ATTAIN LAB OPENS AT BERRY HOUSES IN STATEN ISLAND

(From left to right) NYCHA’s Assistant Deputy General Manager Michelle Pinnock, SUNY’s University Center for Academic and Workforce Development’s (UCAWD) William Chalmers, Deputy General Manager Hugh Spence and Assemblyman Michael J. Cusick join UCAWD Director Vijay Macwan for a demonstration at the new ATTAIN Lab at Berry Houses.

By Eileen Elliott

The digital divide is getting smaller — at least at the New York City Housing Authority’s (NYCHA’s) Polo Ground Houses in Manhattan, Farragut Houses in Brooklyn, and most recently at Berry Houses in Staten Island. On September 29th, New York State Assemblyman for the 63rd District Michael J. Cusick hosted a Grand Opening at the new ATTAIN Lab at Berry Houses.

(Continued on page 8)

CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS TO BE INSTALLED IN 43,000 NYCHA APARTMENTS

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, tasteless, colorless gas that results from the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels, such as wood, kerosene, gasoline, natural gas and oil. Dangerous amounts of CO can accumulate when the fuel is not burned properly, or when rooms are poorly ventilated and the CO is unable to escape.

To help prevent CO poisoning, on May 6, 2004 an amendment was made to the Administrative Code for the City of New York that requires the installation of CO detectors in every dwelling unit in a building where a fossil fuel-burning furnace or boiler is located.

For the New York City Housing Authority this means that approximately 43,000 households located in buildings with such furnaces will be receiving the carbon monoxide detectors. In accordance with the law, residents will be charged $25.00 for each carbon monoxide detector provided and installed by the Authority. NYCHA also has plans to install the detectors in buildings that don’t have fossil fuel-burning furnaces or boilers.

Because the devices must be located within 15 feet of any room that is lawfully used as a sleeping area, it may be necessary to install more than one CO detector per apartment.

NYCHA will provide all residents who are receiving the detectors with guidelines concerning usage and maintenance.

(Continued on page 7)

HUD’S Resident Service AND Satisfaction Survey Is Coming

It’s that time of year again! Time for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to assess how satisfied public housing residents are with living conditions in their developments across the nation.

A random sampling of New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) residents who live in NYCHA’s 324 federally funded developments will be receiving HUD’s Resident Service and Satisfaction Survey from November 23, 2004 through January 31, 2005. The survey includes questions on maintenance and repair, communication, safety, services and neighborhood appearance.

The Resident Service and Satisfaction Survey is part of HUD’s increased effort to monitor public housing authorities’ performance, through its annual Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS). The PHAS also evaluates the public housing authority’s physical condition, financial health, management operations, and resident services.

The Resident Service and Satisfaction Survey accounts for 10 out of the 100 points a public housing authority can receive under the PHAS. The survey was developed with the help of resident leaders, public housing authorities and industry representatives.

A computer program is used to randomly choose the residents who will receive the form. NYCHA will not know who participates in the survey but will only receive the overall score. All responses from residents will be kept confidential and anonymous.

NYCHA urges all residents who receive the survey to complete it.

Housing Authorities which receive scores above 90 on their overall PHAS are considered “High Performers” and qualify for additional capital funding.

(Continued on page 8)

42nd Garden Awards Ceremony

Resident Gardeners filled the Palm House of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden for NYCHA’s 42nd Garden Awards Ceremony.

By Deborah Williams

On Friday, October 8, 2004, NYCHA celebrated its 42nd Annual Garden Competition Awards Ceremony in the Palm House of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. While the guests enjoyed the aroma of blossoming flowers, Charelle Davis, who was one of NYCHA’s 2003 Talent Show winners sang her own beautiful rendition of the National Anthem to open the ceremony.

NYCHA Vice-Chairman Earl Andrews, Jr., General Manager Douglas Apple, Community Operations Deputy General Manager Hugh Spence, Operations Management Assistant Deputy General Manager Rowland Laedlein, Community Operations’ Citywide Programs Director Ernesto Lozano, and Garden Coordinators Howard Hemmings and Robert Bematon joined residents to celebrate, what is, in the words of the Vice-Chairman, “One of NYCHA’s most beautiful traditions.” Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz was a special guest.

