



Community Connection



March 2013

ALLEGHENY COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY

DEVELOPMENT TEAM MEETS WITH LOCAL DIGNITARIES IN DUQUESNE

On February 7, 2013, the Development Team (the Allegheny County Housing Authority & Ralph A. Falbo, Inc.) hosted Brian Hudson, CEO of the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency; Rich Fitzgerald, Allegheny County Chief Executive; State Senator Jim Brewster; Phillip Krivacek, Mayor – City of Duquesne; and representatives from State Representative Marc Gergley’s office to a site tour of the proposed Orchard Park Housing Development.



The Development Team is submitting a low-income housing tax credit application to the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency to obtain funding for the construction of 44 affordable housing units to be built on the former Burns Heights public housing development. The tour highlighted the investment that is taking place within the City of Duquesne which includes: RIDC

City Center of Duquesne, the modernization of the Duquesne Shopping Plaza, Allegheny County Economic Development, the City of Duquesne, and the Allegheny County Housing Authority. Low-income housing tax credits are extremely competitive to obtain, and the site tour stressed that range of activities occurring with Duquesne for a successful community revitalization plan. Improvements have been made to infrastructure, business development, community beautification, community safety, housing, and recreation.



CEO-PHFA, Brian Hudson

The day featured speakers from all represented parties focusing on the need to re-invest in a community that has slipped for too many years. If funded, the project will create approximately 125 construction jobs for 18 months.

Having so many officials, both appointed and elected, participate in the bus tour of Duquesne, allowed us to present a unified front in the

request for funds to develop these properties. Working together towards common goals benefits all of our constituencies.



Allegheny County Chief Executive, Rich Fitzgerald



PA State Senator, Jim Brewster

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PERSPECTIVES

by the ACHA
Executive Director
Frank Aggazio



2012 was a very productive year for the ACHA. We completed millions of dollars of renovations that represent our continued commitment to providing seniors, disabled residents, and families with safe, high-quality housing and an improved quality of life. The following list summarizes some of these improvements:

- Rachel Carson Hall, Golden Tower, and Brackenridge Hall: Complete kitchen and bathroom renovations and common area improvements.
- Prospect Terrace: All revitalization work complete; features a new geothermal heating and cooling system, new windows, new roofing, new asphalt street, new concrete sidewalk, and landscaping improvements.
- G.W. Carver Hall, West Mifflin Manor, Jefferson Manor, Wilmerding Apts., and Springdale Manor: Common area and accessibility improvements.
- Nearly all (95%) of ACHA communities have security cameras installed.

Congratulations to the Housing Choice Voucher Program Department for achieving a "High Performer" score of 102!

We are anticipating a score of 85 for public housing. Given the changes made to the rating criteria, I consider this a very good score and achievement.

The ACHA will do its best to maintain our high standards of service and continue to meet difficult challenges we face on a day-to-day basis despite the imminent threat of federal budget cuts.

Finally, I would like to thank each employee for their effort and dedication in making the ACHA a better place for our residents.

ACHA DEVELOPS LOW-INCOME TAX CREDIT HOUSING AT ANDREW CARNEGIE APTS.



Partnering with PNC Real Estate through the low-income housing tax credit program, the Allegheny County Housing Authority (ACHA) has set out on "self-developing." On September 26, 2012, the financial closing with PNC Real Estate was completed and construction started. Due to the uncertainty in Washington, DC; it was important to close and begin construction to secure the full 9% tax credit allocation for the redevelopment. In meeting this deadline, the ACHA saved approximately \$ 500,000 in ACHA funds and/or other resources by capitalizing on the full 9% allocation. In self-developing, the ACHA will realize 100% of the developer fee in the redevelopment effort that can be used for future affordable housing development and opportunities.

Through the end of 2012, construction is progressing very well at the development. The building will feature 17 one-bedroom units updated to today's market standards. Because of the location of the building (very close proximity to state highway 376); ACHA Executives felt it was necessary to reconfigure the building to accommodate single persons, because the development does not have the necessary amenities for families and children.

All units will have a geo-thermal heating and cooling system with individually controlled thermostats. All floors will have laundry facilities centrally located to accommodate the residents' laundry needs. Additionally, parking is part of the overall revitalization effort and will be located directly across Hays Street. Construction is expected to be completed by October, 2013. As a tax credit community, all former residents whom are deemed eligible individuals/persons have been given the right to return to the development if they choose to do so. Marketing/Leasing efforts will begin in late July/August, 2013 to help fill the building as quickly as possible. 



