I had to sleep with a sleep apnea mask for three or four nights. I finally said, "I'm done!" It was either quit or be on oxygen for the rest of my life.

I didn't set a stop date, but I did start smoking less. I used to smoke a pack and a half a day; I brought it down to half a pack, then to six or seven a day. I used the Chantix starter kit for the first two weeks and then went cold turkey. I will say that in order to stop smoking you have to be ready mind, body, and soul. All you can do is try.

It's been 19 months since I stopped smoking and I'm breathing better now. My two daughters celebrated when I quit. They've seen EMS coming to get me, they've seen me attached to machines at

If You're Ready to Quit

It helps to prepare yourself to quit smoking. People are more likely to stay smoke free with support.

NYC Quits provides free support to help you quit for good, such as information on how to quit, how to deal with nicotine withdrawal symptoms, and quit smoking programs close to your home. Text **NYC QUIT**s to **877-877**.

For more information and resources on quitting smoking, call **311** or go to **nyc.gov** and search for "quit smoking."

Visit NYC Quits: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/smoking-nyc-quits.page>

How to Quit Smoking: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/smoking-how-to-quit.page>

Call or visit NYS Quitline 866-NY-QUITS <https://www.nysmokefree.com/>

the hospital, so they are very happy I quit. I'm also saving money by not buying cigarettes, so I've been able to take my daughters on a couple of cruises.

Crime Down in 2017 at NYCHA

Last year saw a significant decrease in crime at NYCHA developments across the five boroughs

“IN 2017, we made great progress combating serious crime and safety issues across the Authority,” NYCHA's Vice President for Public Safety Gerald Nelson said. “The Mayor's Action Plan and our partnerships with the NYPD and residents are critical to improving resident quality of life at NYCHA.”

The City's significant investment in safety-related infrastructure has played a major role in crime reduction throughout NYCHA. To date, \$140 million from the Mayor, City Council and Speaker, and the Manhattan District Attorney's Office has gone toward security upgrades at the 15 developments that are the focus of the Mayor's Action Plan (MAP). MAP is a strategy to



New exterior lighting, like the ones pictured here at Castle Hill Houses in the Bronx, is one of the tools used as part of the MAP program to increase neighborhood safety.

reduce violence and increase neighborhood safety at the 15 NYCHA developments that accounted for 20 percent of all violent crime in public housing in 2014.

At the end of 2017, NYCHA finished installing new exterior lighting at 14 of the MAP developments—more than 6,200 state-of-the-art LED lights. NYCHA installed CCTV cameras at six developments and began that work at eight more. Installation of layered access control (secure building entry doors) is complete at three developments and underway at 11 sites.

“Resident safety is our top priority,” said NYCHA Chair and CEO Shola Olatoye. “Through NextGen NYCHA, we have invested in our communities and these crime stats show we are making strong progress.”

2017 Crime and Safety Highlights

- Overall crime at NYCHA is down 6.8% when compared to 2016; more importantly, violent crime (murder, rape, robbery, assault) is also down 6.8%.
- PSA 2 (40 developments in Brooklyn) had a 17.4% drop in crime (60% drop in murder, 47.8% drop in rape, 10% drop in robberies and an 18% drop in felony assault).
- There were no murders at NYCHA developments in Staten Island in 2017.
- Improved and increased data sharing between NYCHA and NYPD has reduced the amount of time, by almost 50%, required to resolve tenancy legal cases.

Crime Decrease by Borough

- NYCHA-wide: Crime is down 6.8% as compared to 2016.
- Staten Island: Crime is down 21.8%
- Brooklyn: Crime is down 10.7%
- Manhattan: Crime is down 5.7%
- Bronx: Crime is down 2.6%
- Queens: Crime is down 2.2%

NYCHA Resident Recognized by the Better Bike Share Partnership

NYCHA'S TOP CITI Bike rider from Bedford-Stuyvesant is Walt Whitman Houses resident Shaquana Boykin, who clocked in at 577 rides in 2017. That brings her total number of rides since joining Citi Bike in 2015 to 1,716—almost 223 hours of biking.

On December 7, member organizations of the NYC Better Bike Share Partnership honored top Citi Bike riders from Bedford-Stuyvesant, East Harlem, and Two Bridges. The partnership includes NYCHA, Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, Citi Bike, NYC Department of Transportation, NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Interfaith Medical Center, Woodhull Medical Center, Myrtle Avenue Brooklyn Partnership, and El Barrio Bikes.

