



First Resident Board Member Appointed to NYCHA Board

Victor A. Gonzalez has history of community service

"I feel not only honored but humbled to have been chosen," said Victor A. Gonzalez, NYCHA's newest Board member. "I saw this as an opportunity to impact not just 350 families at my development, but almost half a million people."

Victor Antonio Gonzalez has been appointed as the first public housing resident to NYCHA's Board by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, effective July 20, 2011. The City received more than 600 applications for this first-time position, representing a diverse resident pool from across five boroughs.

"This is great news for NYCHA and its over 400,000 residents, who will for the first time in NYCHA's history, be officially represented at the Board level in critical policy, regulation and contract decisions for the Authority moving forward," said Mayor Bloomberg.

Mr. Gonzalez, who has lived in NYCHA housing for 50 years, is a tireless public

housing resident leader and advocate. He was president of the Residents Association of Rabbi Stephen Wise Towers in Manhattan since 2003 and served as an alternative member of NYCHA's Resident Advisory Board. Mr. Gonzalez also has done extensive work with advocacy groups, organizing workshop meetings for tenants. He serves on the Goddard Riverside Community Center Board; Community Board 7 in Manhattan; the Neighborhood Advisory Board for the City's Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD); and is a member of the NYC Residents' Alliance.

"Mayor Bloomberg's appointment of Victor Gonzalez as Resident Board Member is another important step for NYCHA as the Authority becomes a more open, responsive organization. This furthers our collaborative efforts, with elected resident leaders and other stakeholders, to implement the long-term strategy that will strengthen public

housing for the future – the Plan to Preserve Public Housing," said NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea. "I look forward to Victor bringing his considerable energy and enthusiasm for housing issues to the Board while working with me, Emily Youssef and Margarita López on the very challenging issues facing the New York City Housing Authority."

Mr. Gonzalez, who recently was honored by the residents of Wise Towers during Family Day, wants to bring his personal experience as a public housing resident to the table and serve as a bridge between NYCHA and residents. "I am eager to begin tackling the most pressing issues facing public housing today, including under-funding and safety and security," he said.

"I look forward to working with Victor Gonzalez and the entire NYCHA Board in greatly enhancing the voice of all residents in the policy and decisions of the New York City Housing Authority,"



Victor A. Gonzalez is the first resident ever appointed to NYCHA's Board.

said Reginald H. Bowman, President of the Citywide Council of Presidents. "Mr. Gonzalez' appointment will give additional strength to the importance of residents' positions in NYCHA matters."

Mr. Gonzalez' appointment follows passage of a law by the State legislature in 2010 allowing for a resident to serve on the Board. As resident board member, Mr. Gonzalez, a retired United Parcel Service worker, will serve part-time.

"It is my true pleasure to congratulate Victor Gonzalez on his appointment to the Board of the New York City Housing Authority," said State Assemblyman Vito Lopez, Chair of the *continued on page 2*

INSIDE THIS ISSUE



'EXPLORING'

Castle Hill Houses » read more on **page 3**

YOU NOW CAN VOICE

YOUR OPINION in the *Journal*
» read more on **page 2**

RESIDENT GOOD SAMARITANS

Save Lives, Keep Eyes Open
» read more on **page 4**

CHECKING THE HEALTH

of NYCHA Seniors » read more on **page 8**

NYCHA/FFAWN Teen Girls Initiative Soars with Take Flight Ceremony

By Zodet Negrón

For more than 40 girls from NYCHA developments in Manhattan and the Bronx, being a part of the NYCHA/FFAWN Teen Girls Initiative has helped them realize the importance of self-worth, independence, financial responsibility and the meaning of friendship. For the past six months, NYCHA and singer Mary J. Blige's Foundation For the Advancement of Women Now, Inc. provided girls and ages 12-15 the opportunity to connect with mentors and provide the support and encouragement they need to pursue their dreams and realize their full potential.

"[This program] taught me a lot," said Gionna Clinton, 16, from Gun Hill Houses in the Bronx. "I've learned to manage money and become more independent and how to support myself."

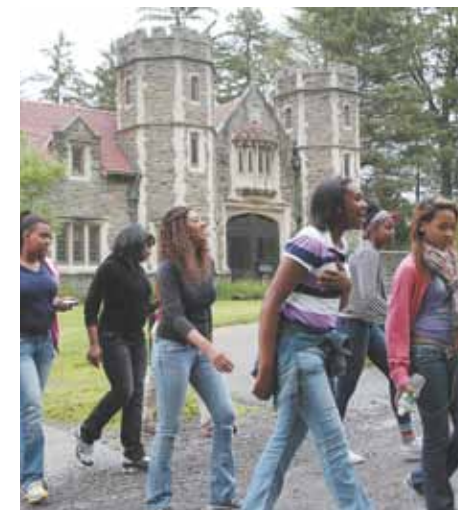
As a culmination to the program, the girls attended a sleepover at Bard College in the Hudson Valley on June 24 and 25. In the park-like campus surrounded by fields and forests, the occasional deer crossing fascinated the city girls while the dorms piqued their interest in going away to college in a few years.

During the weekend celebration, the girls joined FFAWN volunteer Danna Lennon-Thomas in a workshop on healthy relationships. They also attended a panel discussion with special guests Wendy Wilson, news editor for Essence Magazine; Brenda Braxton, award-winning artist and entrepreneur; Patrice Tanaka, co-chair and chief creative officer of CRT/tanaka; and Elizabeth Toledo, who oversees operations at the Dodge YMCA.

Ms. Tanaka told the girls that she wouldn't be in the position she is in today if she had not gone after her dreams. "Every success I've had has been because I've followed a passion and pursued it," she said. "You need to tell yourself what it is you want to happen in your life and not what won't, and tell people who love you and support you."

All of the panelists concluded that the secret to success is to believe in yourself, have a vision of what you want to do and pursue your dreams and passions. The girls heeded the message.

"This program really inspired me. I loved all the events," said Brianna Flores, 15, from King Towers in Manhattan.



Participants in the NYCHA-FFAWN Teen Girls Initiative stroll through the campus of Bard College in upstate New York during their weekend graduation in June.

"This program taught me that you can show off your confidence," said 12-year-old Nia Berrien from Wilson Houses in Manhattan.

"Some of you were very shy in the beginning but you should all be commended because those of you who spoke out gave others the confidence also to speak out and be a little stronger," Deidra Gilliard, Assistant Deputy General Manager of Community Operations and Development, told the girls.

NYCHA plans to continue the program and expand it beyond Manhattan and the Bronx.

NYCHA Board Meetings



Notice hereby is given that the New York City Housing Authority's Board Meetings take place every other Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. in the Board Room on the 12th floor of 250 Broadway, New York, New York (unless otherwise noted). The remaining meetings for Calendar Year 2011 are as follows:

August 3	September 28	November 23
August 17	October 12	December 7
August 31	October 26	December 21
September 14	November 9	

Any changes to the schedule above will be posted here and on NYCHA's website at nyc.gov/nycha to the extent practicable at a reasonable time before the meeting.

These meetings are open to the public. Pre-registration at least 45 minutes before the scheduled Board Meeting is required by all speakers. Comments are limited to the items on the Calendar. Speaking time will be limited to three minutes. The public comment period will conclude upon all speakers being heard or at the expiration of 30 minutes allotted by law for public comment, whichever occurs first.

Copies of the Calendar are available on NYCHA's website or can be picked up at the Office of the Secretary at 250 Broadway, 12th floor, New York, New York, no earlier than 3:00 p.m. on the Friday before the upcoming Wednesday Board Meeting. Copies of the Disposition are available on NYCHA's website or can be picked up at the Office of the Secretary no earlier than 3:00 p.m. on the Thursday after the Board Meeting.