11th ANNUAL GOLF CLASSIC

On June 4, 2012, the The First Tee of Pittsburgh hosted the 11th Annual First Tee of Pittsburgh at Pleasant Ridge Golf Classic at the Sewickley Heights Golf Club. One hundred-ten golfers enjoyed a beautiful day on the links to help raise construction funds for The First Tee of Pittsburgh at Pleasant Ridge. Despite a change in venue and a slight decrease in the number of participants, the event raised nearly \$25,000.

The First Tee curriculum focuses on using golf as a learning vehicle to teach children Nine Core Life Skill Values. The event dinner featured youths of The First Tee Program and stories of how the program has impacted their lives. Marc Field, The First Tee of Pittsburgh's Executive Director, was also in attendance and spoke about the accomplishments of the program.

By securing additional funding from Allegheny County Economic Development and The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, construction on the much anticipated First Tee Clubhouse started in September 2012 and is expected to be complete in April of 2013. This building will bring the entire program to one central location that will benefit all participants.

The ACHA would like to thank everyone involved in the event, from sponsors to the volunteers. We look forward to seeing you on July 22, 2013 for the First Tee of Pittsburgh at Pleasant Ridge Golf Classic at Sewickley Heights Golf Club. 



Marc Fields with youths of the First Tee of Pittsburgh

THE FIRST TEE CLUBHOUSE

In the summer of 2012, the ACHA awarded contracts to Moret Construction, Controlled Climate, Merit Electric Group, and Merante Plumbing to start construction on The First Tee of Pittsburgh @ Pleasant Ridge Clubhouse. The Clubhouse, located at the 3-hole golf course in Pleasant Ridge, will be approximately 2,000 square feet. This building will feature a classroom area that will teach the nine core life skills values to The First Tee of Pittsburgh @ Pleasant Ridge program participants. The building also has a game improvement area, which houses two golf simulators, allowing for First Tee participants to practice their game in a controlled environment. The Building is expected to be completed in spring 2013. The clubhouse is staffed and operated by The First Tee of Pittsburgh with operating costs funded through The First Tee of Pittsburgh @ Pleasant Ridge Golf Outing. 



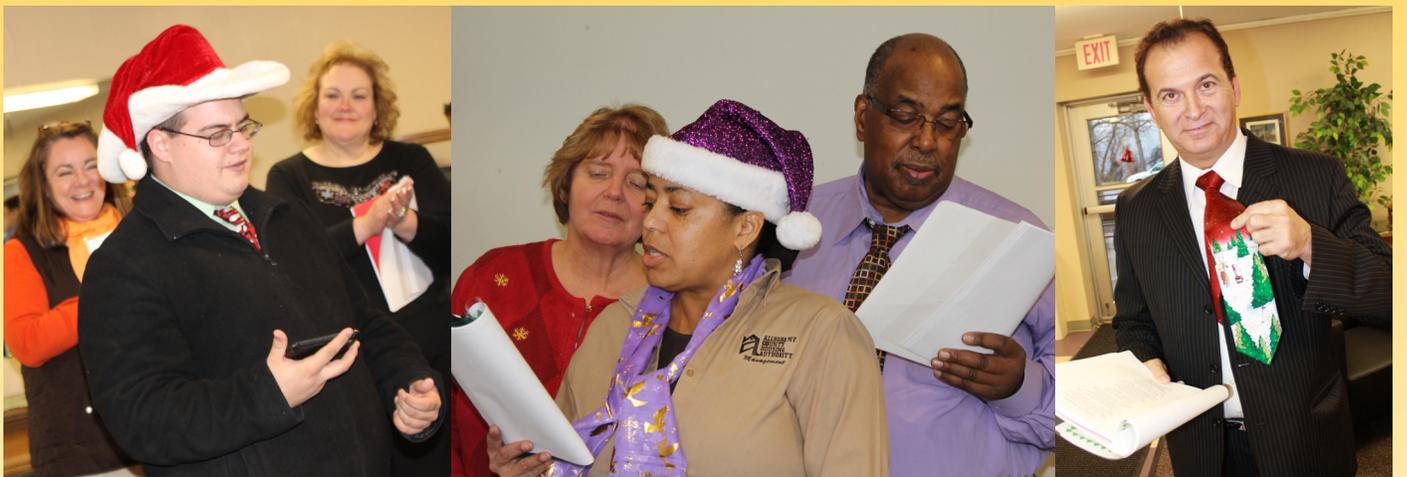
ACHA SUPPORTS DISABILITY AWARENESS

On July 6, 2012, the ACHA participated as a vendor during the 7th Annual Pittsburgh Pirates Disability Awareness Celebration. More than 2,000 disabled Pirates fans were in attendance at the Resource Fair which took place on Federal Street prior to the baseball game. Rebecca Stokes (Leasing Administrator for Low-Income Public Housing) and Renee Mielnicki (Program Accessibility Coordinator) spoke with members of the community regarding low-income housing options for the disabled and also passed out applications, free bags and other giveaways. 



