



Community Connection



Volume 12, Issue 1 ALLEGHENY COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY

HOMESTEAD APARTMENTS REVITALIZATION IS COMPLETE



Homestead Apartments & Community Room - Building C



Brian Hudson, PHFA Executive Director congratulates the ACHA on another excellent job

Back in 1998, Homestead Apartments was awarded an Elderly Demonstration HOPE VI by The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to rehabilitate the existing site and improve the development. This was one of five Elderly HOPE VI Grants awarded for the whole country. The ACHA is pleased to announce that after 2 years of planning and 7 years of construction, the Development is now officially complete. A Grand Opening for C Tower was held on June 9th to formally open the last of the four renovated buildings. As you could imagine, there was plenty of excitement in the air for a development that has completely energized the community. This revitalization effort took approximately \$ 32,000,000 to complete, of which nearly 70% of this funding was through private investment and the low-income housing tax credit program.

Dr. Howard Slaughter, Landmarks Community Capital Corporation's Chief Executive Officer, served as Master of Ceremonies and remarked about the patience and ability to form partnerships to create an affordable housing development that provides so many opportunities and amenities for the residents at the Homestead Apartments. Other Guest Speakers for this event included: Rich Fitzgerald, Allegheny County Council President, Brian Hudson, Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency Executive Director, Cheryl Campbell, Pittsburgh Field Office, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Public Housing, Corey O'Connor, Staff Member for Congressman Mike Doyle's Pittsburgh Office, William Gatti, President of TREK Development Group, Inc., Mary Esther Van Shura from Allegheny County Chief Executive Dan Onorato's Office, Peter

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PERSPECTIVES

by the ACHA
Executive Director
Frank Aggazio



Our report card is official - The Allegheny County Housing Authority (ACHA) received a score of 90 (out of a possible 100), placing the ACHA in the elite "High Performer" category once again!

The breakdown of the HUD performance evaluation of ACHA is as follows:

Criteria	ACHA Score	Max. Pts.
Management	28	30
Financial Condition	28	30
Physical Condition	25	30
Resident Satisfaction	9	10
Total	90	100

I want to take this opportunity to thank the ACHA staff for their hard work and dedication in achieving this honor.

We must pledge to the ACHA residents to continue our efforts to serve them in the most efficient manner possible.

It is important to continue practicing excellent customer service and always be empathetic to the concerns of the residents.

Frank Aggazio




Dignitaries perform the ceremonial Ribbon Cutting.

Kaplan, Vice President of Acquisitions – PNC Multifamily Capital, Betty Esper, Mayor of Homestead, and Frank Aggazio, ACHA Executive Director. All speakers commented about the commitment to building quality, affordable housing and the ability for all team members and financial lenders to come together to reach its goal of producing a great housing product for the residents and the community.



Homestead Mayor Betty Esper

This redevelopment was unique in the aspect that all buildings were preserved and unit count in each building was reduced. Overall, the site was reduced from 350 units to 232 units. The revitalization effort eliminated all efficiency apartments and provided spacious one- and two-bedroom units to accommodate the on-site residents. In addition to this unit reduction, unit improvements included air conditioning, which are individually controlled by the resident all year long, common area lounges and laundry rooms on each floor, spacious closets, and improved kitchen and baths. Other features throughout the community are: computer lab/libraries with high-speed internet access, wellness center with a physiologist, modernized community center, LIFE Center, and a recreation room that includes flat screen televisions, pool tables, and a small movie theater that seats approximately 40 people. Before the renovation the site lacked green space and residents could not use much of the outside common areas. Improvements were made to reconstruct the water fountain, which is now lit at night, benches, and improved green space with a beautiful landscaping package have been added to the development.

A redevelopment effort of this magnitude required many financial partners to bring this project to a reality. These financial partners were Allegheny County Economic Development, The U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development, The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, PNC Multifamily Capital, the entity that purchased the low-income housing tax credits, FHL Bank Pittsburgh, The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and The Allegheny County Housing Authority. 



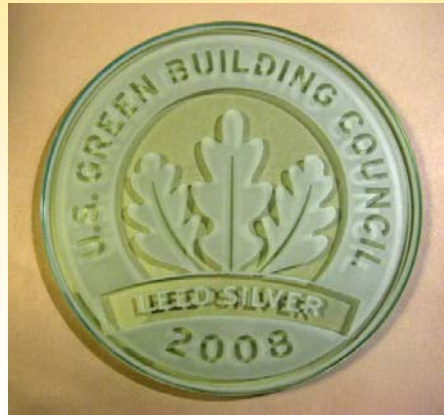
HOMESTEAD APARTMENTS SITE DESIGN LEADS TO NATIONAL RECOGNITION

The Allegheny County Housing Authority, TREK Development Group, Inc. and its lead architect – UpStreet Architects, Inc. received 2 Silver LEED awards from the U.S. Green Building Council (U.S.G.B.C.) for building design at the Homestead Apartments. The Allegheny County Housing Authority received the Silver LEED awards at the Homestead Apartments Grand Opening for its design at Homestead A and B Towers. The Silver LEED award is given to developments that have a strong responsibility towards environmental stewardship, reduce environmental impact by construction/rehabilitation, have energy savings that provide long-term financial and environmental returns, allow for protection of the environment and natural resources, provide a higher comfort level and standard of living for building occupants and the community, and improve the world that we eventually will turn over to a younger generation.

