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Mayor de Blasio watches NYCHA staff plug rat burrows with dry ice at Bushwick Houses.

Watch Out, Rats!

NYCHA IS ROLLING OUT a new, aggressive extermination plan to reduce the rat population at the ten most infested developments in the city: Bushwick, Webster, Marcy, Butler, Morris I, Morris II, Riis I, Riis II, Morrisania, and Hylan. The new program is part of the Mayor's Rat Reduction Plan which aims to reduce the rat population by as much as 70 percent in the City's three most infested neighborhoods: the Grand Concourse area, Chinatown/East Village/Lower East Side and Bushwick/Bedford-Stuyvesant.

"We want to make the greatest city on Earth the worst place in the world to be a rat," said Mayor de Blasio as he laid out the details at Bushwick Houses on April 17. NYCHA's program will eliminate food sources and rat burrows by:

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)

Four Years of Progress



Chair Shola Olatoye announced her resignation at Ocean Bay Bayside Apartments in Far Rockaway, alongside Mayor Bill de Blasio and new Acting Chair Stanley Brezenoff.

DEAR RESIDENTS,

On April 30, I stepped down as Chair and CEO of NYCHA. It has been a profound honor and privilege to hold this position, working for you and with you on our Next-Generation NYCHA goals.

When I started in March 2014, we identified several areas in need of critical improvements to bring NYCHA into the 21st century. NextGeneration NYCHA, launched in May 2015, outlined an ambitious but realistic

plan to improve the Authority for the one in 14 New Yorkers who call NYCHA home. We have made real progress, thanks in no small way to your partnership and support. You can read what we have accomplished over the last four years on page 3. As important, we have significantly increased your ability to participate in decision-making. We have held thousands of community events with residents to inform you about new projects and programs,

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)

FOUR YEARS OF PROGRESS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

gather your input, and make changes to provide what you want and need. Residents have helped shape plans for NextGen Neighborhoods, Sandy repairs and renovations, Smoke-free NYCHA, the Farms at NYCHA Program, and community partnerships. In addition, residents actively participate in the work of the Authority, not just through resident associations, but through membership on the Public Safety Action Committee, the board of the Fund for Public Housing, and Youth Leadership Councils.

I cannot stress how important and unusual our partnership with residents is. NYCHA, with a population the size of



In her last month on the job, former Chair Shola Olatoye met with residents and staff at developments across the city.

Cleveland's, is five times larger than the next biggest public housing authority in the United States. What we do in New York

has the potential to change the lives of thousands of residents across the country. Your voices matter, not just to you and your

neighbors, but to all the people who call public housing home, now and in the future.

I leave knowing that NYCHA is in good hands. Mayor de Blasio has named Vito Mustaciolo as General Manager and Stanley Brezenoff as Acting Chair & CEO beginning June 1, 2018. NYCHA's 10,500 staff members are the most committed employees I know. Working side by side with you, they will transform our Next-Generation NYCHA vision of safe, clean, connected communities into reality.

With gratitude,

Shola Olatoye

Shola Olatoye

ATTEND NYCHA'S BOARD MEETINGS

MAKE YOUR VOICE heard at NYCHA's Board Meetings. Board Meetings are open to the public, and are an opportunity for residents and interested parties to weigh in on items on the monthly agenda.

Board Meetings are held at 250 Broadway in the 12th floor Board Room at 10 a.m., generally on the last Wednesday of the month. People who wish to speak during the public comment period must pre-register at least 45 minutes before the Board Meeting is scheduled to begin and can only comment about items on that Board 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 expiration of 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, no earlier than twenty-four (24) hours before the Board Meeting. Copies of the Minutes of prior Board 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 Board Meeting should contact the Office of the Corporate Secretary at **212-306-6088** no later than fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the Board Meeting. For additional information regarding the calendar of Board Meetings, Minutes, dates, and times, please call **212-306-6088**.

For those unable to attend the Board Meetings, please visit **on.nyc.gov/boardmeetings** at the time of the Board Meeting to watch live. You may also watch past Board Meetings by visiting NYCHAnnel, NYCHA's YouTube page at **www.youtube.com/c/nycha**.

Upcoming Meetings 2018:

May 30	July 25	October 31	December 19
June 27	September 26	November 28	

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Three Years of NextGeneration NYCHA Progress and Accomplishments

Finance.....

- City forgiveness of payments, including NYCHA's Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) and NYPD payments.
- Expenses reduced by approximately \$100 million annually in the expense operating budget.
- Balanced budget four years in a row.
- Reduced Central Office costs by \$23 million.

Operations.....

- Basic maintenance service levels: down to 4.3 days from 13 days.
- FlexOps: extended service hours by creating multiple staggered shifts for front-line staff; deployed to 12 sites.
- NextGen Operations: expanded to 207 developments (141,223 units); will be deployed NYCHA-wide by 2019.
- Launched MyNYCHA app and implemented online annual recertifications.

Capital.....

- Number of roofs repaired or replaced: 386.
- \$500 million Bond B investment in facades and roofs completed ahead of schedule.
- Sandy Recovery: one development complete, 27 projects in major construction, approximately \$1.85 billion in contracts awarded.
- Energy Performance Contracts: launched energy and sustainability program, with 3 EPCs underway totaling \$167 million (46,869 units).

Safety and Security.....

- Mayor's Action Plan: more than 6,200 security lights installed at 14 developments, 560 security cameras installed, and 38 cameras upgraded at 19 developments.
- Crime is down Authority-wide 7 percent in 2017 alone, with drops in all five boroughs.

Engage.....