Ms. Boykin won top rider for the second year in a row. She uses Citi Bike to travel between home, college, and her job as Program Manager of the Healthy Communities Initiative of the Myrtle Avenue Brooklyn Partnership.

"I was surprised and honored to win top rider again. We're keeping the mission of the Better Bike Share going without much effort, meeting people in their own communities," she explains. "Citi Bike meets me in my community, where I am at. I don't have to worry about using a lot of money for traveling and easy access to a bike helps me balance my busy schedule."

Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation received a grant from the Better Bike Share Partnership, funded by The JPB Foundation, to make bike share more accessible. The NYC Better Bike Share Partnership originally focused on Bedford-Stuyvesant but recently expanded to include East Harlem and the Two Bridges neighborhood on the Lower East Side. Additional funding was provided by the New York State Health Foundation and the New York State Creating Healthy Schools and Communities initiative.

"This partnership has been working for three years and we've evolved in our conversations about what equity is and what we want bike share to do, which is benefit people of color and low-income residents so that they have access to jobs, economical building, better health, and really getting around their neighborhoods," said Tracey Capers, Executive Vice President of Programs/Organizational Development at Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation.

NYCHA collaborates with the Partnership as part of its work to connect residents to preventive health resources and advance resident leadership in health.

NYCHA residents 16 years and older can join Citi Bike for just \$5 a month and get unlimited rides all year. To learn more, visit: <https://www.citibikenyc.com/pricing/nycha>.

Meet the Mayor of the Washington Park Citi Bike Station



Shaquana Boykin in front of the sign proclaiming her Station Mayor of Citi Bike's Washington Park station.

In 2017, Walt Whitman Houses resident Shaquana Boykin was named Mayor of the Washington Park Citi Bike station in Brooklyn—the first NYC resident to ever receive that honor. She is an avid Citi Bike rider and one of NYCHA's top Citi Bike riders.

Why do you use Citi Bike so often?

It's the fastest way to get around. I can go to work; in the middle of the day I can go to school at City Tech in downtown Brooklyn; and then I can ride back to my job at the Myrtle Avenue Brooklyn Partnership. I'm in the community and I work with tenant associations in Whitman, Farragut, and Ingersoll, and it's easier to bike to the office rather than waiting for

transportation or spending extra money on taxis. I cut off four hours of travel a day.

Second, on Citi Bike you're getting exercise without thinking about it. I'm busy and I don't have time to be in the gym, but after I started biking every day I've seen a difference.

What other ways do you use Citi Bike?

I also use the bike for the City Harvest Pantry at Farragut. We move about 15,000 pounds of food and I bike to our storage place and put supplies on the bike. I get there quicker than most people who are waiting on transportation.

I also lead community bike rides from the Washington Park Citi Bike station May through October on the second Saturday of the month at 10:15 a.m. I love leading the bike rides because I get to meet different people in the neighborhood. On a bike ride you can have people who live in NYCHA and people who own homes.

A Taste of West Africa in Harlem

JOHNSON HOUSES RESIDENT

Naima Afoatti is the proud owner of NINI, a company that shares a taste of her home through the traditional drinks of Togo, West Africa. Thanks to what she learned in NYCHA's Food Business Pathways (FBP) program, Ms. Afoatti is growing her business online and sees herself closer to one day opening a West African café.

In 2016, Ms. Afoatti, age 24, graduated from FBP, a 10-week competitive business course for NYCHA residents interested in owning food businesses. The program is a collaboration between NYCHA's Office of Resident Economic Empowerment & Sustainability (REES), NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS), Citi Community Development, Hot Bread Kitchen, Start Small Think Big, other kitchen incubators, and REES zone partners.



"FBP makes sure you understand the business aspect," Ms. Afoatti said. "I had already done a lot of research and did a business plan, but once FBP started, I listened to what the teachers said and fixed the errors I made."

Ms. Afoatti was one of four students from her cohort to receive free kitchen incubator space at Hot Bread Kitchen. There she was able to work on recipes for the healthy juices she sells, made with fresh ingredients such as pineapple, lemon, and ginger.

The idea for her company grew from her childhood. When Ms. Afoatti was 10, she moved from Togo to the U.S. and into Johnson Houses in Harlem. She and her mom made and sold drinks to people in their neighborhood. Eventually, their customers would stop them on the street for additional orders. As she got older,

Ms. Afoatti wondered if she could turn their work into something bigger and began researching and planning—which is how she found out about the FBP program.

