



Residents Are Talking; NYCHA is Listening

Community Conversations a Key Part of Plan to Preserve Public Housing



Residents speak their minds about what they would like the future of NYCHA to look like at the Community Conversation held at Van Dyke Houses in Brooklyn on April 30, 2011 (top and bottom photos).

By Eric Deutsch

Some residents knew exactly what the New York City Housing Authority should do: “Fix the elevators,” or “Add more surveillance cameras,” or “Replace the whole roof.” While the series of 10 Community Conversations NYCHA held across the City to engage

public housing and Section 8 residents will set goals for the agency, it also was a discussion about the future of NYCHA. The Community Conversations are a key part of the Authority’s Plan to Preserve Public Housing – the Authority’s comprehensive plan that will serve as a vital roadmap for the next five years.

The format of the Community Conversations facilitated the dialogue needed for residents and NYCHA to work together to come up with solutions to problems. The key issues being addressed in the Plan are a result of extensive outreach to residents, including focus groups, a phone survey of public housing residents and Section 8 clients and an extensive survey of employees. “If we all work together, we can find solutions,” said Carlos Laboy, Deputy General Manager for Operations. “We need to make a plan together and then enact it together.”

Authority senior staff and members of the Citywide Council of Presidents started the conversations by getting residents excited about the opportunity to have a significant impact on the Plan to Preserve Public Housing. But the discussions also laid out the harsh realities that need to be faced, including funding being rolled back steadily on the national level, even as NYCHA’s buildings

continue to age and its budget deficits increase. There also is the potential elimination of funding for resident services that are so vital, and even longer waiting lists to get an apartment.

At a Community Conversation at the Williamsburg Community Center in Brooklyn on May 2, the excitement in the room readily was apparent – the din was so loud, it was hard for people to hear the person sitting right next to them. The focus quickly turned to the first topic of the evening – why is NYCHA important to you? Having access to affordable housing overwhelmingly was the most mentioned item, but residents had other reasons as well, including access to social services. “If someone has some sort of mental illness, NYCHA has social workers. In the event that things get bad, there is someone there for you,” said Cheryl Uzamere from Pink Houses. “There isn’t another housing community that has that.”

The next group discussion, titled “Your Home,” focused on maintenance and repairs and safety and security. Residents had no shortage of ideas on things NYCHA could do. “When they come to plaster, they should find where a leak is coming from and fix it first,” said Eva Garrett from Williamsburg Houses. “There should be a live, on-line chat system, instead of calling and sitting on hold

for repairs,” said Melanie Cubilete from Williamsburg Houses.

The final group discussion focused on “Ensuring NYCHA’s Future.” For NYCHA to help more people in need and take better advantage of opportunities, it needs assistance from residents. The Authority will transition families to right-sized apartments and phase in a rent increase for families that are paying less than 30 percent of their income for rent. Gloria Bonilla from Bushwick Houses said having families move into more appropriate-sized apartments is a good idea. “There is a senior citizen in my development with four bedrooms who is willing to downsize, but wants to stay in her development,” she said. “People would be willing to downsize if they don’t have to move to a different development.”

The Community Conversations ended with a call to action to residents to stay involved and get their neighbors to join in the effort. Based on the sustained positive energy at the Williamsburg event – and the several rounds of rousing applause the residents and staff gave when it was finished – it appears this joint effort to preserve public housing in New York City is just getting started. Residents interested in joining with NYCHA and their neighbors as part of the solution can send an e-mail to plan@nycha.nyc.gov to find out more information.

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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:

May 25	August 17	October 26
June 7 (Tuesday)	August 31	November 9
June 22	September 14	November 23
July 6	September 28	December 7
July 20	October 12	December 21
August 3		

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**.

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

NYCHA Dept. of Operations has Ambitious Goals

New Family Investment Center Example of Holistic Approach



NYCHA Department of Operations Deputy General Manager Carlos Laboy speaks with Citywide Council of Presidents Manhattan South District Chair Rose Bergin at a recent event.

While NYCHA's Plan to Preserve Public Housing – the Authority's comprehensive plan that will serve as a vital roadmap for the next five years – nears completion, many features of the plan already are being acted upon. The Department of Operations has new ways of running business that will benefit residents.

"NYCHA has many different programs that can influence a development, like mixed-finance, community operations, the Safety and Security Task Force," said Carlos Laboy, the Authority's new Deputy General Manager for Operations. "To be sure services for residents mesh well, we have to look at a development holistically and see how the whole situation affects residents."

The new Family Investment Center at St. Nicholas Houses in Manhattan partners the Property Manager (Department of Operations) together with social service staff (Department

of Community Operations). "There is a direct correlation between maintenance needs, social service needs and the developments' needs," said Mr. Laboy. "If a resident is facing eviction, we want to be sure they receive social services."