- Transitioned to partnership-based resident services model, onboarding approximately 50 new partners and launching new workforce, business development, financial literacy, and resident training programs.
- Facilitated over 8,300 resident job placements.
- Launched new Resident Leadership Academy and 14 Youth Councils.
- Supported the formation of over 160 new resident businesses.

Development.....

- 100 Percent Affordable: Closed first two deals in 2017 (Ingersoll and Mill Brook); five sites in pre-development; five sites in RFP process.
- Rental Assistance Demonstration: closed first RAD deal in 2016, Ocean Bay-Bayside (1,400 units).
- NextGen Neighborhoods developers selected at two sites, bringing \$62 million to NYCHA.

Public-Private Partnerships.....

- Launched the Fund for Public Housing: nearly 100 individual donors, 15 corporate and institutional supporters, and many more partners now on board; in two years raised \$1.4 million.
- Supported thousands of residents through programming, such as free tax preparation, Resident Leadership Academy, homeownership education and grants, college scholarships, entrepreneurship support, workforce training resources, community-designed playspaces, NYCHA Tech Pilots.

Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8).....

- HUD approval for the conversion of Bayside and Murphy Houses (721 units).
- HUD High Performer certification two years in a row.

NOTICE

New York City Housing Authority

Significant Amendment to the FY 2018 Agency Annual Plan and the Draft Agency Plan for FY 2019

The public is advised that the *Significant Amendment to the FY 2018 Agency Annual Plan and the FY 2019 Draft Agency Annual Plan* will be available for public inspection at NYCHA's principal office, located at 250 Broadway, New York, NY, starting April 6, 2018, between the hours of 9:30 am to 4:30 pm. Please call (212) 306-3701 to make an appointment to review the *Significant Amendment to the FY 2018 Agency Annual Plan and the FY 2019 Agency Annual Plan* and supporting documents. The *Significant Amendment to the FY 2018 Agency Annual Plan and the FY 2019 Draft Agency Annual Plan* will also be available at the following locations:

- On NYCHA's webpage, which is located on: <http://www1.nyc.gov/site/nycha/about/annual-plan-financialinformation.page>.
- At the Management Office of each NYCHA public housing development during regular business hours.
- At the Community Centers/Borough Offices listed below during the hours of 9:00 am to 7:30 pm:

Manhattan Family Partnerships
Borough Office
45 Allen Street
New York, New York

Taft Senior Center
1365 5th Avenue
New York, New York

Sedgwick Senior Center
1553 University Avenue
Bronx, New York

Soundview Senior Center
1674 Seward Avenue
Bronx, New York

Queens Community Development/
Family Partnerships
Borough Office
70-30 Parsons Boulevard
Flushing, New York

Asociaciones familiares de Staten Island
Oficina Municipal
90 Lafayette Avenue
Staten Island, New York

Centro para personas de la tercera edad
Brownsville
Brownsville Senior Center
Brooklyn, New York

PUBLIC COMMENT

The public is invited to comment on the *Significant Amendment to the FY 2018 Agency Annual Plan and the FY 2019 Draft Agency Annual Plan* at a public hearing to be held on **Tuesday, May 22, 2018**, from 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm at:

Borough of Manhattan Community College
199 Chambers Street
New York, New York 10007

The location listed above is handicap accessible and can be reached using public transportation. For transportation information go to <http://tripplanner.mta.info> or call the MTA/NYC Transit Travel Information Line at (718) 330-1234.

Written comments regarding the *Significant Amendment to the FY 2018 Agency Annual Plan and the FY 2019 Draft Agency Annual Plan* are encouraged. To be considered, **submissions must be received via United States Postal Service mail or fax no later than May 23, 2018**. Faxed submissions will be accepted at (212) 306-7905. Comments may be sent to the following address, and comments may also be emailed to annualplancomments@nycha.nyc.gov.

Public Housing Agency Plan
Comments Church Street Station P.O.
Box 3422
New York, New York 10008-3422

More Federal Funding for NYCHA

NYCHA To Receive An Estimated \$160 Million More For Capital Projects And \$30 Million More For Operations.

FOR THE FIRST TIME in decades, Congress has significantly increased the federal resources available for affordable and public housing, recognizing the critical role that housing plays in our lives, our communities, and our economy. This funding package represents additional resources for the many programs—Community Development Block Grants, the HOME Investment Partnership Program, Section 8, and the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit—that make possible the safe, stable affordable housing that is proven to improve health and educational outcomes for families and provide economic benefits to communities.

This watershed moment also represents a welcome change in the federal government's approach to the public housing capital fund. With a more than 40 percent increase, this move will help public housing more aggressively address critical levels of repair needs, at over \$17 billion in New York City alone. Public housing residents deserve decent housing and the government must address those needs; this bill is a move in the right direction.

We applaud our partners across the country, and the New

Housing is a BASIC HUMAN NECESSITY and yet, for a growing number of Americans, access to a safe, affordable home is out of reach. The affordable housing crisis is a genuine and growing threat to the security, stability, and opportunity that home represents, and is one that we can no longer afford to overlook.

York Congressional delegation for their steadfast and vigorous advocacy to defend and indeed expand the resources available for public and affordable housing on behalf of veterans, seniors, families with children, and the most vulnerable Americans who need and deserve the opportunity that safe, quality affordable housing provides. The fight is far from over, and we will continue to push for the increased resources and sound policies that will help ensure a decent standard of living for all Americans.

Shola Olatoye,
Former NYCHA Chair
Maria Torres-Springer,
HPD Commissioner
Eric Enderlin,
HDC President

WATCH OUT, RATS! (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)



Bushwick Houses resident Marisol Robles (center) holds a new, smaller trash can presented to her by Mayor de Blasio and NYCHA General Manager Vito Mustaciuolo. These new trash cans will help reduce food sources for rats.