Any person requiring a reasonable accommodation in order to participate in the Board Meeting should contact the Office of the Secretary at **(212) 306-6088** no later than five business days before the Board Meeting. For additional information, please visit NYCHA's website or call **(212) 306-6088**.

◀ continued from page 1

First Resident Board Member Appointed to NYCHA Board

Assembly's Housing Committee. "I wholeheartedly believe that the addition of a NYCHA resident will bring needed unique insight to the Board and will

be a great benefit to NYCHA residents throughout the City. I am proud to have drafted the legislation to help bring this change to the NYCHA Board."

As with the Chairman, the Resident Board member is appointed by the Mayor and serves at the Mayor's will.



Introducing the NYCHA Residents' Voices!

As the New York City Housing Authority continues to become a more transparent agency, we

want to increase our efforts to reflect your voice. In the spirit of the Community Conversations held for the Plan to Preserve Public Housing and the new roundtable format for the town hall meetings as part of the Draft Agency Annual Plan process, we are pleased to introduce the NYCHA Residents' Voices in the *Journal*.

Residents' Voices will allow you to tell us what is on your mind. We welcome diverse and varied opinions. In addition to letters, we also will accept photographs, poems, drawings - anything that allows you to express yourself!

When sharing your thoughts or ideas with Residents' Voices, please include your full name, development name, address and phone number. We will print only your name and development on our pages; we need your address and phone number for verification purposes only. Please limit written submissions to 250 words.

The *Journal* reserves the right to edit all content for length, clarity, good taste, accuracy, etc. Because of space limitations, we must limit all contributions to one letter per person per issue.

There are many ways to share your thoughts with us at the *Journal*:

- Send an e-mail to **Journal@nycha.nyc.gov**
- Send a snail mail to:
**NYCHA Journal
Letters to the Editor
250 Broadway, 12th floor
New York, NY 10007**
- Send a Tweet on Twitter at **twitter.com/NYCHA_Housing**
- Post a message on Facebook at **www.facebook.com/NYCHA**
- Send a fax to **212-577-1358**

If you have any questions, please send them to **Journal@nycha.nyc.gov**.

We look forward to joining with you all on what we expect will be a positive inclusion of the voices of all NYCHA residents in the *Journal*.

—NYCHA Journal Staff

Editor's Note: To start off the new Residents' Voices section of the *Journal*, Reginald Bowman, the President of the Citywide Council of Presidents, wrote an open letter to the residents of public housing.

CCOP Takes Action Now to Preserve Public Housing for the Future



Reginald Bowman, President of the Citywide Council of Presidents, speaks at one of the Community Conversations held this year for the Plan to Preserve Public Housing.

As the President of the Citywide Council of Presidents (CCOP), my colleagues and I represent the 178,000 families that reside in the Public Housing Communities/ Developments of New York City.

We know that you have many concerns, including repairs and maintenance, rents, eviction policy, safety and security, vandalism, and making sure your voice is heard in budget and policy decisions. We hear you! Residents come first and the CCOP has embarked on major initiatives and reforms to meet your needs and better represent you and your families as residents. To fix the problems and own the future, we as residents must commit to take action now, let your voice be heard, and unite in proactive civic engagement to restore permanent funding in the city, state and federal levels of government to preserve public housing as a socioeconomic infrastructure and permanent landmark.

The first initiative increases resident participation in policy and decision-making. Resident leaders participated in the process of putting a resident on the NYCHA Board. On July 20, Mayor Bloomberg appointed the first resident member in history to the Board of NYCHA. This is part of a long-term strategic plan focused on repositioning residents and their leaders in the decision making at NYCHA. This strategy also is evidenced by the expansion of resident engagement in decision-making through the Security and Safety Task Force, the Community Roundtables and the new Agency Annual Plan participatory town hall process to be introduced this year.

We also work to provide leadership training, conferences, office space and equipment to all Resident Associations, through access to TPA funds. This effort is intended to improve communication and the transfer of information between CCOP and the residents and NYCHA, and to build working alliances and affiliations between CCOP and resident advocacy groups locally and nationally to build our resident organizations' effectiveness.

Through leadership in resident participation, education, partnerships with local and national advocacy networks, voter registration, proactive civic engagement and working to improve lines of communication, the CCOP will continue strengthening the voice of public housing residents in New York, and our ability to deliver the resources to restore our homes in Public Housing.

Please join us in these continuing initiatives. Through continued strategic planning and working together we shall build a stronger resident organization and preserve public housing for the future.

Thank you.
Reginald H. Bowman
President, Citywide Council of Presidents

Comments? Questions? E-mail Journal@nycha.nyc.gov.



ESTABLISHED 1970 • CIRCULATION 200,000

Published monthly by the New York City Housing Authority
Department of Communications • 250 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10007
Tel (212) 306-3322 • Fax (212) 577-1358 • nyc.gov/nycha

Michael R. Bloomberg..... Mayor
John B. Rhea..... Chair
Emily Youssouf..... Vice-Chair
Margarita López..... Board Member
Victor A. Gonzalez..... Resident Board Member
Wilma Huertas..... Secretary
Michael Kelly..... General Manager
Lynn Godfrey..... Chief Communications Officer
Sheila Stainback..... Communications Officer
Eric Deutsch..... Editor
Zodet Negrón..... Editor, Spanish Edition
Peter Mikoleski, Leticia Barboza..... Photography
Christian Nwachukwu, Brent Grier..... Staff Writers

If you are interested in placing an advertisement in the *Journal*, please call our marketing representatives in the Office of Business and Revenue Development at (212) 306-6614. The inclusion of any advertisement in this *Journal* does not constitute any endorsement by the Housing Authority of the advertiser or its products or services or any other representation by the Housing Authority with respect to such products or services.



Message from the Chairman

The NYCHA Team has been hard at work trying to maximize our funds while maintaining services that keep your homes safe, secure and in good working order. These tough economic times present us with significant challenges. If we are to succeed in reinvesting in public housing communities, we will need a renewed focus on the threats to its survival.

In 2009 alone, NYCHA received the largest single grant made to a public housing authority from the *American Reinvestment and Recovery*

Act, better known as the Stimulus bill. An unprecedented level of federal operating support in 2010 helped NYCHA balance its budget – a significant step forward after a decade of reduced funding that resulted in a cumulative loss to the Authority of \$666 million. And the Federalization transaction in 2010 created additional federal operating subsidies that contributed to balancing the Authority's operating budget in 2011. That's the good news.

However, we now face significant risks from the proposed federal budget cuts. The President's 2012 budget for public housing recognizes a need of nearly \$5.0 billion to fund public housing authorities at their full operating subsidies. But less than \$4.0 billion is being requested from Congress. It is proposed that this \$1.0 billion gap be offset by using local Authorities' operating reserves.

It is unclear how the federal government will recapture these operating reserves from housing authorities. The funding shortfall could be distributed proportionally among all housing authorities, and if that happens, it would result in NYCHA losing \$200 million. This would be the equivalent, for example, of 3,000 direct service jobs being cut or

70,000 apartments going without even basic repairs.

To respond to \$200 million of lost revenues, NYCHA has developed a preliminary contingency plan, which includes a drastic reduction in community programs, agency-wide layoffs, renegotiation of contracts and large transfers from the capital to operating budget. To avoid these cuts, NYCHA, residents, community advocates, industry stakeholders and elected leaders alike must work together to increase public support for our communities today and in the future.

