

The PHA Experience



Vol. 1 No. 4

A Community Newspaper for and about Residents

Fall 2004

Relocated Seniors Grateful After Tragic Fire

Sometimes, a tragedy can lead people to pull together and rise to new heights. Such was the case in the hours and days following a deadly fire at PHA's Plymouth Hall senior building in Tioga.

Three residents died in the fire, started on an unattended stove-top. The remaining residents were forced to evacuate their homes. From that moment on, PHA staff, residents of the neighborhood and volunteers from other organizations pitched in to make sure every resident's needs war met. Community members came forward immediately offering food, blankets, and clothing. PHA employees worked through

the night and through the weekend to make sure residents were comfortable and had a warm place to stay.

PHA Executive Director Carl Greene wasted no time in directing PHA teams to make the safety and security of the building's residents the top priority. Relocation specialists began work immediately finding apartments at other PHA developments. Some residents chose to temporarily stay with relatives; for the rest the City of Philadelphia responded by offering a temporary shelter.

Within two weeks, PHA staff had relocated the group from the

shelter into permanent homes. Fire victims received donations of money, food, clothing, furniture, and other household items from PHA as well as other agencies and companies. To say that PHA's specialists moved quickly and compassionately would be an understatement.

Residents who had been staying with friends and family were the next group to be moved to new apartments. First, they gathered at 642 N. Broad Street to discuss relocation procedures. A former Plymouth Hall resident sang "Amazing Grace" as the

(Cont. Page 3)



Plymouth Hall Resident leader, Creasie Ashe (center) pictured with students, school officials and other seniors, accepts a \$ 300 gift raised by Cleveland Elementary School students for fire victims.



It was all smiles for Temple graduate Markeeta Beckham as she received her diploma in sociology. Beckham was one of the successful PHA scholarship graduates.

PHA Scholar Beckham Scores Temple Degree

Markeeta Beckham absolutely beamed with pride as she walked down the aisle to receive her diploma from Temple University, (a BA degree in Sociology). Now, she plans to use her degree and her warm personality to help others by becoming a social worker.

Beckham, who grew up at Richard Allen homes, fulfilled her dream of a college education through hard work and a scholarship from PHA. "The scholarship meant a lot. It was an inspiration to

see that I had people behind me who believed in me," she says. "I felt honored, and it gave me the motivation to go to college and finish."

Beckham was inspired by an older brother who graduated from Cheyney University in 1999. As a Temple grad she is now a role model for her younger brother who has just entered high school. While attending Temple she has been an inspiration for kids in her neighborhood too.

Having a dream and hanging on to it is important she says. "If you have any dreams, never let anyone discourage you from doing or being whatever you choose to be," Beckham says.

Family support, she says, is important, too. Beckham ran into obstacles that made her doubt herself, but her family was always there to offer her support and help her keep her eyes on the prize.

(Cont. Page 3)

(Cont. From Page 1)

Pre-Apprenticeship Program Moves to Brand New Facility

PHA's nationally renowned Pre-Apprenticeship training program in the building trades now has a first class facility - and that's great news to PHA residents interested in learning a trade.

With program graduates and an audience of more than 200 looking on, PHA Executive Director Carl Greene cut the ribbon on the

agency's new Work Force Development Center, located on Vare Avenue at the new Greater Grays Ferry Estates.

"As successful as this program has been in sending well trained men and women into the union workforce, this new center will

(Cont. Page 13)

(Cont. From Page 1)



These PHA residents: Elizabeth Williams, Kevin Dawkins, Marlon Williams, Lisa Reese, Derrick James, Tamika Preston, Olusegen Fakanlsun graduates of the pre-apprenticeship program stand in front of the new facility.



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Medicaid (HMO)

Fire Tragedy Unites Plymouth Hall Community

(Cont. From Page 1)

seniors enjoyed refreshments and counted their blessings.

Gracie Fields, 84, says she's very happy in her new apartment at Wilson Park although she'll miss her old home. "I like Wilson Park better than Plymouth Hall because I have more room to wheel myself around," she says. "I have made friends already and everyone that I have met has been wonderful; I have no complaints whatsoever."

Jesse Muhammad says many people went beyond the call of duty to help him in his time of need. He relocated to his new home, Bentley Hall, 8 days after the fire. Muhammad will miss some of his former neighbors at Plymouth Hall, but he's really grateful and says, "everything's good." He was full of praise for the efforts of PHA staff, social workers and neighbors of Plymouth Hall. Like others who survived the fire, he's glad to be



Former Plymouth Hall resident Dorothy Davenport comforted residents attending the relocation meeting by singing "Amazing Grace." Davenport left Plymouth Hall in 1996 to live independently, but still has friends there.

alive and able to enjoy a new home.

Like Muhammad, Robert Powell found a new residence in just 8 days at Morton Homes in Germantown. Powell, who celebrates his 76th birthday this fall, says he's happy with his new location and is just glad to wake up and see another day.

Even school children got into the act. Students from the Cleveland Elementary School - just two blocks from Plymouth Hall - sold pretzels to raise money, and by the time they had counted up their nickels, dimes and quarters they had collected \$300. Principal Karen Borden turned over a check to the residents in special ceremonies at the school on October 28. Firefighters

from Engine 59 were also honored for their heroic efforts in bringing residents safely out of the building.

Pam Dunbar, PHA's Supervisory Asset Manager for the Northeast Area, says seeing people come together in the wake of the fire was a most touching experience. "People automatically did the right thing and helped each other," she says. "It was beautiful." Dunbar says the greatest thing that could happen now is for others to take a similar perspective when any of our residents need help in the future.

Without exception, residents said they were moved by the love, care, and attention shown them in their greatest time of need.

Temple Grad Looks Ahead

(Cont. From Page 1)

Markeeta says she wants to work with children in her new career, to share her energy and success with others. "Your outlook on life, what you plan to do for the future, your goals - everything starts out when you're a child," she says.

Ideally, Markeeta Beckham will pursue her career in North Philadelphia. Residents of that part of the city need lots of encouragement and moral support, and she's ready to give it.