The Family Investment Center is a model that other developments will follow. In addition to providing St. Nicholas residents with essential information and assistance, the three social services staff members focus on four key areas – developing residents' economic assets; creating youth empowerment opportunities; building a Resident Green Committee; and assisting residents with tenancy issues.

Another example of how one item can affect many areas recently occurred at the Justice Sonia Sotomayor Houses in the Bronx. Many outdoor lights were out, and the replacement of them was a maintenance issue. However, once new lights were installed, residents told NYCHA that now security at the development was better because it is not so dark anymore at night.

NYCHA has set aside \$11 million to address a backlog in repairs across the City. The Department of Operations is working with the Department of Capital Projects to prioritize property maintenance needs. By this summer, a new system will be in place that is expected to improve how the Authority maintains the developments. "If a roof is being rehabilitated, we need to be sure it's the correct roof that really needs that work," said Mr. Laboy. "We have enough money to fix the priorities, but we don't have enough for everything."

Mr. Laboy and his team have been running all over the City, meeting with residents and visiting apartments, to improve communications. "We have to listen to our clients – the residents," he said. "And while some may be frustrated, we can't change the past. But we can talk about today and tomorrow."



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

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Deputy Mayor Robert Steel Assumes Oversight of NYCHA



Robert Steel, the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development, has assumed management authority for NYCHA at City Hall. A former Under Secretary for Domestic Finance at the federal Department of the Treasury, Deputy Mayor Steel is responsible for the Bloomberg Administration's five-borough economic development strategy and job creation efforts, as well as its efforts to expand job training, promote new industries and achieve the goals of the New Housing Marketplace Plan.

He replaces Dennis Walcott, a longtime partner, friend and tireless champion for public housing who left his post as Deputy Mayor to become the Chancellor of New York City's public schools. As an educator, community advocate, business leader, and public servant, Chancellor Walcott undoubtedly will have a deep and positive impact on the City's efforts to educate and prepare its children to succeed in the future. NYCHA wishes him all the best in his new and challenging endeavor.



Message from the Chairman

One of the major principles of the Plan to Preserve Public Housing is to seek creative solutions to improve public housing in New York City. Considering our communities' existing needs and the available public resources, we must be resourceful to maintain our current housing stock and create new development. It was this thinking that led us to pursue the federalization of 21 developments in 2010.

Taking developments that no longer received State or City funds, and transferring them to a separate organization that NYCHA is in control of, allowed us to receive federal funds for the 21 developments. This helped ease a large drain on our finances – nearly \$700 million over ten years – as we no longer need to take money from the rest of the Authority to cover those 21 developments' costs.

I stress that these developments were not sold to a private company. Federalization is a joint venture with Citi Community Capital and the non-profit New York Housing Partnership. NYCHA still is responsible for the day-to-day management. We are using the funds Citi is investing to pay for needed improvements. This is how most affordable housing development and revitalization is funded in the United States today.

And we have used that money to improve the quality of life for residents. The rehabilitation work underway at the 21 federalized developments includes upgrades in individual apartments, roof replacements, façade repairs and elevator rehabilitations. I am

very pleased to tell you that Rutgers Houses is the first development where all work is completed. The other 20 developments are scheduled to be completed by March 2012.

Federalization is one example of a mixed-financing plan, which combines public, private and non-profit funds to operate, upgrade and develop public housing neighborhoods, as well as revitalize surrounding communities. Going forward, we plan to use mixed-financing to not only preserve public housing, but to develop new affordable housing units as well.

Mixed-financing brings additional resources to public housing communities, which can be used to bridge the gap between the rents residents pay and government funding and our actual expenses and needs. If government funding is reduced, we can use private capital to develop quality housing. Mixed-financing stimulates neighborhood revitalization and economic development. Using private funding as a supplement allows public housing funds to influence the creation of new public facilities in addition to housing, including community centers, health clinics and recreation centers. Mixed-financing also creates opportunities to partner with not-for-profit organizations to improve service delivery, foster economic growth and support housing development.

We are committed especially to developing new affordable housing for seniors. We need to create opportunities for seniors to move to appropriately-sized homes in the communities where they've spent their lives, and make larger apartments available to families currently on NYCHA's waiting list.

Mixed-financing is one of the most promising and effective ways to preserve public housing. While federalization was a unique opportunity, it will serve as a model for future partnerships to not only preserve NYCHA's homes, but to foster the healthy, vibrant communities that every New Yorker deserves.

NYCHA Hosts Arbor Day Celebration at Justice Sonia Sotomayor Houses

By Zodet Negrón

The New York City Housing Authority welcomed more than 300 NYCHA residents, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr., federal Housing and Urban Development officials, BNP Paribas and Toyota employees, community volunteers and local fifth grade students on April 28 to celebrate Arbor Day by planting more than 100 trees at Justice Sonia Sotomayor Houses in the Bronx. With cooperation from the weather, which provided both a little rain and sunshine, several different species of trees were planted throughout the development.