While we continue to face challenges, it is important that we not lose sight of our core priority: the preservation of our invaluable yet aging housing stock. Preservation does not come without significant cost. Recent inspections of more than 14,000 apartments conducted at 13 developments generated an average of eight work orders per apartment at a cost of nearly \$3,000 per unit. We estimate that it would cost approximately \$500 million to make basic interior repairs to all NYCHA apartments.

To address the most severe conditions, we have allocated an additional \$31 million over the next five years, \$11 million of which is dedicated in 2011. A NYCHA special task force is targeting the buildings that have the most work orders per unit. More than 4,000 repairs in six developments already have been completed and closed out. In the coming months, we plan to add 400 temporary workers to further address our efforts.

We are committed to improving the quality of life of our residents. Together, we already have accomplished so much to preserve our communities and support NYCHA's families. Our progress is significant, but our work is ongoing.

Johan the Explorer Sails Into the Bronx

He didn't have to cross a moat or scale a stone wall, but a foreign explorer did enter a castle in the Bronx recently. Or more accurately, Castle Hill Houses. Johan Ernst Nilson, a Swedish explorer known for 'climate neutral' travels, visited the NYCHA development on July 7 as part of a year-long expedition to travel from the North Pole to the South Pole, using only methods that do not create greenhouse gases, such as walking, bicycling or skiing. Called Climate Neutral – Pole2Pole, the expedition is meant to raise awareness of environmental sustainability.

"The space I visited was a masterpiece in green thinking with all details and problems figured out," said Mr. Nilson, known as 'The Explorer.' "The boilers in the basement support many blocks of apartments and have a high sufficiency. I honestly believe this is the future of building houses."

Mr. Nilson was shown the innovative energy man-

agement processes at Castle Hill, including apartment temperature sensors that prevent over-heating, upgrades to the central boiler plant and replacing all interior lighting in public spaces and apartments with more energy efficient lighting. Put in place in 2007 with support from the Clinton Climate Initiative, these efforts have led to significant improvements in service to residents and reductions in costs and carbon emissions into the environment.

"I asked the staff who work with the boilers about how it is to work in a heated environment all day. They told me it is hard and hot, but they are very proud of what they do," said Mr. Nilson. "They said this is the future and want to be a part of that."

The journey will cover 12,000 miles. It ran through Greenland and Canada before reaching the United States, and then will continue through South America. It will end with a two-month journey in Antarctica on skis and a parafoil.

Correction to June Green Column

In the June issue of the *Journal*, the Green article "Preparing for Bad Weather in the Rockaways" included unclear information on how to disinfect water during an emergency. The article stated that iodine tablets, used to disinfect water, can be substituted with one quart of unscented bleach. To clarify, the entire one quart of unscented bleach should not be used to disinfect the water. The amount of bleach depends on the amount of water to be treated. Unscented bleach should be used to disinfect water only if directed to do so by health officials, and the use of an eyedropper or teaspoon is recommended to add the bleach. For half a gallon of water, 5 to 10 drops of bleach would be added depending on how cloudy the water is. For one gallon, it would be one-eighth to one-quarter of a teaspoon. The water then should be mixed thoroughly and allowed to stand for 30 to 60 minutes before using.

Resident Green Committees are On-Line

Residents who want to enhance their green thumbs have a great resource at greennycha.org. All 28 Resident Green Committees have their own page on the site with information about upcoming events and ways to get involved in fighting climate change and preserving public housing. Anyone living in a development that does not yet have an RGC can contact NYCHA through the website and the Authority will assist in setting one up. The website offers information on how to receive grants and materials, rules for starting a garden at a development and ways to volunteer at green events. The RGCs also have their own Facebook page. To visit it, go to facebook.com/nycha.



NYCHA Board Member Margarita López shows Johan Ernst Nilson, known as 'Johan the Explorer,' the boiler room at Castle Hill Houses in the Bronx. Mr. Nilson is travelling from the North Pole to the South Pole to raise awareness of environmental sustainability.

THE NYCHA NOT WANTED LIST

Below is a partial list of names of individuals who have been excluded permanently from NYCHA's public housing developments. This list keeps residents informed of the Authority's ongoing efforts to improve the quality of life for New Yorkers in public housing and to allow for the peaceful and safe use of its facilities. The following are the people, with their former addresses, excluded as of August 11, 18 and 25, 2010.

Prohibited as of August 11, 2010

Joseph Bowen Kingsborough Houses, 354 Kingsborough Third Walk, 6th fl., Brooklyn

Warren Johnson Pelham Parkway Houses, 2255 Bronxwood Ave., 6th fl., Bronx

Gquan Lloyd Forest Hills Coop Houses, 110-01 62nd Dr., 9th fl., Queens

Pedro Melendez Carver Houses, 65 E 99th St., 6th fl., Manhattan

Andrew Spalding Ocean Hill Apartments/Saratoga Square Houses, 930 Halsey St., 8th fl., Brooklyn

Noah Wise a/k/a Noah Nelson Lafayette Houses, 345 Classon Ave, 11th fl., Brooklyn

Prohibited as of August 18, 2010

Chris Albert Frederick Samuel Houses, 2441 Adam Clayton Powell Blvd., 7th fl., Manhattan

Omar Caballero Harborview Terrace/Amsterdam Houses, 520 W 56th St., 7th fl., Manhattan

Arlester Corbett Howard Houses, 40 Glenmore Ave., 2nd fl., Brooklyn

Noel Diaz Grant Houses, 1305 Amsterdam Ave., 1st fl., New York

Victor Feliciano Grant Houses, 1305 Amsterdam Ave., 1st fl., New York

Willie Giles Van Dyke Houses, 361 Livonia Ave., 5th fl., Brooklyn

Teaira Grant Albany Houses/Weeksville Gardens, 1131 Park Pl., 14th fl., Brooklyn

William Graves Morris Houses, 1385 Washington Ave., 2nd fl., Bronx

Raday Gonzalez LaGuardia/ Two Bridges U.R.A., 230 Clinton St., 9th fl., Manhattan

Darryl Knowles Queensbridge North Houses, 40-06 10th St., 6th fl., Queens

Christopher Morton Bland Houses, 133-40 Roosevelt Ave., 2nd fl., Queens

Albert Negrón Vladeck Houses, 14 Jackson St., 6th fl., Manhattan

Angel Rivera Wyckoff Gardens Houses, 272 Wyckoff St., 15th fl., Brooklyn

Jose Tejada Grant Houses, 1305 Amsterdam Ave., 1st fl., New York

Arthur Thomas Castle Hill Houses, 2120 Randall Ave., 12th fl., Bronx

Willie Waters Ocean Bay Apartments, 55-49 Almeda Ave., 5th fl., Queens

Prohibited as of August 25, 2010

Raheem Fonseca Red Hook West Houses, 450 Columbia St., 1st fl., Brooklyn

Frank Hazzard Van Dyke I Houses, 372 Blake Ave., 3rd fl., Brooklyn

Gary Moses Van Dyke Houses, 422 Blake Ave., 4th fl., Brooklyn

Grant Houses Resident Saves NYCHA Youth, Becomes Local Hero



By Zodet Negrón

When a young boy was left pinned under a car after being hit by a taxi cab, Sabrina Johnson, a resident at Grant Houses in Manhattan, did what she felt she had to do: lift the rear of the car while another good Samaritan dragged the boy from underneath the car.

"I'm a mom and when I saw what happened, I told the lady [Dr. Sabrina Martin, who also witnessed the incident] that we had to lift the car," said Ms. Johnson,

who works for NYCHA as a Caretaker. "My adrenaline kicked in and I was able to lift the car while she dragged him out."

