



Community Connection



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ALLEGHENY COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY

DUMPLIN HALL of WILKINSBURG RECEIVES A FACE LIFT



(left to right) Michelle Pagano Heck, Chairperson, ACHA Board of Directors; Frank Aggazio, Executive Director, ACHA; Mary Ann Sipos CPM, ARM, Senior Housing Mgt. Representative/PHFA; Dan Onorato, Chief Executive, Allegheny County; Wanda Balthazar and Kathleen Anderson, Dumplin Hall Residents; John Thompson, Mayor of Wilkinsburg; Ralph Falbo, Falbo/Pennrose Development; Richard Ranii, Manager of Housing and Human Services, ACDOED; Sherry Campbell, Field Office Director HUD Pittsburgh Office;

The Allegheny County Housing Authority in cooperation with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Allegheny County Economic Development, and Ralph Falbo, Inc. hosted the Grand Opening of Dumplin Hall, an affordable residential community, on Wednesday, April 11, 2007 at 2:00 P.M The celebration was held in the Community Room, 502 Hay Street in Wilkinsburg.

Joining in the celebration was: Chief Executive Dan Onorato, Mary Ann Sipos Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, and Ralph Falbo of Ralph Falbo, Inc. Also participating were Sherry Campbell, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Rick Rani, Allegheny County Economic Development, Mayor John Thompson of Wilkinsburg, as well as Allegheny County Housing Authority's Board Chairperson Michelle Pagano Heck, staff and residents. Dr. Howard B Slaughter, Jr. served as Master of Ceremonies.

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PERSPECTIVES

by the ACHA
Executive Director
Frank Aggazio



Recently, the Allegheny County Housing Authority (ACHA) completed work on the Annual and Five Year Plans. This involves a review and changes to existing policies in both the Housing Choice Voucher Program and Public Housing Programs. Plans for the use of ACHA Capital Funds are also finalized.

The completion of this process would not be possible without a very diligent, dedicated and hard-working resident advisory board (RAB). The RAB meets on a monthly basis carefully reviewing the ACHA Annual Plan. Suggestions that the Board makes are very worthwhile and often times adopted into the plan. We are fortunate at the ACHA to have such devoted residents who care, not only about their communities, but the ACHA community as a whole.

Thank you to:

Isaiah Dent, President
Marlane Vennie, Secretary
Henry 'Hank' Wild, Treasurer

Board Members:
Jim Carnahan
Vera Kelly
Irene Nock
Joanne Molinari
Cornell Broadwater
Jean & Eugene Frederick
Tonya Bennett



Dumplin Hall (continued from cover)
The revitalization of Dumplin Hall included a complete transformation of a severely distressed public housing high-rise building from 60 units that were constructed in the early 1970's to a 46 unit building with units having amenities that exist in market rate units. This revitalization effort also had a positive economic impact in Allegheny County by providing approximately 150 to 200 construction related jobs throughout the revitalization effort.

"In these times of severe budget cuts, this revitalization of Dumplin Hall is a perfect example of leveraging additional funds to improve the quality of life for Allegheny County residents. Many former residents returned to their homes in Dumplin, and we know they will enjoy their newly remodeled, updated home," stated Frank Aggazio, Executive Director/Allegheny County Housing Authority.

"Dumplin Hall is the successful result of a unique partnership between Allegheny County, our Housing Authority and the private sector," said Onorato. "Partnerships like this enable us to be successful and creative in providing high-quality, affordable housing."



HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM NAMED HIGH-PERFORMER IN SEMAP

The Housing Choice Voucher Program was designated a High Performer for the Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) certification for fiscal year ending September 30, 2006.


SEMAP enables HUD to better manage the Section 8 tenant-based program by identifying PHA capabilities and deficiencies related to the administration of the Section 8 program.

The final SEMAP score for the Allegheny County Housing Authority is 102%.

The Housing Choice Voucher Program Department staff were given the Employee of the Month award for their achievement.

WORK PROGRESSING AT DALTON'S EDGE PHASE II AND LIFE CENTER

As part of a nearly \$ 21,000,000 new construction development in Tarentum and Brackenridge Boroughs, the Allegheny County Housing Authority is moving forward on the Dalton's Edge Phase II Development and the construction of the Living for Independent Elders (LIFE) Center. Dalton's Edge Phase II, which will consist of seventy-two (72) housing units designated for the elder population (62+) will be completed by the end of July 2007 with lease-up to begin in August. Due to the successfulness of Dalton's Edge Phase I, currently there are approximately eighty (80) applicants on the waiting list for this development. Dalton's Edge Phase II features spacious units that include an individually controlled cooling and heating system that is operated through a geo-thermal system that will be cost efficient to the residents and the ownership. In addition to the cooling and heating systems, the unit will have a full size electric range and a full size refrigerator. All units have spacious kitchens with ample cabinets and storage space. The bathrooms feature a "roll-in" shower to ensure that these areas are "senior-friendly" to the residents. In addition to the spacious units, there will be a community room, wellness center, and a passive recreational room, which could be used for reading and/or Bingo games.