Honor Roll

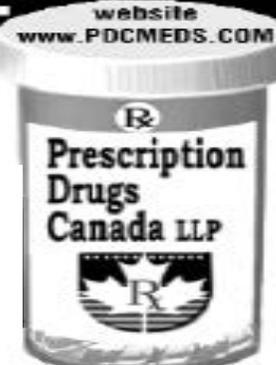
- Bed, Bath and Beyond
- Cleveland Elementary School
- Emlen Arms Resident Council
- IKEA
- Mattress Giant
- Mount Ephraim Baptist Church
- Office of Emergency Shelter & Services
- Philadelphia Corporation for Aging
- Pinn Memorial Baptist Church
- Red Cross
- Venango House
- Wal-Mart
- Wilson Park Resident Council

Toys for Tots...



NEEDY CHILDREN WILL once again receive gifts from Santa Claus through the efforts of PHA and TSSI. Hundreds of presents will be distributed to families thanks to the efforts of PHA Executive Director Carl R. Greene and TSSI Executive Director Asia Coney (pictured above).

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Abbotsford Homes Resident Killed in Iraq

page 4

Rodney A. Jones lived at Abbotsford Homes for 21 years - his entire life - until he joined the Army earlier this year. Recently, his family and friends were shocked to learn he was killed while serving in Iraq.

Rodney had dreams and visions of a wonderful life. He was smart and enjoyed writing poetry while listening to classical music. A graduate of Roxboro High School, Rodney looked forward to attending college, and running for President. After high school Rodney got a job working for the IRS, and subsequently joined the service last January.

His mother Renee says what was most important to Rodney was the love he had for God and the dedication to his family. In her words "he was a loving son, grandson and brother." Even from overseas, he would call and email his mom whenever he could. Unfortunately he can no longer make those calls or realize his dreams. Rodney, just months before his 22nd birthday, was killed by a bomb explosion in Baghdad. Fortunately for his family, he had just been home on leave in September for a week. Rodney's lieutenant says that he gave his life for what he believed, and because of Jones' quick action additional lives were saved.

Ironically Rodney won a poetry contest when he was 15 years old that described how he wanted to be remembered.

Don't Weep

Don't weep, for I am only asleep;

**I will wake up when Jesus comes to seek
the souls of the meek.**

**Don't weep, I'll be waiting there, with my robe,
my halo, and my sandals**

Just so I fit in.

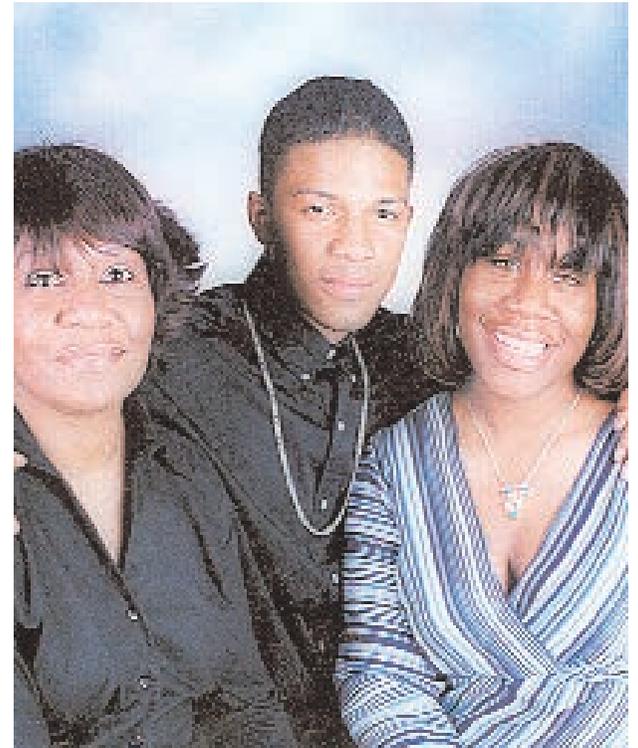
**Don't weep, because my God, he's been watch-
ing me, like a hawk in the sky.**

So I cannot deny, the one who soars the sky.

**Don't weep, it's not a sad but happy thing you hear,
I'm going to a place where there is no fear.**

I want everybody to cheer that I made it here.

Rodney Jones Died September 30th, 2004.



Residents of Abbotsford Homes and the Philadelphia Housing Authority would like to send their sincere condolences to the family of Rodney Jones who sadly passed away while serving his country in Iraq. Pictured here are Renee Jones (mother), Rodney, and sister Felicia.

The PHA Experience • Fall 2004

www.pha.phila.gov

PHA Senior Residents Upcoming Events...

November 19, 2004

Thanksgiving Luncheon
Gladys B. Jacobs
12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

December 11

Senior Holiday Party
Blumberg One Stop Shop
6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

December 13

Christmas Tree Lighting
Celebrations
Emlen Arms, 10 a.m.
Holmcrest, 12 p.m.
Suffolk Manor, 1 p.m.

December 14th

Christmas Tree Lighting;
Gladys B. Jacobs, 10 a.m.
Blumberg, 11 a.m.
Bentley Hall, 12 p.m.
Parkview, 1 p.m.
Collegeville, 2 p.m.

December 15th

Christmas Tree Lighting
Katie B. Jackson, 2 p.m.
Mantua, 3 p.m.
Johnson Holmes, 4 p.m.
Point Breeze, 5 p.m.

December 16th

Christmas Tree Lighting
Cassie L. Holley, 10 a.m.
Wilson Park, 10.30 a.m. Finale

February, 3rd, 2005

PHA Super Bowl Friday

February 8 - 9

Atlantic City Overnight Trip
at the Tropicana Casino
& Resort
Buses leave from Wilson Park
at 8:00 a.m.