The incident happened on July 6 when 10-year-old Jaden Torres, another Grant Houses resident, ran across the street while playing near the development.

"I was so happy that I was there," said Ms. Johnson, who was on her way home from work when the incident occurred. "Angels really protected him at that moment with a strong woman and a doctor."

The boy was examined by Dr. Martin, a pediatrician who was visiting her mother Sara Martin, the Grant Houses Resident Association President, and was taken to a hospital.

Ms. Johnson, who has lived in NYCHA for almost 40 years and worked as a caretaker for the past 10 years, has three children ages 23, 19 and 10. When her youngest son Joe-EI saw her on the news the next morning, he told her that the boy she saved was his "skelzies" playmate (skelzies is a street game played by children using bottle caps as play pieces).

"My son said to me 'Mom, you're my hero. You saved my skelzies partner,'" Ms. Johnson said, beaming.

When He Sees Something, Jefferson Houses Resident Says Something

By Eric Deutsch

Jefferson Houses is full of kids, so I wasn't going to just sit there. I knew they weren't supposed to be there." So said Jerry Jackson, a resident of Jefferson Houses in Manhattan. When Mr. Jackson saw four people in the early morning on May 8 entering the tunnel being dug for the Second Avenue subway, he immediately called 911. The four people, who turned out to be self-described "urban explorers" looking to take photos inside the tunnel, were arrested and charged with criminal trespass.

Mr. Jackson was honored for his vigilance by NYCHA's Safety and Security Task Force with a "Good Citizen Award." "When someone steps up to make their neighborhood and the City safer, we need to stop and say thanks," said NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea.

"When I hear of a Housing Bureau officer doing something that makes a difference in safety, I'm proud. When it's a resident doing something extraordinary, I'm even prouder," said NYPD Housing Bureau Assistant Chief Edward Delatorre.



Mr. Jackson said when he was in the military, he was trained to pay attention. "I did what any citizen of New York should have done. I live here, so I have something to say about security."

"Good Citizen Award" winner Jerry Jackson (second from left) was joined, from left to right, by NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea, his son Saihiem Griffin, his wife Nykeisha Jackson, and NYPD Housing Bureau Assistant Chief Edward Delatorre.



Do you want to train in the emerging field of electronic health records or other high-demand jobs?

Join us at one of our information sessions.

718.289.5170

Bronx Community College
Continuing and Professional Studies
www.bcc.cuny.edu/cps





By Eric Deutsch

Sharon Myrie started as NYCHA's Deputy General Manager for Community Programs and Development on June 27, 2011. Ms. Myrie sat down recently with the *Journal* to talk about her position leading the newly expanded department.

Question: What interested you about working for NYCHA?

Answer: I always have been drawn to programs and I see coming to NYCHA as the culmination of my experience. I worked in City government before (for Mayor David Dinkins) and also worked at a settlement house, so I have seen how important offering programs and social services are to support people. I have a strong interest in program development, looking at how delivery of services can be shaped in a better way. Needs can change and the delivery system needs to change with them.

Q: How does your experience as a Vice President at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden and as an Associate Director of Programs at Lenox Hill Neighborhood House translate into what you want to accomplish at NYCHA?

A: At both organizations, I looked at the strength of programs and where needed, updated them to fit the current community. For instance, Brook-

Q & A with New NYCHA Deputy General Manager for Community Programs and Development Sharon Myrie

lyn Botanic Garden is 100 years. Some programs weren't reaching specific populations, especially older youth. I worked closely with staff, youth and community residents to design and develop educational resources for them. I also used gardening as a tool for community organizing, and I know that resident gardens are important here at NYCHA. At Lenox Hill, I managed a team to deliver services to people on the street, to seniors and to youths, and made sure that residents received the benefits they needed.

Q: The department, formerly called Community Operations, has added new offices to its portfolio – Public/Private Partnerships and Resident Economic Empowerment and Sustainability (REES). Can you talk about what this means for the department and how it serves residents?

A: Chairman Rhea sees great value in forming strong and long-lasting partnerships with foundations and organizations interested in supporting our community and self-sufficiency programs. We will work with these groups to find ways to benefit residents. And when you benefit residents, you benefit the city as a whole.

A lot of great work has gone into strengthening a program targeting job development and job placement. By incorporating REES back into community programs we can ensure that all areas of NYCHA that are providing direct services to residents are working collectively.

Q: How have the first few weeks been?

A: During my first week here, I attended events in Harlem to promote literacy in children that involved both public and private partner organizations. I saw great

examples of ways we can partner with individuals and organizations toward a common goal – getting books in the hands of children and instilling a love of reading from day one. It made me think, "How can we get this program in

every development?"

Q: Anything else?

A: I am committed to getting out into the community to see the programs in action and determine how we can best deliver services in an effective way.

CARVER COMMUNITY Cash

Immediate Access. Total Control.

No bank account needed

No credit check

Plus, you can pay your rent now at any of our branches.

Call us today at **718.230.2900** or stop in at one of our branches. To find out more visit www.carverbank.com

Send money

Money orders

Pay bills

Prepaid VISA® card

Checks Cashed

Member FDIC

Summer Heat Tips

On summer days that are very hot, to find the cooling center nearest to you, call **311 (TTY: 212-504-4115)**, or use OEM's online Cooling Center Finder at www.nyc.gov/oem. OEM recommends checking the online Cooling Center Finder or calling **311** just before leaving home to ensure the closest center is open.

For more information on coping with extreme heat, see the *Ready New York: Beat the Heat* guide at www.nyc.gov/oem.

For more information on the health effects associated with extreme heat visit www.nyc.gov/health.

During periods of extremely hot and humid weather, electricity use rises, which can cause power disruptions. There are several ways to conserve energy:

- Set air conditioner thermostats at 78 degrees
- Use air conditioners only when at home, and only in rooms being used
- For people who want to cool a home before they return, set a timer that turns on no more than 30 minutes before arriving
- Turn off nonessential appliances
- To receive free notifications about power outages, sign up for Notify NYC at www.nyc.gov/notifynyc.

CARVER BRANCH OFFICE LOCATIONS:

MANHATTAN

125TH STREET BRANCH
75 West 125th Street
at Lenox Avenue
Monday - Friday 8:30a.m. - 5:30p.m.,
Saturday 9:00a.m. - 1:00p.m.

BRADHURST BRANCH
(Inside Pathmark Supermarket)
300 West 145th Street
at Frederick Douglass Boulevard
New York, NY 10039
Monday - Friday 10:00a.m. - 7:00 p.m.,
Saturday 10:00a.m. - 3:00p.m.

MALCOLM X BOULEVARD BRANCH
142 Malcolm X Boulevard
at West 117th Street
Monday - Friday 8:30a.m. - 5:30p.m.,
Saturday 9:00a.m. - 2:00p.m.

BROOKLYN

ATLANTIC TERMINAL BRANCH
4 Hanson Place
at St. Felix Street
Monday - Friday 8:30a.m. - 5:30p.m.,
Saturday 10:00a.m.-2:00p.m.

BEDFORD-STUYVESANT BRANCH
(At Restoration Plaza)
1392 Fulton Street
at Restoration Plaza
Monday - Friday 8:30a.m. - 5:30p.m.,
Saturday 9:00a.m.-2:00p.m.

CROWN HEIGHTS BRANCH
1009 Nostrand Avenue
at Empire Boulevard
Monday - Friday 8:30a.m. - 5:30p.m.,
Saturday 9:00a.m. - 1:00p.m.

833 FLATBUSH BRANCH
833 Flatbush Avenue
at Linden Boulevard
Monday - Friday 8:30a.m. - 5:30p.m.,
Saturday 9:00a.m. - 1:00p.m.

