

# *Rochester Housing Authority* **times**

## **2019 in Review**

**Dear Residents, Participants and Community Partners,**

Autumn days are here again, and it's time to reflect on our accomplishments this year and look forward to 2020 goals for our residents and community. This edition of the RHA Times highlights Resident Commissioner Florine Cummings' ambitions for the Resident Councils, completed and current construction projects, tips on preparing your home from the cold weather and much more!

As we make this transition into fall, we will continue to focus on our mission of Opening

Doors to Brighter Futures for All. From everyone on the Shared Leadership Team, may your homes be filled with warmth and love during this holiday season. We hope to see you at all our upcoming fall/winter events and family activities!

Cheers, The Shared Leadership Team: *Acting Executive Director Mr. Shawn Burr; Interim Deputy Executive Director Ms. Cynthia Herriott; and Interim Director of Finance Mr. Sinclair Carrington.*

*Executive Briefings*

### ***Calling (and Texting) all Residents & Participants!***

Get ready for better, faster and more efficient communication from RHA!

We are excited to inform you about our new digital alert system, we've set-up to bring you instant updates on important service and program information, as well as resident events and activities, right to your phone and email.

To receive instant updates from RHA through this new alert system, please make sure we have your current email address, home phone number and mobile number by calling your Housing Specialist today.

To learn more about this and other exciting announcements, visit [www.rochesterhousing.org](http://www.rochesterhousing.org) or [www.facebook.com/rochesterhousing](https://www.facebook.com/rochesterhousing).

**Administration  
Headquarters**  
675 W. Main St.,  
Rochester, NY 14611  
585-697-3600

**Application  
Processing Center**  
270 Lake Ave.,  
Rochester, NY 14608  
585-697-7180

**Resident Services  
Center**  
495 Upper Falls Blvd.,  
Rochester, NY 14605  
585-232-1112



**ROCHESTER  
Housing Authority**

## *Resident Spotlight Shines on Resident Commissioner Florine Cummings*

Being a resident of RHA since 2007, Florine Cummings has a passion for the residents and believes in the mission of RHA. After working a long career in the healthcare industry, Cummings decided to become a Resident Commissioner and served from 2008 to 2012. In 2018, she returned as a commissioner, elected by her fellow residents. She continues to be an advocate for her neighbors and all RHA residents and participants.

Cummings saw the need for resident advocates and spearheaded an initiative to bring back helpful information from Housing and Urban Development conferences to the resident advisory board. She is very proud to have implemented resident council training throughout her two terms and is an active participant in the Resident Workers' program – collaborating with the facilities department to keep the main areas of her building clean and welcoming. She has also been instrumental in establishing Tenant's on Patrol (TOP) at several RHA sites.



"I would like to see residents become involved in conferences to equip them with the tools to be successful council members," says Cummings. "We need to increase communication to the residents and have them get involved with their resident councils."

Resident participation and building working relationships with housing authority staff helps ensure residents' needs are heard and supported. Cummings' goal is to help properties without a Resident Council to reestablish them, so that every resident feels they have access to necessary resources and a constructive way to share thoughts and opinions.

If you are a public housing resident and are interested in serving on a resident council, visit [www.rochesterhousing.org/resident-council-a-voice-for-public-housing-tenants](http://www.rochesterhousing.org/resident-council-a-voice-for-public-housing-tenants).

## *Resident Council Nominations Now Open*

Do you want to be a voice for your public housing property?

Nominations for Resident Council are now being accepted through Tuesday, October 15. Please add your name to the nomination sheet located in your building's management office for one of the open positions: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and sergeant-at-arms.

If there are five or more residents interested in serving (at least one for each position), we will hold formal elections. Elections would be held Thursday, October 24. Please note that all nominees/officers must be residents in good standing to serve.

# Events at RHA

Our residents and families have a fun calendar filled with a variety of exciting events and educational opportunities this season.

Recent events included our Resident Services Department's Annual Homeownership Fair, the Strong Families Extravaganza summer party, Annual Resident Senior Picnic, and annual School Backpack Giveaway put on by Hudson Ridge Tower's Resident Council.

## Upcoming Events:

**DECEMBER 4** – Our Resident Senior Holiday Party will be held this year at the Harro East Ballroom in Rochester, N.Y. If you are a public housing senior resident with RHA you can RSVP for this event by calling the Resident Services office at 585-232-1112. Please RSVP by November 4.

**DECEMBER 12** – The Annual Toy Giveaway with Santa and Mrs. Claus at Resident Services. If you're a public housing resident or participant and would like to attend please RSVP by calling the Resident Services Office at 585-232-1112. Please RSVP by November 4.