- Plugging rat burrows with dry ice, a humane, fast, and effective treatment;
 - Placing a full-time exterminator at each development;
 - Providing residents with new, smaller trash bins to reduce clogs in chutes and large bags of trash left on NYCHA grounds; and
 - Replacing dirt floors in basements with concrete flooring to keep rats out of buildings.
- A partnership between

the Authority, the Health Department, and the Department of Sanitation, NYCHA's rat reduction program will improve quality of life for 23,000 residents.

"Working with our colleagues and our residents, we hope to finally take control of the rat problem at NYCHA," said NYCHA General Manager Vito Mustaciuolo. "Residents have had to accept rats as a regular presence, but we now have the resources and support to reduce infestations."

NYCHA'S RENT INCENTIVE PROGRAM Earned Income Disallowance Can Lower Your Rent

ARE YOU A NYCHA PUBLIC HOUSING RESIDENT or NYCHA Section 8 Voucher Holder who recently started working and had an increase in your income? Do you know about the Earned Income Disallowance (EID)? It's a program that works as a temporary income exclusion, meaning that if you qualify, a certain amount of your earned income is not counted when your household's rent is being calculated. If you are an authorized resident and you qualify for the program, in the first 12 months, your new earned income will not be included in your rent calculation. In the second 12 months, half of your new earned income will be included in your rent calculation. For more information about EID, visit on.nyc.gov/Rent-Incentives or speak to your Property Management Office.

Mayor Appoints Stanley Brezenoff Acting Chair of NYCHA



NYCHA's new Acting Chair Stanley Brezenoff (center) discusses his new role at an event at Ocean Bay Bayside.

NYCHA'S NEW ACTING CHAIR STANLEY BREZENOFF says he's failing at retirement. The long-time public servant from East New York, Brooklyn has worked ceaselessly for New York City since the 1980s. On June 1 he will join NYCHA to continue the work of improving New York City's public housing.

"Anyone who knows Stan knows he is one of the great public servants in the last generation in this City," Mayor de Blasio said. "What he has done as First Deputy Mayor, the Head of Port Authority, what he has done recently at Health and Hospitals stabilizing another organization that needed major overhaul. Stan has an extraordinary track record of success."

The Mayor announced Mr. Brezenoff's appointment and introduced him to attendees at an April 10 event at Ocean Bay Bayside in Far Rockaway, following former Chair Shola Olatoye's announcement that she would resign at the end of April. He says he's ready to take on the challenge of "one of the toughest jobs in America" because he believes that government can make a big difference in people's lives. "I'm committed to working with residents, finding new solutions and making progress that people will see and feel in their communities."

As Acting Chair, Mr. Brezenoff will partner with NYCHA General Manager Vito Mustaciulo to continue work on the NextGeneration NYCHA strategic plan, creating safer, cleaner, and more connected communities. Mr. Brezenoff says he'll work to confront decades of disinvestment in public housing, improve front-line services for residents, and replace critical infrastructure like heating systems.

LEGEND



HEAT



HOT WATER



HEAT AND HOT WATER



WATER

NYCHA Performance Stats Available in Real Time

NYCHA RESIDENTS can now use new digital tools on the NYCHA website to track NYCHA's progress on repairs and construction.

These tools include:

- **Outages Dashboard:** The improved "Outages Dashboard," which tracks heat and hot water outages, is automatically updated multiple times each day. Visitors to the site will now have the same information NYCHA has about when an outage began, how many buildings and apartments are affected, when service is restored, and how long it took to resolve the issue. Visit on.nyc.gov/outages to view the Outages Dashboard.
- **Capital Tracker:** Follow the progress of more than \$1 billion in new construction (not including Sandy Recovery projects) across the five boroughs on a map that outlines every project by development. Individual project awards are posted online and updated regularly, allowing any resident or member of the public to learn more about current and planned capital projects, including project scope, funding amount and source, status of project, and project start and end date. View the new Capital Tracker at: arcg.is/1Trbzq.
- **Energy & Sustainability Map:** This new map provides detailed information on several programs under the NextGeneration NYCHA Sustainability Agenda, including Energy Performance Contracts, Weatherization, and the DEP/NYCHA Green Infrastructure Program. View the Energy & Sustainability map at: j.mp/nycha-green-map.

NYCHA will continue to update its website with additional reporting features such as a Healthy Homes Dashboard to track lead paint inspections and a Section 3 jobs tracker. To see the current overview of transparency and reporting on the NYCHA website, visit: www1.nyc.gov/site/nycha/about/reports.page.

The Fair Housing Act at 50

“Despite important progress we’ve seen in New York City in just the last four years, we continue to see that opportunity is not shared equally by all New Yorkers – and a federal government working to pick apart the progress we have made as a city and as a nation. We will fight back every step of the way. With or without the federal government, we will advance the vision of democracy laid out by Martin Luther King Jr.”

—Mayor Bill de Blasio

APRIL 11 MARKED the fiftieth anniversary of the Fair Housing Act which made it illegal to deny any individual housing based on a person’s skin color, religion, or country of origin, protecting marginalized groups from discrimination in the housing market and providing them with equal opportunity to rent or purchase homes. Upon signing the act into law seven days after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., President Lyndon B. Johnson said, “At long last, fair housing for all is now a part of the American way of life.”