When the tradition began in 1944, it was known as the Community Colonial Gardens, and was a development-based program. In 1962 the Garden program was opened to residents Citywide. This year there were 502 gardens registered in the competition. These included 276 Flower Gardens, 194 Vegetable Gardens and 32 Children’s Theme Gardens, reflecting the efforts of 2,735 residents.

In addition, special recognition was given to the Development Manager in each borough who registered the most gardens. This year’s winners were Monroe Houses registering eight Gardens for the borough of the Bronx, Wagner Houses registering 12 gardens for the borough of Manhattan, Hope Gardens registering 4 and 5 for a list of winners.)

Inside:

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• Make a Commitment to Good Health . .page 3
• Meet NYCHA’s New Inspector General . .page 3
• Athletes Donate Books to NYCHA . . . . .page 7

Have a Happy Thanksgiving!
Victims will be able to meet with a prosecutor, petition for an order of protection, receive legal advice on housing and custody issues, talk to a counselor, and apply for housing and financial assistance — all while their children play safely in the next room.

For victims of domestic violence, the physical wounds are only part of the trauma they are forced to endure. Victims suffer terrible emotional wounds, and many lose their sense of security, their financial support, even their homes. These pressures often prevent them from leaving their abusers or reporting crimes to the police.

The ultimate goal of this collaborative is to reduce the number of family violence incidents, recidivism and homicides. Our administration took an important step toward easing these pressures by creating the Domestic Violence Response Team (DVRT) pilot program, launched in May of 2002. The DVRT program brought all relevant agencies and service providers to the table. In its first two years, DVRT has served 150 victims in the 67th and 43rd Precincts and a Public Service Area in the Bronx with the highest concentrations of domestic violence. Of those served, 96% have not reported any subsequent physical harm by the batterer.

Now we are taking our campaign against domestic violence to the next level. The new Family Justice Center will take the DVRT model for the coordinated delivery of vital services and place it under one roof so that even more victims can get the help they need. While DVRT teams are able to serve approximately 75 clients each year, the Center anticipates serving 7,000 adults and up to 14,000 children annually.

The key feature of the Center will be the on-site presence of the District Attorney’s entire 68-member domestic violence unit, along with staff from five City agencies and 25 community-based programs and organizations. Bilingual receptionists will greet clients, who will be escorted to comfortably furnished consultation rooms.

While clients are cared for on-site by pre-screened childcare workers and art therapy professionals, an intake specialist will work with the client to determine the range of services required, and schedule the appropriate sequence of appointments within the Center for that day. Supportive services, from counseling to social services to legal assistance on issues such as housing, custody and immigration will be handled by the respective Center partner, eliminating gaps in services, and expediting the process for the victim.

The Center will house a Crime Victims Board claims staff who will be able to provide victims with immediate access to financial compensation for their injuries.

The first New York City Family Justice Center will be centrally located in downtown Brooklyn at 370 Jay Street. Although one-third of all domestic violence related homicides last year occurred in Brooklyn, the most serious domestic violence crimes are down by 5% in Brooklyn, year-to-date. The Center will provide victims with the services they need to put their lives back together.

Our new Family Justice Center is an innovative way of making victims safer, healthier, and more secure, and it’s going to be a model for the City and the nation.

Michael R. Bloomberg

THE FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER WILL PROVIDE ONE STOP ESSENTIAL SERVICES TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS

New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) executives and staff joined elected officials, staff from Samaritan Village and neighborhood seniors for the Grand Opening of Samaritan Village’s newly renovated Woodside Senior Center at NYCHA’s Woodside Houses in Queens on a breezy September 30th morning. Thanks to $1.7 million in funding obtained by former City Council Member Walter McCaffrey, additional funding from State Assembly Member Margaret Markay and City Council Member Eric Gioia, and space and assistance from the New York City Housing Authority, seniors from the neighborhoods of Woodside, Sunnyside, Astoria, Long Island City and Ravenswood now have a 7,000-square-foot state-of-the-art facility in which to enjoy meals and educational and recreational activities.

Samaritan Village President Richard Pruss served as Master of Ceremonies for the outdoor event, introducing and thanking the many people who played a role in the seven-year project to expand and renovate what was originally a 1,500-square-foot facility.