Philadelphia Housing Authority Family Self Sufficiency-North

OFFERING THE FOLLOWING SERVICES:

EDUCATION:

GED CLASSES
ADULT EDUCATION
COMPUTER CLASSES

EMPLOYMENT:

JOB READINESS CLASSES
JOB PLACEMENT
CAREER DEVELOPMENT
EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING
PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

HEALTH:

BEHAVIORAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH
FAMILY HEALTH CARE CENTER
GROUP FAMILY THERAPY
NARCOTIC ANONYMOUS (NA) MEETINGS

LIFE SKILLS:

BUDGETING AND HOME OWNERSHIP COUNSELING

SOCIAL SERVICES:

COMMUNITY RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT
& SOCIAL SERVICES (CRDSS)
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE UNIT (PHA)

YOUTH PROGRAMS:

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM
YOUTH ART PROGRAM
SUMMER YOUTH CAMP

215-684-4416

Pre-Apprenticeship Grads Find New Careers in Shipbuilding

Two PHA residents have taken advantage of an opportunity and now they've set sail on a new and unexpected career - building ships.

Derrick James and Olusegun Fakankum graduated from PHA's Pre-Apprenticeship Program this past June. Then they took a special test to qualify for their dream opportunity - joining the new apprenticeship program at Kvaerner Philadelphia Shipyard, Inc. Only ten people were admitted to this top rate program that takes four years and 8,000 hours of training to complete.

James and Fakankum are training to become ship outfitters, (people who install the machinery and pipes on ships). They are members of Local 690 of the Plumbers Union and the Philadelphia Metal Trades Council.

They both say that before entering the Pre-Apprenticeship program their jobs helped them get by, but did not offer a real future. James, a resident of Paschall Homes, used to work on cars; and Fakankum, a Scattered Site resident, gave haircuts at home.

The picture changed dramatically for both men right after July 4th when their apprenticeships at Kvaerner began. "I was excited because it's not just a job, it's a career. It was a good thing to get my foot in the door and start off toward a good life," James says. Fakankum admits it's quite a leap to go from cutting hair to welding, but he says there is a connection. "Cutting hair and welding go hand in hand. You've got to have a steady hand."

Tom Quinn, Kvaerner's welding instructor, says James and Fakankum have a lot to learn over the next four

years: welding, outfitting, ship fitting, rigging, blue prints and metrics. He says the hard work will pay off. Quinn says, "You can make \$35 an hour as a union welder," Quinn knows; he's been a career welder for 35 years making a good living from it.

Al Williams, case management director for the Pre-Apprenticeship Program, says the partnership with Kvaerner is part of PHA Executive Director Carl Greene's vision under the Moving to Work Program. Williams says besides expanding the program to other trades or career areas, custom training will be tailored to the needs of Kvaerner or other employers.

Quinn advises, "for any man or woman who does not want to go to college, this is a great skill to learn and you can make a lot of money. You can buy a nice house, have medical benefits and have a nice life."

Derrick James and Olusegun Fakankum believe they



PHA Residents Derrick James and Olusegun Fakankum are currently training to become ship outfitters. The duo are graduates from the successful PHA Pre-Apprenticeship program that provides skills and training in various trades.

already have interesting jobs and a great future ahead of them. They say PHA's Pre-Apprenticeship Program changed their lives and they're excited about fulfilling their dreams.

"GREAT" - How to Handle Bullies

What do Whitney Houston, Michelle Pfeiffer, Tom Cruise and Mel Gibson have in common? They were all bullied when they were young. It's true; yes even famous people have been victims of bullying. Anyone can be a target for a bully. But it's important to know that in spite of being bullied, you too can be successful.

"Boys will be Boys" is one of many myths about bullying. Actually bullying is rarely outgrown. Sixty percent of middle school bullies (both boys and girls) commit a crime by the time they are twenty-four; and an alarming number go on to become career criminals. I know it's hard to think of middle school bullies as future criminals, but this is a reality.

Here at PHA we believe everyone has a role in nurturing our children. It takes more than a village to raise a child; it takes a culture. We need to communicate with and listen to our young people about what they see and hear. Problems often occur in classrooms, playgrounds, homes and neighborhoods.

Here are a few suggestions that can help. First of all we should not accept bullying under any circumstances. We all need to learn to respect differences of opinion and to treat others the way we want to be treated.

Kids - Let your parent or teacher know if you have been bullied, or see another person being bullied. Agree with your friends that bullying is not OK. If you can, talk to your friend one-on-one; let them know that they don't need to be a bully to be accepted. Remember kids, it's your future and reputation at stake; don't let a bully interfere with reaching your goals.

Parents - Observe your children's actions and words, and be aware of your own behavior. Let your kids know that bullying others is not O.K. and will not be allowed. Get to know your children's friends and their parents. Get involved in all their activities, to prevent bullying and its consequences.

Work with parents in your community and teachers in your schools to create a system to discourage bullies. Above all: teach and model for your children respect and tolerance.

Get your school signed up for programs such as the Drug Abuse Resistance and Education (DARE) and Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT). These programs teach young adults life skills and strategies in dealing and coping with bullying behaviors.

Finally, parents - look at yourselves. Do you bully at home

or frequently criticize your children or neighbor? Is your voice unnecessary harsh? Do you teach and model the art of negotiation? You may be the only positive role model your child sees. Let's all make a commitment here at PHA to invest in an anti-bullying campaign. Recognizing there is a problem is the first step; doing something about it requires commitment. Make a difference in a child's life.

A Message from the Executive Director

Situations arise that test us and let us know what we're made of. After witnessing the manner in which Plymouth Hall residents reacted to the tragic fire that destroyed their homes I can tell you that these men and women are made of something special.

Their spirit and resiliency has been inspiring. Instead of complaining about their lot in life and all that they have lost they speak of how thankful they are to be alive and how grateful they are to PHA employees for quickly finding them new apartments.

Those employees showed what they are made of as well, putting in countless hours in the first several days after the fire, making sure all residents' needs were met and not rest-



Carl Greene

ing until every tenant was comfortably settled at a new development.

Just as we stood with our customers, we will stand with their former building. Plymouth Hall may be badly burned and boarded up, but

we plan to rebuild. We have begun assessing the damage and estimating the time and cost required to renovate the structure. There are too many seniors in Philadelphia who need affordable housing for us

to abandon 70 apartments.

We at PHA consider our work a mission. Serving customers like those from Plymouth Hall - and feeling their love and appreciation - makes it all worthwhile.

