

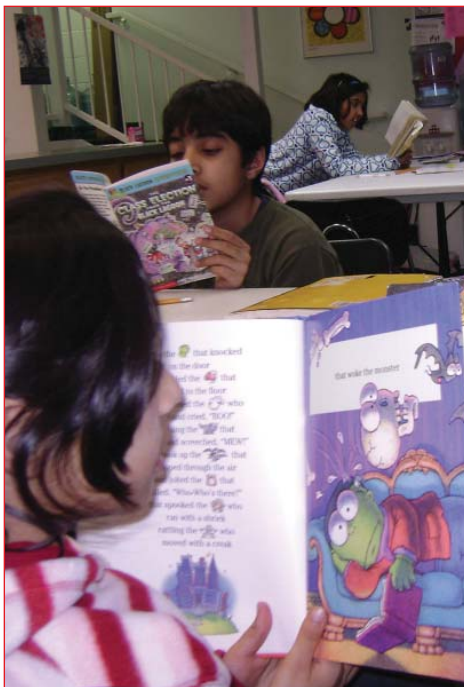


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#60939



Wexford Reading Challenge

At Wexford Manor, WHDC staff began a new educational program to promote literacy development among the young residents who attend our Community Resource Center (CRC). Introduced in February, the “Wexford Challenge” is designed to increase student reading comprehension and writing skills. The Challenge requires students to read 20 minutes each day and then write a summary of what they have read. When the student turns in a summary, he or she receives a sticker for each 20-minute reading session. Once a student has completed 20 summaries, he or she is allowed to pick a prize from a “grab bag” and the group receives a sticker. When the entire group of students enrolled at Wexford Manor CRC reaches 20 stickers, they will earn a pizza party.

“When we initiated the program some students were reluctant readers and fought against it,” said Center Director Shereena Rodney. “Later, we learned that students, such as fourth grader Rashaad, refused to read because of his inability to grasp the reading material. Every day we encourage him to read on his own or with a member of the Center staff. Staff members and volunteers took turns working one-on-one with Rashaad, assisting him in writing summaries of the books he reads.”

In less than two weeks, Rashaad transformed from “the reluctant reader” to an “eager reader,” as he continued to participate in the Challenge. Now, as soon as Rashaad enters the Center, he runs to a staff member requesting to read a book. He waits impatiently for others to finish so he can have his turn to read out loud. Within five minutes of arriving, he’s asking, “Ms. Shereena can I read to you now?”

Strong literacy skills are the foundation of learning in any discipline. By offering a program in which children of all ages are able to participate, both individually and as a group, WHDC has set another stone in the foundation of this community.



SPRING 2008



An Open Door Concert

Pianist David Nevue Headlines May 16th Fundraiser

Nevue promises an evening of original and classic pieces to benefit WHDC's affordable housing efforts in Northern Virginia.

“An Open Door Concert” will feature the musical stylings of David Nevue. A self-taught pianist and composer from Springfield, Oregon, Nevue cites a variety of

musical influences including George Winston, Chopin, and the progressive rock band Rush. Nevue recorded his first album of piano works in 1991 and has since released nine more CDs, including “Overcome,” named the “Best Instrumental Piano Album of 2005” by the LifeStyle Music Awards. He has shared the stage with David Lanz, Peter Kater, Suzanne Ciani, Wayne Gratz, and dozens of other pianists during his travels. Kathy Parsons of Solo Piano Productions describes the appeal of Nevue’s musical

compositions as “a wonderful way of taking a simple melody line and filling it with meaning.”

This special evening will include vignettes of residents’ stories and performances by area youth musicians.



Friday, May 16, 2008

Centreville United Methodist Church

Tickets: RSVPConcert@whdc.org or
 (703) 642-3830 x218

Listen to David Nevue’s music at www.davidnevue.com

Construction Begins at Beverly Park!



Located in Alexandria, Beverly Park Apartments has long been one of the most affordable market-rate communities in the surrounding area. Originally built in the 1940s, this multi-family property includes 3 garden-style buildings with 41 units.