NEW YORK CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY FAIR HOUSING NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the policy of the New York City Housing Authority to provide equal housing opportunities for all qualified residents and applicants. In the selection of families and in the provision of NYCHA programs, services or activities, there shall be no discrimination against any person on the grounds of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, age, familial status, marital status, partnership status, lawful occupation, lawful source of income, military status, alienage or citizenship status, or on the grounds that a person is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking. This policy also prohibits retaliation.

This policy is in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Fair Housing Act of 1968, as amended by the Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and the New York State and New York City Human Rights Laws.

NYCHA will generally, upon request, provide appropriate aids and services leading to effective communication for qualified residents and applicants with disabilities so they can participate equally in NYCHA programs, services, or activities, including qualified sign language interpreters, documents in Braille, or other ways of making information and communications accessible to people who have speech, hearing, or vision impairments.

NYCHA will make reasonable modifications to its policies and programs to afford qualified residents and applicants with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in its programs, services, or activities.

Persons who require an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a NYCHA program, service, or activity may contact NYCHA’s Customer Contact Center at 718-707-7771, or the Department of Equal Opportunity, Services for People With Disabilities Unit, 250 Broadway, 3rd Floor, New York, NY, 10007, telephone number, 212-306-4468, TTY 212-306-4845 from 8:30AM to 5:00PM Monday through Friday.

Any resident or applicant who wishes to report housing discrimination or retaliation MAY FILE A DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT (NYCHA 036.024) by contacting the Department of Equal Opportunity from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday at:

**New York City Housing Authority
Department of Equal Opportunity
250 Broadway, 3rd floor
New York, NY 10007
Telephone (212) 306-4468
Fax: (212) 306-4439
TTY: (212) 306-4845**

Any resident or applicant may also contact any of the following federal, state or city human rights agencies listed below to report housing discrimination or retaliation:

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development New York Regional Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity 26 Federal Plaza, Room 3532 (212) 542-7519 1-800-496-4294 TTY (212) 264-0927	New York State Division of Human Rights One Fordham Plaza, 4th Floor Bronx, New York 10458 (718) 741-8400 TDD: 1-718-741-8300	New York City Commission on Human Rights 22 Reade Street, 1st Floor New York, NY 10007 (212) 306-7450
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Copies of this policy are available in accessible format to Persons with Disabilities upon request.

Electrical Connections

Fund for Public Housing Partnership Creates Careers



Partners in career success: NYCHA residents with prep course Instructor Brian Mendes (front center) and Constellation Senior Project Manager Jason D. Hewitt (front right).

NINE NYCHA RESIDENTS recently became members of Local Union 3 IBEW, the electrical workers' union, with help from a new NYCHA partnership.

Constellation NewEnergy, a NYCHA Energy Performance Contracts partner, worked with the Authority to offer an eight-week academic preparation course to prepare residents to take the competitive Local 3 Aptitude test. The company partnered with NYCHA's Resident Economic Empowerment & Sustainability (REES) office to develop the prep course, based on curriculum created by NYC Small Business Services.

"As an employment partner, Constellation wanted to take the extra step to ensure that they were able to offer meaningful and relevant training opportunities in addition to employment," said Lenese Vergara, Assistant Director of Job Generation, REES. "We hope the success of this project encourages other employment partners to invest in meaningful resident training initiatives."

Constellation provided almost \$20,000 towards the cost of the prep class, covering the cost of instruction, MetroCards for transportation, lunches during the course, and starter toolkits for candidates who passed the exam.

"At Constellation, we believe that you must invest back into the communities in which you live and work," said Larry Godleski, Executive Director, Distributed Energy for Constellation. "We're excited to have helped support this group of NYCHA residents as they embark on a new career path. We wish them all the best as they develop in their professional journeys."

Participants of the prep class included graduates of NYCHA-funded Pathways to Apprenticeship and Rebuilding Together NYC

pre-apprenticeship programs, which provide residents affected by Superstorm Sandy with hands-on construction training, as well as graduates of the NYCHA Resident Training Academy's construction training track.

Alex Rodriguez of Wyckoff Houses and Jasmine Renaud of Red Hook Houses said completing the course was an invaluable experience; both are now first-year apprentices with Local 3.

Mr. Rodriguez, currently at work on an electrical project at the NBA's Manhattan office, said, "I wouldn't have known to study topics that we covered in the course. I wasn't confident about taking the test before the course, but during the course I reached a point where the information was so fresh, and I was so sharp, I just wanted the test day to come faster."

Ms. Renaud, who works for Unity Electric, sees the opportunities NYCHA has provided her as stepping stones toward owning a business in the future. "It was a great program. It was good to know that there were people willing to help me," she said.

This prep class is an example of the opportunities the Fund for Public Housing aims to provide to residents through public-private partnerships.

"Constellation NewEnergy is really a pioneer. This grant is the first contribution the Fund has received to address the donor industry's needs while creating careers for NYCHA residents," explains Rasmia Kirmani-Frye, President of the Fund for Public Housing. "We hope the success of Constellation's grant will inspire other industry partners to make similar investments in NYCHA residents."



Woodson Houses Is Tops

NYCHA CELEBRATED EARTH DAY by naming Woodson Houses, a development for seniors in Brooklyn, as the top recycler of all of the Authority's 325 developments. Thanks to the partnership between Woodson's 433 residents and NYCHA staff, the development has a successful recycling program that captured over 25 percent of metal, glass, plastic, and paper recyclables in 2017. The Woodson Houses Resident Association accepted the award on behalf of all residents.

Queensbridge Resident Becomes First-Time Homebuyer

IN THE MORNING, Charline Ogbeni and her husband, Peter closed on their first house purchase. Then they headed back to the Queensbridge apartment Charline called home her entire life, packed their things, and moved that evening, too excited to end the day any other way.