"NYCHA is blooming with new trees," Good Morning America meteorologist and event emcee Sam Champion said to the crowd, acknowledging the groups of volunteers who helped make it a reality.

The event was part of MillionTreesNYC, a public-private partnership between the New York Restoration Project (NYRP) and the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation through which one million new trees will be planted and cared for across New York City's five boroughs by 2017.

"It is an honor to be here at Sotomayor Houses to continue this great project and return the forests to New York," said Bette Midler, acclaimed actress, singer and founder of NYRP. "This is one of many events we do with NYCHA. I think it's fantastic."

NYRP and NYCHA have had an ongoing partnership since 2008, when they teamed up as part of the Authority's Green Agenda to plant trees at developments across the city. NYRP is also working together with non-profit group Trees New York to educate NYCHA residents and families on how they can adopt newly planted trees and help water and protect them all year long.

"As the Native American proverb reminds us: 'We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children,'" said NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea. "At NYCHA, we are working not only to ensure that the New York we entrust to our



Children joined community leaders at the Justice Sonia Sotomayor Houses in the Bronx on April 28, 2011, to celebrate Arbor Day. In the back row, from left to right, are Parks and Recreation Commissioner Adrian Benepe, BNP Paribas Chief Operating Officer Larry Sobin, NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea, Toyota North America Group Vice-President Pat Pineda, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr., entertainer and New York Restoration Project founder Bette Midler, federal Housing and Urban Development official Sonia Burgos, and NYCHA Commissioner Margarita López.

children is more sustainable, more livable and more green, but also that NYCHA families are co-owners of this urgent and unrivaled responsibility."

NYCHA Commissioner and Environmental Coordinator Margarita López, who leads the Authority's Green Agenda, echoed that feeling. "Today you have planted trees not for yourself but for the children of your children," Commissioner López told the children in the crowd.

To date, MillionTreesNYC, launched in 2007 as part of Mayor Michael Bloomberg's PlaNYC, the city's long-term environmental sustainability strategy, has planted more than 440,000 new trees citywide, and more than 11,300 trees on 129 NYCHA developments.

"A big part of PlaNYC was the MillionTrees

program and NYCHA has played a big role, planting more than 10,000 trees," said Chairman Rhea.

MillionTreesNYC has a green collar jobs training program for young adults that recruits NYCHA residents. Fall recruitment is expected to begin in August; for more information go to www.milliontreesnyc.org or call NYCHA's Office of Resident Economic Empowerment and Sustainability at 718-289-8100.

The Authority's participation is part of NYCHA's Green Agenda. Promoting environmental sustainability is an important part of NYCHA's Plan to Preserve Public Housing, the Authority's comprehensive plan that will serve as a vital roadmap for the next five years.

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 July 14 and 21, 2010.

Prohibited as of July 14, 2010

Bianca Diez Justice Sonia Sotomayor Houses, 1780 Watson Ave, 3rd fl., Staten Island

Jamel Dossie Unity Plaza Houses, 390 Georgia Ave, 5th fl., Staten Island

Paul Foster South Beach Houses, 150 Lamport Boulevard, 6th fl., Staten Island

Angela Garcia Butler Houses, 1348 Webster Ave, 19th fl., Bronx

Legbithan Guzman Melrose Houses, 681 Courtlandt Ave, 9th fl., Bronx

Raymond Jusino Castle Hill Houses, 535 Havemeyer Ave, 14th fl., Bronx

Lavon Smith Cooper Park Houses, 295 Jackson St, 5th fl., Brooklyn

Prohibited as of July 21, 2010

Oscar Aguilar Jr. Saint Mary's Park Houses, 694 East 149th St, 14th fl., Bronx

Lawrence Alston Tompkins Houses, 77 Tompkins Ave, 4th fl., Brooklyn

Horace Betard Wyckoff Gardens Houses, 185 Nevins St, 18th fl., Brooklyn

Corey Colston Grant Houses, 1305 Amsterdam Ave, 14th fl., Manhattan

Trent Cook a/k/a Bernard Cook, Roosevelt Houses, 927 DeKalb Ave, 10th fl., Brooklyn

