

Resident's Digest

MESSAGE FROM THE PUBLIC HOUSING DIRECTOR



Happy New Year to you and your families!

I look forward to the challenges brought by the New Year. 2009 will be an exciting year for the agency and hopefully for you as well.

We're moving forward with the HOPE VI redevelopment program and based upon the participation at the recent community meetings, I am sure that we're heading in the right direction.

Your safety remains a high priority for us, so the Crime Reduction office needs your help. So help us to help you.

We also want you to help with water conservation. There are many ways everyone in your household can help. Start today!

Attention to the needs of our residents is one of our core business values, so please provide us with any feedback.

Sincerely,

Alex Ballina

Public housing resident becomes a homeowner

Veronica Jones is enjoying her new home, the reward of her hard work, commitment, and determination to make her homeownership dream come true.

Jones is a recent graduate of MDPHA's Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program. She enrolled in the five-year program in 2002 with a scheduled completion date of 2007, but her contract term was extended an additional year to help her complete the final goal of homeownership. Her goals were to be free of public assistance, find a better job, and repair her credit. Jones went on to reach her goals and received her FSS escrow account check.

She spotted her dream home in the newspaper. The three bedroom/two bath house located on NW 45 Street. The property was part of the County's Infill Housing program.

Jones, who describes herself as a "people person" is currently employed as a bus operator with Miami-Dade Transit. Another bonus: she is close to her job and didn't have to transfer her three children from their school.

When asked what advice she would give to other FSS participants, Jones thoughtfully replied: "You have to really go after your goal; don't let negative people get in your way, and never give up."



Reducing crime in the community

Making our public housing communities safer for families continues to be a high priority.

Through a coordinated effort led by local law enforcement, the goal of the initiative is to reduce crime in and around the public housing properties as well as to provide long-term solutions to strengthen positive relationships between residents, site managers, police, and the community.

There's been a noticeable drop in crime as a result of increased collaboration among Miami-Dade Police, City of Miami Police, Homestead Police, Department of Probation and Parole, Narcotics Task Force and MDPHA. This has been achieved by conducting coordinated sweeps and implementing the Stay Away Orders issued by the Miami-



Dade State Attorney's office.

Additionally, a 24-hour anonymous hotline was launched so that public housing residents can report criminal activity.

"It's great when public housing residents, police and social service providers can collaborate together to reduce crime, so I would invite residents to join our effort,"

said Jeffrey C. Gorley, crime initiative coordinator.

Remember, we need your help. If you see or hear suspicious activity in your development, pick up the phone and call the hotline at 305-638-6308 or the crime initiative coordinator at 786-255-0545 or send an email to reportcrimeMDPHA@miamidade.gov. For emergencies, always call 911.

Community Service in honor of Dr. King



In tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the national focus on community service, volunteers lent helping hands at three public housing developments during the holiday weekend.

On Saturday, volunteers with Hands on Miami gave a long-needed facelift at Liberty Square with new landscaping and exterior painting while another group of volunteers from Florida International University picked up litter along the Miami River shoreline and helped residents at Robert King High Towers.

On Monday, youth from the AmeriCorps/South Florida Urban Ministries and City Year AmeriCorps partnered together to celebrate the day with the residents at Edison Plaza by donating two hand-painted benches with the theme of peace and helped to plant a new herb garden.

Special thanks to all of the residents, resident councils, and agency staff who participated in these community events!

Get employment help on the road...

South Florida Workforce is now mobile thanks to their fully air-conditioned and handicap accessible vehicle equipped with computer workstations with satellite internet, interactive SMART board for instructional purposes, and state-of-the-art audio visual system. The mobile service is available for updating resumes, conducting on-site interviews as well as testing and assessment services. The current calendar for the mobile unit is available on the South Florida Workforce website www.southfloridaworkforce.com.

Getting help has never been easier!



Environmentally friendly maintenance



Want to do your part to save the planet? Read these green tips from a recent *HUD's EcoWise* newsletter on water conservation that you can start doing today!

- Check for toilet leaks by placing some food coloring in the tank. If color appears in the bowl without flushing, you have a leak. Fixing that leak can save 400 gallons per month.
- Don't let water run when shaving, brushing your teeth, or

washing your face. Just turning the water on when you need it saves over 3,000 gallons per year.

- Avoid unnecessary flushing by disposing of tissues, other paper and food waste in the trash.
- For baths, close the drain before turning on the faucet. To balance the initial burst of cold water, add hot water as needed.
- Store drinking water in the refrigerator rather than letting the tap run for a cold glass of water.

HOPE VI Update

MDPHA has selected McCormack Baron Salazar Inc., a leading developer of mixed-income urban neighborhoods, in a joint venture with Reliance Housing Foundation and Urban Strategies, to develop HOPE VI - Phase II. There will be 354 units, of which 177 will be replacement public housing units.

In January, former Scott-Carver residents and other community stakeholders participated in a series of design meetings and presentations hosted by the developer. Residents are strongly encouraged to stay involved with HOPE VI activities by attending the monthly meetings.

Residents are also encouraged to complete a new Community and Supportive Services (CSS) survey form by contacting the CSS staff at the HOPE VI office located at the Merline Matthews Community Center, 5200 NW 22 Avenue. Call for an appointment at 305-633-2093 or send an email to HOPE6CSS@miamidade.gov



MBS staff conducted several design meetings at the community center.

RESOURCE CORNER: IMPORTANT NUMBERS !



Family Self Sufficiency Program:	305-644-5280
GSA Infill Housing Program:	305-375-4400
HOPE VI CSS Office:	305-633-2093
Crime Reduction Hotline:	305-638-6308
Crime Initiative Coordinator:	786-255-0545
South Florida Workforce:	305-594-7615

"The art of progress is to preserve order amid change and to preserve change amid order."

— Alfred North Whitehead