Want to stay in-the-loop on upcoming events and educational opportunities? Follow us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/rochesterhousing](http://www.facebook.com/rochesterhousing) stay informed on all the latest news and happenings.



## FREE Health Clinics Available!

Jordan Health is now hosting clinics at Glenwood Gardens and Kennedy Tower. Both clinics provide primary and specialty care services that are open to everyone in the community!

To make an appointment or to learn more, call one of the locations listed at the right.

If you do not currently have health insurance, Jordan Health will work with you to create a payment plan that is manageable for you and your family.

### JORDAN HEALTH AT GLENWOOD GARDENS

41 Kestrel Street  
Rochester, NY 14613  
Tel: 585-423-5837

Hours at Glenwood Gardens:  
Monday – Friday  
8 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.

### JORDAN HEALTH AT KENNEDY TOWER

666 S. Plymouth Avenue  
Rochester, NY 14608  
Tel: 585-423-5836

Hours at Kennedy Tower:  
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday  
and Friday  
8 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.

## *New Process for Voluntary Moves Using a Housing Choice Voucher*

As of September 1, 2019, the Leasing Operations Department updated our voluntary moving process for HCV/Section 8 participants. This change will allow Housing Choice Voucher participants to begin the housing search without terminating their current lease.

RHA will continue to make housing payments on your current unit until a new lease has been signed. Please note: this does not apply to moves as a result of a failed inspection or owner-initiated termination of tenancy (involuntary moves).

If you have any questions, visit our website at [www.rochesterhousing.org/participants-interested-in-moving](http://www.rochesterhousing.org/participants-interested-in-moving).

## *Leasing Operations Department has Gone Digital!*

To streamline processes and provide more personalized and efficient services to our valued residents, we are going digital!

Our Leasing Operations and Public Housing Departments are moving towards document scanning, which will allow secure, file retrieval at our fingertips.

This new system means faster filing and quicker response times for residents, with documents instantly accessible, right from the computer.

## *HCV Participant Spotlight: Jacqueline Lightle*

**From tenant to landlord – Jacqueline Lightle has hope, no matter what life throws her way.**

After giving birth to a beautiful baby then losing her fiancé in a car accident, Ms. Lightle felt lost and didn't know what to do. Ironically, during that time she was accepted into the public housing program. Being a new single mother, the resources within the program created opportunities and allowed Jacqueline to 'save up for a rainy day.' Throughout the program, she had mentors to guide her in moving towards the next step in life.



Jacqueline Lightle (right) with her daughter Akiyah Kelley (left).

Unfortunately, a few years later, she was injured at work and was put on disability. Faced with another life challenge, Lightle did not know what to do. Kathleen Murphy, a staff member at RHA, pushed Lightle to the next step: homeownership. After many years of saving, Lightle decided to search for a house for her and her child. Shortly after, Lightle bought a house and promised Murphy that she would give back to her community.

Currently, Lightle owns three houses and participates in the RHA Section 8 Rental Assistance Program. Having experienced the program first-hand, Lightle assists and guides other RHA landlords when it comes to setting up their homes to in accordance with the Section 8 standards.

"I believe that RHA's purpose is to help and encourage people," says Lightle. "They give you the opportunity to better yourself and build your own empire."

RHA inspires individuals to move from public housing assistance to homeownership, and even to becoming landlords. Lightle continues to keep her promise of helping her community, whether by encouraging single mothers to be homeowners or guiding RHA landlords through processes and protocols. The opportunities are endless, and she aspires to better herself and her neighborhood.

To learn more about leasing your unit to an RHA participant or becoming an RHA landlord, visit: [www.rochesterhousing.org/landlords](http://www.rochesterhousing.org/landlords).



# Construction Projects in Progress

Many projects are underway and pending, with improvements being made to our public housing properties for residents across the city of Rochester. Here are a few construction highlights:



**Harriet Tubman Estates:** The Harriet Tubman Estates will have all new aluminum double-pane insulated windows installed throughout every building. This project will begin in the next few months. Residents will no longer have problems with their windows being inefficient and hard to open.



**Parliament Arms:** The complex at Parliament Arms will have all-new exterior doors installed very soon. Earlier this summer, the residents were able to vote on the color of their choice for these doors, and the color 'plunge' was the winner by one vote. This shade of green will match the existing construction very well and give the façade a nice fresh facelift for residents and those who pass by the building.



**Scattered Sites Roofs:** The Capital Projects department has identified five sites that will have all new roofing, trim, gutters and downspouts completed this spring. Currently, there are seven additional sites that are in the process of receiving new roofing. This work will protect the interior of the buildings and improve their appearance.

## Recently Completed Capital Projects

RHA is excited to share the completion of several construction and maintenance projects from the past several months, including Glenwood Gardens and the Hudson Ridge Exterior Improvement Project.