"I am very grateful for this opportunity with Food Business Pathways because it confirmed so much of what I was doing," said Ms. Afoatti. "It's been hard trying to think of how I can push through to be successful, and this program really pushed me to do more."

NINI is currently sold online at **drinknini.com** and in two physical locations in Harlem, New York Grill and Healthy Selection. She also sells NINI at special pop-up events throughout the city and is finalizing the process to sell through Amazon Fresh. Ms. Afoatti's goal is to sell NINI at Whole Foods and in the meantime she is working to expand her products' online presence. Five percent of NINI's profits support the professional development of women entrepreneurs



working in the agricultural industry in Togo, West Africa.

Since it launched in 2015, Food Business Pathways has empowered 167 residents to launch their own businesses by providing them with business education, startup capital, and affordable space to help them turn their business dreams into reality.

Ms. Afoatti's ultimate dream is to open a West African café that teaches people more about the history and culture of that region, brings the community together, and also supports African-owned businesses.

Congrats to 35 New NYCHApreneurs!

ON NOVEMBER 28, NYCHA celebrated 35 residents who successfully completed the Food Business Pathways (FBP) program. Now prepared to launch or scale their food businesses, they join the program's 167 previous participants as resident business owners creating delicious food for New Yorkers to enjoy. Since it started in 2015, FBP has empowered residents to launch their own businesses by providing them with business education, startup capital, and affordable space in which to build their businesses. The program is a collaboration between the Office of Resident Economic



Empowerment & Sustainability (REES), NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS), Citi Community Development, Hot Bread Kitchen, Start Small Think Big, other kitchen incubators, and REES zone partners across the city.

To learn more about Food Business Pathways, visit <http://opportunitynycha.org/business-development/food-business-pathways>.

Red Hook Senior Center; the former center had been destroyed by Superstorm Sandy. The Center officially opened for programming in January.

Ms. Delgado has lived at Red Hook Houses for 63 years and raised seven children there. Her excitement was contagious. "I'm very happy that this new center is open," she said. "Now, I'm alive and well. I was worrying and worrying because Sandy took our center away. I come every day. There's nobody in my house but here at the center I have a lot of friends. We come to talk and gossip."

Ms. Holzendorf, a 32-year Red Hook resident, said, "It's beautiful, it's convenient. I will come every day that it's open, for breakfast, for lunch. This is my second home."

The original center was located in a basement that flooded during Superstorm Sandy in 2012. Seniors were given temporary space in the Joseph Miccio Cornerstone Community Center, but they needed and wanted a space of their own.

The new center, located outside of the flood zone, was built with \$5.7 million in funding from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), New York City Council, and federal funding—including \$1.8 million from City Council Member Carlos Menchaca and \$1 million from Congresswoman Nydia Velasquez. The building, vacant for several years, received a top-to-bottom renovation: new roof, heating and ventilation systems, insulated concrete



Red Hook Houses Resident Association Presidents Lillie Marshall (left, West) and Frances Brown (East) were happy to tour the new center.



NYCHA Chair Shola Olatoye (second from left) and City Council Member Carlos Menchaca (second from right) welcome Red Hook residents Candida Delgado (left) and Gertrude Holzendorf to the new senior center.

slab floors, kitchen equipment, bathroom refurbishments, fixtures, plumbing, electrical, walls and flooring, doors and hardware. Red Hook seniors provided design input; the new center also features an exercise room, sewing and dominos room, and computer lab.

"Seniors make up one fifth of NYCHA's residents, and well over a third of our households are

headed by people age 62 or older. Many of our seniors have lived in their homes for decades and are anchors of their communities, providing wisdom, support, and continuity to younger families, said NYCHA Chair & CEO Shola Olatoye. "I am very proud that this new center will serve more than 1,100 seniors."

Lisette Sosa-Dickson, Executive Director of The



Red Hook East Houses resident Candida Delgado holds a piece of the red ribbon she helped cut to welcome the community to the new Red Hook Senior Center.

Spanish Speaking Elderly Council-RAICES, which operates the center, added that the center provides older adults in the community with a dedicated space to receive vital support services and programs as well as exercise, breakfast and lunch, and most importantly, companionship.

Attendees at the opening also included Congresswoman Velazquez, New York State Senator Velmanette Montgomery, Council Member Menchaca, Assistant Speaker of the State Assembly Felix Ortiz, and Commissioner for Department for the Aging Donna Corrado. Frances Brown, RA President of Red Hook Houses East and Lillie Marshall, RA President of Red Hook Houses West, also spoke.