QUEENS

JAMAICA CENTER BRANCH
158-45 Archer Avenue
at 160th Street
Monday - Friday 8:30a.m. - 5:30p.m.,
Saturday 10:00a.m. - 2:00p.m.

ST ALBANS BRANCH
115-02 Merrick Boulevard
at 115th Street
Monday - Friday 8:30a.m. - 5:30p.m.,
Saturday 9:00a.m. - 1:00p.m.

www.carverbank.com | 718.230.2900 | BUILDING WEALTH BLOCK BY BLOCK.



NYCHA Draft Agency Annual Plan Offers Chance to Make Your Voice Heard!



NYCHA residents discuss the course of the Authority's next year at the Roundtable Discussion held for the Fiscal Year 2012 Draft Agency Annual Plan on July 25 at Van Dyke Community Center in Brooklyn. A second Roundtable Discussion was held on July 28 at Stapleton Community Center in Staten Island. There will be three more held in August, all from 6:00-8:30 p.m.:

August 3

**Manhattan
Manhattanville
Community Center
530 West 133rd Street**

August 4

**Queens
Queensbridge
Community Center
10-25 41st Avenue**

August 16

**Bronx
Classic (Melrose) Center
286 East 156th Street**

The Plan, currently in its draft stage, will outline NYCHA's priorities including financial resources, rent, operations and management, community service and self-sufficiency programs, crime and safety issues, pets and capital/modernization projects. The Authority hopes to increase resident participation in the Annual Plan process by arranging for a more intimate conversation at each of the borough meetings. Having smaller discussion groups allows residents to share their ideas and concerns with NYCHA leaders.

Residents also can comment on the Draft Agency Annual Plan at a public hearing on August 24, from 5:30-8:00 p.m. in the Pace University Auditorium at One Pace Plaza in Manhattan.

Deputy Mayor Gibbs: "Agencies Need to Work Together"

By Howard Silver

New York City Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Linda Gibbs visited NYCHA on June 23 to discuss the importance of collaboration among City and non-governmental agencies. Through several administrative reforms, Ms. Gibbs has made it easier for non-profit organizations to work with the City. The development of a new computer system called HHS-Connect allows 12 City agencies to better share information on clients, which allows New Yorkers to receive services faster.

"Collaboration among different agencies can be hard because leaders' and managers' instincts are to trust themselves and do things on their own," Deputy Mayor Gibbs said. "Opportunities for collaboration can be identified by looking at what agencies have in common, such as back office and IT functions."



Deputy Mayor Gibbs also stressed that if agencies are too "protective of their turf," they can stray from their core mission. "Unless we figure out how to make organizations work together, we are doing a disservice to the people we serve," she said.

NYCHA Dads Honored

NYCHA Fatherhood Initiative Now in All Five Boroughs

"This is an excellent initiative and resource that this community didn't used to have. It really helps fathers with their kids." That sums up the feelings of David Perez, an active participant in the NYCHA Fatherhood Initiative (NFI). Mr. Perez was one of two participants in NFI honored on June 16 by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg.

For information on the NYCHA Fatherhood Initiative

Bronx: 718-409-8620
Brooklyn: 718-453-1296
Manhattan: 212-306-3348
Queens: 718-969-6240
Staten Island: 718-815-0140

A total of 10 fathers from across the City who have overcome extraordinary challenges to become positive and consistent forces in the lives of their children were recognized at the *Dads Matter* event at Gracie Mansion.

Mr. Perez doesn't just take part in NFI at the Williamsburg Community Center in Brooklyn, he also is a volunteer. His experience in the program with

his three sons led him to volunteer for NFI, bringing the program into local events like handball tournaments and flag football. "My relationship with them has broadened through the Fatherhood Initiative," Mr. Perez said. "I grew up with my dad working all the time and didn't see him much. I don't want that for my sons."

Joseph Sawyer, the other NFI participant honoree, is the father of a two-year old son and one-year old daughter. Seen as a leader to many of his peers at the Manhattanville Community Center, he volunteers as the coach of the Manhattanville 13 and under basketball team. Mr. Sawyer's dedication and diligence led him to be hired by NYCHA as a Program Assistant at the Community Center.

Two days after the *Dads Matter* event, NFI kicked off in Staten Island at the Berry Community Center, fulfilling NYCHA's goal to offer the program in all five boroughs. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) invited hundreds of public housing authorities across the country to participate in "Father's Day 2011" – an event modeled after NYCHA's Fatherhood Initiative kick-off events. Two hundred public housing authorities participated.

"The leadership we are taking right here in New York City not only dramatically improves the lives of so many children — and their fathers — but is also serving as a model to help millions across the country, as other public housing authorities are adapting NYCHA's and the City's approach to this initiative," said NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea.

NYCHA's Fatherhood Initiative was developed in partnership with the Office of the Mayor, the City University of New York (CUNY), the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), the Human Resources Administration (HRA) and the Department of Education (DOE). NFI events foster engagement between fathers and their children and include job training, father and child outings, social services and family counseling.



David Perez, an active participant in the NYCHA Fatherhood Initiative at the Williamsburg Community Center, stands with his three sons after being honored at the *Dads Matter* event at Gracie Mansion on June 16, 2011.

Healthfirst

and **New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA)** present

Health and Wellness Series

Healthfirst is committed to giving back to the communities we serve. That's why we partner with NYCHA to help host these health and wellness series to educate our local communities. Visit our website to see a list of our upcoming events at www.healthfirstny.org.



Brooklyn

Location

Brevoort Houses - 280 Ralph Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11233
 Wyckoff Garden - 572 Warren St, Brooklyn, NY 11217

Bronx

Location

Adam Houses - 731 Tinton Ave, Bronx, NY 10455
 Moore Houses - 515 Jackson Ave, Bronx, NY 10455
 Boston Secor Houses - 3570 Bivonia Ave, Bronx, NY 10475
 Baychester Houses - 1811 Schiefflin Ave, Bronx, NY 10466
 Jackson Houses - 765 Cortland Ave, Bronx, NY 10451
 Millbrook Houses - 530 East 137th St, Bronx, NY 10454
 Marble Hill Houses - 5210 Broadway, Bronx, NY 10463

Queens

Location

Astoria Houses - 2-10 Astoria Blvd, Astoria, NY 11102
 Bland Houses - 40-21 College Point Blvd, Flushing, NY 11354
 Queensbridge Houses
 Queensbridge Park 41st Ave and Vernon Blvd, LIC, NY 11101
 Woodside Houses
 50-19 Broadway (between Newtown Rd & 15th St)
 Woodside, NY 11377

Manhattan

Location

Wise Towers - 117 West 90th St, New York, NY 10024
 Wald Houses - 58 Avenue D, New York, NY 10009
 La Guardia Houses - 45 Rutgers St, New York, NY 10002
 St. Nicholas Houses
 131 St. Nicholas Ave (between 116th and 117th St)
 New York, NY 10027
 Johnson Houses - 1844 Lexington Ave, New York, NY 10029
 Polo Grounds
 2931 Frederick Douglas Blvd, New York, NY 10039
 Manhattanville Houses - 545 West 126th St, New York, NY 10027
 Drew Hamilton Houses
 2660 Frederick Douglas Blvd, New York, NY 10030
 Amsterdam Houses - 218 West 64th St, New York, NY 10027
 Robbins Plaza - 341 East 70th St, New York, NY 10021



1-866-463-6743 | healthfirstny.org

New Report: Older NYCHA Adult Population Growing Rapidly

Older residents are the fastest growing age group among NYCHA's population. That's a key finding from the first survey ever taken of senior residents in public housing developments in New York City. The survey results are outlined in *Health of Older Adults in New York City Public Housing*, a collaborative report from NYCHA, the New York City Departments of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) and for the Aging (DFTA), and The City University of New York (CUNY) School of Public Health. NYCHA, with its City partners, conducted the survey to address the challenges posed by the large and expanding population of older adults in public housing.