Among them was City Council Member Eric Gioia who invoked the words of President Franklin D. Roosevelt when he called the completion of the Center, “a rendezvous with destiny.” “It’s our turn to be builders, to renew the social contract and the fabric that binds us together,” he said, which he defined as the ability to “enjoy your old age with dignity.”

In introducing Chairman Hernandez, who worked for Samaritan Village for four years, Mr. Pruss called him, “an old friend of Samaritan. He has a special place in my heart.”

“What a great day to be at Woodside,” the Chairman exclaimed to the crowd that fanned out into the courtyard. “Samaritan Village is one of the premier community organizations not only in Queens but throughout New York City.” The Chairman emphasized the importance NYCHA places on senior centers and services to seniors, since a full-one-third of the Housing Authority’s household are headed by residents aged 62 or above.

He also thanked the NYCHA staff who were present, including Department of Community Operations Deputy General Manager Hugh Spence, Assistant Deputy General Manager Michelle Pincock, and Queens Borough Director Anthony Richburg, along with Queens Borough Manager Michael Cornelius and Woodside Houses Manager Donna Jones. The Chairman called the Center a “great asset to the step and a performance in the dining room by a hot young a cappella quartet, Footsteps, who sang the National Anthem.

Since November 1999 when Samaritan became the sponsor of the Woodside Senior Center, it has served 144,484 clients. The Center is funded by the New York City Department for the Aging in cooperation with NYCHA.
MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

MAKE A COMMITMENT TO GOOD HEALTH IN THE COMING YEAR

Summer seems like yesterday and yet we are fast approaching Thanksgiving and the holiday season. That chill in the air is here to stay and another, not so welcome season is here already too — the flu season. This is a good time to check up on your health and the health of your family, remembering that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

At the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) we are designating the coming year, 2005, as a year in which we will promote healthy living among residents. This includes improving diet, participating in exercise appropriate to your age and physical capacity, getting regular medical and dental examinations and taking advantage of the many health related programs and services provided by NYCHA and the City of New York.

One way to stay healthy is to fill out and maintain your personal “Passport to Health.” Developed as part of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene’s (DOHMH) Take Care New York program, the Passport to Health is a form that can be printed out from the DOHMH web site, on which you can track your doctor’s visits, test results and other pertinent information. It also contains Action Steps you can take to improve your health, and additional resources to help you follow through. These Action Steps include having a regular doctor or other health care provider, quitting smoking, getting checked for cancer and making your home safe and healthy.

NYCHA will be distributing a limited number of passports through the Resident Associations this month. To find out more, call 311, or visit nyc.gov/health.

If you don’t have health insurance, or feel you can’t afford it, don’t despair. Through the City’s HealthStat program you can obtain free or low-cost health insurance. NYCHA has facilitated the enrollment of over 12,000 residents into health insurance plans so far this year through HealthStat. In fact, last year NYCHA enrolled more New Yorkers in health plans than any other City agency. While we are very proud of that accomplishment, we are even more pleased that more and more NYCHA residents have health insurance. If you are uninsured, call the NYCHA HealthStat hotline at 212-306-8443.

(See the ad on page 10 of this Journal.)

I’d also like to take this opportunity to remind NYCHA residents who are younger than two or older than 64, or in other high-risk groups, to get their flu shots. Flu vaccine will be in short supply this year, so it is especially important for seniors and your doctor’s high-risk groups to get their shots early. NYCHA is working with the DOHMH to facilitate vaccinations for our senior population. We will be bringing the flu vaccine to select senior centers throughout the City and making it possible for seniors to get to those locations. Find out where the location nearest you will be by calling 311 and make it a point to be there.

Another important health threat that NYCHA is addressing is diabetes. You may be surprised to learn that nearly one in every twelve adults in New York City has been diagnosed with diabetes. East Harlem in particular has the highest rate of reported diabetes in the City (15%), almost twice the rate of the City overall.

Together with the DOHMH’s East and Central Harlem District Offices, NYCHA is addressing this high incidence of diabetes with the Diabetes Prevention and Control Initiative. The initiative will include the participation of Resident Associations and NYCHA-based service providers within targeted developments in East and Central Harlem. It will address the diabetes epidemic by promoting regular physical activities and healthy eating not only in NYCHA developments, but also in schools, day care centers and other community sites. Its goal is to prevent the onset of and improve the management of diabetes by improving patient/medical provider communication, increasing physical activity and improving nutrition.

