



Mutual Housing Association of Southwestern Connecticut, Inc.

Spring, 2005

Board of Directors

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Debbie Joyner, President
Patricia Williams, Vice President
Carol Davis, Secretary
Samuel Roberts, Treasurer

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Gloria Rivera
Herbert Sutton
Carolyn Welhous
Michael Wiederlight
John Wooten

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MUTUAL HOUSING ELECTS FIRST RESIDENT BOARD PRESIDENT!



MHA is pleased to announce Debbie Joyner as the first Mutual Housing resident to be elected as President of its Board of Directors. Debbie comments, "It's a real honor to be a part of such a great organization and I'm looking forward to the challenge." Previously, the position as Board President was held by Ruth Price who said, "Debbie will make a great leader for MHA. She has been part of the organization since the beginning and experienced the growth and challenges of the organization. I believe

that the residents of MHA developments should be proud to have her as the President of the Board of Directors." According to Larry Kluetsch, MHA Executive Director, "The Mutual Housing concept is based on resident participation and leadership and Debbie is the kind of person whose leadership skills and spirit of cooperation exemplifies this concept. Time and time again, Debbie has proven her commitment and dedication to the organization and I am delighted to have her serve as our Board President."

Debbie has been a resident at Parkside Gables and Trinity Park Mutual Housing on the West Side of Stamford, Connecticut where she is active on a variety of resident led committees and local community activities. She has held resident leadership positions including on the MHA Board of Directors serving as Vice President and on the Executive Committee. Debbie has traveled throughout the U.S. to receive training in resident leadership and community development through the nationwide programs of the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation's Training Institute.

Debbie works as an Executive Administrative Assistant at Towers Perrin, a management consulting firm in Valhalla, New York where she has served on the company's Diversity Committee and High Performance Team. Debbie has volunteered as a spiritual and self development counselor for incarcerated women at the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility in New York.

Debbie is working toward a degree in Behavioral Psychology from Iona College. She received a degree in Office Systems Technology from Chesterfield/Marlboro Technical College in Cheraw, South Carolina where she was a member of Phi Beta Lambda. As a high school student she was a member of the National Honor Society.

Debbie looks forward to working with residents, staff, board members and our community and funding partners, and appreciates their ongoing dedication and commitment to the Association. 2005 Board Officers include Patricia Williams as Vice President, Samuel Roberts as Treasurer and Carol Davis as Secretary. Board Directors include: Christine Abraham, Sanford Anderson, Larry Bentley, Leticia Colon, Janet Davis, Nicole Dumas, Sadie Green-Carter, Lynn Haig, Gloria Morgan, Ruth Price, Daisy Quinones, Gloria Rivera, Herbert Sutton, Carolyn Welhous, Michael Wiederlight, and John Wooten.

MHA JOINS TWO NATIONAL NEIGHBORWORKS® INITIATIVES



Debbie Joyner, Board President, and, Carol Davis, Board Secretary, taking a dinner break with MHA Staff Larry Kluetsch, Bob Owens, and Carol Sydnor while attending NeighborWorks® Training Institute.

MHA has been selected to become a member of two national eighborhood Reinvestment Corporation NeighborWorks® Initiatives, the Campaign for Home Ownership and Multi-Family Initiatives. During February, MHA staff and board members traveled to Denver, Colorado to learn about these two important initiatives at the NeighborWorks® Training Institute.

The "Campaign for Home Ownership." is the largest national initiative of NeighborWorks® network organizations to bring families of modest means into the economic mainstream by helping them achieve homeownership.

Since its inception in 1993, the Campaign has helped over 81,000 households nationwide in becoming homeowners. The Campaign builds upon MHA's track record of success in helping low and moderate income households become first-time home owners in Fairfield County, one of the most expensive housing markets in the nation. Through its partnership with lenders, government agencies, and charitable foundations, MHA is able to offer affordable homes to purchase, home buyer education, brokerage services, and financing all in a one-stop-shop approach. Over the past 3 years, MHA has assisted over 100 to become first time home buyers and started 1,500 others on their way with education and counseling.

MHA was also selected to join Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation's Multi-Family Initiative. The Multi-family Initiative is a national asset management program of NeighborWorks® network organizations that provides capital funding, technical assistance in asset management and training opportunities for staff.

The purpose of the initiative is to assist organizations like MHA better manage and oversee the affordable housing units they own. Nationally NeighborWorks® organizations operate over 40,000 affordable units. In Fairfield County, MHA's resident organizing and property management staff work with 358 units at 8 properties serving over 1000 residents.

Residents, young and old, came out for Maplewood Court's Spring Clean-up on Saturday, April 9, 2005.



