



Community Connection



April 2017

ALLEGHENY COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY

ACHA RECEIVES A LOW-INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDIT AWARD FROM THE PENNSYLVANIA HOUSING FINANCE AGENCY



The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program continues to be important to the ACHA. In an effort to increase public

housing and affordable housing options in the South Hills of Allegheny County, the ACHA's proposed 60-unit senior development located in Mt. Lebanon, PA, we were awarded a "low-income housing tax credit allocation" by the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency in the summer of 2016. The tax credits will be leveraged to help finance the 60-unit development. In Partnership with Oxford Development and Green Development, the ACHA has engaged RBC & BNY Mellon to provide the financing to assist in this development. As an area which has been underserved, this development will be an opportunity to serve the low-to moderately low-income seniors in the South Hills communities. Other agencies are supporting the development with committed financing include the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and Allegheny County Economic Development. Construction is slated to begin in the Summer of 2017 with construction completion tentatively set for Fall 2018. 

~ Ed Primm

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PERSPECTIVES

by the ACHA
Executive Director
Frank Aggazio



Dear friends, colleagues, & partners,

Currently, the administration in Washington is requesting \$6 billion dollars in cuts out of the HUD budget. These cuts include \$1.3 billion from the Public Housing Capital Fund and \$600 million from the operating fund. It also appears that the Voucher Program is facing a \$300 million dollar cut.

There are cuts designed to eliminate funding for CDBG and HOME programs. Cuts to these programs will limit our ability to do tax credit deals. Also, CDBG has been used to supplement our Capital Fund work.

Our ability to help the most vulnerable in society is definitely on shaky ground.

It's very important to note that since January 1, 2017, the ACHA operating subsidy has been cut by 8%. In addition, lower proration, inaccurate utility deflation, and flawed resident inflation, are all contributing factors penalizing the ACHA with HUD budget cuts.

Congress which controls the nation's spending, can choose to adopt or ignore the proposal from the administration. It is my hope that Congress passes a realistic budget that meets the needs of the elderly, veterans, families, and children that we serve.

Best,



NAHRO OFFICIALS SELECT PITTSBURGH AS HOST CITY FOR 2017 NAT'L CONFERENCE

Come late October 2017, The Allegheny County Housing Authority (ACHA) will be in the national spotlight as a co-hosting agency for the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Official's (NAHRO's) 2017 National Conference.

NAHRO is a professional membership organization comprised of approximately 20,000 housing and community development agencies and officials throughout the United States who administer a variety of affordable housing and community development programs at the local level. NAHRO's vision is to be the leading resource for affordable and subsidized housing and community development through innovative research, analysis, advocacy, professional development and ethics. This conference attracts nearly 3,000 housing professionals from all over the country and Pittsburgh was selected from a handful of potential cities. The ACHA is excited for the opportunity to show the NAHRO conference attendees what makes Pittsburgh unique and the impact ACHA has made for the affordable housing community throughout the Pittsburgh Region. The 3 day conference begins October 27th at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center. 



NAHRO
building communities together

~ Ed Primm

ACHA HCVP DEPT. - HIGH PERFORMER

The Allegheny County Housing Authority (ACHA) was designated a "High Performer" by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP).

This designation exemplifies the commitment to quality and service by ACHA's Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher team. The staff prides itself in excelling at it's collective mission to serve the residents and landlords of Allegheny County by expanding affordable housing opportunities for all.

ACHA Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) administers over 5,800 vouchers including Veteran's Administration Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers, Mod Rehab units and Mainstream vouchers.

The Section 8 team thanks Executive Director, Frank Aggazio for his support in achieving this designation. 

~ Kim Longwell

A NEW WILMERDING POLICE STATION

On December 21, 2016 The Allegheny County Housing Authority (ACHA) and the Allegheny County Police hosted a grand opening for the new police station at Wilmerding High-rise. Allegheny County Chief Executive Rich Fitzgerald was present during the ceremony and was pleased to announce the new partnership between Allegheny County, Wilmerding Borough, and the ACHA. Effective January 1, 2017, the Allegheny County Police commenced patrolling the Wilmerding Borough.

ACHA's Executive Director, Frank Aggazio, welcomed the county police and converted two first floor apartments into the new police station which is manned 24/7. The ACHA was delighted when we were approached by county officials about the police station. We knew that this was a win-win for all. This is a true illustration of "community oriented policing." Our residents welcomed the police with opened arms. They also frequent the police station at times and they feel very safe knowing that the police are in their building. 