The PHA Experience

The Residents' Newspaper

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Resident Writers

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Computer Class Leads to Teaching Post



In this picture, starting from the left in the first row, Ms. Edwina Young, Ms. Luciana Gashkin, Ms. Florence Pelham, Ms. Mario Bailey, Ms. Linda Staley, Mrs. Anna Williams in front of the Ms. Staley. Ms Nellie Reynolds (PHA Commissioner) In the second row. Mrs. Jeenifer Beaman, Ms. Annette Lloyd, Ms. Regina Major, and Mr. Thomas Dulin. All the students in this picture completed the Beginning and Advanced Computer classes.

Edwina Young signed up for a computer course at PHA's Blumberg Computer Center last April. She had some basic computer skills, but nothing fancy (like PowerPoint, Excel, or Access).

While participating in the program (which lasts 6 months), Edwina won Second Place in a PowerPoint contest with a presentation on teen pregnancy. Before she graduated in October, Edwina had begun to help train other students.

As a result, Edwina was invited to join the team of computer teachers at Blumberg. She is now a Teaching Assistant, volunteering 30 hours a week at the computer center. This assignment is part of Edwina's community service requirement, but actually

it's much more. Edwina has learned that she's a good teacher. "I never saw anyone learning from me except my child," she says. "I like dealing with the people."

Edwina also realized that this assignment could lead to a paying job - doing something she really enjoys. Her next goal is to enter Community College of Philadelphia and become Microsoft Certified (by the State of Pennsylvania). She hopes that a formal certification will lead to employment with a private company or a job teaching. One thing is clear to her: Even adults want someone to hold their hand (especially while they learn how to use the computer!).

We've Got a Computer With Your Name On It

School is back in session and that means homework, book reports and projects. Are you running to the library every time your child needs to do a report? Did you know that your family can purchase a computer for only \$150?

Team Children is a non-profit group that places computers with low-income families. Robert Toporek, the founder of this program, knows the importance of children using computers at an early age. Toporek calls the computer an invaluable tool to help kids and adults succeed and he says financial hardship shouldn't prevent you from owning one.

Team Children has received many letters from PHA residents who want to take advantage of this wonderful program: "I do take computer classes at PHA but I do not have a computer to practice the lessons on. So sometimes I get a little frustrated because I cannot come home and practice." Another resident shared her need for a computer, "I am writing this letter with regard to my 11 year old grandson. He needs a computer to help him with his school work. I read about this project through PHA. I was very encouraged when I heard about this organization. A computer from your organization would help my grandson a lot. He has specific learning problems in math, and I think this could really help him with his school work."

Over 100 PHA families have benefited from this

program so far. And there are still many computers that can be placed in needy homes. To receive a computer, you must write a letter explaining why you cannot afford a computer, and how obtaining one would benefit your family. Letters must be at least a page and a half long. Toporek encourages families to take the time to write a great letter, and photos of the family are welcome too!

If the family is selected to receive a computer they must give back to the organization in three ways:

1) Make a Donation! \$150 donation to The Children's Project. This donation helps keep the program running so other families can benefit from the program.

2) Volunteer your time! On the day you pick up your computer you are required to volunteer a minimum of two hours in the repair center helping with anything from packing computers for other families to something as simple as cleaning tables.

3) Follow Up! One month after receiving the computer, the family must write a follow up letter explaining how the computer has helped their family.

For more information on how your family can obtain one of the computers from The Children's Project call 610-539-8480.

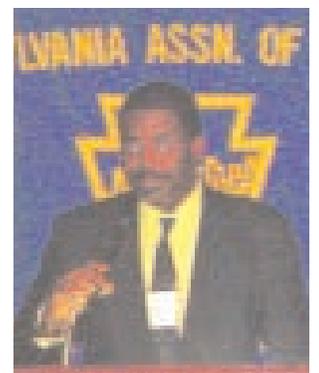
PA Housing Group Honors Greene As Man of Year

Philadelphia Housing Authority Executive Director Carl Greene has been named Person of the Year by the Pennsylvania Association of Housing and Redevelopment Agencies (PAHRA), the organization's top honor.

The inscription on the plaque reads in part, "Carl Greene's tireless and relentless efforts have resulted in an unprecedented level of construction of high quality affordable housing for low and modest-income citizens of Philadelphia."

Greene has overseen an unprecedented overhaul of affordable housing in Philadelphia, converting old style public housing projects into modern beautiful affordable low-rise housing. In addition, he has worked with community organizations to reform the Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) so that it focuses on helping recipients toward economic independence.

In addition to the Person of



Carl R. Greene
...honored by peers

the Year Award for the executive director, PAHRA awarded PHA two Certificates of Achievement, one for the new homes at Cambridge Plaza Phase I in North Philadelphia and the second for the redevelopment of Mt. Olivet Apartments in West Philadelphia. PHA redirected Housing Choice Voucher funding to help build both of those developments.

The awards ceremonies took place at PAHRA's annual conference, held this year in Wilkes Barre.

House Proud

by Resident Journalist
Antoinette Martin

In the past, Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) tenants and Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) residents had a stigma against them. The tenants were viewed as people who didn't respect or take care of their properties. This stigma went on to conclude, for instance, that PHA tenants were undesirable neighbors. But now, in the present, PHA is in the process of "Building Beyond Expectations."

As tenants of public housing, our "building" comes in the form of taking responsibility for our homes and apartments including daily housekeeping chores, inside and outside.

This responsibility also includes living in a way that doesn't damage or deface our properties. We also need to teach our children how to be good neighbors, and let our guests know that we will not tolerate disrespect of our homes, our neighbors, or our community. Also, become a valuable part of the community by participating in community meetings and events, so your neighbors know you care.

In their commitment to Building Beyond Expectations, PHA has created a booklet addressing the above

issues, entitled "Quality of Life Initiative." You can pick one up for yourself and one for your neighbor at the Housing Choice Voucher main office at 642 N. Broad Street.

Treat where you live with the utmost respect. Your home (inside and out) is a reflection of who you are and how and what you think of yourself. You wouldn't attend an event in dirty clothes because you wouldn't want others to get a negative impression. Taking care of your home and your community is the same thing. People, if we don't care about how we live, then when shall we feel worthy to live in a clean, safe, peaceful and an enjoyable environment?

