



ACHA RECEIVES 2003 BELLAMY AWARD

The Pennsylvania Association of Housing and Redevelopment Agencies (PAHRA) President Joe Kohut presented the 2003 PAHRA Bellamy Award to Frank Aggazio at the 2003 PAHRA Annual Conference Awards Banquet held on November 11, 2003 at Nemaocolin Woodlands.

The Bellamy Award recognizes outstanding work by a PAHRA Member and is the highest honor that PAHRA can bestow upon its member agencies. The Award was named as a lasting tribute to one of the PAHRA's Presidents, William C. Bellamy (1968-1970). Mr. Bellamy was the Executive Director of the Altoona Redevelopment Authority and previously, the Executive Director of the York City and York County Redevelopment Authorities. He developed a program for rehabilitation of housing that gained national recognition and was innovative in the design and implementation of projects and programs at both authorities.

The ACHA received the 2003 Bellamy Award for their Home Ownership Program. Also at the Conference, the ACHA was awarded The "Best Practice Award" for the "Resident Construction Training Program".



ACHA's Executive Director, Frank Aggazio receives the PAHRA Bellamy Award

The ACHA also received the following Awards of Merit in 2003

PAHRA AWARDS

- Direct Debit Program
- Drug Demand Reduction Program
- ACHA Annual Golf Classic
- Housing Choice Voucher Homeownership Program
- Camp Rox-Well
- Senior Living Enhancement Program
- Resident Orientation
- ACHA Resident Staff Retreat
- Groveton Village Revitalization
- Uansa Village Modernization
- Resident Clerical Training Initiative

NAHRO AWARDS

- Cultural Liason Program
- Family Forum
- Furnish-A-Start Program
- Furnished Efficiency Apartments
- Homestead Housing Elderly Supportive Service
- Mega Manual
- Owners Association and Outreach Program
- Senior Living Enhancement Program

A special thanks to all those involved with these programs

In This Issue:

ACHA Awards of Merit 2003	1
In Perspective	2
ACHA: PHAS High Performer	2
Community Corner: (Uansa)	3
Operation Good Neighbor	3
The Spotlight: (Groveton)	4
"New Americans Celebration"	4
2003 Christmas Blessing	5
2003 Annual Meeting	5
Community Service	5
The ACHA Golf Classic	6

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AWARDS

PERSPECTIVES



Frank Aggazio
 ACHA Executive Director

I'm proud to present this ACHA newsletter as the first issue entirely produced by the very talented employees of ACHA. In an era of "doing more with less," this newsletter exemplifies the efforts of ACHA and its employees to perform above expectations. I commend those involved for making it successful and encourage all employees to contribute. To submit your article or suggestions, please contact Patricia Caslin (412.402.2542) or Dean Allen (412.402.2469).

2004 will be an exciting year for ACHA. Meyers Ridge in McKees Rocks, and Sharps Terrace of Sharpsburg will be complete in the first quarter, while the HOPE VI Revitalization of the Ohioview Acres community in McKees Rocks goes underway. Additionally, I look forward to the ACHA being named a "High Performer" for the third year in a row.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE
Heading for a 3rd Straight "High Performer" Year!


The ACHA is on track to winning HUD's prestigious "High Performer" recognition from HUD for the third consecutive year. The federal Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act ("QHWRA") requires every housing authority to annually certify to its management performance as measured by the Public Housing Assessment System ("PHAS"). By scoring an anticipated score of 92 out of 100 possible points, ACHA will once again exceed HUD's benchmark of 90 and win the highest possible recognition that HUD could give to a housing authority.

PHAS evaluates our administration of the low-income public housing program and is based on objective, uniform and quantifiable standards. The assessment result is our "score" and is a public record for HUD, Congress, local government and members of our communities to evaluate the effectiveness of our management of Low Income Housing.

There are four PHAS performance indicators that housing authorities are assessed on:

1. Physical Condition: evaluation of the physical condition of LIPH property through inspections performed by private sector real estate inspectors contracted by HUD.
2. Financial Condition: evaluation of ACHA's management of its financial resources through private sector (generally accepted accounting principles) analysis techniques and submission of audited financial statements.
3. Management Operations: evaluation of LIPH property management performance in the areas of maintenance, leasing, inspections, applicant screening, lease enforcement and resident service programs.
4. Resident Satisfaction Survey: evaluation based on a statistical sample survey of residents, conducted by HUD, to determine resident satisfaction with ACHA's management of LIPH.

Our preliminary PHAS score should be released by the Real Estate Assessment Center before February 1, 2004 and our final score will be available after HUD's review of our audited financial statements.

Frank Aggazio has stated that "receiving the High Performer designation is a commendable recognition of ACHA's teamwork, commitment and efforts to meet HUD's goals and fulfill the ACHA mission." 

UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN 2003

You truly have made a difference. This year's United Way Campaign, chaired by Chris Wroblewski, was our most successful campaign to date. Through your generosity, the 2003 United Way Campaign was able to increase total contributions by 11% over last year's campaign.

