



ALEXANDRIA REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY

# ARHA ON THE MOVE

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For the past 2 years ARHA has sponsored 20 ARHA youth for *The Executive Youth Leadership and Policy Summit* held on Capitol Hill at the U.S. Capitol. The students get to meet U.S. Congressmen and Senators, White House Staff and learn about leadership, policy making and how the U.S. Government works.

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## What Is Your Image Of Public Housing? Which of These Buildings Is Public Housing?



Yes  No



Yes  No



Yes  No



Yes  No



Yes  No



Yes  No



Yes  No



Yes  No

Answers on page 2

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## ARHA ON THE MOVE

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## Editorial

# The New Face of Public Housing

*Welcome to our latest issue.*

**T**he public housing of yesterday was mostly high rise buildings or barrack-style housing. There was little or no consideration given to the environmental or social needs of the residents. Public Housing was deliberately designed to stress difference and non-participation and not opportunity or inclusion. The main purpose of public housing was to provide minimal provisions of accommodations for its residents.

The Berg, Bland, Samuel Madden, Ramsey Homes, Andrews Adkins, at el .....for years were designated as traditional public housing. Now they are vanishing from the landscape. So too is the tag “public housing” or “the projects”. They are being replaced with mixed income developments, and merged into the surrounding communities. The new direction for public housing is that it will not look like traditional public housing and that residents will not have to move out of neighborhoods they have lived in all of their lives and that they will integrate and assimilate successfully into the new surroundings. The stigma surrounding public housing was that the residents did not work. This way of thinking is certainly not true. The majority of public housing residents works and pays 30% of their income towards rent. For some residents public housing is circumstantial because of divorce or the loss of a job or transitional, some residents because of upward mobility who go back to school to get a degree or their children grow up and go on to higher education and leave the neighborhood.

The Alexandria Redevelopment & Housing Authority or AHRA, as we have come to be known, is changing the “Face of Public Housing” in Alexandria. We have grown at a time when federal funds are being cut resulting in diminished public housing supply and vouchers causing long lines for waiting lists. ARHA recognizes that we all want a place to call home. We all want

a safe, clean home in a safe neighborhood with quiet enjoyment where we can raise our children and enjoy our families. ARHA has made strides to replace old public housing with new mixed-income housing that is well designed, has green space and is centrally located near public transportation and some retail.

ARHA is deliberate and methodical when planning a project. We make it a priority to engage the residents, local authorities and others in the community to ensure that the ARHA vision is compatible with the needs of the ARHA residents and the surrounding community; although participation initiatives are not always well supported by some in the community. However, it is important to put into context the emphasis on the creation of an environment that impacts their lives and wellbeing and to demonstrate to the residents that it is in their self-interest to be involved and to instill in all residents to grow, hope to eliminate any complacency or stagnation and replace it with the confidence to aspire to achieve, if feasible, greater upward mobility to continually strive to share in the American Dream.

The New Face of Public Housing is not just bricks and mortar. It is improving the housing system, providing opportunities for the community to be inclusive, reinvesting in our neighborhoods so that they are places of choice and opportunity.

The Face of Public Housing is changing all over the Country with the Federal Government making austere budget cuts and banks cutting back on financing options. Housing Authorities must find ways to maintain and increase housing stock, revitalize neighborhoods that create a balance and is less crises prone. Housing Authorities must find ways to change the perception the way the nation looks at public housing.

“Public Housing does not have to look like public housing”



**Roy O. Priest,**  
Chief Executive Officer

From page 1:

Which Building is Public Housing? Answer: They all are!

# What You Need to Know to Continue Your Occupancy in ARHA Properties

The Alexandria Redevelopment & Housing Authority (ARHA) works hard to transform neighborhoods in Alexandria. We provide great new and renovated homes for families who need them as well as bring revitalization to neighborhoods. To accomplish this goal we must have the cooperation of all residents.

Below is a partial list of resident behavior that must be followed to enjoy continued occupancy in one of ARHA's units:

- **Criminal Activity**- Not engaging in any criminal activity on or off ARHA property.
- **Drug Related Activity**- Not engaging in any drug related criminal activity on or off ARHA property.
- **Domestic Violence** – Not engaging in domestic violence. The abuser male or female will be removed from the property.
- **DO NOT Destroy ARHA's property.** If a resident or member of the residents household intentionally destroys or damages ARHA property inside the unit, inside the common area of a building or on the common grounds. The willful destruction of ARHA's is a criminal offense and the offending party will be evicted and prosecuted.
- **Housekeeping** – Residents are obligated to keep their units clean and safe.
- **Ability to maintain Unit**- Report maintenance needs in a timely manner.
- **Receive no less than three (3) 2130 Lease Violations.**
- **Be a good neighbor**- Do not interfere with the rights and peaceful enjoyment of others and do not damage the property of others or ARHA's property. ARHA's ability to manage and maintain properties that have great curb appeal is a direct result of how residents maintain their dwellings.
- **Pay rent** and other charges as required by your lease **on time.**

The above list is not exhaustive, it is meant to highlight some of the major rules and program requirements that we must follow in order to continue providing all residents with quality housing. In these challenging economic times for housing and jobs, we strengthen our commitment to our residents to provide safe and affordable housing. However, our residents must also commit to us to be good tenants, neighbors and good citizens.