First Class of Sandy Pre-Apprenticeship Program Graduates

WYCKOFF HOUSES RESIDENT Alex Rodriguez wants to become an electrician and join a union. NYCHA's Pathways to Apprenticeship helped him create a road map to reach that goal.

On November 6, Mr. Rodriguez and 22 fellow NYCHA residents graduated from the first class of Pathways to Apprenticeship. The program, for NYCHA residents affected by Superstorm Sandy, provides classroom and hands-on construction training. After graduation, they are connected to apprenticeships in the building and construction trade unions working on NYCHA's Sandy recovery contracts. Residents from other NYCHA developments are allowed to participate in the apprentice program, space permitting.

"Five years after Superstorm Sandy, we are committed to building back stronger and providing new opportunities for our residents," said NYCHA Chair and CEO Shola Olatoye. "Today's graduates will join trade unions working to rebuild their own communities, and should take pride knowing they are helping get the City back on its feet through their hard work and dedication to their futures, their families, and our community."

NYCHA's Office of Recovery and Resilience (NYCHA R+R) manages Sandy recovery and resilience work at 33 developments. Through this work, over 550 new jobs have been created and 370 have been filled by low-



The 23 resident graduates of NYCHA's first class of Pathways to Apprenticeship program celebrate their successful completion of the program with a ceremony held at the Red Hook Initiative.

income New Yorkers, including 221 NYCHA residents. NYCHA residents are given top priority when new hires are considered on any NYCHA project.

Participants in the four-week Pathways to Apprenticeship program receive important safety certifications including OSHA 10 and Scaffold Security plus a \$250 stipend after completing each week of training, a Metro-Card, helmet, work boots, and assorted equipment.

Mr. Rodriguez, who would like to become a member of electrical union Local 3 IBEW, said he would definitely recommend the program, "It's necessary to know what it is you want to do and how you're going to get there and this program helps you do that. Pathways to Apprenticeship is creating a new funneling system, a system that helps benefit our communities, our families, ourselves, and not the prison industrial complex. Funneling people into jobs, into a trade, and not prisons."

Pathways to Apprenticeship is one of the three apprenticeship programs offered by

NYCHA's Sandy Recovery Pre-Apprenticeship Program, led by NYCHA R+R, which plans to train 100 residents a year. NYCHA R+R received \$1.4 million from HUD to ensure that Sandy-impacted residents not currently qualified to do the

work have a clear pathway to gaining employment over the next several years. Sandy-impacted residents interested in learning more about Pathways to Apprenticeship should call NYCHA's Sandy team at REES at **718-218-1517**.

IDNYC: Free Access to Health, City Services, and Fun!

FOR THE FOURTH YEAR, IDNYC, the largest local identification program in the nation, is free and available to all residents. More than 1.2 million IDNYC cardholders are connected to health and city services, affordable family-friendly activities, cultural institutions, recreational activities, and entertainment. This year, IDNYC has added new benefits partners including: Aviator Sports and Events Center, Chelsea Piers Golf Club, Chelsea Piers Sky Rink, Entertainment Cruises, International Print Center, King Manor, Sculpture Center, Soho Playhouse, and Zipcar.

For information on how to sign up for IDNYC and a full list of benefits, please visit www.nyc.gov/idnyc.



NYCHA Chair Shola Olatoye at the temporary IDNYC Pop Up Enrollment Center at Sedgwick Houses in 2016.

A Better Way to Pay Your Rent

Coming January 2018

PAYING YOUR RENT will soon be easier! NYCHA is changing to a new rent payment processing service launching in January 2018. It features a host of service upgrades including:

- Easier-to-read rent statements
- New, easy-to-use, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant online payment site and a telephone payment system with more features, including 24/7 customer service
- No-fee when you pay online using e-check from your checking or savings account
- Reduced fee for debit card payments (0.85% of payment amount)
- Ability to pay with Visa or MasterCard (the convenience fee is 2.25% of payment amount)
- Enhanced security features that protect your personal financial information
- Dedicated option on the Customer Contact Center call-in line for questions related to paying your rent.