The Ogbenis purchased their new home through the Small Homes Rehab-NYCHA Program, which develops vacant, city-owned, one-to-four family houses into affordable homeownership opportunities for low- to moderate-income homebuyers. The program will help about 100 families become homeowners. So far, 13 NYCHA residents have closed or are expected to close on single-family homes.

"This has been a priceless experience," Mrs. Ogbeni said. "I don't have to return the keys, this is really my home. It has been an amazing experience pursuing my dreams of homeownership and I had a lot of help along the way."

The properties in the Small Homes Rehab, mainly in Brooklyn and Queens, were acquired from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); many of them have been vacant for 20 years. The homes undergo gut renovation by a non-profit developer with funding from Housing Preservation and Development (HPD). The Ogbeni home was rehabilitated as part of a multi-home project that received funding from HPD, JP-Morgan Chase,

and the New York State Affordable Housing Corporation.

Now that Mrs. Ogbeni's homeownership dreams are a reality, she is dedicated to helping others achieve the same dream. On April 10, she hosted a homeownership workshop for parents and colleagues at Mott Hall Bridges Academy, the middle school in Brownsville, Brooklyn, where she works as a school counselor. "It's not just about you making it through the door, but keeping the door open and seeing who you can bring with you to help them reach their homeownership dreams, too," she said.

NYCHA residents interested in homeownership education should contact the REES Office



Charline and Peter Ogbeni.

at 718-289-8100. The Fund for Public Housing also provides Homeownership Awards to former NYCHA residents/new homeowners who complete the annual NYCHA-hosted JP-Morgan Chase Pre-Homebuyer workshop series.

Cold Day, Warm Hearts

Youth Leadership Council Organizes Wellness Fair for All Ages

ON A SUNNY, COLD EARLY APRIL DAY, more than 100 people attended a Wellness Fair outside Grant Houses. Organized by the Manhattan North Youth Leadership Council (YLC) in partnership with Moshulu Montefiore Community Center and the Grant Houses Resident Association, the fair featured plenty of activities to keep warm. A marketplace of vendors provided information on everything from healthcare coverage options to job training programs to violence prevention. Seniors learned how to juice fresh produce and make healthy smoothies. Teens took part in a fierce basketball tournament and Double Dutch, while kids painted their own aprons and played in the sunlight.

"We organized a wellness fair because everyone in the YLC agreed that was something our community needs," explained Grant houses resident and YLC member Dayon Corprew, age 16. Kendall Strong, also age 16, a Grant Houses resident and a YLC



member, added that "we wanted to get as many people here as possible, so we used social media and put flyers everywhere in the neighborhood."

A Force for the Environment



Urban Farm Corps Members Graduate

FOR THE LAST several months, 28 young NYCHA residents put on their brown uniforms, built farms, tended crops, handed out free organic produce to residents and collected food scraps at NYCHA farms.

These residents were members of Green City Force's Urban Farm Corps Cohort 14, and on March 20 they were celebrated at a graduation ceremony at Brooklyn Borough Hall.

Green City Force (GCF) is an AmeriCorps program that provides NYCHA residents ages 18 to 24 with full-time service projects, training and education on sustainability and green technologies, a stipend, free transportation, and assistance with job and college placement. GCF has graduated about 400 NYCHA residents, who are now using their knowledge

and skills to help the environment and improve public health.

Princess Banyan, a 22-year-old resident of Polo Grounds Towers, said GCF has contributed to her personal growth and her understanding of the environment: "It taught me to always believe in myself and inspired me to always think about the choices I make and their impact on the future of the planet...Because of the program, I'm committed to a career where I can give back to my community and the earth."

The graduation ceremony highlighted the combined 40,000 hours of service Cohort 14 Corps Members completed. Their list of accomplishments includes building a new farm at Forest Houses in the Bronx; operating and maintaining the farms at Bay View, Howard, Red Hook, and Wagner Houses. In addition, they distributed 19,920 pounds of free organic produce to NYCHA

residents in exchange for compostables or volunteer time; diverted 5,502 pounds of organic waste from landfills; educated more than 500 students; and held more than 120 farm stands and special events, including Harvest Festivals at four farms.

Joining GCF and the graduates' families and friends were GCF partners and funders including the Fund for Public Health in New York, NYC Food Policy, Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Unilever, the Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund, and NYCHA.

Most of the graduates, like Chantel Kemp who addressed the audience, have already found jobs. A resident of Marlboro Houses, Ms. Kemp secured a position with Isabahlia Ladies of Elegance Foundation, the community-based organization

partner for Howard Houses Farm.

Stressing the importance of food justice, especially in low-income communities, Ms. Kemp explained, "I have vowed not to let my quest for food justice end here today, standing at this podium, challenging you all to uphold justice. Justice for the beautiful children living in circumstances out of their control, justice for the children who watch me here today and feel so inspired to pick up a book or a brick, justice for my ancestors who gave up their lives just for me to speak, and justice for the generation who cannot yet speak for themselves."

If you are a NYCHA resident between the ages of 18 to 24 and are interested in learning more about Green City Force, please call the REES hotline at **718-289-8100**.