These are just some of the ways NYCHA is working to promote good health among residents. Please join me in making a commitment to your good health in the coming year. It’s never too late.

Tino Hernandez

(Continued on page 4)

MEET NYCHA’S NEW INSPECTOR GENERAL

New York City’s Department of Investigation (DOI) works to root out municipal corruption wherever it is found. Today I had the opportunity to meet about the NYCHA residents who were arrested because they lied to keep their mothers’ or fathers’ apartments after they died, or the NYCHA employees who were arrested for money laundering, fraud, drug trafficking, or any other illegal activity. The woman behind many of the recent arrests is NYCHA’s newly appointed Inspector General, Judy Abruzzo. She replaced Beverly Pasichow, who left the agency in August to join the Inspector General’s Office for the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey.

“I left big shoes to fill,” explained Ms. Abruzzo, who lead NYCHA’s Inspector General’s (IG’s) office for nearly ten years. NYCHA’s IG investigates NYCHA employees, residents, contractors, and vendors who lie about their income, steal, or take bribes. The IG’s office also helps NYCHA develop new programs to find and eliminate potential corruption, such as the Rental Amnesty Program, which ran from November 2001 to January 2002, and allowed residents who had misrepresented their incomes to NYCHA to come forward, admit what they had done, and repay back rent, without facing criminal charges. That program has helped NYCHA recover more than $1 million so far.

The IG’s Office also conducts ongoing “Death Match” programs that detect fraud by matching NYCHA’s records with records from the IRS or other agencies. For example, the “Death Match” program has matched NYCHA’s records with the City’s Department of Health records to detect when residents have illegitimately taken over the apartment of a deceased relative. The program recently resulted in a number of arrests, allowing NYCHA to reclaim units for people who really need them.

The IG is sometimes looked at in a bad light. Ms. Abruzzo conceded, “because we investigate tenants, employees and contractors, and sometimes have to make arrests.” However, she emphasized, “We always see that justice is served.” Judy is just trying to do the right thing. It’s to everyone’s benefit. By catching the few bad apples, everyone is helped. It’s rewarding to help NYCHA recover money because that means the money from NYCHA to repay tenants, buy new appliances, and open up apartments to others.”

DID YOU GET YOUR FLU SHOT?

Because of a vaccine shortage, healthy people between the ages of 2 and 64 are asked to postpone or forgo their flu shots this year.

For more information, call 311.

INSPIRATION

It’s truly remarkable and inspiring as well as gratifying to know that when you write about the success of another, the story you write can change or influence someone else’s life. I am delighted to say that one of my articles did just that. I recently received a letter from Julia Polisano, a resident of Rutgers Houses in Manhattan who had this to say: “Dear Deborah’s Diary, I am 35 years old and I have four beautiful children who mean the world to me. I have read articles printed by you Ms. Deborah Williams, and I must say that each one I have read lifted my spirit and inspired me. I also would like to share with you that I recently lost my mother, who was also my friend and my protector, in February 2004. Since my mother has gone home with the angels her spirit has brought me to realize that my life had to change. I read one of your articles about NYCHA’s Department of Resident Employment Services, and after reading the article my self-esteem began to build up. I then called the Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC) to register for the courses necessary to become a Direct Care Counselor. I began my class in May 2004. Getting up in the morning to go to school was a blessing. My life now means so much to me since I have started the program to become a Direct Care Counselor. I have completed courses such as Human Growth and Development, Developmental Disabilities, Sign Language, Legal Rights, CPR, First Aid, and the history of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities. On September 28, 2004, I graduated and was assigned a seven-week internship. I successfully completed the 104-hour requirement in just twelve days! I received compliments on my enthusiasm and my thirst for knowledge. I hope to be working soon and helping developmentally disabled adults live normal independent lives. To my fellow classmates — it has been a pleasure and I hope that you accomplish whatever you endeavor. I would also like to thank all my teachers and staff, the job developer, case manager and not to mention myself. I am very proud of myself and I will continue to be strong and open-minded.” And indeed you should be proud of yourself! Believe me when I say I truly understand what it means to lose someone that you love. You have weathered the storm and the decisions and choices you have made will not only improve your life but the lives of your children as well. I am touched that my article inspired and lifted your spirits but you deserve all the credit for your success. It was you who picked up the phone and called BMCC. Nonetheless, thanks! Your story has made my day a better day. Congratulations on your graduation and good luck with your job search.

SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

When Natasha Lee, or Nikki as she is affectionately known, graduated from Morris High School in the Bronx, everyone was excited and proud, but when she entered the New York Lottery Scholarship Essay Competition and won, the excitement grew immensely. It was Nikki’s essay entitled “My Experience as a Mentor” that won her a four-year college scholarship. Nikki gained her mentor experience through her work with the Team Outreach Prevention Program (TOPP) at Public School 158. Nikki’s essay was chosen over those of three other students who attended Morris High School. She is using the scholarship to pay for her tuition at Buffalo State College where she is right now diligently working towards a bachelor’s degree in business administration. Nikki, everyone at Morrissiana Air Rights extends their congratulations to you on your achievements and for continuing your education. “Good Luck” and “Best Wishes” are the sentiments everyone is shouting out to you. Nikki, remember, being the best requires a lot of hard work and I am sure you know that. More importantly, I want to convey to you is, always strive to be the best at whatever you choose and you are sure to succeed in life. Congratulations and keep up the good work!
In this issue we continue our editorial policy of publishing the names of individuals who have been permanently excluded from our public housing developments. Listing the proscribed persons is part of the effort to keep residents informed of NYCHA’s ongoing efforts to improve the quality of life for all New Yorkers in public housing and to allow for the peaceful and safe use of our facilities. Here follows a list of the people excluded after hearings were held on July 23 and 30, and August 6, 13 and 20, 2003.

**Prohibited as of July 23, 2003**

- Terrence Jordan
  - Case 4635/03 formerly associated with the second floor of 772 Henry Street, Red Hook East Houses, Brooklyn.
- Giovanna Rodriguez
  - Case 4793/03 formerly associated with the ninth floor of 40 Avenue D, Wald Houses, Manhattan.
- Timothy Cullen
  - Case 4778/03 formerly associated with the second floor of 418 West 17th Street, Fulton Houses, Manhattan.
- Shaniqua Brown
  - Case 4808/03 formerly associated with the third floor of 2069/03 Union Street, Sutter Avenue/Union Houses, Brooklyn.
- Damian Whitaker
  - Case 4864/03 formerly associated with the seventh floor of 1955 East 174th Street, Bronx River Houses, the Bronx.
- Yose Perdomo
  - Case 4852/03 formerly associated with the ninth floor of 40 Avenue D, Wald Houses, Manhattan.

**Prohibited as of July 30, 2003**

- Luther Bryant
  - Case 5115/03 formerly associated with the second floor of 5711 Avenue H, Glenwood Houses, Brooklyn.
- Rafael Roman
  - Case 3255/03 formerly associated with the fifteenth floor of 189 Allen Street, Gompers Consolidated Houses, Manhattan.

**Prohibited as of August 6, 2003**

- Tarell Davis
  - Case 5292/03 formerly associated with the fifth floor of 40-03 Vernon Boulevard, Queensbridge North Houses, Long Island City, New York.
- Pedro Rodriguez
  - Case 953/03 formerly associated with the sixth floor of 2295 West 111th Street, Marble Houses, Brooklyn.
- Steven Santana
  - Case 5178/03 formerly associated with the sixth floor of 925 Waring Avenue, Pelham Pkwy., Pelham Parkway Houses, Brooklyn.
- Timothy Betance
  - Case 3227/03 formerly associated with the twelfth floor of 735 Magenta Street, Gun Hill Houses, the Bronx.