Another unique feature at the development is the LIFE Center, which will be operated by Community LIFE. This structure should be completed by the end of August 2007. Enrollment and marketing of the program has begun with informational meetings being held at the development. Once this structure is completed, the LIFE Center will provide numerous medical services to eligible participants in the development and surrounding communities. These services will be provided at no cost to the eligible participant. LIFE Center services include but are not limited to the following: day center services, social services, adult day care, physical and occupational therapy, speech therapy, nutritional counseling, personal care, meals, transportation, primary medical care, nursing, prescriptions, lab tests and results, radiology, emergency room care, specialist services, medical specialists, and audiology/hearing services. 



ACHA RECEIVES \$175,000 GRANT AWARD FROM FEDERAL HOME LOAN BANK OF PITTSBURGH

Recently, The Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh announced that the Allegheny County Housing Authority has been awarded \$175,000 through the Affordable Housing Program to continue the revitalization of the Homestead Apartments. Federal Home Loan Bank President and CEO, John Price, Allegheny County Chief Executive Director, Dan Onorato, Congressman Mike Doyle, and Congressman Jason Altmire presented the Grant Funds in a check presentation to Allegheny County Housing Authority Executive Director, Frank Aggazio. This funding will assist in the site beautification that is on going with the last phase of construction of Tower C at the development. In particular, these funds will be used for the improvements to the entrance courtyard between Towers A and C, replacement of the parking lot surface, landscaping around the revitalized Tower C, and replacement of the Dickson Street parking lot. Due to the fact that Homestead Apartments is a very popular development, more parking spaces are needed and the improvement to the Dickson Street parking lot will address this parking issues. 



THE FIRST TEE OF PITTSBURGH AT



The Allegheny County Housing Authority (ACHA) in cooperation with the United States Golf Association (USGA) and The First Tee of Pittsburgh held a Ground Breaking Ceremony at The First Tee Facility at Pleasant Ridge. This celebration was held at The First Tee Construction Site, South Pleasant Ridge Road, Stowe Township, PA on June 13th, 2007 at 9:30 A.M.

Pleasant Ridge, a public housing community, underwent a multi-million dollar revitalization initiated by the ACHA to improve and update affordable housing opportunities for the residents in this area of Allegheny County. Pleasant Ridge will be the first public housing community to house The First Tee Program in Pennsylvania. The First Tee is part of a national program created by the World Golf Foundation that offers children of all backgrounds an opportunity to develop life skills and values through the game of golf. The nine core values are honesty, integrity, sportsmanship, respect, confidence, responsibility, perseverance, courtesy and judgment.

Joining in the celebration was: Paul D'Alesandro from Congressman Mike Doyle's Office, Chief Executive Dan Onorato and Ralph Falbo of Falbo/Pennrose. Other participations were officials and representatives from: United States Golf Association, The First Tee of Pittsburgh, as well as Stowe Township Government representatives, and business partners in this venture.

The PGA, Design Services Inc. of Ponte Vedre Beach, FL provided the design for the facility. One of the first of its kind in this part of the country, and it promises to be "state of the art". A Clubhouse that contains classroom and indoor instructional areas is planned for the near future.




PLEASANT RIDGE “BREAKS GROUND!”

Tour Turf, Inc. of Jacksonville, Florida, is the General Contractor for this project and will provide and install the synthetic materials. Quality Golf, Inc. of Sunbury, Ohio, is the subcontractor who is performing all other work related to the golf course construction.

With the continuing support of the Chief Executive of Allegheny County, the ACHA has been able to partner with: USGA, PGA and Private Sector Businesses enabling us to provide this “State of the Art” facility to not only the youth at Pleasant Ridge but to all children that reside in the western suburbs. A special thanks to all who have so generously contributed to the AHCA Golf Classic, which helped, fund this facility.

Frank Aggazio, Executive Director, ACHA stated “We believe The First Tee of Pittsburgh at Pleasant Ridge will provide opportunity for our youth and at-risk youth to develop the values and skills to become better students, friends, employees and citizens.”

“Through our community center initiative, Allegheny County has been working to provide communities with critical recreational, educations and human service programs,” said Onorato. “First Tee is a proven program that provides invaluable lessons that help to level the playing field for youth. By building a 1st Tee Facility here at pleasant Ridge, the first public housing facility in the Commonwealth to have such a facility, we will open doors to any number of possibilities for these kids.” 



Celebrating the Groundbreaking (left to right): Paul D'Alesandro - Congressman Mike Doyle's Office, Ralph Falbo - Ralph Falbo, Inc., Matt Sawicki - USGA, Dan Onorato - Allegheny County, John Douglas - The First Tee of Pittsburgh, Jack McGraw - ACHA, Bruce Stephan - The First Tee of Pittsburgh

THE ACHA CREATES NEW JOB OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH A RESIDENT CONSTRUCTION TRAINING INITIATIVE

Construction projects are increasing within the Allegheny County areas. The increase in construction activities could also mean increased job opportunities for low-income public housing and Section 8 residents residing in Allegheny County.