THANK YOU FOR TAKING TIME TO CARE.



COMMUNITY CORNER

A New Look for Uansa Village

This fall, Uansa Village in McKees Rocks took on a new look. Those familiar with the development may not recognize it today since a 4.3 million dollar conversion to a community of 37 new townhomes and a beautiful community center. Uansa Village, originally constructed in 1954 and named after 1930's University of Pittsburgh football All-American Toby Uansa, consisted of 70 row-type family units. In 2001, a complete modernization of Uansa began in an effort to provide quality, up-to-date housing for ACHA residents.




Typical Uansa Village building BEFORE the modernization

Today, residents enjoy new community amenities including common laundry facilities; landscaping, road and parking improvements; enclosed trash areas; fencing; as well as larger play areas and new equipment for children. Each new townhome includes kitchen and bathroom renovations; upgrades of heating, electrical and plumbing systems; and a private deck or patio.



The same building AFTER undergoing modernization

In addition to the modernization of the entire development, a new community center was constructed to provide on-site management and services for residents. On September 5, 2003, the community center was dedicated to longtime advocate of assisted housing programs and former HUD official Paul LaMarca. Before his death in 2002, LaMarca was a lifelong resident of the McKees Rocks area. 

Operation Good Neighbor Foundation

Helping ACHA rid homes of lead-based paint hazards

The affordable housing stock in Allegheny County is often aged. Most of these homes have been painted with lead-based paint. The Environmental Protection Agency has determined that lead is a highly toxic metal that was used for many years in products and especially paint. Lead may cause a range of health effects, from behavioral problems and learning disabilities, to seizures and death. Children 6 years old and under are most at risk, because their bodies are growing quickly.

a \$10,000 grant from "Operation Good Neighbor". The **Operation Good Neighbor Foundation** is a 501 c (3) founded by U.S. Senator Rick Santorum. **Operation Good Neighbor Foundation** unites corporations, business and individuals from around the nation to work directly with grass roots organizations.



The Greene's

Fortunately, Allegheny County Housing Authority recognized that ridding homes of lead-based hazards and eliminating the risk and expense to first-time homebuyers would enhance ACHA's homeownership program. That's where the **Operation Good Neighbor Foundation** came in. The Three Rivers Communities Inc. is a non-profit affiliate of Allegheny County Housing Authority and the lead agency for ACHA's homeownership initiatives. Three Rivers Communities Inc., applied for

Funding from the **Operation Good Neighbor Foundation** paid directly for the risk assessment, clearance testing and steps essential to make three of our new homeowner's houses safe.

"Since I purchased a newer home I assumed that it was lead safe. I would not have known that my home contained LBP if I had not received a call asking me if I would like a free inspection. I had lead in my front door and garage door. They were completely replaced by beautiful brand new doors. When the job was complete my house was inspected again and I received a written report stating that it is now lead free. I would like to thank Senator Santorum's Good Neighbor Foundation and ACHA" (through Three Rivers Communities, Inc.) Sincerely, Shelia Greene

THE SPOTLIGHT

A New Victory: Groveton Village

On September 16, 2003, the Allegheny County Housing Authority (ACHA) celebrated the grand opening of the new, revitalized Groveton Village. Originally named the “Victory Project” and constructed in 1946 as permanent war housing, Groveton Village had become an undesirable housing development and was in need of significant renovation. The Grand Opening was a celebration for the residents of Groveton as well as many key community leaders involved in the revitalization. Some guest speakers and attendees included former Allegheny County Chief Executive Jim Roddey, Groveton Resident Council President Lynn Bonner, Richard Nemoytin of the U.S. Department of Housing and Development, Developer Ralph Falbo, and Frank Aggazio, the ACHA Executive Director. Longtime Groveton resident Kenneth Watson, who helped lay the bricks of the original Groveton Village in 1942, was honored during the ceremony.



ACHA’s goal in modernizing Groveton Village was to create a community that residents would be proud to live in while offering quality housing with modern-day amenities and plenty of living space for families. ACHA also wanted to create a beautiful housing development that was better integrated into the surrounding neighborhoods and accepted by the larger community of Robinson Township.

With the input of residents, ACHA and developer Falbo/Pennrose came together and created the new Groveton Village through a mixed financing approach. Funds from the

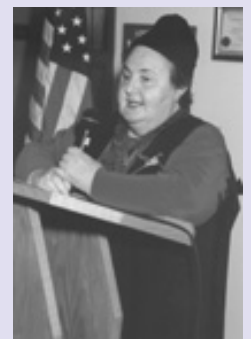
Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, the ACHA Capital fund through HUD, Related Capital Company, the Allegheny County Department of Economic Development and the Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh provided the necessary \$11 million for new construction. Today, the new Groveton Village consists of 69 total units with mix of one, two, three, or four bedroom homes. All units are equipped with ample living and closet space, storage space and washer/dryer hook-ups as well as central air and other modern-day amenities. The landscaping within Groveton Village, coupled with the front patio space and off street parking for each unit, helps to make the community beautiful.