Paying your rent:

- Visit the following link to pay your rent online:
- <https://ww2.e-billexpress.com/ebpp/resnycha/> (Residents)
- <https://ww2.e-billexpress.com/ebpp/commnycha/> (Commercial Tenants)
- Call **1-877-481-9947** to pay your rent by phone.
- Mail your rent check to: New York City Housing Authority, PO Box 70169, Philadelphia, PA 19176-0169

Sign-up for e-Bill

If you currently receive your monthly rent statement by mail, NYCHA will continue to mail it to you. If you enroll in e-Bill, you will not receive a paper bill. But there are many additional features e-Bill provides that you may want to use:

- You can receive your monthly rent statement through “e-Bill,” which is safe, secure, and reduces paper.
- NYCHA will automatically transfer your information to the new payment processing service. If you have a recurring payment set up, your recurring payment will transfer to the new system. You will receive an email letting you know your recurring payment has been moved over to the new system with a temporary password. Please sign on and create a new password.
- Please note that any payments you make at this point to the old system will be automatically transferred to the new payment processing service and credited to your account.



NEW YORK CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY
SOUTH BEACH
PO Box 5120
Sioux Falls, SD 57117
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

000001 Job Name
F. LEE CUSTOMER
160 LAMPARD BLVD. 01C
STATEN ISLAND, NY 10305-0000

7/13/2017

Opening Balance

0.00

Transaction Activities 6/26/2017 – 8/13/2017

7/27/2017

LOCKBOX PAYMENT

(379.60)

8/01/2017

Rent Posted

379.60

Charges for September 2017

9/01/2017

Sep. Rent

368.00

9/01/2017

Air Conditioner Fee

7.00

9/01/2017

WATER FEES

4.60

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE

379.60

Monthly Billing Statement

Page 1 of 2

TENANT ID

ACCOUNT NUMBER

035999999

03599999C

DATE DUE:

09/01/2017

TOTAL DUE:

\$379.60

MINIMUM DUE:

\$379.60

Transaction Activities after 08/13/2017 will be included in next month's statement

Help prepare and protect your community by joining the New York City Community Emergency Response Teams (NYC CERT). You'll receive basic training in fire safety, light search and rescue, and more to prepare your community for disasters. You can also volunteer for NYCHA Resident Watch and work with neighbors in your own development on safety issues. Visit www.nyc.gov/cert for more information on NYC CERT and talk to Property Management staff about Resident Watch.

Ayude a preparar y proteger su comunidad al unirse a los Equipos Comunitarios de Respuesta a Emergencias de la Ciudad de Nueva York (NYC CERT, por sus siglas en ingles). Usted recibira formacion basica en seguridad contra incendios, busqueda y rescate, y mas para ayudar a su comunidad a prepararse para desastres. Tambien puede ser voluntario del Equipo de Vigilancia Compuesto por Residentes de NYCHA y trabajar con los vecinos de su propio residencial en cuestiones de seguridad. Visite www.nyc.gov/cert para obtener mas informacion sobre NYC CERT, y hable con el personal de su Oficina de la administracion de propiedades acerca del Equipo de Vigilancia Compuesto po Residentes.

Human Readable

Payment is Due on the 1st Day of the month. Please mail your payment in the envelope provided. Tear off stub and mail your payment.

F. LEE CUSTOMER
160 LAMPARD BLVD. 01C
STATEN ISLAND, NY 10305-0000

NEW YORK CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY
SOUTH BEACH

REMITTANCE SLIP

TENANT ID

ACCOUNT NUMBER

035999999

03599999C

WRITE ACCOUNT NUMBER ON YOUR CHECK OR M/O

DATE DUE:

09/01/2017

TOTAL DUE:

\$379.60

MINIMUM DUE:

\$379.60

DO NOT SEND CASH
MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: NYCHA
PLEASE SEE IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON THE BACK

New York City Housing Authority
P O Box 70169
Philadelphia, PA 19176-0169
|||||

035999999 4 03599999C 000037960 000037960 20170901 011 7

- You can save your information, view your payment history, make a one-time payment, or set up recurring payments every week, twice a month, or on a specific date. If you are enrolled in e-Bill and would like to pay rent by phone, the process will be faster since the online and phone system will now be linked.
- You can store multiple payment methods in your account, allowing you to pay your rent from multiple sources—for example, part from checking, part from saving, and part on a credit card.

More information about rent paying upgrades is coming shortly. If you have any questions in the meantime, please contact your property management office.

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FIND OUT MORE AT WWW.NYCHAJOURNAL.NYC



A New Way for City Employees to Pay Your NYCHA Rent



Here's why you should enroll in the automatic rent deduction program:

It's Free

There's no charge for automatic rent payments.



It's Easy

Automatic, recurring payments take the work out of paying your monthly bill.



No Checks to Write

Funds are transferred electronically, paying your bill right from your paycheck.