"Older adults are an important part of NYCHA's social

fabric," said NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea. "As NYCHA develops a long-term vision for the preservation of public housing, improving the quality of life for our residents by providing safeguards for their well-being and implementing strategies that will address their health and social needs are critically important."

According to the report, more than 61,500 New Yorkers aged 65 and older, and 48,200 aged 55 to 64 live in NYCHA developments; the majority of these residents are black or Latino women. The report estimates that 20 percent of NYCHA residents will be aged 65 or older by 2030. Projections suggest that the growth of this group will outpace that of the City's older adult population as

- ▶ 89% reported having a personal doctor
- ▶ 31% reported using a senior center in the past three months
- ▶ 29% reported limitations in their ability to perform basic activities of daily living

a whole. NYCHA residents are more likely to stay in their residences instead of moving out of the City or into assisted living facilities. Although nearly all older NYCHA residents report having some kind of health insurance, some have poor access to health care, and many do not use available community supports.

Although poverty remains a key challenge, the report highlights a unique opportunity for NYCHA and City agencies to provide coordinated health, social and financial services to older adults living in public housing. In the coming years, NYCHA will continue to establish and strengthen collaborations with other government agencies, as well as community and resident leadership to help build a sustainable strategy to improve the quality of life of all older New Yorkers.

To read the full report, go to NYCHA's website at www.nyc.gov/nycha.



NYCHA Honors Developments' "Eyes and Ears"

More than 700 NYCHA seniors gathered on June 27 for the 31st Annual Senior Volunteer Floor Captains' Recognition Luncheon. NYCHA Social Services Director Nora Reissig acknowledged the seniors, who look after one another, calling them the "eyes and ears" of the Authority.

The value of the services provided by the dedicated floor captains was captured by this year's theme, "Making a Difference." And Senior Volunteer Floor Captains make a difference in one of several ways: the Senior Resident Advisor/Service Coordinator Program which delivers supportive services, such as accessing public entitlements or advocating with service providers; the Elderly Safe at Home Program that offers crime prevention services and crime victim assistance in the South Bronx; and the Senior Companion Program which provides home visits for socially isolated elderly residents in more than one dozen developments across the city.

All 53 developments that participate were recognized and awarded Certificates of Appreciation.

In addition, Mamie Upton, a 99-year-old Senior Volunteer Floor Captain from Justice Thurgood Marshall Plaza, received a longevity award.



Mamie Upton, a 99-year-old Senior Volunteer Floor Captain from Justice Thurgood Marshall Plaza, received a longevity award at the 31st Annual Senior Volunteer Floor Captains' Recognition Luncheon on June 27, 2011.



New Drug Discount Available

The BigAppleRx card is a free prescription drug card available to all New Yorkers. This new card may lower the cost of your prescriptions by as much as 53% on generic drugs and 15% on brand name drugs.

- The BigAppleRx card is accepted by most pharmacies
- You can use it as often as you like
- No forms to fill out
- No personal information is required

There are two ways to get your card:

- Call **800-697-6974**, press '0' and request a BigAppleRx card by mail
- Go online at www.bigapplerx.com and click 'GO'

Participating pharmacies and discounted prices for drugs are listed on the website.

Avoid Mosquito Bites – Avoid the West Nile Virus

The West Nile Virus is spread to people by infected mosquitoes. In people older than 50, it can cause serious or fatal illness. Here's what you can do to prevent mosquito bites:

- Wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts and socks
- Use an insect repellent with DEET, picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus
- Plan outdoor activities during the middle of the day (mosquitoes are most active at dusk and dawn)
- Avoid areas with standing water, weeds, tall grass and bushes

If you have questions call **311** and ask for information on West Nile Virus.

Another new Affordable Housing Option for NYCHA Seniors

NYCHA senior residents soon will have another affordable housing option in Staten Island. With construction scheduled to be completed in September 2012, Markham Gardens Manor will set aside 19 of the 79 mixed-income units for current Staten Island NYCHA residents 62 or older. Residents will have access to the 6,000 square foot recreational center. Markham Gardens Manor will be the second development that NYCHA has completed through the HUD Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly Program. Council Towers VI at Pomonok Houses in Queens was the first ever of this type of housing that offered NYCHA seniors preference.

FREE 15-week job training program for homeless & low-income women

First Step Program

Computer Training - Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook
Internet Research • Resume Writing • Interviewing Skills
Job Placement Assistance • Self-Esteem Building
2 Month Internship • Case Management • Typing
Literacy Building • Mentoring • Yoga & Meditation
Support Groups • Empowerment

GED not required • New class starting soon!

FREE Continental Breakfast & Metrocards Provided

For more information, please call (212) 776-2074





Youth Literacy Program Promotes Summer Reading

By Zodet Negrón

More than 300 NYCHA youth gathered at King Towers in Manhattan this summer to celebrate the kick-off of the NYC Literacy Enterprise/NYCHA Reads summer reading program.

"Today's event is all about you," NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea told the children who gathered on June 28. "This program is all about each of you establishing your own appreciation for the written word."

The NYC Literacy Enterprise/NYCHA Reads is a public-private partnership between NYCHA; City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn; City Council Member Inez E. Dickens; National Cares Mentoring Movement founder Susan L. Taylor; Scholastic, Inc.; Sesame Street; The Disney Company; and WABC-TV to engage parents, caregivers and children in exciting literacy activities. The goal is

to promote and nurture reading, writing and comprehension skills.

"Creating partnerships like the NYC Literacy Enterprise/NYCHA Reads initiative that foster an early appreciation for reading is one of the most important things we can do to give our youth a strong foundation," said Chairman Rhea.

Children received information on summer reading programs, including NYCHA's Read and Rise program with Scholastic, for parents to strengthen their children's links to literacy activities in everyday life; and Sesame Street's Sesame Reads program, which targets preschoolers attending child care centers in NYCHA developments. They also received free books and enjoyed a carnival-like atmosphere that included interactive reading games, face painting, snacks and even a visit from Scholastic's famous big red dog – Clifford.

The NYC Literacy Enterprise/NYCHA Reads program is an ongoing project in development that will be implemented in every borough.

"In order to be successful in life, what do you need to do?" Council Member Dickens asked the children in the crowd. They all shouted out their response: "Read!"



A NYCHA resident gets a boost from Clifford the Big Red Dog at the kick-off of the NYC Literacy Enterprise/NYCHA Reads summer reading program on June 28, 2011.

Schools Chancellor Celebrates NYCHA-DOE Partnership for Early Literacy

At an event at King Towers on June 30, City Schools Chancellor Dennis Walcott helped recognize the 23 NYCHA families who participated in the third cycle of the New York City Early Literacy Learning (NYCELL) program. NYCELL is a collaborative effort among the Mayor's Office, the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) and NYCHA for parents with children between one and four years old. The 12-week program meets for two hours twice a week with literacy activities for parents and their kids. NYCELL is offered at Community Centers at Melrose Houses in the Bronx; Van Dyke in Brooklyn; and Rutgers and King Towers in Manhattan.

"I'm thrilled that so many parents and guardians came out to celebrate their children's progress in reading," said Chancellor Walcott.