**Prohibited as of August 13, 2003**

- Elizabeth Sanchez
  - Case 5519/03 formerly associated with the fourth floor of 5240 Broadway, Marble Hill Houses, Manhattan.
- Carls Real
  - Case 5451/03 formerly associated with the fifth floor of 230 East 115th Street, Jefferson Houses, Manhattan.
- Jason Morgan
  - Case 4169/03 formerly associated with the fourth floor of 2219 Pitkin Avenue, Fiorentino Plaza Houses, Brooklyn.
- Clarence Emerly
  - Case 5487/03 formerly associated with the fourteenth floor of 927 DeKalb Avenue, Roosevelt Houses, Brooklyn.
- Timothy McMeans
  - Case 5545/03 formerly associated with the sixth floor of 40 Centre Mall, Red Hook West Houses, Brooklyn.
- Nain Njam
  - Case 4102/03 formerly associated with the fifth floor of 458 Beach 40th Street, Far Rockaway, New York.

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GARDEN COMPETITION AWARD WINNERS

STATEN ISLAND — FLOWER GARDEN WINNERS
1st Prize: A Purple Heart – A Tribute To Our American Service People, Berry Houses
2nd Prize: Garden of Luv, Mariner’s Harbor Houses
3rd Prize: Miller’s Beauty Garden, Mariner’s Harbor Houses

STATEN ISLAND — VEGETABLE GARDEN WINNERS
1st Prize: Campy’s Garden, Mariner’s Harbor Houses
2nd Prize: Dina’s Garden, Berry Houses

STATEN ISLAND — CHILDREN’S THEME GARDEN WINNERS
1st Prize: A Little Sunshine Garden, Mariner’s Harbor Houses
2nd Prize: Miller’s Beauty Garden, Mariner’s Harbor Houses

QUEENS — FLOWER GARDEN WINNERS
1st Prize: Allen’s Flower Garden, South Jamaica Houses
2nd Prize: Rain Drop Garden, Redfern Houses
3rd Prize: DJ’s Corner Garden, South Jamaica Houses
Honorable Mention: Catherine’s On A Hill Far Away, “Flower Garden”, Beach 41st Street Houses

QUEENS — VEGETABLE GARDEN WINNERS
1st Prize: Allen’s Friendly Vegetable Garden, South Jamaica Houses
2nd Prize: Garden Of Venus, South Jamaica Houses
3rd Prize: Garden Of Ear’n, South Jamaica Houses

QUEENS — CHILDREN’S THEME GARDEN WINNERS
1st Prize: Eye Of The Tiger Garden, South Jamaica Houses
2nd Prize: Catherine & Tiffany’s “Live Peaceful & Joyfully,” Beach 41st Street Houses
3rd Prize: Highest Praise Garden, Beach 41st Street Houses

MANHATTAN — FLOWER GARDEN WINNERS
1st Prize: Heavenly Scent Serenity Garden, Stanley M. Isaacs Houses
2nd Prize: A Touch of Class, Wagner Houses
3rd Prize: Garden of Love, Douglass, West Of Broadway Houses
Honorable Mention: 55 J Jackson Garden, Vladeck Houses

MANHATTAN — VEGETABLE GARDEN WINNERS
1st Prize: Troche’s Garden, Wald Houses
2nd Prize: Jade Garden, Campos Plaza
3rd Prize: Wilson Vegetable Garden, Wilson Houses

MANHATTAN — CHILDREN’S THEME GARDEN WINNERS
1st Prize: Lilly’s Butterfly Garden, Lexington Houses

BRONX — FLOWER GARDEN WINNERS
1st Prize: Harrod Garden, Bronx River Houses
2nd Prize: The Liberty Garden, Throggs Neck Houses
3rd Prize: God’s Paradise Garden, Union Avenue Consolidation
Honorable Mention: Garden Gate Perennial, Bronxdale Community Center

BRONX — VEGETABLE GARDEN WINNERS
1st Prize: Family Garden, Throggs Neck Houses
2nd Prize: Tiny Tat’s Family Garden, Morris Houses
3rd Prize: El Bahio Garden, Union Avenue Consolidation
Honorable Mention: Davidson Community Center Vegetable Garden, Davidson Houses

BRONX — CHILDREN’S THEME GARDEN WINNERS
1st Prize: Webster Community Center Garden, Webster Houses

CITYWIDE WINNER—FLOWER GARDEN: Renew Your Spirit Garden, Sheepshead/Nostrand Houses, South Brooklyn

CITYWIDE WINNER—VEGETABLE GARDEN: Garden of Joy, South Jamaica Houses, Queens

CITYWIDE WINNER—CHILDREN’S THEME GARDEN: Mrs. Pott’s Garden, Stanley M. Isaacs Houses, Manhattan
NYCHA is pleased to announce that it is working with two not-for-profit organizations, Presbyterian Senior Services (PSS) and the West Side Federation for Senior and Supportive Housing (WSFSSH) to introduce a new housing development, the PSS GrandParent Family Apartments, located at 951 Prospect Avenue in the Bronx. The development will be available for occupancy in December 2004.