You Are Invited to Participate
in **Abo Haven's**
**Entrepreneur Family Childcare Provider
Training & Customized Childcare
Worker/Aid Training Program**
This is a sixteen (16) week program
Monday-Friday from 10AM - 2PM
Sponsored by **PHA**
Please call to schedule an orientation
Ask for Ms. Brown 215-640-0880

New Vista

by Valerie Manlove

My marriage is over; now I can see.
I kept trying to please him, pushing down me.
He said reading and writing were not for our kind.
There was no chance of getting ahead with our mind.
Ever harder I worked, to be here as he said.
Until all I had been, was buried and dead.
Walking a tightrope, I dodged his rage,
Until no longer speaking or acting my age.
Deeper and darker the pit became.
Living my life in darkness and rain.
The tears flowed often and always were mocked.
I hid them inside; all outlets were blocked.
Showed him I loved him in so many ways.
No matter what, he wouldn't give praise.
Dimmer my future, more my boundaries became.
Tapes in my head said all folks were the same.
Dawn now arises; things aren't as he said.
Now hearing others, his power is dead.
My love for mankind diminishes not.
Strong desire for peace rises bright and hot.
Nature is sweet; it is what I am.
Evil and darkness won't stay my hand.
Faith in humanity beats strong through my soul.
And now through my writing, I feel whole.
The words I am blessed with, kept never more near.
I found a more peaceful world, and freedom from fear.
Onward I'm marching, to make the most of each day.
This beautiful sunrise, lighting my way.



PHA Pre-Apprenticeship Program Open House

WHEN: Wednesday December 1 & Thursday December 2, 2004
12:00pm to 6:00pm

WHERE: Workforce Development Center
1905 Vare Avenue (right off of the expressway)

Here is your chance to become a skilled union member. Don't miss this opportunity!

Students are instructed in electrical, carpentry, roofing and painting trades. Union entrance exams available to participants.

Program is math intensive. Students learn Algebra, Geometry and Basic Math for union exams.

Qualified applicants must take aptitude & drug tests prior to admission.

For info call:
215.684.8049 or 215.684.8053

The next session will start in January 2005.
This 21-week session will end in June 2005.
Classes are Monday thru Friday 8:00am to 4:00pm.
Applications will be accepted in October 2004.

Applicants must meet the following requirements:

1. Resident of the Philadelphia Housing Authority
 - Section 8/Housing Choice
 - Conventional Housing
 - Scattered Site
2. Positive attitude
3. Physically capable of lifting up to 60lbs
4. 18yrs. of age or older, or 18 before the end of the cycle
5. A high school diploma or GED is required. (If applicants have neither one, before they can be accepted into the program they must have taken steps toward obtaining one.)

PHA Community Partners Education/Job Training Programs

Job Placement/Retention Programs	Personal Development	
Day Programs	Day Programs	Evening Programs
<p>Job Placement/Job Coaching If you need help getting your first job, this is the program for you. The program offered during the day has no requirements, and will help you obtain a job, and provides job coaching for increased responsibility/pay increases.</p> <p>Location: Center City</p> <p>Provider: Educational Data Systems, Inc. 42 South 15th Street, Suite 300 Philadelphia, PA 19102 Contact: Melanie DiBlasi 215.568.8316</p>	<p>Family Self-Sufficiency If you want to develop a plan for your future, this agency is for you. The program includes: Life Skills Development, Career Guidance, Job Search Assistance, family finance, and household management.</p> <p>Location: Southwest Philadelphia</p> <p>Provider: MET 5008 Baltimore Avenue, Suite B Philadelphia 19143 Contact: Sherrie Davis 215.717.2727</p>	<p>Adult GED (22yrs & above) Get your ticket to a brighter future by obtaining a GED.</p> <p>English as a Second Language (ESL) Learn to speak English in a friendly, supportive setting.</p> <p>Housing Counseling Taught by a licensed realtor, this program helps HCV residents locate housing, and provides an introduction to Homeownership.</p> <p>Location: NE Philadelphia</p> <p>Provider: CORA Services Inc/Beacon Center Grover Washington Jr. Middle School Contact: Anne Marie Schulz 215.455.8296</p>
	<p>Young Adult GED (16 – 21 yrs) This program prepares students to gain their GED. It also includes: computer skills, pre-employment and life skills training. Family support services are also available.</p>	
<p>Job Retention for Employed Individuals This “Survival Skills for Employment” Program will teach you how to succeed in your job. Learn how to advance in your job, gain greater responsibility, obtain promotions and salary increases, or transition to a new career. The program offered during the day includes: job coaching, GED training, driver’s education and computer skills.</p> <p>Location: South Philadelphia (Near Greater Grays Ferry Estates)</p> <p>Provider: American Community Partners 1905 Vare Avenue Philadelphia, PA 19145 Contact: Al Williams 215.684.8052</p>	<p>Housing Counseling Taught by a licensed realtor, this program helps HCV residents locate housing, and provides an introduction to Homeownership.</p> <p>Location: NE Philadelphia – Frankford</p> <p>Provider: Cora Services Inc/ Neumann Program 1000 Orthodox Street Philadelphia, PA 19124 Contact: Debra Williams 215.535.2957</p>	

People You Should Know



Juanita Maiga,

Juanita Maiga is Assistant General Manager with the Scattered Sites Division. Juanita has been with the Philadelphia Housing Authority through the bad times and the good, having joined the agency 18 years ago. She started out working for the Housing Choice Voucher Program and moved over to Scattered Sites five years ago. Juanita now manages properties from the Delaware to the Schuylkill Rivers. In addition, her department makes social service referrals to encourage economic self-

sufficiency.

She has always had a strong belief in the services PHA provides for residents. "I am proud to be a Philadelphia Housing Authority employee. I believe we deliver quality housing and effective customer service. Working directly with the residents makes the effort worthwhile." Juanita believes the services PHA offers set an example for other housing authorities, but she says there is always room to improve.

Scattered Site residents can contact Juanita at 215.684.4532.