West Nile Virus Mosquito Treatment

The New York City Housing Authority will be treating all of the catch basins located on Housing Authority developments to reduce the mosquito population in an effort to minimize the transmission of the West Nile Virus. These treatments will take place between June and September of 2018. One or more of the following pesticides will be used:

Vectolex CG, EPA Reg. No. 73049-20, Toxicity Category – "Caution"
Summit B.i.i. Briquets, EPA Reg. No. 6218-47, Toxicity Category – "Caution"
Altosid XR, EPA Reg. No. 2724-421, Toxicity Category – "Caution"

Contact information:

NYC Housing Authority:

Debbie Wolf, Administrative Staff Analyst, 718-707-5709 available from 9 am – 5 pm
Denise Torres, Technical Resource Advisor, 718-707-8032 available from 8 am – 4 pm

NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation, Region 2, Bureau of Pesticide Management – 718-482-4994

National Pesticide Telecommunications Network – 1-800-858-PEST

**Inquiries concerning symptoms of pesticide poisoning should be directed to the Poison Control Center
1-800-222-1222**

Solar Energy Comes to NYCHA

"There is no issue more pressing today than saving our atmosphere and planet. I'm excited to help transform the energy grids of neighborhoods that are too often neglected. Energizing our world, while providing green construction job opportunities for NYCHA residents is exactly what is needed."

—Pedro Castillo, Bright Power Installation & Construction Team Member and NYCHA Resident

NYCHA's ambitious solar program, a feature of the Authority's Sustainability Agenda, will install solar panels at up to 190 developments by 2025, providing 25 megawatts of power to 6,600 households and creating dozens of jobs for NYCHA residents in the process. Two energy companies, Bright Power and Tangent Energy, have been selected to install the first panels on 90 roofs and 13 parking lots.

NYCHA will lease the sites for up to 25 years and the energy companies will install, operate, maintain, and sell the power to an estimated 550 to 750 low- to moderate-income households across the city; NYCHA residents and NYCHA Section 8 voucher holders who pay their own electric bills are eligible for the program. Construction is set to begin and be completed within 2019; each installation will last approximately two weeks per building and parking lot permit holders may experience temporary disturbances.

Bright Power

"Bright Power is excited to be partnering with Sol Purpose, Solstice, Green City Force, and Solar One to deliver an exciting win-win-win-win for NYCHA, its residents and the planet, providing clean solar power, good jobs, revenue for NYCHA and lower electricity rates through this innovative community solar model."

—Jeffrey Perlman, Bright Power President & Founder

- Panels will be installed at 27 Queensbridge North and Queensbridge South buildings.
- 12 positions will be created for NYCHA residents who are enrolled in or are alumni of Green City Force.
- Twenty percent of the power created will be sold to low-income households throughout the city, who will pay 10 to 20 percent less than the Con Ed rate.
- Bright Power will pay NYCHA a yearly lease of \$65,596.80 over 20 years, for a total of \$1.3 million to be invested back into Queensbridge.

Tangent Energy

"We are honored to be one of the first distributed energy providers selected by NYCHA to develop rooftop solar arrays on their residential buildings. This project builds on the suc-

cess of previous solar projects and other ongoing initiatives between Tangent Energy and the City of New York.

—Andy Meserve, Vice President, Sales and Development of Tangent Energy

- Panels will be installed on 63 buildings and 13 parking lots at six developments: Pomonok, Beach 41st Street-Beach Channel Drive, Coney Island I Site 1B, Throggs Neck Addition, South Beach, and Gowanus.
- Tangent Energy will also provide the technology needed to monitor the amount of energy that is generated by the solar arrays and ensure that the system is working properly.
- 16 one-year jobs will be created for NYCHA residents.
- Sixty percent of the power created will be provided to low- and moderate-income households, who will pay 20 percent less than the Con Ed rate.
- Tangent will pay NYCHA a yearly lease of \$112,227.5 over 20 years, for a total of \$2.24 million to be invested back into the six developments.

NYCHA's solar initiative will help New York City reduce greenhouse gas emissions 80 percent by 2050. NYCHA's solar program also contributes to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Renew300 initiative, in which 300 megawatts of solar energy capacity will be installed at federally assisted housing by 2020.



Pedro Castillo installing solar panels on a rooftop in the Bronx.

NYCHA Residents See Harry Potter

ONE HUNDRED LUCKY

NYCHA residents were among the first people in the country to see the new Broadway play, "Harry Potter and the Cursed Child," thanks to the Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment and the show. NYCHA residents saw the play in March and also had the opportunity to meet some of the actors in



the play. The play is based on a series by J.K. Rowling and opened in the U.S. on Broadway in April.

To Quit Smoking, It Takes a Village

Support is key to success

JOHNSON HOUSES RESIDENT Patricia Young was a long-time smoker who, thanks to a quit smoking workshop with Harlem Health Advocacy Partners, is now on the road to better health: Ms. Young stopped smoking on February 14.

Harlem Health Advocacy Partners (HHAP) provides residents of Clinton Houses, Johnson Houses, King Towers, Lehman Village, and Taft Houses with individual and group health coaching to help manage their health issues, connections to community resources, enrollment and saving on health insurance, and getting involved with community organizing.

HHAP staff members became

certified to lead the American Lung Association's (ALA) *Freedom From Smoking* program, which provides participants eight sessions in small groups to learn how to quit smoking. The 35-year-old program has helped thousands of Americans quit smoking, and according to the ALA's website, program participants "are six times more likely to be smoke free one year later than those who quit on their own."

"I was proud to be part of this initiative that offers community residents tools to quit smoking and live healthier lives," said Carrie Sealy, HHAP Community Health Worker Supervisor. Ms. Sealy is a Castle Hill Houses resident and member of NYCHA's Advisory Group on Smoking

and Health. "The group members shared their stories and the challenges they faced while trying to improve their health. We were there to support them and give them the tools to help them quit or cut back on smoking. We were honored that they allowed us to be a part of their journey to a smoke-free lifestyle."