The 50 apartments in this new building will be exclusively for grandparents, or elderly caregivers, 62 or older, who care for minor grandchildren (under the age of 18) or other relatives. A family relationship such as grandparent-grandchild and a legal care relationship such as adoptive parent or guardian will be required. You may apply even if you do not currently have a legal care relationship with the minor child or children for whom you are caring.

PSS and WSFSSH will assist you regarding the legal care relationship during the period prior to occupancy. A comprehensive program of supportive services will be available on-site. If you are interested in this unique opportunity or know someone who is, just ask your Development’s Management Office for a “Tenant Request to Move PSS/GFA” — NYCHA form 040.050G. Complete the form and return it to your Housing Assistant for further processing.
Athletes Donate Books To NYCHA

NYCHA’s Department of Community Operations Deputy General Manager Hugh Spence (above, center) joined NFL twin superstars Tiki and Ronde Barber at Shula’s Steakhouse in Times Square on September 13th to accept 200 copies of the Ronde brothers’ new book, “By My Brother’s Side,” on behalf of the after-school Partners In Reading Program. The brothers made their donation with the help of NY Reads, a partnership between Verizon Communications and the national non-profit Literacy Assistance Center.

Tiki Barber is a running back for the NY Giants and Ronde is cornerback for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. “By My Brother’s Side” is a children’s book about their childhood experiences, emphasizing the family support that helped them both to become successful. The brothers thanked NYCHA for its work promoting literacy with the after-school Partners In Reading program.

Partners In Reading is a collaboration between the Mayor’s Office, the Department of Education and NYCHA to improve literacy skills in children in the 1, 2, and 3rd grades. It currently operates at 121 public housing sites, serving approximately 6,000 children.

CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

(Continued from page 1)

NYCHA will replace missing or defective CO detectors prior to a new occupant and will replace any defective detector within 30 days of notification if the defect occurs within one year of installation and is not the result of resident negligence.

It is the resident’s responsibility to maintain the detector in proper operating condition by:

—testing the detector weekly;
—replacing batteries as needed;
—adhering to manufacturers guidelines for proper care and maintenance;
—replacing the device if it is stolen, removed, or missing, or rendered inoperable as a result of negligence.

Please cooperate with NYCHA as we install your carbon monoxide detector. Remember, it could save your life, or the lives of your family.

If your carbon monoxide alarm goes off...

Stay calm. Once you determine that it is your CO alarm and not your smoke alarm you should: silence it by pushing the reset/silence button; open windows; check to see if any member of the household including pets are experiencing flu-like symptoms; and call 911.

** Women **

FREE COMPUTER & EMPLOYMENT TRAINING for DISPLACED HOMEMAKERS at the YWCA’s Re-Entry Employment Program

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4-8PM

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SATURDAY
NOVEMBER 13, 2004
10-2PM

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ATTAIN LAB IN STATEN ISLAND  
(Continued from page 1)

Opening for the new Advanced Technology Training And Information Networking (ATTAIN) lab at the development, which will provide area residents with access to state-of-the-art computer technology.

Through its University Center for Academic and Workforce Development (UCAWD), the State University of New York’s (SUNY’s) ATTAIN program places computer labs in underserved communities to help residents enhance employability and academic skills. All ATTAIN labs are equipped with 16 IBM computer stations, each loaded up with over 30 different software programs. There is also a facilitator to assist in the use of the programs.

Funding for the lab at Berry Houses was obtained by Assemblyman Cusick. “This is a great event,” the Assemblyman announced to the crowd of supporters gathered for the occasion. “This will benefit all of Staten Island. Staten Islanders can use this lab to make themselves more marketable, and for those who aren’t computer literate they can learn.”