Albert Pham,

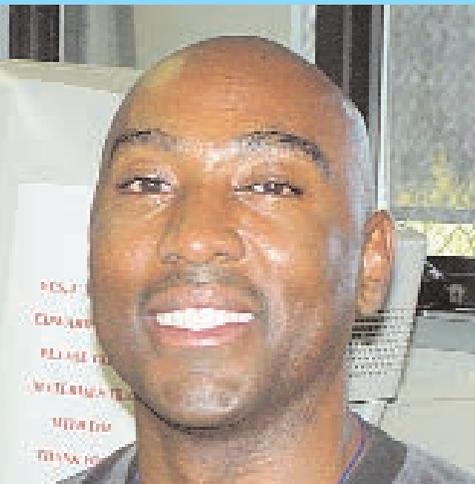
Albert Pham is a Computer Instructor/Adult Education Teacher at the Blumberg Self-Sufficiency Center. He came to work for PHA last December and developed a plan to teach beginning and advanced computer training classes.

This position has been quite a leap for a man who knew nothing about computers when he came to this country from Vietnam 14 years ago. Pham says he realized almost instantly upon his arrival that technology could improve his life. He went to school

part time for almost ten years to earn his degree in Computer Science from Temple University.

Albert says most of his students are adults who resist change. "I have found that patience, understanding and simplicity are important factors in assisting adults learning this (computer) process," he says.

Pham is thrilled by the increasing size of his classes and the enthusiasm of his students. One of his students called recently to thank him after landing a job based on things he learned in Pham's class. It makes a big difference, he says, when you have marketable skills. Interested in computer instruction? You can contact Albert Pham at 215-684-4628.



Edward Highsmith

Edward Highsmith is one of PHA's Economic Self Sufficiency coordinators. He helps residents put together plans for their future including linking them to PHA training programs, and helping them find employment.

This Philly native is a social service worker who came to PHA last June after working for seven years with the City's Office of Emergency Shelter and Services. Highsmith - who enjoys meeting people with different backgrounds - speaks French fluently and is a graduate of Temple University.

Highsmith's goal is to make PHA residents marketable for employment, ideally, jobs with benefits. He says it's a challenge because the job market is tough right now, even for people with college degrees. Many residents come to him short of a high school diploma or GED. Highsmith helps them learn how to make a plan and follow up on it.

His advice to residents: "Learn how to make a plan, but know when to say you need help." You can contact Edward Highsmith at 215-684-3105.



Shaun Reed

Shaun Reed is the Assistant General Manager for Conventional Sites. He is responsible for managing the operations of five conventional site regions including 7,400 units at 32 sites. Shaun started working at PHA in 2003 as a Supervisory Asset Manager for the North East and North Central Areas, before he was promoted to his current position. "Over the past 18 months, I've had the absolute pleasure of working with employ-

ees and residents that exemplify an unparalleled commitment to raising the standard of public housing."

Covering as much ground as he does, it's unlikely you'll see Shaun for very long at your site, but you will see the managers who work for him. He promises they all reflect the same level of professionalism that he brings to the job.

*How to Get Your
Personal Experience
Into Your Paper*

Tell us about your "Experience" as a client of the Philadelphia Housing Authority. Simply give us a call and tell us your story! Our paper reaches all of our residents including: Traditional Sites, Scattered Sites, and Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program. Join our resident journalism classes which are conducted every other Friday from 10am -12pm; you will learn about the newspaper business and become one of our published writers. Either way, this is a golden opportunity, so reach out. It's easier than you think! Call 215-684-8645 or email anne.martinez@pha.phila.gov.

Long and Steady Road Leads to Dream

"I can do this." These were the driving words that encouraged Beverly Helms (a mother of six), to do what many thought was impossible, buy her own home. She knew there were big obstacles to overcome. Beverly was a single parent, and she was out of work because of a disability. To make matters worse, without a job Beverly couldn't make the required payments on her credit card bills, so she had a really bad credit rating. Still, when she found out about PHA's Homeownership Program, Beverly decided to pursue her dream of home ownership.

First, she enrolled in a program that told her what she needed to do to

become a homeowner. She received information on how to clean up her bad credit, found out about the different types of loans, learned what should be inspected when buying a home, and how to avoid investment predators.

Turning around Beverly's credit rating took years to achieve. Then she needed time to make loan arrangements as she looked for the home she wanted. She says this was a long road to travel but was well worth the effort. First she lived in shelters, then in PHA housing for ten years, (rented through the Housing Choice Voucher Program). "But now I have my own home, and we couldn't have done it

without the help of PHA. All the experiences with the Philadelphia Housing Authority have been good". Her son Shawn describes his new home as "awesome". Her daughter Ebony describes the experience as only a teenager can, saying "now I have a room of my own."

Beverly has been in her own home since April 2004, and has words for those with similar ambitions. "Anyone who has a goal they really want to accomplish can succeed in homeownership. There are many who have helped us along the way, especially PHA."



Patricia, Shawn, Jeneen, Beverly and Ebony Helms realized a dream recently when they purchased their home thanks to the PHA Homeownership Program.



MTW/Family Services Program Homebuyers Club Workshops

Sponsored by Citizens Bank

10:00A.M. to 12:00P.M.

Strawbridges Building
8th & Market Street
13th Floor Community Area

Please plan to attend all three sessions when registering for seating.

Call to register:
Mr. Gilbert Vega, 215.684.2057 or
Ms. Camille Johnson, 215.684.8114

Tuesday December 7, 2004

First Time Homeownership Orientation

Learn how to use your Housing Voucher (Section 8) to purchase a home.

Tuesday December 21, 2004

Budgeting & Money Management

Learn how to define income and expenses.

Tuesday December 28, 2004

Credit Repair

Learn how to establish, maintain and repair credit.

Senior Partners urges you to . . .

If you have Medicare Parts A & B and live in Philadelphia, you have a dozen choices for how to get your health care coverage. These include Original Medicare, HMOs, PPOs and other types of health plans.

With so much alphabet soup, you may be tempted to choose the plan with the lowest monthly health plan premium, and sign on the dotted line. But you could be making a mistake.