BRINGING CHRISTMAS CHEER TO SENIOR COMMUNITIES

On December 20, 2012, Allegheny County Housing Authority executives and staff visited several senior citizen communities to deliver kindness and cheer in the form of Christmas carols. The tour included Harrison Hi-Rise, Dalton's Edge, Blawnox Manor, West View Tower, R.J. Corbett Apts., North Hills Hilands, Jefferson Manor, West Mifflin Manor, and G.W. Carver Hall.



ACHA's "TOP GUN" OFFICER

Congratulations to ACHA Police Officer Tim Ballou Jr. for completing the prestigious Pennsylvania Top Gun Training sponsored by the office of the Attorney General. Officer Ballou studied many areas of law with the main focus on narcotics investigations and prosecution.



ACHA Officer Tim Ballou

In Officer Ballou's words, "The Top Gun Training I attended was an exceptional learning experience. It's an excellent way to meet and share information with other law enforcement agencies of Pennsylvania. While in training, we experienced proper execution of search warrants including real-life drug buys and building raid scenarios. I would recommend that all law enforcement agencies and prosecuting attorneys attend this training to further their education in drug work. I'm confident that I will be able to utilize what I've learned and also help improve the lives of the residents of Allegheny County Housing Authority." 

THANKS FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT

The ACHA would like recognize Allegheny County District Attorney Stephen A. Zappala, Jr. for his continued support and dedication to law enforcement within Allegheny County. The ACHA Police received a grant for \$4700.00 from the District Attorney's office which enabled our officers to receive new portable radios. The radios were part of a recent mandate from county 911 which upgraded the frequencies and added identifiers to monitor the officers activities. These new features will add an addition level of protection while our officers are hard at work patrolling the communities of ACHA. 



District Attorney, Stephen Zappala

ACHA ANTICIPATES AGENCY SCORES IN 2013

The Allegheny County Housing Authority anticipates 2012 performance scores to be released later in 2013 and predicts a slight improvement to a score of 85%. The ACHA will be scored for Low-Income Public Housing and the Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8). The federal Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act (QHWRA) requires every housing authority to annually certify its management performance as measured by the Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS). Simply put, this is ACHA's report card from HUD. 2011 scores were an 83% for LIPH and 102% for HCVP.



PHAS evaluates the administration of low-income public housing and is based upon objective, uniform, and quantifiable standards. The assessment result is our "score" and public record of evaluation of effective of low-income public housing management.

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

- 1) Physical Condition: Evaluation of the physical condition of PHA 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, inspection, applicant screening, lease enforcement and resident services programs.
- 4) Capital: Evaluation of the PHA's capability of administering the Capital Fund grant process.

THANKS to all employees for your hard work and effort to maintain and improve ACHA's performance. 

ACHA HCVP DEPT. - HIGH PERFORMER

Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) Director, Kim Longwell, and the Section 8 Department has achieved High Performer status for the sixth year in a row. Her approach has been unique and innovative to the Authority and has set the bar for the entire staff. The staff has worked hard to maintain such a high level of performance and this achievement reflects their accomplishment.

On Tuesday, October 23, 2012 at the Western Pennsylvania Housing Directors Association (WPHDA) meeting, the Allegheny County Housing Authority (ACHA) was awarded a Certificate of Superior Accomplishment for recognition of designation as a High Performer under the Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) for the 2011 Fiscal Year.



Jacqueline Molinaro-Thompson, Director, Field Office of Public Housing, HUD Pittsburgh, presented the award to ACHA staff members Frank Aggazio, Executive Director, Kim Longwell, Director of HCVP, Robert Gabbianelli, Associate Director HCVP and Ellen Parker, Quality Control Supervisor HCVP. 

ACHA EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH for 2012

For consistently showing enthusiasm and working with an unwavering positive attitude. You've clearly made a difference. We acknowledge our appreciation.