~ Mike Vogel

NAHRO 2016 AGENCY AWARDS

The Allegheny County Housing Authority received two “Awards of Excellence” from the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) Conference. NAHRO Awards of Excellence recognize outstanding innovation and achievement in housing and community development programs throughout the country. Entrants in the Awards of Excellence are chosen from among the Award of Merit entries by NAHRO Regional juries and sent on to national juries for the choice of winners by competition.

Winners are honored at the National Conference and Exhibition and in articles in the Journal of Housing and Community Development. Both ACHA programs have proven records of success. Thanks to ACHA employees Bobby Gabbianelli, Dean Allen, Kim Evans, Andrew Jamrom, and Ed Primm for organizing these award submissions. 

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

DIAL 211 - RECRUITMENT OF LANDLORDS TO HOUSE HOMELESS VETERANS

In July of 2014 Allegheny County Chief Executive Rich Fitzgerald and Pittsburgh Mayor Bill Peduto accepted President Obama’s challenge to end veteran homelessness by December 31, 2015. On August 8, 2014 a Housing Boot Camp formed with an array of agencies from across the area, which included the Allegheny County Housing Authority. After exceeding the goal of housing 135 homeless veterans in 100 days, it became evident landlord recruitment would be necessary in order to achieve their final goal. They designed simple and patriotic signage to be installed on Allegheny County Port Authority Buses in bus shelters throughout the city of Pittsburgh, and in windows of businesses who were willing to help in order to recruit landlords.



RESIDENT AND CLIENT SERVICES

JOB TRAINING and SECTION 3 PROGRAM

Providing low-income residents the opportunity for employment in multi-million dollar redevelopment efforts can be challenging to any housing authority. By developing an aggressive outreach program with the general contractor and for-profit developers, the Allegheny County Housing Authority helped employ thirty-six (36) Section 3 residents during the \$17 million dollar renovation of the former Burns Heights site into the new Orchard Park community in Duquesne. Using creative marketing strategies and community outreach, this successful program has led to 16 permanent jobs for the Section 3 residents.



THE 412 FOOD PROGRAM

The ACHA pursued and secured a collaboration sure to blossom with the 412 Food Program. Beverly Moore, Leah Lizarondo, and Ava Johnson initiated conversation that resulted in a strong partnership with the ACHA Resident Services Department and the 412 Food Rescue Team to fulfill the mission to end food waste and reduce human hunger in Allegheny County, specifically, in the ACHA communities. Musicians from the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra helped distribute food and provided musical entertainment. Residents (seniors, disabled, non-seniors, veterans and families with children) have greatly benefitted from this partnership. 

~ Angela Burke-Harris



Ava Johnson



SHELDON PARK STUDENTS, THE LORAX & RICH FITZGERALD

County Executive Rich Fitzgerald read Dr. Seuss's book "The Lorax" to students ages five through 12 at the Pleasant Ridge Center and the Sheldon Park Hayden Center. His visit prompted a Reading program that included ACHA Board of Directors, Vice Chairperson, Austin Davis and ACHA's Executive Director, Frank Aggazio. The students at the Sheldon Park Hayden Center entertained the County Executive and ACHA Executives as they performed the Lorax Book through readings and props. 

~ Angela Burke-Harris



NETL HOSTS REMAKE LEARNING DAY FOR LOCAL STUDENTS

The National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL) welcomed students from the STO-ROX School District to participate in the Remake Learning Lab Day. The event was held in collaboration with Allegheny County's Executive Office and the Allegheny County Housing Authority. NETL's program was designed to inspire student interest in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and make students aware of career opportunities in those fields. The event featured hands-on science activities, laboratory tours, and presentations from NETL's diverse group of laboratory professionals.

~ Nat'l Energy Technology Laboratory



HOMEOWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES CREATED THROUGH PARTNERSHIP WITH HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

The Allegheny County Housing Authority has sold five unoccupied homes in Penn Hills and three empty lots in Duquesne to Habitat for Humanity of Greater Pittsburgh, the first time the two organizations have worked together, officials announced. The partnership will allow eight families to become homeowners, said Howard Slaughter, Jr., President and CEO of Habitat for Humanity of Greater Pittsburgh.

Families who qualify for Habitat programs must work for 350 hours to invest "sweat equity" in the house, as part of the home-buying process, along with their down payment. "For the families that will become homeowners, I'm thanking you now for them," Mr. Slaughter said at a press conference to announce the agreement. He said he hopes the Penn Hills homes can be rehabbed and occupied later this year, with new houses built on the lots in Duquesne by the end of next year. "We have home ownership programs at the Housing Authority, and we thought this would be a good partnership. We can expand home ownership opportunities with Habitat," said Frank Aggazio, Executive Director of the ACHA.