The sessions also cover using medication to help stop smoking, making lifestyle changes, managing stress, creating a plan to quit smoking, developing social support, dealing with cravings, meditation for stress relief, and how to permanently stay smoke free.

Ms. Young, who was a smoker for 45 years, remarked on the caring and supportive environment the group provided.

"I enjoyed the group a lot. You talk about the things that trick you into smoking, your triggers and how to avoid them. It's rough to quit smoking, I'm going to be honest. But with the techniques they told us to do, it helps. I sit down and breathe, I take time for myself. This program is really helping me. My doctors love it,

Walking the Smoke-Free Talk

From January through March 2018:

- NYCHA organized 22 Smoke-Free NYCHA "Community Conversations" with residents from 103 developments.
- In a partnership with the Department of Health, Green City Force's AmeriCorps team talked about Smoke-Free NYCHA with more than 2,000 residents individually.
- NYCHA shared Smoke-Free NYCHA educational materials with over 3,000 seniors.

my family is so happy for me and everyone's rooting for me."

Although the workshop ended on March 24, many of the participants have created a buddy system with their fellow members to keep supporting each other outside

of the program.

"As part of Smoke-Free NYCHA we are excited to be working with wonderful partners such as HHAP to connect residents to resources that help them quit smoking and reduce exposure to secondhand smoke," Andrea Mata, NYCHA's Director of Health Initiatives, said. "This is a critical component to our work to create healthier homes for residents and healthier working environments for employees."

HHAP plans to hold future smoking cessation groups. NYCHA residents citywide can call HHAP Hotline at **646-682-3400** to learn more about the program. Residents may also find more resources for help quitting smoking by calling **1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487)** or **311** or by visiting **nysmokefree.com**.



Johnson Houses resident Patricia Young successfully completed the Freedom From Smoking program, thanks to Harlem Health Advocacy Partners.

Health Commissioner Dr. Mary T. Bassett Talks Numbers

What is DOHMH's "Your Number" campaign all about?

"It's hard to quit smoking, and it takes almost everyone multiple tries before they quit for good. It took me five tries before I quit for good. Quitting smoking is the most important thing you can do for your health, ok if you don't quit for good the first time. Just keep trying. It takes almost everyone who successfully quits more than one try. Relapsing is not a sign of failure. If you start smoking again, don't be discouraged – just throw out your cigarettes and try quitting again."

Would you talk a bit about your own experience with quitting smoking?

"I started smoking when I was just 16. At the beginning, of course, I was interested in the image. But like many young kids who try cigarettes, I became addicted. I smoked for years. I knew that this wasn't good for me. I was a doctor in training before I finally stopped smoking cigarettes. It wasn't easy. Nicotine is very addictive. But you can quit. I quit. My body felt better. I did not need to plan my life around making sure that I had a cigarette. We're tough enough to quit. If anyone can quit smoking, it's a New Yorker."

Is there evidence that those who try to quit in groups, with other friends or family members, are more successful?

"For some people, group counseling is very helpful. We strongly encourage smokers to try medications and talk to their doctor if they need more help quitting – medications can double their chances of success, especially with a prescription that's tailored to them and their smoking history. Visit **nysmokefree.com** or call **1-866-NY-QUITS**. The Health Department also launched a free app, NYC HelpMeQuit, to help people stop smoking."

How can family members and friends best help a loved one quit?

"Be there to offer support, but let them be the one to start the conversation. When they're ready, help them change their routine or distract themselves to manage triggers and cravings. As they make progress, recognize their success. Celebrate milestones with a special meal or outing, whether it has been one week or one month smoke-free. If they slip up and have a cigarette, stay positive and help them keep trying to quit. Remind they haven't failed; they've learned more about their triggers and can try again."

How can smokers address the triggers that contribute to smoking when they are trying to quit?

"For a smoker, reaching for a cigarette can be an automatic response to a feeling or a trigger. To quit successfully, it is important to learn strategies deal with those triggers. Exercising can help when you feel

It takes almost everyone multiple tries to quit smoking. But keep trying! Because one try at a time is how you quit for good!

FIVE WAS IT FOR ME!

Mary T. Bassett, MD, MPH
NYC Health Commissioner

NYC'S FREE QUIT RESOURCES CAN HELP YOU SUCCEED.
Call 1-866-NY-QUITS or visit nysmokefree.com for your FREE NYC Quits Starter Kit plus tips for quitting for good.

DOWNLOAD THE NYC HelpMeQuit APP TODAY!

NYC Health

down or stressed. Relaxation techniques, like breathing or meditation exercises, can also be helpful. Notice what your other triggers are and try changing your routine."

Do you think exploring the history of tobacco smoking related to structural racism and other forms of discrimination can help motivate smokers to quit?

"The decision to quit is personal, and smokers have to decide for themselves that they are ready to go smoke-free. But everyone deserves to know the history of tobacco companies' targeting of youth, women, and people of color using targeted marketing, giveaways, and false information. The University of California San Francisco Library has a broad archive of tobacco industry documents that you can view here: **on.nyc.gov/UCSF-Tobacco**. One of the most disturbing stories found in these documents is a conversation with an executive from the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company who, when asked if he and his colleagues smoked replied, 'Are you kidding? We reserve that right for the poor, the young, the black, and the stupid.'"



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Celebrating Reunited Families, Reigniting Hope

IT WAS A CELEBRATION without titles and status, focused on families and second chances. On March 22, families, participants, and partners gathered to applaud the success of NYCHA's Family Re-entry Program.