Christopher Cruz Hammel Houses, 81-05 Hammels Blvd., 6th fl., Far Rockaway

Shaborn Dickerson Hammel Houses, 81-05 Hammels Blvd, 6th fl., Rockaway Beach

Joseph Favor Hammel Houses, 81-05 Hammels Blvd., 6th fl., Far Rockaway

Andrew Ferguson Amsterdam Houses, 228 West 63rd St, 5th fl., Manhattan

Lahiem Hanley West Brighton Houses, 240 Broadway, 3rd fl., Staten Island

Clyde Harrill Pomonok Houses, 65-12 Parsons Blvd, 2nd fl., Queens

David Jones Butler Houses, 1458 Webster Ave, 10th fl., Bronx

Benjamin Mackey Throggs Neck Houses, 2816 Schley Ave, 4th fl., Bronx

Dorian Mobley Ravenswood Houses, 35-19 12th St, 4th fl., Long Island City

Melvin Owens Marlboro Houses, 63 Ave W, 6th fl., Brooklyn

Carlos Rivera Butler Houses, 1458 Webster Ave, 10th fl., Bronx

Victor Rivera Edenwald Houses, 1151 East 229th St, 5th fl., Bronx

Tommy Wadlington Saint Mary's Park Houses, 681 Courtlandt Ave, 9th fl., Bronx



Get FREE Help to Access Benefits Programs All in One Place

ACCESS NYC is a free website that allows New York City residents to find out if they are eligible for more than 35 City, State and Federal human service benefit programs. Residents enter their information, and the website will show a list of benefits they may be eligible for. They then can apply or renew online for some benefit programs; for other programs, ACCESS NYC will help them fill out and start an application that needs to be completed with a specific agency. Other options include searching for benefit office locations and creating an account to access information at a later time. The website is anonymous and available in seven languages: English, Spanish, Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese), Korean, Russian, Arabic and Haitian-Creole. ACCESS NYC is located at www.nyc.gov/accessnyc. For more information, call **311** and ask for ACCESS NYC.



Staten Island Tenants' Forum Features NYCHA

NYCHA took part in a tenants' forum in Staten Island on April 20. Queens-Staten Island Property Management Borough Director Carolyn Jasper (second from right) joined officials from partner agencies to give information to residents about repairs, housing benefits for seniors, Section 8 and other issues. The forum was led by City Council Member Deborah Rose (second from left) and the Department of Housing Preservation and Development.

Check out Your Neighbors' Artistic Talents!

The 22nd Annual NYCHA Resident Art Show runs from June 6 to June 23. Be sure to check it out at the Rutgers Community Center at 200 Madison Street in Manhattan. The paintings, drawings and sculptures can be viewed on weekdays from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. For more information call **212-306-3306**.

Take a Walk, Get in Shape!



WALK NYC is a free program for New Yorkers of all ages to get fit while enjoying the outdoors. Through a major partnership with Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield, the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation has hired trained walking instructors to lead fitness walks throughout all five boroughs, keeping participants active, exercising and having fun. The walking program has begun and runs through December 18. The walk locations and full schedule can be found on Parks and Recreation's website at nycgovparks.org/sub_things_to_do/programs/walk_nyc.html, or by calling **311**. For more information, e-mail rsvpwalknyc@parks.nyc.gov.

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



The Way You Receive Federal Benefits Will Be Changing

If you receive a monthly check in the mail for Social Security, SSI or any other federal benefit, a major change will take place in less than two years. The federal government has announced that beginning in March 2013, they will not mail checks anymore. Instead, they will offer two choices that are safer, easier and faster than a check:

- **Direct Express Card:** Receive your payment in the form of a "Direct Express" debit card that can be used at any bank teller machine (for cash) or location that accepts credit/debit cards.
- **Direct Deposit:** Have your payment sent electronically to a bank or credit union account that is in your name.

If you do nothing between now and March 2013, you automatically will receive a Direct Express Card in the mail when the new program begins. So, start thinking about which choice you would like to make. For more information, call **800-333-1795**, or visit www.GoDirect.org.

'Say Cheese!' Residents' Pix Featured on New Website



By Howard Silver

Residents at Manhattanville Houses in Manhattan are telling the stories of their lives through photography. And the pictures are featured on a new website dedicated to showcasing residents' creativity – StudioNYCHA.

Residents' artistic output, including photographs, artwork, music and performing arts, usually are enjoyed only by the people who experience them in person at community centers, art and talent shows, senior festivals and other NYCHA events. But StudioNYCHA, launched in

March, brings their talents to the widest possible audience.

The website currently features nearly 80 photographs by pre-teen, teen and senior residents of Manhattanville Houses taken from October 2010 through February 2011, through a special pilot program called Developing Lives. Two dozen residents were provided with cameras, film and 12 weeks of instruction by professional photographers.

"The photography classes helped me look at things around me more closely and to arrange the people in the photograph more carefully," said Dorothy Ballard, whose photograph is shown at left. "This photograph shows my sister and her two children around Thanksgiving."