Not all health plans are alike, and not all health coverage is the same. Think about your own health care situation when you make your decision.

- ✓ **Do you have the freedom to go to a specialist when you need one?** Or does the plan require you to get a referral from your Primary Care Physician, or other prior approval?
- ✓ **What about additional health services, like routine vision care?** Does the plan give you more coverage than original Medicare? Does it cover the services that are most important to you?
- ✓ **What is your cost for these services?** Most plans have copayments, coinsurance and/or deductibles, and these can add up. Estimate your yearly costs for the care you know you'll need.
- ✓ **Does the plan include doctors, hospitals and other providers you'll be satisfied to use?** Are they providers you know and trust? Are they convenient for you?



Nothing's more important than your good health. Before you make a decision about something so important in your life, take some time. Do your homework.

Get information on the plans of interest to you, and compare them carefully. (You can see the Medicare Personal Plan Finder at www.Medicare.gov for detailed information, or call 1 800 MEDICARE anytime with questions.)

Senior Partners offers a choice of plans, including our Gold plan, with \$0 copays and \$0 deductibles for all your Primary Care Physician visits, and our \$0 health plan premium Silver plan, designed to especially benefit members who also have Medicaid coverage. Both plans offer more benefits than original Medicare, including fitness center membership and routine vision care.* And they give you the freedom to visit plan specialists without a referral!

Senior Partners plans are offered by Health Partners, a not-for-profit HMO owned by seven of Philadelphia's best-known hospitals.** This means you can count on professional and respectful health care from some of the area's leading primary care physicians and specialists, right in your neighborhood.

* Certain limits and restrictions apply.

** Health Partners is a not-for-profit health plan with a Medicare Advantage contract.

Not all Medicare coverage is the same !!!

Find out how Senior Partners offers more benefits than original Medicare at a no-obligation sales information session:

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(If you have any special needs, please call us at the number below so we can accommodate you at the sales information session.)

For more information, call 1-888-776-9466, Ext. 243 (TTY/TDD: 1-877-454-8477) or visit our website at www.healthpart.com

Monday, December 6
11:00 AM - 12:00 Noon
Free Library
Kingsessing Branch
1201 South 51st Street

Tuesday, December 7
10:00 - 11:30 AM
HACE Mall
2927 North 5th Street

Tuesday, December 7
1:30 - 2:30 PM
Gordon Medical Associates
6329 North Broad Street

Wednesday, December 8
12:30 - 1:30 PM
Free Library - Frankford Branch
4634 Frankford Avenue

Thursday, December 9
10:30 - 11:30 AM
Health Care Center # 4
4410 Haverford Avenue

Friday, December 10
1:00 - 2:30 PM
Center in the Park
5818 Germantown Avenue

 **Senior Partners**
Health Partners Medicare Plan

Former Schuylkill Falls Resident Honored

Bryant Feggins, who founded a company called Positive Image Consultants, was recently honored with the Youth Entrepreneur Award at the Resident Empowerment Conference.

The firm, which has its own website (www.universalspic.com), was born out of Feggins' own life experiences, including the loss of a close friend and his grandfather. He received funding for his company from the Philadelphia Commercial Development Corporation in June 2002.

Bryant gives motivational speeches and sells T-shirts and counts PHA among his customers. He has also sold cars and prepaid legal services to support himself while building his business. But no matter what he's doing, he's always creating relationships.

Feggins told the crowd at the conference not to pay attention to the person or the award, just the spirit that everybody has or should have. He's planning on helping more PHA residents through a life skills program under development and he's expanded his product line to include 30 Christian T-shirts. Feggins encourages others to form their own businesses.

"Nothing in life is really stable, but you can't make advances if you don't take chances," said Feggins.



Bryant Feggins

Top of the Clock Couple To Wed

When Marcus Boone and Betty Carvalho took jobs as security guards at PHA, they had their reasons. However, love was not on the list, or so they thought.

Betty went to work for Top of the Clock in June 2002, working a second job on weekends to earn tuition money for her daughter who was attending Penn State. Marcus came on board in September of that same year looking for a new career. They met at PHA's West Park Apartments where Betty was assigned to train Marcus. Then, the unexpected happened. They fell in love.

Betty Carvalho says everyone at West Park thought she was so strict, someone without a heart. That was hardly the case. She had responsibilities and had to maintain the level of security that West Park residents expect.

The couple initially tried to hide their relationship, but word eventually did get back to their general manager. He wasn't about to get in the way of the budding romance but he did remind Marcus and Betty to conduct themselves in a professional manner while on the job.

Off the job, Betty says Marcus is a very gentle, very affectionate man. Betty also says that she and Marcus are best friends. "I can be myself with him. I don't have to pretend that I'm somebody that I'm not. To him, I'm always beautiful." Marcus says he was drawn to Betty by her beautiful smile and beautiful eyes, and he liked the way she carried herself.

The couple plans to marry on New Year's Eve. "We thought we would give people something nice to come to," Betty says. "It's the beginning of a new life for us, so what better day than New Year's Eve."

As for the place, Marcus wanted to hold the ceremony



Betty Carvalho and Marcus Boone met on the job at PHA. They plan to marry on New Year's Eve. Betty says their romance is like something out of a fairy tale.

at the security booth at West Park Apartments because that's where he met Betty. However that could get a bit cramped so the couple settled on the North American Motor Inn at Belmont and City Line. The exchange of wedding vows will take place at 10 PM, followed by a party into the New Year. Betty says the romance is like something out of a fairy tale. Few people would disagree.

Southeastern Girl Scouts Do More Than Sell Cookies



Arch Homes Girl Scouts with leaders Kaira Holmes, Michelle Watkins, Deborah Holmes and Constance Jones (left to right).

The Girl Scouts of SEPA (Southeastern Pennsylvania) have invaded PHA to the benefit of more than 500 hundred young residents. While most of us think of the Girl Scouts just selling cookies, the training and life benefits for these young ladies goes much further.

The program was launched two years ago at PHA through a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Girl Scouts focuses on talents that will take these young residents through life. They learn leadership skills and conflict resolution while being encouraged to become involved in good relationships.