In October 2005, WHDC purchased the property with financial assistance from the City of Alexandria and Housing Partnership Network, with plans to turn Beverly Park into an affordable housing community, offering units to individuals earning 50 and 60 percent of the Area Median Income or less.

Planned renovations will improve the physical condition of the building as well as raise the quality of life for residents. The redevelopment work will include new windows, entrances, and full interior renovations.

The renovation will change the current mix from all one-bedroom units to 7 studios, 18 one-bedrooms, 6 two-bedrooms, and 2 three-bedrooms, reducing the units from 41 to 33.

Financing through the federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program, as well as low-interest loans from federal, state, and local sources will ensure long-term affordability and stable rents at this property, helping to meet the increasing demand for low- to moderate-income housing in Alexandria.

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Notes from Shelley

The current economic climate has made funding for affordable housing more challenging, to say the least. Federal funds have dwindled in recent years, and now state and local governments are facing deficits for the first time in a long while.

The manner in which we conduct business must, as they say, "change with the times." This means that local and state governments, as well as nonprofit and for-profit developers, are also seeking flexible solutions that will preserve and expand the stock of affordable housing in our region. Our success will depend on how well we adapt during these difficult times.

We are excited about the challenges before us because they will provide new opportunities that will stretch our imaginations and help us to grow. We will be seeking collaborative partnerships to expand our scale and position us more strongly with investors and funders. These partners will be ones whose missions align with ours. We are looking for new ways to increase the efficiency of our operations and to leverage our experience as a means of further diversifying our revenue sources.

For 34 years, WHDC has set out to provide affordable housing for residents in Northern Virginia. The current downturn in our economy makes this mission more important than ever.

Shelley S. Murphy
President/CEO

Assessing Residents' Needs

Times change. We all know that. The mix and needs of the residents in our communities also change. Gender, age, ethnicity are all in flux as people move in, stay a while, and move out. Children grow. Adults discover new opportunities. In order to be effective in delivering services to residents, we need to assess the validity of the services we offer on a regular basis.

"Here at WHDC, we want to keep our finger on the pulse of our communities," explained Susan Parrott, Director of Resident Services. "That means understanding both the current needs of our residents and the assets available to them in the surrounding area. This dual-pronged approach will help to improve the effectiveness and the efficiency of WHDC programming."

Throughout 2008, WHDC will engage in a strategic review of its residents, communities, and program offerings. Part of this review will examine areas in which WHDC Resident Services can grow to meet the basic needs of our residents, such as academic, professional, and personal development, and the specialized needs of seniors and persons with disabilities. We also aim to provide opportunities to facilitate well-being and enrichment, such as exploring the creative arts, physical activities, and community activism and volunteerism.

When the assessment of services is completed, WHDC will then determine which of our current offerings are needed, what needs to change, and the resources needed to successfully support the residents in our communities. 🏠

Thank You!

COMPASS & Greater DC Cares: Volunteer MBAs, working through the COMPASS program of Greater DC Cares, began a 6-month Board Development project in January. Led by John Nolan, the team surveyed the Board of Directors and facilitated work sessions to determine strategic direction and capacity-building needs.

Herndon Brownies: Baked by hand! Coppermine Place I & II residents were served a first class Holiday Party by a local Brownie troop. A Coppermine resident's daughter and granddaughter are part of the troop and have arranged this seasonal party for the past two years.



Faith Communities: 5 x \$75 = FUN! Franconia UMC, Immanuel UMC, Graham Road UMC, Annandale UMC, and Lincolnia UMC joined to support WHDC's annual ice skating party for the children at our Community Resource Centers. In a Lenten service project, UMC youth served as volunteer chaperones.

ExxonMobil Internship: Emily Duda, a Human Development major at Virginia Tech, will serve as our Community Partnerships Intern for the summer, working with Amanda House, Volunteer & Community Partnerships Manager.

WHDC Now Takes Online Donations!

To make a donation by **Credit Card**: Visit our website and follow the Ways to Help links to find the **Donate Now** button for WHDC on **GuideStar.org**.