Saves Time & Money

You won't have any checks to write or mail. No check costs. No postage. No delays.



Never Late

Your payment will always be on time.



Safe and Reliable

Only the amount you agree to pay will be deducted from your paycheck.



All employees of NYCHA and other City agencies who live in New York City public housing are eligible. Sign up online at <https://selfserve.nycha.info> or take a recent paycheck to your property management office and fill out an authorization form.

Questions? Ask your property management staff.



nyc.gov/nycha

STRONG FAMILIES, STRONG NEW YORK

AS OF JANUARY 1, 2018, most employees who work in New York State for private employers can take Paid Family Leave, which provides job-protected, paid time off so you can bond with a new child, care for a relative with a serious health condition, or help out when a family member is called to active military service. If you are a public employee, your employer may choose to offer Paid Family Leave.

To learn more about New York's Paid Family Leave:

Visit: ny.gov/PaidFamilyLeave

Text: FAMILY to 81336

Call: 844-337-6303 from 8:30am – 4:30pm ET, Monday-Friday

Crowdfund for Your Business!

ATTENTION WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS:

New York City can help you start or grow your business with a crowdfunded loan.

WE Fund Crowd is the City's first crowdfunding program for women entrepreneurs. The City teamed up with Kiva, a non-profit crowdfunding platform for women to apply for loans of up to \$10,000 for their businesses, and will contribute the first 10 percent or up to \$1,000 towards the campaign's goal.

"Leveling the playing field for women entrepreneurs will help grow and diversify our economy, and strengthen our families and neighborhoods," Mayor Bill de Blasio said. "With Kiva, we will help launch small businesses that might otherwise never get off the ground."

The City has committed to a total of more than \$3 million in loans to at least 500 business owners over the next three years. WE Fund Crowd is part of Women Entrepreneurs NYC (WE NYC) launched by the City's Department of Small Business Services in 2015, which connects women to mentoring, expert advice, and business and leadership courses to help them start and grow successful businesses.

Kiva's loans are designed to reach women-owned small businesses locked out of traditional lending. Loans are offered at 0 percent interest, no fees, no minimum credit score, collateral, or minimum years of operation.

Women interested in the program, please visit we.nyc.



A Tree Unites the Community

THIS SEASON, a holiday tradition was revived at Betances Houses thanks to the efforts of the South Bronx Youth Leadership Council (SBYLC): decorating a community Christmas tree.

On December 4, nearly 30 seniors from Betances, Adams, and Saint Mary's Park Houses joined 70 children from the BronxWorks Betances Community Center, plus SBYLC members and NYCHA staff, to help decorate and light the tree. The SBYLC wanted to host a neighborhood project that would bring together people of all ages to build community and beautify the neighborhood.

"Our goal was to promote community unity and anti-violence," said Isis Garcia, a Betances Houses resident and SBYLC member. "A lot of seniors came out and worked with the children to help decorate the tree. There was a choir and even a Santa Claus for the kids. Everybody was



excited to be working together to light up the community."

The idea for the event came after a few seniors told SBYLC members about a tree that used to be decorated as an annual community project and had become a symbol of unity.

"Many of the seniors brought handmade ceramic ornaments decorated with their development to display their NYCHA pride, which was great," said NYCHA Community Coordinator David Soto. "It was awe-



some to see seniors from three developments come out to help decorate the tree and contribute to community safety, because it truly takes a whole community to make those changes."