Danette James who heads the initiative at PHA says, "

We promote self-esteem and loyalty. And what's most important is that many of the leaders and facilitators are parents. Together we help these young ladies discover who they are, and help start them down the right path." Other activities include sporting events like "Black Women in Sports" or health and wellness workshops like "Sisters in Shape." And just as you would expect, the PHA Girl Scouts sell cookies!

The Girl Scouts meet once or twice a week at 10 different sites throughout PHA. To join call the PHA Girl Scout Director, Danette James at 215.564.2030 ext. 240. The \$10 registration fee for PHA residents is currently

covered by a grant - so sign up now!!

PHA Girl Scout Sites:

Haddington Homes

Arch Homes

Liddonfield Homes

Morton Homes

Queen Lane Apartments

Bartram Village

Fairhill Apartments

Raymond Rosen

Blumberg Apts

Arlene Homes



Girl Scout troop from Fairhill Apartments with leaders Laurie Alston and Michelle Watkins (left to right). Leader Danielle Reason (absent).

PHA Trade School Opens New Facility

(Cont. From Page 1)

enable PHA to help even more residents," said Greene.

Since its inception in 1999, nearly 350 PHA residents have graduated from the 21-week program, with the great majority of the graduates going on to full time jobs with decent wages.

Ed Coryell, Secretary-Treasurer of the Carpenters Union provided the keynote address at the dedication. The Carpenters have accepted more Pre-Apprenticeship graduates than any other union, an easy decision according to Coryell, "considering the quality worker the program produces."

"It Takes a Village to Raise a Child"

by Resident Journalist
Rochelle L. Hairston

"There is no instruction book on being a parent." I've heard this saying before, even saw it on a few billboards. Although there is no specific book instructing us how to become a good parent there is an instruction book on Godly living, instructing us in all areas of life, including parenting. The instruction book? The Bible!!

In today's society, the focus is off of Godliness and on selfishness. When we become parents, our focus cannot be just on ourselves anymore. There is a new, helpless life that we are responsible for, that we should be committed to. How do we tell this to a teenager who has just become a parent, and expect them to understand? How do we expect someone who is still a child to think and behave as a responsible adult, just because they are a new mother or father?

As a great woman once said, "It takes a village to raise a child." Listen, really listen, and hear what this statement is saying. "It takes a village to raise a child." This statement has tremendous power. A village. Let us become villages in our communities. Make the decision and stand firm. The village can start with two or three, and it will grow. Make the decision. Stand firm in your decision. Reach out with love, patience, concern, and commitment to your children, other children, other parents. Villages embrace your people; people embrace your village. Allow loving concern, even if it sounds like criticism. Learn from it! Parents learn to be patient

with your children. Allow them to ask questions. This is how they learn. Never, never tell children to shut up or be quiet. Never tell them that they ask too many questions; it stifles them. Nurture that inquisitive nature, feed it.

Have structure in your home: a specified dinnertime, playtime, homework, and family time. Build on your

spiritual relationship and your children's spiritual relationship. Read, understand and learn from the "instruction book". Last but not least, parents young and older, set aside time just for you. "Selfish Time", that can be all about you, to do what is good and positive for you. Let us become a village, strong and true, for our children, ourselves and the future, our future.

Resident Empowerment Conference

by Resident Journalist
Nilsa Rodriguez

The Philadelphia Housing Authority together with Tenant Support Services, Inc. (TSSI) held their third annual Resident Empowerment Conference from the 19th-22nd of August 2004. The conference provided a wealth of information to everyone who attended including visitors from other Housing Authorities around the country.

PHA talked about a host of programs it provides to empower tenants for self sufficiency; they have one of the best programs in the country. By forming partnerships with their residents, they serve as positive role models to other municipalities. This information was helpful for all tenant councils in attendance. They took information and literature back to their respective states, to duplicate the programs for their own individual developments.

More than 200 participants attended from around the country including: Baltimore, MD; San Antonio, TX;

Rochester, NY; Indianapolis, IN; El Paso, TX; Camden, NJ; and New Orleans, LA.

My opinion of the conference is very positive. I thought it was well planned and packed full of extremely useful information. In the future, the tenant councils who attended could utilize and make available to their residents many programs that are proven effective in helping people become self sufficient. These programs were not designed just for now but for generations to come.

Friday & Saturday workshops included:

- How to build a successful resident council.
- Job training strategies that work.
- Meeting the social needs of elderly residents
- Starting a resident owned business
- Youth activities and entrepreneurial opportunities.
- Resident insurance and retirement planning
- Building stable communities through family reunification
- Technology for public housing residents

Computer Learning Classes Fall Session

● ● ● ● ●

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Intro to Windows, Word, Internet
Classes held Mon & Tues 1- 4pm or 5- 7:30pm
10-Week Class
- **Advanced Classes - January 5th, 2005**
Class Covers Microsoft Office
Classes held Wed - Thurs & Fri 1- 4pm
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**PHA Computer Learning Lab
Norman Blumberg Apartments
2311 W. Jefferson Street**

Apply Now Call 215.684.4628

Community Partners Program Free Course Offerings



The Citizen and Family Resource Center

CORA Offers PHA Tenants GED and Homeownership Counseling

CORA Services is very proud to be providing a wide range of programs for PHA tenants under the Community Partner Program. At the agency's Neumann Center and The Beacon Center at Grover Washington, Jr. Middle School, CORA is offering GED, Career Counseling and other youth related services. In addition, Homeownership Counseling is available to qualified tenants. All services are free of charge.

CORA's Neumann Center is located at 1000 Orthodox St in Frankford and is easily accessible by the Frankford El. The Beacon program operates from the Grover Washington Middle School on Olney Avenue & B Street. For Information on either program please contact Terry Devlin at CORA, 215-701-2538.



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Jobs, Networking and Outreach

Wednesday, December 8, 2004

11:00 A.M. — 3:00 P.M.

Blumberg Self-Sufficiency Center North

2311 W. Jefferson Street

Philadelphia, PA 19121

For more information, please contact
Mr. Edward Highsmith — 215.684.3105
Mr. Albert Pham — 215.684.4628



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Building Beyond Expectations