**Seven** (7) residents in the Family Self Sufficiency Program (FSS) received cash from their savings in the amounts ranging from \$3,962.00-\$34,483.90. The money can be used for homeownership or other purposes.

**ARHA** awarded 5 scholarships ranging from \$2,500 to \$5,000 to college bound students with GPA's of 3.5 or better who resides in ARHA properties.

# A SNAPSHOT OF ARHA



HOLIDAY TOY GIVEAWAY



ARHA WWL 2011 APPRECIATION RECEPTION



KRUNCH BUNCH



PLAY FEST: THE BERG DIARIES

PLAY FEST



# AT WORK AND PLAY

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT



PLAYING CHESS



FSS MIND, BODY & SOUL



GARDENING AT HOPKINS TANCIL



NIGHTMARE ON MADISON STREET



QUAKER HILL GRAND OPENING



FSS GRADUATION, OCTOBER 2011



DEPT. CLUB HONORING ROY PRIEST



ARHA COMPANY PICNIC

READING CONNECTIONS



YOUTH ARTS FESTIVAL



A SNAPSHOT OF ARHA AT WORK AND PLAY (cont.)



**ARHA** gave away over 8,000 toys at the Santa's Winter Wonderland thanks to our Community Partners.

**Trader Joe's** is an ARHA partner and provides food to the residents of Ladrey High Rise every week.

# "The Wait List"

## What To Do?



**T**here are more people who qualify for public housing than there are public housing units available. As evidenced by the long lines and 15,691 applications received by ARHA last August 2011. People came from Arlington, Fairfax and other parts of Virginia and Maryland looking for better housing. The numbers clearly suggest that, public, affordable and workforce housing is needed in Alexandria, the Washington Metropolitan area as well as across the United States. Applicants range from people who have lost jobs, victims of domestic violence, elderly, people with disabilities, veterans and families who have become homeless.

What is the solution to "The Wait List"? ARHA believes improving housing conditions, creating safe and clean housing and revitalizing neighborhoods so that they are safe and vibrant, partnering with national and community based organizations, local businesses, local residents and/or developers to provide services that improve the overall quality of life are ingredients to the solution to help families become self-sufficient and to help alleviate the need for "The Wait

List". One of ARHA's philosophies is that if people feel safe and good about their living conditions this starts to address some of the barriers to self-sufficiency. Many studies have proven that there is a direct correlation between home environment and self-esteem. Additionally, the home environment can have an impact on health issues, social skills, advancing to higher education, jobs and personal relationships.

ARHA's central plan is to provide residents with resources, tools and incentives to help build the self-confidence they need to become self-reliant. Housing is just one vehicle albeit a central one. There must be a focus on creating more housing and providing the necessary services to help families make the transition from public housing to mixed income communities and to independence. ARHA's priority is to build strong, healthy neighborhoods and provide resources.

Housing Authorities are turning to Public/Private Partnerships to help solve the housing dilemma. Public/Private Partnerships help Housing Authorities solve two problems they are able to get rid of deteriorating housing stock and replace it with new housing units while revitalizing neighborhoods and providing economic development.



**ARHA** sends staff to the Hill to Advocate on behalf of The Family Self Sufficiency Program.



**B3** solutions, an Alexandria Small Business and Brenda Bearden, President of B3 Solutions and a resident of Chatham Square, donated \$20,000 to ARHA for the residents of Hopkins Tancil and Chatham Square and \$5,000 to Santa's Wonderland.

# Highlights of AHRA Special Events and Important Dates

2012



## ARHA Krunch Bunch Calendar

### August

- Wednesday, August 15 – CHSC to Riverdale House Museum's Concert on the Lawn, 6:00 pick-up
- Friday, August 17 – Excursion to Sotherly Plantation, MD, 8:30 a.m. departure, \$15
- Friday, August 24 – End of Summer Activity/Beach Blanket BINGO, 11:00 – 1:00

### September

- Wednesday, September 19 – CHSC 40th Anniversary Celebration, 11:00

### October

- Tuesday, October 30 – Intergenerational Harvest Social w/Burgundy Farm School Students, 10:30

## Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) events

### August

- FSS Graduation on 8/15/2012 at 6:00 p.m. at 600 N. Fairfax
- Joint Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher Program Coordinating Committee (PCC) Meeting on 8/20 at 3:30 at 600 N. Fairfax

- FSS Financial Workshop on 8/23/12 at 6:30 at 18 Roth Street
- Joint FSS Participants Monthly Meeting 8/30/12 from 6:30 to 7:30

### September

- Joint PCC Meeting on 9/17/12 at 3:30 at 18 Roth Street
- Electrician Apprenticeship Seminar – date to be determined

### October

- Workshop on Getting a Job on 10/17/12 at the Lee Center

## Charles Houston Center

### August

- Aug 19- Trip to Farmer's Market for all ARHA residents 8am – 1pm
- Aug 23- Money Mgmt. Seminar & IDA Presentation 6-9p
- Aug 30- Risky Behaviors by ADCHS & Health fair sign up 7-9p

### September

- Sep 20- Job Link & Virginia Employment Commission, 6:30-9p

### October

- Oct 17- "Why You Should Hire Me" Seminar, 5-7p
- Oct 18- Laurie Mitchel Employment Center Presentation, 6:30-9p

\*\*\*\*Meetings held at Charles Houston Center unless otherwise advised



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