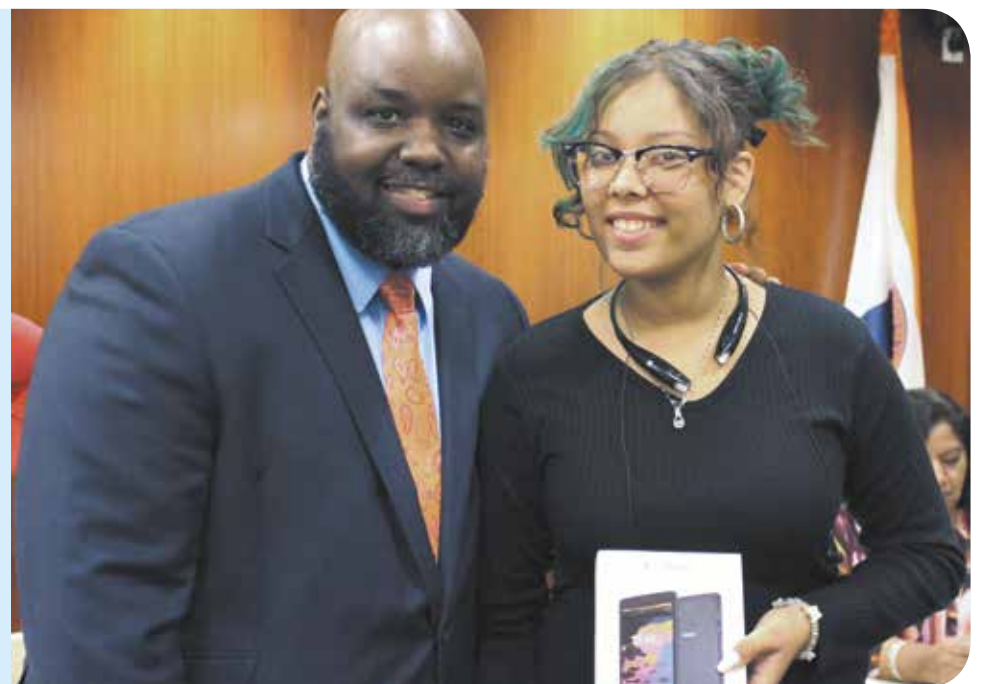
The tree decorating event was one of many events the SBYLC organized this year. Their mission is to address quality of life issues through events like clean-up days and anti-violence campaigns. The SBYLC works with NYCHA's Public Safety Advisory Committee on youth outreach

and with community members to help resolve neighborhood issues one project at a time.

The SBYLC is one of NYCHA's 10 Youth Leadership Councils across the city, which brings together residents ages 14 to 21 to address issues in their communities while building leadership skills. To apply to join one of NYCHA's YLC's, fill out the application here: www1.nyc.gov/site/nycha/residents/youth-leadership-council-application.page

NYCHA's Youth Leaders Get Connected

SOUTH BRONX YOUTH LEADERSHIP COUNCIL member Isis Garcia (right) stands with Curtis Williams, Manager of NYCHA's Resident Engagement Department, to show off the free tablet computer she received courtesy of T-Mobile, NYCHA, and the City of New York. All 150 members of NYCHA's 15 Youth Leadership Councils (YLC) received tablets that they can use for developing projects to help their communities. In 2016, T-Mobile provided 5,000 public housing residents in the Bronx with tablets as part of the part of the Obama Administration's ConnectHome Initiative.



From Caretaker to Supervisor: An NRTA Success Story

KAREN CALLENDER NEVER pictured herself in a career involving manual labor—but when she saw information about the NYCHA Resident Training Academy (NRTA) in *The NYCHA Journal* soon after her corporate office position of 14 years had been eliminated, she wanted to try something new.

The NRTA, managed by NYCHA's Office of Resident Economic Empowerment and Sustainability (REES), provides residents with training opportunities and job placement assistance for careers in the construction, janitorial services, and maintenance fields. Ms. Callender, a former Bayview Houses resident, completed the janitorial

track of the NRTA in 2012 and soon began working as a Caretaker J at Langston Hughes Houses in Brooklyn.

She is thankful for the program that introduced her to a new career she enjoys. "If I look back, I wouldn't have ever seen myself riding a Bobcat or picking up garbage – sometimes I ask myself, 'Am I really doing this?' I actually love it. I don't think I could ever go back to an office job."

The NRTA was launched in 2010 and is funded by the Robin Hood Foundation. REES partners with many of the best employment training providers in the city to help with the NRTA, including Brooklyn Workforce Innovations (BWI), Non-traditional Employment for Wom-

en (NEW), and the New York City College of Technology (City Tech). The program has helped many residents achieve their dreams of having careers with growth opportunities—of the 1,521 NRTA graduates more than 80 percent have been placed into jobs.

Throughout her time working at Langston Hughes, Ms. Callender got to know many residents, partner organizations working at the development, and also completed projects to better the community, including a mural project for all three buildings at the development. Her initiative has helped Ms. Callender rise through the ranks, moving from Caretaker J to Caretaker G, then Acting Supervisor, and a promotion in 2017 to Su-



pervisor of Housing Grounds at Sheepshead Bay in Brooklyn.

"The NRTA gave me a second chance to get back on my feet," said Ms. Callender. "I believe in paying it forward, so I try to tell anyone I know who is in need of a job to go to the program." To learn more about the NYCHA Resident Training Academy, visit the REES website: <http://opportunitynycha.org/workforce-development/nycha-resident-training-academy/>

Make the Right Connections

New online service links residents directly to service providers

DID YOU KNOW you can connect to exciting financial, educational, and business opportunities from your home computer, laptop, or smartphone?