This development is the first Affordable Housing LEED-NC Silver project in the state and one of the first in the nation. In addition to the team members mentioned above, other team members are: Perkins Eastman Architects, Guardian Construction Management Services, Inc., Ray Engineering, Midwest Sustainable Collaborative, PNC Multifamily Capital, The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, and FHL Bank Pittsburgh.



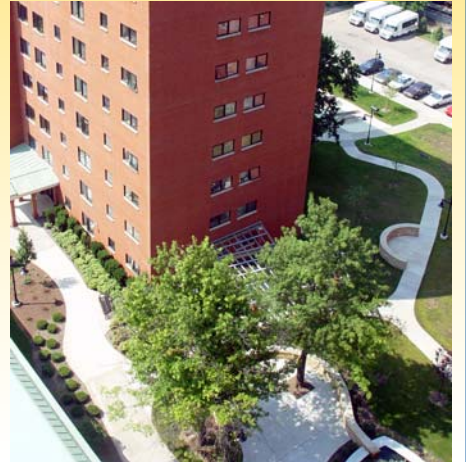
Rich Fitzgerald, Allegheny County Council President, acknowledges the ACHA LEEDS Awards



2008 Leeds Silver Award



Homestead Apartments Site Plan by Upstreet Architects, Inc.



Building A and Courtyard



Howard Slaughter PHFA Board Member welcomes the residents & guests



Residents Florence Reed and Faina Zalevsky share their satisfaction about living at Homestead Apartments




ANOTHER "BIRDIE" FOR THE ACHA GOLF CLASSIC



*Ralph Falbo
Title Sponsor - Falbo/Penrose*



Over 160 golfers and volunteers headed to the links at the beautiful Treesdale Golf and Country Club in Gibsonia, Pennsylvania to help raise funds for The First Tee of Pittsburgh at Pleasant Ridge. Despite a few raindrops and shots that didn't hit their target, the event was another success for this program – raising over \$ 56,000. This is the 7th year for the event, which has raised over \$235,000 for The First Tee Program and the construction of an outdoor programming area at Pleasant Ridge. The First Tee Program helps the children of the community learn important life skills using golf as a catalyst for this educational program. The ACHA would like to thank everyone involved in the event from sponsors to the volunteers. We look forward to seeing you next year on June 29th, 2009 for the 8th Annual ACHA Golf Classic at Treesdale Golf and Country Club. 




Congressman Mike Doyle and Paul D'Alesandro join Frank Aggazio



Marc Field, Exective Director of The First Tee of Pittsburgh with Ashlee Philyaw and Eric Thorne



COMMEMORATING OF THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FAIR HOUSING ACT OF 1968

Communities and nonprofit agencies joined with the Pittsburgh Office of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development to create the first ever Western Pennsylvania Fair Housing Quilt. This collaborative project commemorates the 40th Anniversary of the Fair Housing Act of 1968. A collection of individual quilt blocks, submitted by participants, was thread together into a powerful symbol of Western Pennsylvania's commitment to civil rights and a shared vision of equal housing rights for all. The quilt is a tribute to those who fought decades ago for housing rights and collaborated with the Federal Government to achieve passage of the Fair Housing Act, expanding civil rights to the sale, rental, and financing of housing. The Quilt is a tribute to the individuals, organizations and communities that continuously advocate for Fair Housing rights every day - neighborhood by neighborhood, "block by block." 




Isaiah Dent (contributor of the ACHA quilt square) of Hays Manor and Frank Aggazio with the PA Fair Housing Quilt

ACHA RECEIVES 2008 ENERGY STAR AWARD AT DALTON'S EDGE




Frank Aggazio holds the Energy Star Award presented by John Bravacos

On January 28th, 2008, the ACHA was informed by The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Energy that Dalton's Edge was a Regional Winner of the 2008 Energy Star award for Excellence in Affordable Housing. This announcement was followed by an award presentation at the site. On April 24th, 2008, John Bravacos, Regional Director of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), presented Frank Aggazio, Executive Director of the ACHA, with the Energy Star award. The award represents how the ACHA and the Development Team is transforming the look of affordable housing in Allegheny County. By using energy efficient products and systems at the Dalton's Edge Development, the Development has produced cost savings in utilities at the site by an estimated 50% of the costs at similar new housing developments. Ms. Cheryl Campbell, HUD Pittsburgh Field Office Director, recognized the ACHA as one of the most progressive Housing Authorities in the country and one that is always looking to provide the ACHA residents with quality, affordable housing options in Allegheny County. 