Or Write a **Check** Payable to: Wesley Housing Development Corporation
5515 Cherokee Avenue, Suite 200, Alexandria, VA 22312

Name: _____

Address: _____

Enclosed is my tax-deductible gift in the amount of \$ _____

Fannie Mae Foundation's Help the Homeless:

WHDC enjoyed another terrific year thanks to our faith partners and generous sponsorships from Arent Fox LLP; The Richman Group Affordable Housing Corporation; SunAmerica Affordable Housing Partners, Inc.; and Reed Smith LLP.

2009 Proposed Federal Budget: Housing Cuts



- ✗ Cut the number of housing vouchers that help very poor people pay their rent by 100,000.
- ✗ Cut the budget for housing for poor elderly people by 27%.
- ✗ Cut the budget for housing for people with disabilities.
- ✗ Cut the fund for repair and maintenance of public housing and eliminate funding to repair public housing that is damaged by natural disasters.
- ✗ Cut the lead hazard reduction funds.
- ✗ Cut the block grants to cities and states for housing and community development programs.
- ✗ Cut low-income energy assistance.
- ✗ Eliminate the HUD rural housing program.

Note: Homeless assistance grants and funding for people with AIDS would be flat funded.

Search with GoodSearch.Com and Earn Dollars for WHDC!

Every time you search the Internet or make an online purchase at one of their partner merchants, **GoodSearch** (powered by Yahoo!) will make a donation to WHDC. Just make **GoodSearch** your search engine and designate **Wesley Housing Development Corporation of Northern Virginia** as your charity.



Wesley Housing Welcomes New Real Estate Development Staff



Wesley Housing welcomes **Kamilah Parker McAfee** as Director of Real Estate Development. Ms. McAfee most recently served as a Development Associate for Forest City Washington, supporting several large scale, mixed-use projects in the Baltimore-Washington-Richmond region. Prior to her employment with Forest City Washington, McAfee was the Director of Public Finance at the District of Columbia Housing Finance Agency (DCHFA), overseeing the

origination, underwriting, structuring and closing of tax-exempt multi-family mortgage revenue bond transactions in the production of over 2,000 low-income housing tax credit units in the District.

Troy D. Cropper, Wesley Housing's newest Senior Project Manager, previously served as Senior Development Officer for DCHFA, where he underwrote multi-family loan transactions involving Federal Mortgage Insurance, Low-Income Housing Tax-Exempt Bonds, and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits financing, overseeing the development process from pre-construction to lease-up.

Milestones

Language Is No Barrier for Nuro



When she came to America at the age of 9 from Kenya, Strawbridge Square resident **Nuro** (15) did not know a word of English. Determined to learn, Nuro explained that she "listened and then listened even more," progressing through 4th, 5th, and 6th grade in special classes for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).

By the 7th grade, Nuro had learned so much that she was bored and frustrated with her modified coursework. Despite the fact that she was regularly helping her classmates, when Nuro requested a transfer into regular classes, she was met with resistance. A private person by nature, she was unsure who to go to or how to express her frustration. She decided to put her message down on paper.

With the help of Lincolnia Community Resource Center Director **Katie Bruder**, Nuro wrote a letter to read aloud to her mother, school counselor, and teachers, carefully articulating the reasons she should be moved into more advanced classes.

"For the first time I was telling everyone how I felt," Nuro said. "I was excited and felt so good inside."

As a result of her own advocacy effort, she was switched to new classes in January. Nuro is pleased now that her work is more challenging and she can study alongside her friends. Now, she can continue to pursue her goal of going to college and, some day soon, becoming a lawyer. 🏠

Hard Work Really Does Pay Off

Alex (17) epitomizes the ideal student. He works hard, has flourished in his studies, and spends his extracurricular time playing the viola, participating in league bowling, and creating his own artwork. All of his efforts have finally paid off with an award he was not expecting: a four-year, full scholarship to attend The College of William and Mary. Alex has been a role model for his community at Strawbridge Square and will most certainly be an asset to his new college campus. 🏠