NYCHA's Office of Resident Economic Empowerment & Sustainability (REES) connects residents to employment and career advancement, adult education and vocational training, financial empowerment, and business development by partnering with organizations throughout New York City who provide these services.

Accessed through NYCHA's Self-Service Portal, Opportunity Connect matches residents to one of REES's trusted service providers citywide or in their neighborhood. It is free, easy to use, and available to NYCHA residents and Section 8 voucher holders ages 18 and over.

What can you do on Opportunity Connect?

- Create or update your REES profile. You'll be able to register what your interests are and add a resumé, which will help REES connect you

to the appropriate job opportunities.

- Refer yourself to REES services, including employment assistance, financial counseling, and business development.
- Check out upcoming REES events and RSVP—you'll receive reminders for your upcoming events and appointments via email.
- Manage events, including rescheduling, canceling,



and/or viewing past event history.

Launched in 2016, Opportunity Connect initially provided residents with financial counseling referrals. It now enables residents to refer themselves

for employment assistance, adult education, and business development. Residents without access to a computer or smartphone can ask their Housing Assistants for a referral, or call the REES Hotline at **(718) 289-8100**, or make an appointment for a REES Information Session.

Coming Soon: New Playground at Hylan Houses

ON DECEMBER 11, 2017, NYCHA toured the site of a much-needed new playground at Hylan Houses with Council Member Antonio Reynoso and members of NYPD Housing Bureau from PSA 3. The Council Member provided \$350,000 to renovate the site, which should be finished by early Spring 2018.

"For years the playground at Hylan Houses was dim, unusable, and uninviting," Council Member Antonio Reynoso said. "It was important for me to advocate on behalf of the residents of Hylan Houses during my first budget negotiation as a Council Member—and today marks the fruition of those efforts. The upgrades to the single playground at Hylan Houses will be bright, innovative and welcoming. I look forward to my continued partnership with the Tenant's Association and residents of the development to improve their quality of life."



Hylan Houses residents and staff joined Council Member Reynoso (fifth from left), NYCHA General Manager Michael Kelly (fourth from right) and NYPD Housing PSA 3 at the playground.

A NYCHA Alum Partners with the Authority

IN OCTOBER, AS the Deputy Chief Operating Officer of the City University of New York (CUNY), Ron Spalter represented CUNY at the launch of NYCHA's announcement of its first large-scale solar energy program.



Ron Spalter

He'd come a long way from the NYCHA development where he started his life in 1946.

Mr. Spalter lived with his parents and older brother in a one-bedroom apartment at First Houses in Manhattan until the age of eight. He remembers sharing the living room as a bedroom with his older brother, playing in the backyard area unsupervised, and seeing his mother poke her head out of the window to tell him when it was safe to cross the street.

In 1954, the family moved into a two-bedroom apartment at Woodside Houses in Queens,

where he lived until he was 17. It wasn't just their apartment that got bigger with the move, the entire development was bigger than First Houses "and there were lots of trees—I'm a city kid—but I can still visualize all the trees as you walked through the property."

"At Woodside, I lived on the fifth floor and I had a friend on every floor. I could knock on a door on any floor and have a friend to hang out with," Mr. Spalter said.

During a summer recruiting outing he organized while working as vice president for Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC), he happened to meet a young woman who lived in the same Woodside Houses apartment he grew up in. "She had the same experiences, the same sense of safety, and support that I did. I couldn't believe it," Mr. Spalter said.



Ron Spalter captured this photo of his fellow P.S. 151 Safety Patrol members at Woodside Houses in 1958. You may recognize two fellow patrol members: former New York City Schools Chancellor Joel Klein (center, hat) and former Dean of Columbia University Roger Lehecka (upper right).

That sense of community and support has stayed with Mr. Spalter and helped shape his career at CUNY, where he has worked for 43 years. In a variety of capacities, he has reinforced physical, financial, organizational and academic stability at CUNY, which is an important resource for New Yorkers.

In his current role his responsibilities include sustainability and energy conservation. Through this work his team has partnered to assist NYCHA with its solar program, which will install solar power on NYCHA rooftops and parking lots to provide low-cost clean energy to lower income New Yorkers.

"It gives me a great deal of satisfaction to work with NYCHA to expand renewable energy in New York," Mr. Spalter explains. "NYCHA has set the most ambitious goals of any city agency and renewable energy is critical to New York remaining a viable place to live."