To learn more about NYCELL and other NYCDOE early learning programs, visit schools.nyc.gov/Academics/EarlyChildhood/default.htm or call 212-374-0351.



Important Dates for the 2011-2012 NYC Public High School Admissions Process

Citywide High School Fair	Saturday, September 24, 2011 Sunday, September 25, 2011
Borough High School Fairs	Saturday, October 22, 2011 Sunday, October 23, 2011
Specialized High Schools Admissions Test • All current 8th grade students	Saturday, October 29, 2011 or Sunday, October 30, 2011
Specialized High Schools Admissions Test • All current 9th grade students • 8th and 9th grade students with special needs and approved 504 accommodations	Saturday, November 5, 2011
Specialized High Schools Make-Up Test • Permission only	Sunday, November 20, 2011

Note: Students whose test date conflicts with a religious observance should notify their school counselor immediately after receiving their test date, and an alternate test date will be arranged.

Investing in a DREAM



Yankees first baseman Mark Teixeira joins children at the groundbreaking of the Harlem RBI DREAM Charter School at Washington Houses in Manhattan in June.

More affordable housing is coming to Harlem as part of a plan to bring a charter school to the grounds of Washington Houses. The Harlem RBI DREAM Charter School will include a mixed-use, 13-story building including 90 affordable housing units, the school and Harlem RBI's program and office space.

"We are here today because we are focused on students, NYCHA residents and their families, and to show our continued involvement in building the neighborhoods that will serve East Harlem families' needs in the 21st century," said NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea at the project's groundbreaking in June, where he was joined by Mayor Michael Bloomberg, City Schools Chancellor Dennis Walcott and New York Yankee Mark Teixeira, the Co-Chair of Harlem RBI's Capital Campaign.

Scheduled to open in 2014, the 90 affordable units will include studio, one, two and three bedroom apartments. NYCHA residents will be able to live in the units and enroll their children in the charter school. Once built, the City will take ownership of the building while Harlem RBI will operate the school. NYCHA will have an option to purchase the housing units for one dollar after a 15-year lending period expires.

The New York City Department of Education's Charter Facilities Matching Grant program is donating a \$32 million grant for construction of the school, while contributions from the Department of Housing Preservation and Development and the Housing Development Corporation will contribute \$30 million for the residential portion of the plan. Harlem RBI plans to raise \$20 million through corporate and foundation donations. Mark Teixeira contributed \$1 million.

"I became involved with Harlem RBI and DREAM Charter because I believe the work we are doing is truly changing lives," said Mr. Teixeira. "It is my hope that my involvement can help shine even more light on this incredible organization and these extraordinary kids."

Greening Grants Available Now!

NYCHA residents have another way to get help turning their ideas for greening their developments into reality. The City of New York and the Citizens Committee for New York City are taking applications for a Change by Us NYC grant. Up to 40 grants, worth \$500 to \$1,000 each, will be awarded for projects that are implemented and completed this Fall. To be eligible, projects must be posted on the Change by Us NYC website; include a minimum of 20 members on the Change by Us NYC project page; and focus on composting, tree and park stewardship, or community gardening and agriculture. The grant application is due by August 15. To learn more and download an application, go to www.citizensnyc.org/grants/change_by_us. To inform NYCHA's Gardening and Greening Program about your application, send an e-mail to rgc@greennycha.org.

In the June issue of the *Journal*, Adolfo Carrión, Jr. was identified incorrectly by a former title. His correct title is HUD Regional Administrator for New York and New Jersey.

Highbridge Gardens and Ocean Bay Apartments Caretakers Receive DeCarlo Award

Residents at Highbridge Gardens in the Bronx and Ocean Bay Apartments in Queens have award-winning NYCHA staff tending to their homes. Carlos Santiago, a Caretaker J at Highbridge Gardens, was honored with the 2010 John DeCarlo Memorial Award on June 24. Dale Lee, a Caretaker J at Ocean Bay Apartments, was named the runner-up.

Working at NYCHA since 1994, Carlos Santiago is described as "dependable," "prompt," and "hardworking." A genuine concern for others and a willingness to help make him popular with residents, who have recognized his diligence in keeping buildings safe and clean. And he is persistent – he was the runner-up for the award in 2008 and 2009.

Dale Lee has been at NYCHA since 1999, and also is a resident. Her supervisors consistently commend her for exceptional work performance and a positive attitude. If Ms. Lee becomes aware of a problem, she ensures that it is taken care of, or brings it to the attention of the appropriate supervisor.

The award is given every year to exemplary Caretakers. It is named after John DeCarlo, who lost his life while performing his job in 1997.



Carlos Santiago, a Caretaker J at Highbridge Gardens, is the 2010 John DeCarlo Memorial Award winner.

Amsterdam Houses Resident Association President no Longer an "Unsung Hero"



"Unsung Hero of the Upper West Side" Margarita Curet (center, holding plaque), was joined, from left to right, by Elicia Rodriguez, her granddaughter; Rosalba Rodriguez, Director of the District Office for City Council Member Gale A. Brewer; Carlos Pellecier, her son; Hon. Gale A. Brewer, City Council Member; and Victor Gonzalez, recently named as the resident member of the NYCHA Board.

By Eric Deutsch

"I don't like to talk about what I do, I just like to do it." So says Margarita Curet, the Amsterdam Houses Resident Association President. However, many more people now know what she does – she was honored recently as one of the "Unsung Heroes of the Upper West Side."

She received the award at a ceremony held by Landmark West!, which called her a "Force to Be Reckoned With." A resident of Amsterdam Houses in Manhattan since 1960, Ms. Curet has done much for her neighbors since first being elected President in 2007, including creating a quarterly newsletter, in English and Spanish; planning themed holiday parties; and overseeing a Resident Association whose monthly meetings rose from an average of 15 attendees to 70.

Landmark West!, a nonprofit that works on historic preservation, is a member of the Lincoln Center Collaborative, which NYCHA partners with to generate employment, training and education opportunities for public housing residents on the Upper West Side. One of the accomplishments Ms. Curet was recognized for was her work on helping get a computer lab and a computer training program set up by the Resident Association at Amsterdam Houses.

With financial assistance from City Council Member Gale A. Brewer, the Resident Association

had a lab ready to be used, but the computers were stolen. Councilmember Brewer then worked with the nonprofit Older Adults Technology Services to bring in the Macquarie Group, a financial services company, which provided money to refurbish old computers and donate them to Amsterdam Houses. Now, seniors at the development can learn basic skills for free.

"The computer lab is very good for the development," said Ms. Curet. "Many seniors are in wheelchairs and would like to learn how to use them, and they don't have to take the subway or bus to get here."

Amsterdam Houses is one of four developments that have computer labs that offer computer training sponsored by their Resident Association. The others are Douglass, St. Nicholas and Taft. Another 10 Resident Associations have computer labs that do not offer training: Butler, Claremont Parkway, Davidson, Isaacs, Lafayette Gardens, Marcy, Ocean Side, Jackie Robinson, Samuels MHOP and Tilden.

BOB MANN TOURS
NYCHA'S #1 GROUP TOUR OPERATOR
Since 1985

New For
2011

"Joseph" at Sight & Sound Theatre
LAST SEASON!
Nordic Lodge
All You Can Eat Lobsterfeast

Heritage Tours.
Baltimore - Includes the Famous Great Blacks in Wax Museum
Washington DC - with Brand New MLK Memorial

CALL FOR OUR SPECIAL DEALS FOR
NYCHA TENANT ASSOCIATIONS INCLUDING:
Spirit Cruise, Gospel Shows, Shopping Tours, Crabfeasts, Casinos,
Amusement Parks, Penn Dutch, Family Reunions & More!