ACHA STOP-LOSS AUDIT RESULTS PENDING

The Allegheny County Housing Authority (ACHA) has been designated a "decliner" under the new Operating Fund Formula of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This designation means that the Operating Subsidy eligibility of the ACHA declined under the new formula resulting in a loss of \$2.8 million. This reduction in our Operating Subsidy is scheduled to be phased in over a five-year period. The Authority has been provided with an opportunity to "stop" our losses if we could demonstrate to HUD that we have successfully converted our agency to comply with HUD's new Site Based Management (SBM) rules.

Auditors working for the department of HUD began a review of our agency in mid July and finished in mid August. The results of that review will determine if the authority qualifies as a "stop-loss" agency. Preliminary discussions with the auditors are very promising. The auditors will send the results of their review to HUD with a final determination expected in late September. If successful, our authority will not lose the scheduled \$2.8 million but only 5% of that number or \$140,000. 

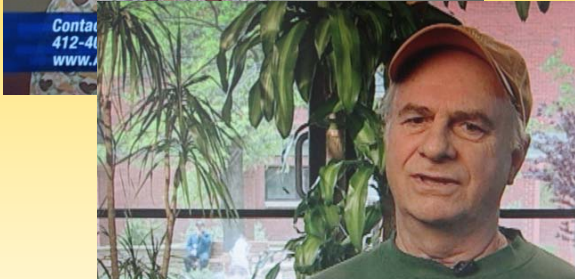


LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

On May 22, 2008, willing ACHA seniors and residents were interviewed for the purpose of cable TV advertising. Three commercials were broadcast on selected cable TV channels. Residents provided testimonials and expressed their satisfaction about living in ACHA communities.



Monica Jones



Marseilles Delle Donne



Louise Smithwick

CONGRATULATIONS JIM CARNAHAN

Congratulations to Jim Carnahan, Resident Council President of Jefferson Manor, for receiving a Certificate of Achievement from the Penn Hills Senior Center for his role in many volunteer services. Jim, many thanks for giving back to the community - Your efforts are greatly appreciated!



Jim Carnahan



MOVING 2 OWN - A SUCCESS STORY

Brandi Starver and Lisa Meadows, the ROSS Homeownership Coordinator share a little joke. Lisa got a phone call in late May that Ms. Starver had found a house and wanted to get it inspected. (Of course, she was already pre-approved for a 30-year fixed rate mortgage). We were really surprised because we thought it would take clients over a year or more to get ready to purchase a home due to completing the classes, credit repair, and saving for a downpayment and closing costs.

To share a little background, Ms. Brandi Starver moved into our scattered sites in August 2005. She completed her surgical technician degree and was initially employed with Mercy Hospital. She later moved to UPMC Presbyterian for an increase in wages. She also decided to participate in the Family Savings Account (FSA) Program with Action Housing to save for homeownership expenses. The FSA program matches the family a dollar-to-dollar match for what they save. Brandi managed to save over \$5000 in the FSA Account and in her savings account. She also attended the first Moving 2 Own homeownership class and credit clinic in January 2008 with Neighborhood Housing Services.

Brandi found a beautiful four-bedroom Cape Cod located in Plum. The house passed the inspection with flying colors. Ms. Starver purchased her first home in a record 10 months.

Ms. Starver received a \$1000 in closing costs assistance from the Allegheny County Housing Authority and closed on the house on June 20, 2008. Brandi met Lisa at the closing with tears in eyes and was so happy to become a homeowner.



Brandi Starver - Proud Homeowner

ANDREW CARNEGIE APARTMENTS COOKS OUT

On June 21, 2008, the residents of Andrew Carnegie Apartments and staff hosted a cookout. The gathering took place on the patio at Andrew Carnegie Apartments. All parties in attendance contributed to the offerings of the cookout which included hamburgers, hotdogs, raviolis, pasta salad, watermelon, baked beans, three-bean salad, potato chips, pop and iced tea. The food was delicious.

The parking lot was closed off so the children could play freely in the large area. It was so much fun watching all the smiling faces as the bigger children blew bubbles for the little ones. People of all ages were talking and listening to music. A good time was had by all. This was the second of many more scheduled cookouts. Looking for a good community gathering idea? HAVE A COOK OUT!



My Day with the Executive Director

I won a “Day with the Executive Director” at the Annual Allegheny County Housing Authority Employee Meeting. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Frank for allowing me to spend the eventful day with him. I attended the board meeting with the executive staff. I understood more of what the executive officer does during his daily routine. I also had the opportunity to see the scope of responsibilities of others who report to Frank. It was an insightful experience.

Spending the day with Frank allowed me to appreciate my position with the housing authority much more. Everyone puts so much effort into their role and its easy to understand why the Allegheny County housing authority is so successful. I may never have had the chance to view the housing authority in the way that I did – to observe everyone working in all the different departments and how it all comes together to be a very successful organization.

It intrigued me that Frank knew so many little details about each community and each department. I was extremely privileged and honored to be Frank’s shadow for the day, and if the opportunity ever came again, I would gladly accept it.

I would also like to thank everyone who made my day with Frank Aggazio a wonderful experience.

- Lisa Tremmel, Homestead Apartments Asst. Property Manager



Frank presents drawing winner Lisa Tremmel with “A Day with the Executive Director”

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