When asked how the residents were adjusting to the new Groveton Village, ACHA Property Manager Gina Kormick stated, “The residents feel very much at home in Groveton and it shows by the way they take pride in their community.” Margaret Henderson, a Groveton resident for more than 34 years feels that the new Groveton is a vast improvement in many ways. “Everything is new, clean and well taken care of,” she stated. The ACHA is proud to say that the former “Victory Project” of Groveton Village can now be considered a “victory” for residents. 🏠



Homestead Apts. “New Americans Celebration”

Eighty-four Russian born immigrants were celebrated on September 25, 2003 as they became naturalized American citizens. Participating in this celebration along with ACHA staff were representatives from Congressman Mike Doyle’s and Governor Ed Rendell’s offices. A highlight of the event was the proclamation read by the Governor’s representative, Louis Boykins, Jr. Two residents were profiled for their outstanding contributions to the community, Faina Zalevsky who received the Community Champions Jefferson Award and Yurif Mudrenko, a local painter and sculptor. Right: Faina Zalevsky wears a hat given to her by an American sailor during World War II when she was six years old - It represents her inspiration and dream to come to America.



Faina Zalevsky

EVENTS


ACHA's 2003 Christmas Blessing

Each year the ACHA helps families in our public housing communities and the Housing Choice Voucher Program that are less fortunate celebrate and enjoy the holiday season. Several families needing assistance are chosen to take part and gifts are purchased for each member of the family. The 3rd Annual Christmas Blessing was held on December 19, 2003.



This year, an Angel Tree was set up in the Central Office of the ACHA. Within one week all the Angels were taken from the tree by ACHA employees who purchased gifts for the families chosen.




At each site, the community room was decorated and Santa visited the children and distributed candy and gifts to all the children who were present. **THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO PARTICIPATED!!!** 

ACHA's Annual Meeting

The annual ACHA authority-wide meeting was held on Friday, November 21, 2003. The meeting included speeches from John Joyce, Beverly Moore and Frank Aggazio in appreciation for the staff and their successful efforts in achieving high performer status again. Richard Nemoytin, Field Director of the local HUD office, also praised the staff for their work and encouraged them to continue to maintain high performer status.

Frank Aggazio addressed the current status of the Authority through a slide presentation and Certificates were presented to all department directors in recognition of their positive leadership roles within the Authority. The meeting wrapped up with a team building exercise facilitated by Darius Swinton of Swinton and Associates.

Recognition was given to 23 employees for years of service with ACHA. 

20-24 years of service:
 Monte Williams (21)
 Carmela Messmer (22)
 Roy Kohler (22)
 Connie Demko (22)
 John Kotchey (22)
 Eli McCary (23)
 John Solanina (23)
 Thomas Malinic (24)
 Richard Rush, (24)
 Donald Smith (24)
 Terri Hinkofer (24)


25-29 years of service:
 Harry Wetmore (25)
 Gina Velar (25)
 William Davis (26)
 Rebecca Sowers (27)
 Robert Marino (27)
 Tony Bennet (28)
 John Majewski (29)

30+ years of service:
 Ricardo Hayden (30)
 Mario Victor Jr. (32)
 Shirley Marshall (32)
 Hattie Proctor (33)
 James Lawrence (34)

Community Service Requirement

The Department of Housing and Urban Development re-issued the Community Service Requirement. All residents residing in Low Income Public Housing who are adult members of the household and are not working, enrolled in a self-sufficiency program, disabled, or meets the other exemptions approved by HUD, must perform 8 hours of community service.

All residents affected were notified by the ACHA in July to either request an exemption or begin community service in October. ACHA will provide information on volunteer service bureaus but residents will also have the option to propose and participate in other types of volunteer work. Residents can get "credit" for participating in their child's classroom, volunteering at a church, hospital or senior center, or helping neighborhood groups with special projects.

For further information, please contact a member of the Operations Department at 412.402.2641. 



ACHA GOLF CLASSIC

The ACHA Annual Golf Classic took place on Friday, July 18, 2003 at the beautiful Highland County Club located in West View, PA. The event benefitted Homeownership and Resident Scholarship programs. Over one hundred golfers participated in the event as well as enjoyed brunch, dinner, gifts, skill contests, a hole-in-one contest and an auction of exciting donated items. Awards were also presented for: Closest to the Pin, Longest Drive, Longest Holed Shot and Hole in One. Eighteen resident youths attended the luncheon and received a golf lesson from the Country Club Pro.

At the awards dinner that evening, one hundred forty people celebrated the success of the classic in raising money for Homeownership. The proceeds from the Golf Classic allowed down payments or closing costs assistance for 5 HCVP tenants and partial scholarships to 9 Low Income Public Housing tenants. Local news celebrity Andrew Stockey distributed checks to the participants at the Awards Dinner.

In November 2003, The 2nd Annual Golf Classic received an award at the Annual PAHRA Conference held in Nemaquin. We're planning our 3rd Annual Golf Classic to be held in early summer 2004. Please contact Patricia Caslin at 412.402.2542 if you're interested in participating.




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