Call for our New 2011 Catalog

718-628-9030 or Toll Free 1-888-745-9897
www.bobmantours.com Email: info@bobmantours.com

Prospect Plaza Plans Push Forward

By **Zodet Negrón**

The plan to revitalize Prospect Plaza in Brooklyn has been given a green light. After weighing resident and community input, as well as the financial feasibility of a mixed-use development, NYCHA and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) are moving forward.

Prospect Plaza was built by a private developer in 1974 and subsequently was operated by NYCHA as a public housing development. The buildings rapidly deteriorated due to the original poor construction. In the late 1990s, NYCHA was awarded a grant through HUD's HOPE VI program, which was established to demolish and rebuild distressed public housing units across the country. In 2003, the development closed for renovations to overhaul the housing complex. In 2007, the project was suspended after it was determined that it was not financially feasible. NYCHA went back to the drawing board and invited former residents and community members to draft a

new plan, as it remained committed to the revitalization of Prospect Plaza.

The *Re-Vision Prospect Plaza Community Plan*, a product of the input from former residents and community members at a planning workshop in 2010, calls for the demolition of the three vacant towers, the construction of 360 new affordable housing units, a community center and retail space.

"We have accomplished a lot in the last year and a half working with you former residents and community residents and there has been significant progress since we last met," Patricia Barrera, Deputy Director of NYCHA's Department for Development, told the attendees gathered at the Van Dyke Community Center in Brooklyn on July 13 for a progress meeting.

NYCHA has received conditional approval of the new plan for the development of the 360 units, which includes a minimum of 80 units of public housing. NYCHA and the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD)

jointly will issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) this summer and a developer is scheduled to be chosen by early 2012. Construction is scheduled to begin in early 2013.

In an effort to help former residents of Prospect Plaza who want to return to the new development once it is built, NYCHA's Office of Resident Empowerment and Economic Sustainability will offer a free Financial Management and Education Program through the non-profit groups Credit Where Credit Is Due and Brownsville Partnership. Former residents who want to return to the new site will have to undergo credit checks and income verifications to ensure that NYCHA is in compliance with the federal government's funding requirements.

"I have a bit of a credit problem but nothing too big," said a former resident who has been attending meetings since the new planning began. "If I get help, it will make me feel confident that NYCHA is doing something for me."

NYCHA Board Member



A former Prospect Plaza resident speaks at the latest progress meeting for the *Re-Vision Prospect Plaza Community Plan* on July 13, 2011.

Margarita López called on all the former residents to take advantage of the credit counseling opportunities offered to them because Prospect Plaza will be built and they need to be ready when it's time to come back.

"We are not going to leave one stone unturned until we talk to every former tenant to offer them the opportunity to come back," said Commissioner López.

NYCHA also released the

results of a retail market and financial feasibility study commissioned by the agency to analyze the retail component of the plan, which calls for retail on the Saratoga Park site. The study, conducted by AKRF, Inc. and G.L. Blackstone & Associates LLC, found that there is demand for a supermarket in the area and recommends including this in the RFP along with another anchor tenant such as a pharmacy, among other options.

ARE YOU BILINGUAL?



MAKE A DIFFERENCE WORKING FROM HOME AS AN

INTERPRETER

Language Line Services is hiring over-the-phone interpreters who are customer service oriented to work from the comfort of their homes. We offer professional training and exciting interpreter career growth opportunities. For more information or to apply visit www.LanguageLine.com/Careers job requisition 002725 "Telephone interpreters that reside in New York".

www.languageline.com/careers

NYCHA Youth Learn How to Make Sustainable Living Fun in a Global Classroom

Some NYCHA youths are discovering the power of global communication while developing a new appreciation for the city they call home. The Global Partners Junior program, a collaboration between the Office of the Mayor and NYCHA, connects students in New York City with students around the world as a way to foster global understanding.

The award-winning after-school program promotes cultural appreciation and communication by connecting New York middle school students with their international peers through the Internet. Starting in 2007, Global Partners Junior operates in Community Centers in Drew Hamilton, Rutgers and Manhattanville in Manhattan; Howard and Williamsburg in Brooklyn; Beach 41st Street in Queens; and Sedgwick and Parkside in the Bronx. More than 500 City students participated in this year's

program, working with more than 700 students in 25 cities worldwide.

This year's program theme was "Living Cities," getting students to think about what makes their surroundings thrive while also considering how to sustain their vitality. Students devoted three to five hours a week for nine months, and their hard work culminated in a presentation at Gracie Mansion.

Each Community Center created virtual designs of zero or low-impact street vendor food carts with cuisine inspired by a global city. The submissions were judged by Global Partners Junior international partners from Toronto, Canada; Mumbai, India; Melbourne, Australia; London, England and Accra, Ghana. NYCHA youth fared especially well, earning honors such as "Excellence in Technology," "Excellence in Literacy," "Excellence in Teamwork," "Excellent Cuisine" and "Excellence in

Sustainability."

"This is truly a unique international program, and students in NYCHA programs are excited to be ambassadors for their neighborhood and the Big Apple," NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea said at the event.

"This type of social media allows our children to understand not only how big the world is, but how small it is at the same time, because we are able to communicate in this way," said NYCHA Educational Services Manager D'Andrea Van Heusen-Thomas.

Global Partners Junior currently is accepting applications for the 2011-12 program and the theme for the year is the "World Marketplace." Students will focus on areas of business and entrepreneurship. To learn more about this enriching after-school program or to apply, go to the Global Partners Junior website at on.nyc.gov/GlobalJr.



NYCHA youth who took part in the Global Ambassador program got to present their work at Gracie Mansion at an event in June, where they were joined by NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea (center).

CEASE THE GREASE

- ▶ **Cooking grease poured into a kitchen drain clogs pipes in your home and city sewers**
- ▶ **Clogged sewer lines cause sewage back-ups into your home and neighborhood**
- ▶ **Clogged lines can also cause sewage to be released into city waterways, harming water quality and the environment**

How You Can Help?



- X DON'T** pour oil or grease down the drain.
- X DON'T** wash cooking oil or grease from dishes, pots and pans down the drain.
- X DON'T** wash food scraps down the drain.



- ✓ DO** place cooled cooking oil, grease and fat in sealed containers and discard with your regular garbage.
- ✓ DO** dry wipe oil and grease off dishes, pots and pans with a paper towel before washing; then discard paper towels in trash.
- ✓ DO** Scrape food scraps from dishes into trash and dispose of properly.



For more information call 311 or visit DEP's website at: www.nyc.gov/dep

West Nile Virus Mosquito Treatment

The New York City Housing Authority will be treating all of the catch basins located on Housing Authority developments to reduce the mosquito population in an effort to minimize the transmission of the West Nile Virus. These applications will take place between May and September of 2011. One or more of the following pesticides will be used:

Vectolex CG, EPA Reg. No. 73049-20, Toxicity Category – "Caution"
Summit B.t.i. Briquets, EPA Reg. No. 6218-47, Toxicity Category – "Caution"
Altosid XR, EPA Reg. No. 2724-421, Toxicity Category – "Caution"

Contact names and numbers for this application are;

NYC Housing Authority:
 Cal Bruno, Deputy Director, 718-707-5281 available from 9 am—5 pm
 Jamal Rashid, Technical Resource Advisor, 718-707-5808 available from 8 am—4 pm
 NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation, Region 2, Bureau of Pesticide Management—718-482-4994
 National Pesticide Telecommunications Network—1-800-858-PEST

Inquiries concerning symptoms of pesticide poisoning should be directed to the Poison Control Center 1-800-222-1222