Developing Lives is planning to expand into two more developments, Fort Independence in the Bronx and Red Hook East in Brooklyn. The program continues to operate in Manhattanville Houses. George Carrano, a retired MTA executive, volunteers to help NYCHA manage the website and the program. One of NYCHA's many public-private partnerships, Developing Lives was financed in part by partnerships with Duggel Visual Solutions and Dell Computers.

To see the Developing Lives photos and other artwork on StudioNYCHA, go to www.studionycha.org. Residents interested in submitting material may contact IT@nycha.nyc.gov.



One of the winning gardens is shown from a previous Citywide Garden Competition.

Show Off Your Green Thumb!

NYCHA's 49th Annual Citywide Garden Competition has kicked off, and this year's competition has two new categories. The "Best New Garden" award will be given to the gardener with the best first-year garden, and the "Best Planter Box Garden" award will go to the gardener with the best planter box. Other returning categories are flower, vegetable and theme gardens, with one citywide winner per category, plus first, second and third prizes in each borough.

Residents must register a garden as competitive at their

property management office to compete for an award. Any gardeners who do not want to compete but still want to receive free garden materials, access to free compost, garden/nature education curriculums and technical assistance should register their gardens as non-competitive.

Registration for the 49th Annual Citywide Garden Competition must be done by July 11. Registration forms can be picked up at property management offices. The winners will be announced in the fall. For more information, call (212) 306-3511.

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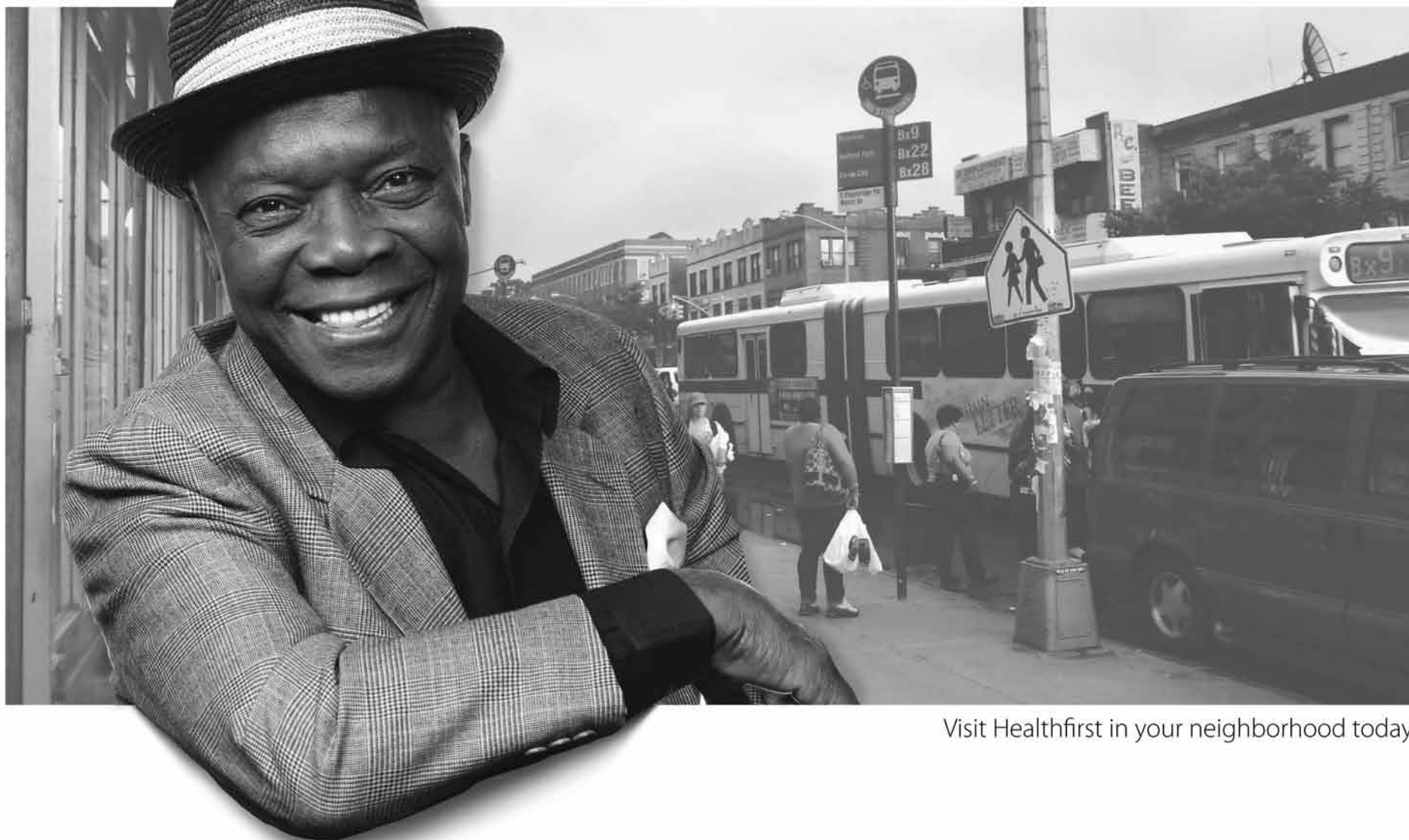
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Proud NYCHA Mom Beams as Son Rises to Top of College Basketball World



Kemba Walker, a resident of Sack-Wern Houses in the Bronx, celebrates after winning the men's college basketball national championship in April. The University of Connecticut player has lived in NYCHA housing his entire life.