JAN	<i>Perry New</i>
FEB	<i>HCVP Department</i>
MAR	<i>Kim Evans</i>
APR	<i>Elaine Dillman</i>
MAY	<i>John Donley</i>
JUN	<i>Tony Bennett</i>
JUL	<i>William Adamson</i>
SEP	<i>Bob Haas</i>
OCT	<i>Tim Prahl</i>
NOV	<i>Richard Jones</i>
DEC	<i>Paul Reiber</i>

THANK YOU!

HOLIDAY CELEBRATION OF LEADERSHIP LUNCHEON

On Wednesday, December 12th, the Resident Services staff hosted a "Holiday Celebration of Leadership" Luncheon. The event was held to recognize and celebrate the efforts of the current Resident Councils throughout our public housing communities. The Resident Councils consist of elected residents who have received leadership training from the housing authority and other various agencies in the hope of improving their respective communities. While working hand-in-hand with the ACHA, the Resident Councils have given their time and determination throughout the year and taken the responsibility of leadership roles with great care and concern for others within their respective communities. For that resolve, the ACHA was more than happy to salute those individuals during this holiday season. Partnering with Health America's Coventry Cares in putting on this event, a catered luncheon was served to those in attendance, along with a presentation from Ralph Festa, the Outreach & Events Coordinator for Coventry Cares. We are always appreciative when other organizations offer their time and efforts to recognize the positive things that occur throughout our communities, and we extend our gratitude for such contributions. 



HAYS MANOR COMMUNITY DAY



ACHA 2012 AWARDS



On July 29, 2012, the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) held its Summer Conference at the Marriot Marquis in San Francisco, California, where the ACHA was presented two Awards of Merit:

Administrative Innovation Award: Public Service Announcements – “Stop the Budget Cuts.” The ACHA produced two 30-second Public Service Announcements asking concerned citizens to contact their federal elected officials and urge them to support Public Housing when making decisions with federal funds. The spots were aired for three weeks on Comcast Cable prior to the elections and reached over one million people in the Allegheny County area.

Program Innovation Award: Resident & Client Services recognizes some of the best ACHA work among housing industry peers. “At-Risk Youth Programs” of the Deborah Booker Community Center the Park/Sheldon family community located in Natrona Heights provides opportunities for children to develop into better students and potential community leaders.

On September 14, 2012, the Pennsylvania Association of Housing and Redevelopment Agencies (PAHRA) held its annual awards dinner and banquet at the Sheraton Bayfront Hotel located in Erie, Pennsylvania. In the Awards Presentation, the ACHA received showcase. The Awards of Merit for innovative programming The Resident Services Department has been a leader in the housing industry through the use of various marketing tools, which help publicize ACHA developments. ACHA continues to receive the most PAHRA awards of any Housing Authority in the Commonwealth. 



GLASSPORT HONORS ACHA's BOB HAAS

Glassport Crime Watch members honored Allegheny County Housing Authority Section 8 housing inspector, Bob Haas, who took the extra step in saving the life of a community member. Master of ceremonies and Glassport Crime Watch co-founder, Angelo Norelli presented the “Extra Step Award” to Bob Haas. While Bob was conducting inspections in the borough of Glassport, he knocked several times at one residence and saw Rita Karnash lying on the kitchen floor. “I went around the side of the building and went upstairs to the porch and I could see her on the floor,” Haas said. “I could see the diabetic testing stuff and dialed 911.” He kept Ms. Karnash talking until paramedics arrived and treated her for low blood sugar. “If it wasn’t for Mr. Haas, we would no longer have my mother with us.” Karnash’s daughter, Valerie Benoit, stated. Mayor Michael Evanovich lauded Mr. Haas for his efforts and expressed appreciation to the crime watch. 





THE LOCKBOX PROCESS

1. You will receive a statement detailing your current rent balance sometime in the first few days of each month.
2. At the bottom of the statement is a perforated coupon which you will detach and return with your rent payment.
3. Please write your account number on the memo line of the check or money order.
4. A self-addressed envelope to a dedicated ACHA P.O. Box is provided with the statement.
5. Don't forget to add postage!
6. PNC Bank will collect from the P.O. Box three (3) times each day and deposit payments to ACHA.
7. ACHA will receive an electronic confirmation from PNC, and in most cases, post the payment to your account the very next day.

RENT PAYMENT OPTIONS

1. **LOCKBOX PAYMENT PROGRAM**
Payment by mail
2. **PAYMENT BY PHONE**
EZ Pay by Phone: 1-800-961-6184
3. **PAYMENT ONLINE**
www.achsng.com
4. **DIRECT DEPOSIT PROGRAM (DDP)**
See your community Property Manager

Please contact the Property Manager with any questions you may have.



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