Over the past six (6) years, the ACHA has been expanding its award winning Resident Construction Training Initiative to include the most at risk adult population residing in public and Section 8 housing. The initiative has “opened doors” to offer regular full-time regular employment opportunities to over 130 residents of public housing. These opportunities include a very diverse group of at-risk adults (parents, single parents, women, homeless, recovering addicts, etc). The main requirements for consideration into the resident construction training initiative is:

- A Sincere Desire To Work.
- Ability To Do Construction Work.
- A Commitment To The Policies and Procedures.
- A Resident of Public Housing or Housing Choice Voucher Program Residing in ACHA’s Assisted Housing.

“In addition to providing decent, safe, and sanitary housing, we want to assist residents gain self-sufficiency through employment opportunities”, explained Frank Aggazio, the Executive Director of Allegheny County Housing Authority. Mr. Aggazio further stated that “..jobs are very important to a family’s quality of living. To be able to provide for one’s family improves the self-esteem of both the person(s) working and the entire family”

Presently, the Allegheny County Housing Authority is accepting resumes for its upcoming 2007 Resident Construction Training Initiative. Any ACHA Public Housing or Housing Choice Voucher Program resident can submit a resume to be considered. Please forward all inquires and resumes to:

Allegheny County Housing Authority
 Development Department’s - Business and Economic Initiatives
 625 Stanwix Street 12th Floor
 Pittsburgh PA 15222


For additional information, contact Mr. Charles Brown, Associate Director, Business and Economic Initiatives. Phone: (412) 402-2487 or E-mail: cbrown@achsng.com. 



ACHA RECEIVES NAHRO AWARDS OF MERIT FOR 2007

The ACHA received the following Awards of Merit:

- Ex-Offenders Resident Construction Initiative
- First Tee of Pittsburgh @ Pleasant Ridge
- Customer Service Initiative
- Guide to Better Living
- Team Up with Sparky Children’s Fire Safety

In addition, the ACHA’s First Tee of Pittsburgh at Pleasant Ridge and Customer Service Initiative has been submitted to the MARC-NAHRO Board of Directs to receive their Regional Award of Excellence. KUDOS to everyone who submitted an entry for again making ACHA well presented in the list of Awards. 

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Resident Service and Satisfaction Survey

HUD needs to HEAR from you!

If you are selected for the survey, please complete and return the “Resident Service and Satisfaction Survey” to HUD.

HUD
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

SENATOR BOB CASEY VISITS PITTSBURGH IN SUPPORT OF PUBLIC HOUSING

At a news conference held on Thursday, April 5, 2007 at the Allegheny County Courthouse, U.S. Senator Bob Casey decried continuing cuts in federal funding for public housing across the county. Under President Bush's proposed budget, housing authorities would receive \$415 million less next year.

Mr. Casey, D-PA, said the proposed budget cuts would continue a "long line of cuts" that threatens the quality of life in public housing and the communities around them. As a member of the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee, Mr. Casey said he has sent a letter to the White House opposing the cuts.

"If these funding cuts continue, it's going to be disastrous," he said. "We're going to fight very hard for (funding of public housing)".

Frank Aggazio stated at the Press Conference "the agency's operating budget has dropped \$17 million to \$12 million a year. Capital funds have gone from \$9 million to \$5 million." "These cuts have reduced the authority's ability to make physical improvements in communities and caused it to eliminate several resident services programs". The authority has laid off 115 employees in the last four years.

Allegheny County Chief Executive Dan Onorato also spoke out in support of public housing.

We applaud both Senator Bob Casey and Dan Onorato's support in opposing these funding cuts. 



(L to R standing) Senator Bob Casey, Allegheny County Chief Executive, Dan Onorato (speaking), and ACHA's Executive Director, Frank Aggazio at a press conference.

LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST HELD AT RIVERS CLUB

The Allegheny County Housing Authority together with the Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh hosted a Legislative Breakfast at the Rivers Club on March 29, 2007. Local Pennsylvania State Senators, Representatives, and Staffers were invited.

This Breakfast was an informative session on the changing face of public housing and what affects the proposed funding cuts will have on housing authorities.

The session was well received and enabled us to get our message through to elected state leaders. Armed with better knowledge of the problems facing public housing, they are better prepared to assist us to obtain much needed funding.



ACHA's Frank Aggazio speaks about recent public housing funding cuts.



TREK /  **PNC**
Development Group

ACHA GOLF CLASSIC VI

AUGUST 6, 2007

at the

Edgewood Country Club



PROCEEDS BENEFIT


The First Tee
Pittsburgh


Pleasant Ridge

For more information contact Patricia Caslin at 412.402.2542

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