When the University of Connecticut men's basketball team won the national championship in April, they were led by Kemba Walker, a resident of Sack-Wern Houses in the Bronx. And his mother, Andrea Walker, could not be prouder.

"I was amazed, it was unbelievable," Ms. Walker told the *Journal*. "Nobody had any faith that they could do it."

The team had lost four of

their last five games before the Big East Conference tournament, but won five games in five days to win the conference title. Then they kept on winning, all the way to the national championship. "After they won the Big East, I thought they would go all the way," said Ms. Walker. "They had a knack for beating teams in other conferences."

Mr. Walker has lived in NYCHA housing his entire

life. He was born when his parents lived in one of the developments that were part of the University Avenue Consolidated Development. When their building was vacated for rehabilitation work more than 10 years ago, the

family transferred to Sack-Wern. Named the NCAA Tournament Most Valuable Player, Big East Tournament Most Valuable Player and a first-team All-American, Mr. Walker is expected to be one of the first players drafted in the NBA draft

in June. Until then, Ms. Walker is living her life as usual. "It's been quiet since the season ended. I'm back doing my everyday thing, going back to work," she said. "But it will get crazy again close to the draft."



Left: Residents of St. Nicholas Houses in Manhattan join volunteers from Home Depot and Ken's Krew on April 12, 2011, to paint a new mural outside the senior center. **Right:** Residents of Manhattanville Houses in Manhattan teamed up with NYCHA staff and volunteers from Sprite on April 18, 2011, to paint the community center as part of the "Brush with Kindness" program. NYCHA Commissioner Margarita López (lower center) joined them to receive a \$25,000 donation from Sprite.

Corporate Partners Help Spruce Up NYCHA Grounds

A couple of NYCHA community centers are looking refreshed after some corporate partners spent time painting and rehabilitating them. On April 12, residents and volunteers from Home Depot and Ken's Krew, a nonprofit that provides vocational training and job placement services to young adults with intellectual and learning disabilities, teamed up to give a makeover to the St. Nicholas Senior Center in Manhattan. Inside the center, rooms got a fresh coat of paint and a small stage, bookcases and shelves were built. Outside areas also were painted, including a new mural, and raised garden beds were installed

in the community garden.

On April 18, the latest effort in the NYCHA/Habitat for Humanity "Brush with Kindness" program was held at the Manhattanville Community Center in Manhattan. Sprite donated \$25,000 and provided volunteers through its Sprite Spark Parks program to help refurbish the center. "Brush with Kindness" teams residents with NYCHA employees and Habitat for Humanity volunteers to paint community centers throughout the city together. "This is a wonderful thing they're doing here," said Manhattanville Resident Association President Ann Morris. "I'm sure our children will benefit from this."

DEVELOPMENTS COMMEMORATE MILESTONE ANNIVERSARIES



Vladeck I and II

Residents and staff gathered in late 2010 to celebrate the 70th anniversary of Vladeck

I and Vladeck II in Manhattan. Among the revelers were Resident Association President Nancy Ortiz, Property Manager Tabia Heywot, Assistant Property Manager Sheila Taylor, Supervisor of Caretakers Paul Dammann, Superintendent Paul D. Crews, Assistant Superintendent Humberto Castro and Assistant Superintendent Sheilah Wilson.



Albany

Albany Houses in Brooklyn commemorated its 60th anniversary in late 2010. Gathered for the occasion

were, from left to right, Aliyah Evans, former Assistant Property Maintenance Supervisor; Marie Bazalais, Assistant Property Manager; Ronald Conliffe, Supervisor of Caretakers; Joanne Campbell, Albany Houses Resident Association 2nd Vice President; Ms. Campbell's granddaughter Ranasia White; Lorna Bovian, former Property Manager; Brenda Allen, Brooklyn Borough Deputy Director; and Derrick Scarboro, Property Maintenance Supervisor.

Berry Houses' anniversary was stated incorrectly in the April issue. It recently celebrated its 60th anniversary.