Launched in November 2013, the Family Re-entry Program (FRP) enables people who have been recently released from incarceration to live with their families in NYCHA developments. A groundbreaking collaboration between NYCHA, the Vera Institute for Justice, the Corporation for Supportive Housing, and an array of community-based service providers, the program supports individuals who demonstrate motivation to make positive changes in their lives with services including intensive case management. After two successful years, they can be permanently added to their families' NYCHA leases.

The largest public housing re-entry program in North



America, NYCHA's program has assisted 110 men and 16 women. Sixty-two have completed the program, and 18 have joined the lease at NYCHA developments. NYCHA's FRP has been slated as a model for United States Housing and Urban Development (HUD) public housing authorities across the country.

Research shows that access to housing and reunification with family significantly increases the likelihood that a person leaving incarceration will be able to find and keep a job and not commit another crime. Over the last three years, less than 10 percent of participants in FRP have had new convictions.

During the celebration, Yolanda Johnson-Peterkin, NYCHA's Chief of Housing Community Activities, director of the program, tasked audience members to answer one of three questions: What does family mean to you? or What does re-entry mean to you? or What does Family Re-entry mean to you?



Here are some of their answers:

“

Alfred: Family to me is my mother...I was afforded the opportunity to get back into my mother's life. I feel grateful that I'm with her, that I'm able to protect her and take care of her. My mother has two bedrooms at NYCHA and I'm in the room next to her, one night at about midnight she knocked on my wall, she said, "Son, come in my room." She ended up having to go to the hospital, thank God I was there to take her. ”

“

Allison: For me, re-entry is about human potential. Everyone has something and many things to contribute to the world around us. Just because you made a mistake doesn't mean that that human potential goes away, and we all make mistakes and we all pay for them in different ways, but we should all get the opportunity to move on and to do amazing things with our lives. Your potential to do amazing things and contribute never goes away. ”

“

Ronald: Thank you to all the family members represented here today that welcomed someone home from incarceration. My mother is the one that welcomed me home...I've been home 11 years now and she recently passed. I can't imagine what life would've been like without the support I had from her. To me, Family Re-entry is about saying that the crime is what you did, not who you are. We all have made bad decisions in our lives, but those of you that believed in us, we thank you. For all the individuals that are still inside, that are coming home, that'll have someone like you to welcome them, thank you. ”

“

Rayford: Re-entry implies that I was already there...You're placing me somewhere I'm familiar, somewhere where I'm comfortable, somewhere I have a belonging and that I'm a stakeholder in, so being able to re-enter is just taking me back home, taking me back to where I'm connected to and all the wonderful things that come along with being in a place where everyone knows your name, and everyone knows who you really are beyond whatever you've done. ”

To learn more about the program, including eligibility requirements, visit on.nyc.gov/Family-Partnerships.

Speed Mentoring: Fast Tracking Success

MEMBERS OF NYCHA'S Youth Leadership Committees (YLCs) met with NYCHA employees and other professionals at NYCHA's first speed mentoring event on February 22.

YLCs provide residents 14 to 21 with training and mentoring to help them address issues in their communities. "We want to help young NYCHA residents build important skills as they continue to grow into their roles as community leaders," explained Sideya Sherman, Executive Vice President for Community

Engagement and Partnerships.

NYCHA used a speed mentoring toolkit from NYC Service, a division of the Mayor's Office to design the event. During a series of short, focused conversations, YLC members met individually with mentors for 10 to 15 minutes before rotating seats to talk to another professional. These one-on-one conversations provided an opportunity to ask mentors about their jobs, education, training, and experience.

Volunteer mentors represented public, private, and non-profit

organizations such as the City Council, the State Assembly, the Mayor's Office, the City University

of New York, HBO, JPMorgan Chase, Urban Upbound, Educators for Excellence, and NYCHA.

YLC Mentee:



Kamiya White,
Brooklyn East Youth
Leadership Council Member,
Van Dyke Houses

I think the speed mentoring can help me in the future because it's a great way to

motivate kids who don't have a good support system at home and feel like what they want to be is irrelevant. The best part of speed mentoring was that I had a chance to talk to people from different boroughs and got advice that I probably won't hear from anyone else. I learned that if I put my mind to something that I should go for it because the mentors I spoke with were also my age at one point and can understand being confusion on choosing a career or the pressure of school.

YLC Mentor:



Kara Ng,
Physical Chemistry Doctoral
Researcher, CUNY Graduate
Center, Ingersoll Houses

My mentor changed my life. I believe mentorship is the most important aspect of any career.

Growing up in NYCHA can have a unique impact. There are challenges that may lead to insecurities and fears about the future—then we limit ourselves to what career and educational opportunities we think are possible for us. The speed mentoring event brings together a diverse group of mentors and mentees, so that young NYCHA leaders can be exposed to the different, uncertain, and unconventional paths that people have taken. The knowledge that "this is possible" can be really powerful and inspire our future leaders to have the confidence to dream big.

A New Season Takes Root

NYCHA KICKED OFF THE START OF SPRING by gathering over 260 resident gardeners on April 13 at the 16th Gardening and Urban Farming Conference. Hosted at the Johnson Community Center in Harlem, the conference provides an opportunity for gardeners to keep up-to-date on horticultural and environmental practices, connect with each other, and receive supplies including seeds, flowers, and tools; education; and technical assistance from partner organizations. Workshops covered grant writing, how to effectively run a community garden, gardening tips in Spanish, composting, what it takes to grow and maintain a winning garden, and more.

The efforts of the more than 3,500 NYCHA resident



gardeners who tend 700 community and individual gardens citywide helps to make all of the City's neighborhoods more beautiful and healthier. The conference was sponsored by Unilever as part of a multi-million dollar partnership with New York City's Building Healthy Communities initiative.