In introducing NYCHA’s Department of Community Operations Deputy General Manager Hugh Spence, Mr. Cusick said, “We couldn’t have done it without NYCHA.” Mr. Spence expressed his excitement about the initiative, saying that it was a prime example of residents, elected officials and the City coming together, and that he was glad NYCHA was able to provide the space.

“With this technology, you can leave Berry Houses and go anywhere in the world...” Mr. Spence told the residents in the audience. “It’s for the whole community—children, adults and seniors.”

Mr. Macwan who is Director of the UCADW emphasized the importance of technology in today’s economy, and of closing “the digital divide.”

“Eighty percent of the jobs in today’s marketplace require technology,” Mr. Macwan remarked. “The technology revolution is also about learning how to utilize technology to make money. Some people refer to this as creating digital wealth — it is going to be one of the most important commodities in the 21st Century.” In referring to the variety of resources available through ATTAIN, Mr. Macwan dubbed the lab, a “One Stop Technology Superstore.” “I wish you all a fantastic shopping trip!” he said in closing.

Before the actual ribbon-cutting, UCADW’s Educational Opportunity Centers Director William Chalmers and the software developer, Instructional Systems Inc.’s, Senior Trainer and Program Developer Sonya Maxwell used the overhead projector to make a presentation.

“We tell our students, ‘You can make it happen,’” Ms. Maxwell stressed. “We say, ‘Let’s chart out a course to where you want to go, and how you’re going to get there. We can help, but the responsibility is yours.’”

“It’s fabulous,” said a long-time Berry Houses resident, who chose to remain anonymous, during the luncheon afterwards. “I never thought a program like this would reach here.”

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NYCHA seniors filled the theater of the Fashion Institute of Technology in Manhattan on the afternoon of September 10th for the 2004 Senior Festival. “Wedding Bell Blues, A Senior’s Romance,” an original musical, was the centerpiece of the afternoon. But even before the main production got underway, NYCHA’s Department of Community Operations Community Coordinator Keir Nelson served as master of the revelry for a pre-show of selections by the Rangel Senior Chorus, the Bronx Senior Chorus and the Citywide Senior Chorus that included Gospel, Motown and clap-along Ecuadorian folk songs.

NYCHA Vice Chairman Earl Andrews, Jr., and Board Member JoAnna Aniello brought greetings from Chairman Tino Hernandez, and Community Operations’ Director of Citywide Programs Ernesto Lozano greeted the seniors. Community Operations Deputy General Manager Hugh Spence threatened to “sing a little song,” but immediately withdrew the offer in favor of the extravaganza about to begin. DGM Spence did take a moment to acknowledge the contributions of over 20 community center staff members who helped to make the production a reality. Mr. Spence made special mention of Mr. Nelson and his fellow Community Coordinators Brian Dennan and Andre LeClech.

“Wedding Bell Blues” told the story of Cara, played by Yvonne Lee of Bushwick/Hylan Houses, who embarks on a trip around the world after the expected wedding ring from her fiancé fails to materialize. Fiancé Bill, as portrayed by Leon White of Douglass Houses, takes off in pursuit of his errant girlfriend as she and her wealthy Parisian Aunt Emerald, Soundview Houses’ Filomena Orpilla, lead him on a French, Italian, Spanish, Chinese and finally African musical adventure. Crucial to their romantic escapades are Cassandra, a Venetian fortune-telling gypsy queen who does a little matchmaking on the side, played with suitable mystery by Elizabeth Correa, also of Soundview, a Sage of Hong Kong brought to life by Charles Tang of La Guardia Houses, and the Nigerian Babalawo (high priest) in the person of William Sellow of La Guardia. Cara’s daughter Lola, played by Kenya Leak of Highbridge Houses, keeps the home fires burning all the while until it is revealed that Cara never left home at all – it has all been a vivid fantasy as she waits for her wedding ceremony.

Cara poignantly wonders what life’s excitement she might be giving up in married life. But as written by playwrights Jessie Saunders Petrus, and Andre LeClech and Keir Nelson, a stable constancy prevails and the sweet reality of marriage vanquishes the foolishness of daydreams.

“Wedding Bell Blues” was more than a very entertaining ride for a summer’s afternoon, it was a meaningful story, well told.

Frances Braxton of the Pink Houses Senior Center giving it her all in Wedding Bell Blues.
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