**Scattered Site Porch Replacements:** The two-story porch renovation, located on one of RHA's scattered site properties, has just been completed. This project was constructed using maintenance-free materials and new vinyl windows, and includes a finished interior of the second-floor porch. Ten more residences will be experiencing porch renovations in the upcoming weeks, as more contracts have been awarded.



**Hudson Ridge Tower:** In addition to new windows at the Harriet Tubman Estates, Hudson Ridge Tower just had more than 700 windows repaired. Many parts were replaced with new ones to make the current sashes operate smoother and to improve weatherization. Hudson Ridge Tower residents, now too, will feel more comfortable with these adjustments.



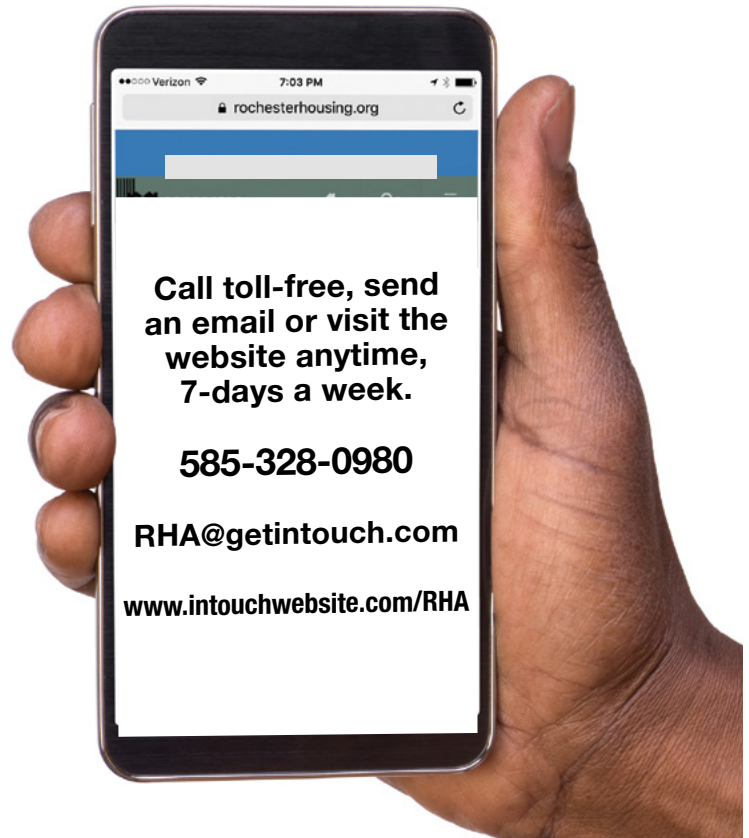
**Glenwood Site Curb Appeal & Upgrades:** This summer, the 130-unit site experienced an upgrade in an effort to renew its long-term appeal. Overgrown gardens, bushes and trees were cleaned-up, removed and trimmed, and flowers were replanted. Bare grass areas received topsoil and seed, and over 50 diseased trees were removed to save the healthy, mature trees. New grills, benches and signage have been installed and over 25 picnic tables have been refurbished. This upgrade has been well received by the Glenwood Gardens residents and the improvements have given the property a fresh look, allowing for plenty of sunlight to shine though. Staff is looking forward to the spring season and continuing to make Glenwood a premier RHA site!



# The InTouch Hotline

We would like to remind you that the InTouch Hotline is available for residents, participants, landlords, employees and community partners. This communication system is designed to make it as convenient as possible for you to **confidentially** share your concerns, questions, and comments directly to our senior management.

A third-party organization will ensure complete anonymity of messages received, unless there is a physical or verbal threat, illegal activity, or you chose to identify yourself. This arrangement ensures that anything you say can be completely confidential, so you can share your concerns with us openly.



## Tips from Mike the Maintenance Man



As the weather becomes colder, residents and homeowners are looking to stay warm, save money and prevent damages in their living space. Here are some tips for preparing your home for the cold weather:

1. **Install a door sweep** – A sweep is a piece of flexible rubber or plastic placed at the bottom of your door to prevent drafts from entering your apartment or house.
2. **Set it and forget it** – To save money on your heating costs, set your thermostat on one setting and leave it alone. According to ENERGYSTAR.gov, the ideal home temperature should be in between 70 to 78 degrees Fahrenheit.
3. **Add window coverings** – Window insulation, window sheet plastic, heavy curtains/drapes and even mini blinds can help keep heat within your home. Also, don't forget to put your storm windows down to prevent the cold from coming into your house.
4. **Check your heating system** – Before it gets too cold, test out your heating system to make sure it is running properly. Whether you have a baseboard heater or central heating through vents, it is important to know if there any repairs that need to be made.