Future Cleanup Schedules are as follows:

Yale Street Commons 4/23/05 (for sure)
5/21/05 (planned)

Parkside Gables 4/30/05

Trinity Park 5/7/05

The trees and flowers are in full bloom at Yale Street Commons



An Innovative Housing Partnership to End Homelessness

This article is a reprint from the Laurel House News, autumn, 2004



The Partners Supported Housing Program is Laurel House's latest initiative to relieve homelessness in Stamford by providing safe, affordable housing to single adults with serious mental illness. Laurel House has a long history of providing supportive housing services, but this is the first time we have joined forces with another organization in this field.

With approval of a \$454,000 grant from HUD, jointly submitted by the two agencies last year, the Mutual Housing Association of Southwestern Connecticut (MHA) has become our first partner in the ongoing effort to end homelessness in Stamford. Of course, we always had our members for partners. They help manage the programs by answering phones in our housing office, maintaining the apartment buildings and grounds, operating a food co-op for other residents and taking calls for our evening and weekend Warm Line program. Now, together with our members and our colleagues from MHA, Laurel House has embraced a new model for the provision of supportive housing services to people with mental illness. The Mutual Housing Association has drawn on its considerable expertise in construction and property management to renovate and maintain the units of housing. Laurel House is providing the program supports, while its members engage in the work and cooperation necessary to transform a living space into a community. Hence the program name - "Partners."

The beauty of this partnership is that it allows all parties to concentrate on the things they do best, and thereby provide an overall better quality of living experience. Three-hundred and forty-five thousand dollars of the HUD grant was used by MHA to purchase and rehabilitate two residential buildings near the soon-to-be converted Fairfield Court public housing project. MHA will be the landlords for the property and as such will collect the rents and provide the building and maintenance services. This will free the Laurel House staff to function in their best capacity as the providers of supportive services: reaching out to potential candidates for housing, helping formerly homeless people adjust to the demands of apartment living, helping them obtain financial resources and facilitating roommate relations. All of this will depend on the involvement and participation of our members for its success.

With the completion of final renovations this summer, the program now houses 13 previously homeless individuals. The programs focus will be to connect tenants with appropriate community resources, foster independence and support them in the achievement of their recovery goals, including employment and higher education.

We are finding that the collaborative approach of this program is a great way of providing housing and supportive services to homeless people with mental illness. Our other partners in this project include Round Hill Community Church, Stamford Housing Authority and United Way of Stamford. We are currently engaged in efforts to develop more housing in Stamford along the lines of this partnership model.

WELCOME KEBA VANTERPOOL



We are pleased to introduce Keba Vanterpool who joined the staff this winter as a Realtor for MHA Realty. Keba was born and raised in Stamford and is a resident at Parkside Gables Mutual Housing. Through a MHA sponsored program, Keba studied the Principals and Practice of Real Estate at Century 21 and secured her Realtor's license.

Keba has a background in elementary education and when not involved in real estate, she is a Substitute Teacher for the City of Stamford Board of Education. Previously she worked as a Math Instructor for the 21st Century Community Learning Center. She also worked as a Site Coordinator for the Domus Foundation. Keba has a Bachelor in General Studies with a concentration in Human Development and Family Relations from the University of Connecticut. She is a member of the National Dean's List. In her spare time, Keba writes poetry and children's stories, and is a member of the Stamford Center for the Arts resident theatre group, the Perry Players.

Keba is based in the Stamford MHA Office and is assisting clients throughout Fairfield County. She looks forward to meeting and working with clients and can be reached at (203) 359-6940 Ext. 20219. Welcome Keba!

Congratulations!

Congratulations to the following Mutual Housing residents who are college bound, currently attending college or graduating!

Paul Torres of Yale Street will be attending Suffolk University in Boston Massachusetts . He is graduating from Fairfield Prep. He is the son of Milagros Seguinot.

Nathaniel Martinez of Maplewood Court will be attending either Eastern Connecticut State University or Southern Connecticut State University or the University of Bridgeport. He is graduating from Westport High School and he is the son of Elizabeth Santana

Braulio Peguero of Yale Street Commons continues to attend Bowdin College in Brunswick, Maine

Ashlee Owens of Parkside Gables will be attending the University of Maine in Bangor Maine. She is graduating from Stamford High School and she is the daughter of Robert & Evelyn Owens.

Efrain Brown of Trinity Park will be graduating in June from Gateway Community College in New Haven. He is the son of Mr. Richard Brown and the late Sylvester Brown of Trinity Park.

Torrey Wood of Trinity Park is currently enrolled at Gibbs College in Norwalk

Again, congratulations to all MHA residents who are pursuing higher education.

If any resident is college bound, attending college or graduating from college and has not been listed, please call Greg Dunn at 359-6940 Ext. 20227 so that this important accomplishment can be acknowledged.



**Mutual Housing Association of
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