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Baruch Houses Teen Attains Statewide Honor from Boys & Girls Club of America

By Eric Deutsch

One of NYCHA's own was named New York State Youth of the Year by the Boys & Girls Club of America. Carlos Valdez, Jr., a 17-year old resident of Baruch Houses in Manhattan, received the honor this spring. He made the state competition after getting the same award from the Educational Alliance Teen Center, a local affiliate of the national youth services organization.

Carlos is a tireless advocate for the teen center, known as "The Edgies." He spoke at a City Hall rally in support of the center, and got many of his friends to start going as well to receive help with studying. Carlos also

enjoys working with younger kids at the center. "I started my own peer mentoring group," he said. "I tutor them and help them with their math skills."

Involved in community service since he was in middle school, Carlos says being involved in public service always has been a passion. "I like being a part of something that's bigger than me, especially when I can help someone else do better," he said. "I want to help kids in our community from becoming just another statistic. I needed that help when I was a kid, so I want to provide the same thing."

His activities at "The Edgies" are just the latest effort Carlos

has made to broaden his horizons. He is very involved in his church, took part in a model United Nations program, and recently returned from a three-week cultural immersion program in Spain. "He's a great role model to his 13-year old brother," said Carlos' mother, Gloria Molina. "He works very hard in school."

Carlos still is deciding where he wants to go to college in the fall, although he has a head start. When he graduates from Bard High School Early College in June, he also will have earned an associate's degree. And he has \$2,500 in scholarship money from the Boys & Girls Club awards. He



Baruch Houses resident Carlos Valdez, Jr., (right) stands with New York State Senator Daniel Squadron (Manhattan) and Educational Alliance Teen Center Director Amarilis Perez on the floor of the State Senate after being named the New York State Youth of the Year by the Boys & Girls Club of America.

will take part in the regional competition this summer.

Carlos does know what he wants to do in his career – be an

engineer at NASA and someday go to space. His mother thinks that is well within his reach. "He's my shining star," she said.

Red Hook East Tenant Leader Receives Borough-Wide Tribute



Dorothy Shields proudly displays her award for being named one of Brooklyn's Extraordinary Women by District Attorney Charles Hynes.

By Howard Silver

Dorothy Shields, a Red Hook East Houses resident for more than 60 years who also works for the New York City Housing Authority as a Community Service Aide (CSA), recently received a high honor. She was named one of Brooklyn's Extraordinary Women of 2011 by Brooklyn District Attorney Charles Hynes.

After retiring as a teacher at P.S. 27 in Red Hook, Ms. Shields focused her attention on revitalizing the area by working to bring in several supermarkets, a department store and the Red Hook Justice Center. With a passion for education, she also helped to bring two charter schools, Red Hook Pave Academy, which soon will be built, and Summit Academy, where she is a board member. Ms. Shields began Family Day in Red Hook Houses 14 years ago and it still is

going strong. Through the Resident Association, she sponsored the 2010 Summer Camp at Micco Community Center and scholarships for youth to attend college.

Ms. Shields understands what it's like to be in need. After suffering the loss of her husband in 1966, she and her family received assistance from many caring individuals. "When I got well, I promised to help other people in repayment for the help that I received," she said. "Every day now, I do something for somebody and it keeps me going."

The 78-year old Ms. Shields has been the Resident Association President at Red Hook East for 37 years. Since 1984, she has worked as a CSA in the property management office, where she intakes residents' maintenance requests and creates and sorts work tickets for processing.

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**NYCHA/CUNY
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The deadline to apply for the NYCHA/CUNY Scholarship has been extended to May 31, 2011. There are two types of scholarships, one for residents who are full-time undergraduates at a City University of New York (CUNY) college, and one for residents with disabilities who are enrolled in a CUNY undergraduate program. For more information and an application, go to nyc.gov/nychacunyscholarship.

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Spotlight Shines on NYCHA Talent



KGB, Edenwald (Bronx)



Shamar Dudley, Gowanus (Brooklyn)

NYCHA hosted its Annual Talent Show at the world-famous Apollo Theater on April 16. The competition showcases the singing and dancing talents of NYCHA residents. "Representing Gowanus Houses for over 20 years dancing, it was a great experience coming in second place at our ages on the Apollo stage," said Nicole Percell on behalf of her fellow dancers Sharlene Bethel, Renee Flowers and Joleita Roberts in the group "40 Plus." "We will continue to show our youth that there are a lot of things you can do in housing, and will continue to reach for the stars and not the atmosphere."

Below is a list of all winners and competitors.