Frank Aggazio & Howard Slaughter sign closing documents

The Penn Hills houses were sold for \$203,000 and the Duquesne lots for \$15,000 total, according to Allegheny County Recorder of Deeds online records. For more information, contact Habitat for Humanity of Greater Pittsburgh at 1-866-NEW-HOME and ask for the Family Services Manager.

~ Kate Giammarise, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette - 9/2/2017

ACHA UTILIZES SKYPE FOR LEGAL HEARINGS

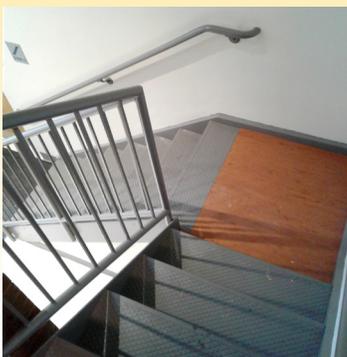
The ACHA Public Safety Department (PSD) is continuing to advance in the 21st century. The PSD is charged with the duties of investigating fraudulent activity in the Section 8 and LIPH programs. The Criminal Records Analyst (CRA) also determines housing eligibility for participants by conducting criminal background investigations. In addition, they recommend terminations for lease violations and at times deny applicants based on certain criminal activity. Part of the denial and termination process requires an informal hearing. Historically, the CRA and ACHA police personnel would have to attend hearings at our central office to testify and present evidence to support the terminations and denials. The hearings could last all day and at times participants would postpone at the last minute which had staff waiting around until the next hearing. Of course, there are also hefty parking expenses and travel time to consider as well.

In February 2017, the ACHA launched our Skype Hearings. Skype is a remote way to conduct hearings via internet. ACHA Public Safety staff can login through a laptop regardless of their location to testify and present evidence as needed. The technology can be very effective for informal use. All in attendance are able to see PSD staff with the web camera and interact by questioning them when needed. This innovative way of participating in hearings saves money, time and allows PSD staff to continue to work in between hearings and postponements.  ~ Mike Vogel



GENERAL BRADDOCK TOWER - PHASE IV MODERNIZATION

The Allegheny County Housing Authority worked with McLean Architects to develop bidding and construction documents for Phases I, II, III and IV of the General Braddock Tower Interior/Exterior Improvements. The general scope of work for Phases I, II, and III included ACM abatement, waste stack replacement and related renovation of dwelling units and on floors 10 through 12, new window installation, exterior lighting and landscaping, and HVAC work by Honeywell respectively. Phase IV completed the renovation of dwelling units and stack work on floors 1 through 9, as well as the common areas. And in addition to the revitalization of the interior spaces, the overall outcome of the exterior work, with its oversized cornices and dramatic façade lighting is the re-establishment of the building's significant place within the community of Braddock. Moret Construction, Inc., Wheels Mechanical and Merit Electrical Group were the General, Mechanical and Electrical Contractors. The cost of Phase IV was \$2,006,400. The value of the overall project totaled \$4,613,736.  ~ Andrew Jamrom



SHELDON PARK APARTMENTS EXTERIOR IMPROVEMENTS

The Allegheny County Housing Authority worked with Upstreet Architects who were contracted to develop the bidding and construction documents for all three phases of the Exterior Improvements at Park Sheldon. Phase Three - which is within a month of finishing - completes the new roof configurations, windows and siding on 18 buildings remaining in the project, as well as the rental office/maintenance building. There are 44 apartment buildings in the Park Sheldon community. Liokareas Construction and Merit Electrical Group are the contractors. The construction cost for this phase is \$1,678,480. Combined with the costs for phases 1 and 2, the total project amount is \$4,582,690. The renovations revitalize the buildings' contextual appearance. The new deep overhangs and windows protect the exteriors from water infiltration and give the buildings more of a human scale as do the playful entry canopies. 

~ Andrew Jamrom



ACHA EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH for 2016

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

- JAN Linda Aliberti
- FEB HCVP Department
- MAR Nicole Knapp
- APR Randi Beattie
- MAY Bill Kilburn
- JUN Steve Maiorano
- JUL Cheryl Thompson
- AUG NA
- SEP Lamar Miller
- OCT Jennifer Jackson
- NOV Ken Heinecke
- DEC Elaine Dillman

THANK YOU!

ACHA RETIREES for 2016 - 2017

In appreciation of your years of service to the ACHA and for your commitment, hard work, and dedication to improve the quality of life for our residents. Your contribution to the work place will be missed. 

- JAN 16 Linda Aliberti
- APR 16 Tony Bennett
- AUG 16 John Habarka
- OCT 16 Charles Brown
- JAN 17 Rich Rush
- FEB 17 William Keith Davis
- MAR 17 Charles Davis

THANK YOU!

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