Children

1st place:

Shamar Dudley
(Gowanus)

2nd place:

Alondra Contreras
(Forest)

3rd place:

Mia Anjou
(Wise Towers)

Teens

1st place:

KGB (Edenwald)

2nd place:

Rasheeda Brown
(Coney Island)

3rd place:

Aquila Taylor (Red Hook)

Competitor:

Mimi Pregón (Wald)

Competitor:

Mercedes Soto (Straus)

Adults

1st place:

Xpressions
(Wagner)

2nd place:

40 Plus (Gowanus)

3rd place:

Lila Lomax
(Carey Gardens)

Competitor:

Christine Rivera
(Nostrand)

Seniors

1st place:

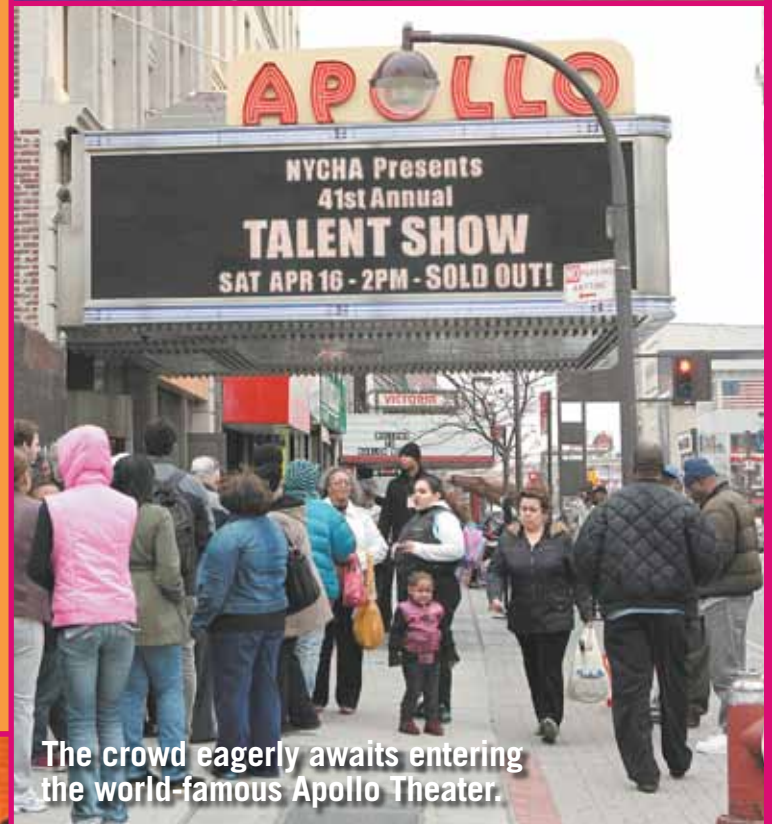
Gene Waiters
(Marcus Garvey)

2nd place:

Sylvia Cunningham
(Todt Hill)

3rd place:

Katie McGhee
(Holmes)



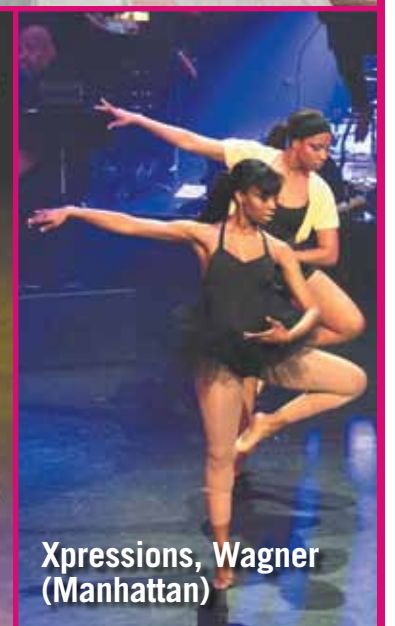
The crowd eagerly awaits entering the world-famous Apollo Theater.



40 Plus, Gowanus (Brooklyn)



Gene Waiters, Marcus Garvey (Brooklyn)



Xpressions, Wagner (Manhattan)

Young Altos, Baritones, Sopranos and Tenors Unite!

The NYCHA Youth Chorus is looking to audition new members during its recruitment drive. NYCHA youth between 12 and 19 years old who enjoy singing and performing and would like to

develop their music skills should call the Department of Community Operations at **212-427-6648** or **212-427-8603**. The NYCHA Youth Chorus is based out of Taft Houses in Manhattan.

Comments?

Questions? E-mail

Journal@nycha.nyc.gov.

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3569 Broadway
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702 St. Nicholas Ave.
(@ W. 145th St.)
212-281-0444

Lower East Side
120 Delancey St.
(@ Essex St.)
646-395-3384

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347-627-6444

Brownsville
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(@ Rockaway Pkwy.)
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93-21 Church Ave.
(@ E. 96th St.)
718-345-1806

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(@ Morris Ave.)
347-498-1157

*2901 3rd Ave.
(@ 151st St.)
718-402-MPCS

308 E. 149th St.
(Btwn Morris Ave.
& Courtland Ave.)
718-993-3900

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1481 Beach Channel Dr.
718-868-0269

Jamaica

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718-297-MPCS

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