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Mobile Food Kitchen Opens At Meadow Gardens

Norwalk Housing Authority is pleased to announce that the Bridgeport Rescue Mission Mobile Food Kitchen will start serving FREE hot take-home dinners at Meadow Gardens weekly on THURSDAYS from 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM starting on Thursday, March 14th.

In partnership with the Norwalk Housing Authority, Bridgeport Rescue Mission Mobile Food Kitchen has been serving FREE hot take-home dinners weekly at 2 other housing sites:

- Washington Village Learning Center on Tuesdays, 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM
- Roodner Court Learning Center on Fridays, 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Approximately 100 meals are served nightly to anyone in need, no ID necessary, and open to all. In addition, the Bridgeport Rescue Mission Mobile Food Kitchen provides take-home lunches weekly on Sundays around noon at Ryan Park off of Day Street. Bridgeport Rescue Mission also provides food for the Bridge Church, located on the lower level of 20 North Main Street Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from noon until 2:00 PM.

Thanks to Bridgeport Rescue Mission for fighting poverty and hunger from the inside out!

NHA Helps Two Families Become Homeowners

Sondra Henry is now the proud owner of a home! Sondra is a 2012 Norwalk Housing Authority Section 8 FSS graduate and recently became a homeowner on February 7th. Sondra is a single mother and even though she has a disability, she works full-time and does not receive supplemental security income. She has been diligently working towards homeownership since 2007, paying off her debt and improving her credit score in order to qualify for a mortgage. She is the first person in her immediate family to become a homeowner.



Amy Huertas, age 24, has been a Norwalk Housing Authority resident since 2007. Amy and her husband William are both employed, and they look forward to providing a better environment for their children. In addition they are anxious to build equity in their new home instead of continually paying rent.



Both families were able to purchase their homes through HUD's HCV Homeownership program, bringing the total number of NHA homeownership vouchers to 14 since 1999. Come to our next homeownership workshop and learn how you can qualify on **Saturday, April 27th**, 9:00AM – 5:00 PM, at Leroy Downs, 26 Monroe Street. For additional information or to register, please call 203-838-8471 X187 (Emily) or X135 (Guillermo).

FRAUD=STEALING

Fraud is working and not reporting your income! Fraud is having someone live with you and not reporting it to NHA. Does this fit someone you know? If so report it to the NHA office at 203-838-8471 ext. 140. All calls are handled confidentially.

South Norwalk /Washington Village Draft Transformation Plan

A hard copy of the Draft Transformation Plan is available at the following locations:

1. Norwalk Housing Authority – 24 1/2 Monroe Street, main lobby
2. Washington Village Learning Center
3. South Norwalk Public Library (Washington Street)
4. Norwalk Library, main branch on Mott Avenue.

You can also access a copy by going to the Norwalk Housing Authority web site www.norwalkha.org and clicking on the CNI link. If you have any questions or would like a copy please contact Patricia Marsden-Kish @ 203-838-8471 ext. 184 or pmkish@norwalkha.org

ALL RESIDENTS! Important 30 Day Notice

(excludes Colonial Village and School Street)

At the beginning of recertification for each development a thirty day (30) notice will be sent to residents of that development to bring in information required to complete the recertification process. If you are not in compliance with this request, you will receive a 24 hour notice to resolve the matter; if it is not resolved, action will be taken to terminate your lease. Thank you for your immediate cooperation.

Emergency Evacuation

Are you wheelchair bound? Do you use oxygen? In the event of a fire can you leave your apartment? Many times NHA doesn't know who can't leave their apartments in the event of an emergency, so that NHA can share this information with emergency responders. Call now and let Evelyn Soberal know so she can put this information can be shared with the Police and Fire Departments. If your needs change, please update us.

Job Search Jump Start

NorwalkWorks is pleased to announce Job Search Jump Start, a FREE five day structured job search program consisting of essential skills and activities needed to obtain employment. Topics include resume development, cover letters, job search techniques, interviewing skills, job leads, goal setting, networking, resources, soft skills enhancements and state incentives. The next session is Monday March 11th through Friday March 15th, at Ben Franklin Center, 165 Flax Hill Road, 3rd floor, Room 305, Norwalk. Please call 203-663-7448 to register or for further information.

Norwalk's Emergency Notification System

We are encouraging everyone to register for the emergency notification system in place with the City of Norwalk. Go on the City of Norwalk website www.norwalkct.gov and click emergency alert, and click the link for CodeRed. Sign-up! This is very important if we ever have a flood, water line break, snow or any other emergency. The system can also send texts. It is FREE and can be very helpful.



Every Recent Veteran Who Applies Can Get a Job at Wal-Mart

Wal-Mart, the second-largest employer in the country after the Department of Defense, is announcing today that every veteran discharged honorably in the last year will have a guaranteed job with the nation's largest retailer. This could be sales associates, warehousing or more advanced job at either Wal-Mart or Sam's Club. The company says the average wage for a full-time workers is \$12.40 an hour. The retailer projects the promise will result in at least 100,000 veterans being hired over the next five years.

Need Help Paying for College?

Check out the new college scholarship directory prepared by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. It's packed with scholarship opportunities and other helpful information. Go online to www.hfpg.org/scholarships.

Here's Why You Should File 2012 Income Tax Even if it's Not Required

Even if your 2012 gross income was low enough that you don't have to file a tax return, it's a money wise idea to file anyway. You may be due a federal income tax refund for 2012 because of state and federal earned income tax credits or refundable child care credit:

- \$\$\$ Federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) worth up to \$5,891
- \$\$\$ Connecticut EITC worth up to \$1,767
- \$\$\$ Federal Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit worth up to \$2,100
- \$\$\$ Federal Child Tax Credit worth up to \$1,000 per child
- You may need proof for Federal College Assistance

Receive your tax refund faster by filing online and have your refund electronically transferred to your bank account. Have your income tax prepared at one of the free tax preparation sites, and you don't have to pay the \$20 to file! Free income tax preparation is available through mid-April at:

- Norwalk Community College, 188 Richards Avenue, Rooms W135 and W138 from 10:00 AM – 3:30 PM on Saturdays (walk-ins only), closed 3/30/13
- NEON, 98 South Main Street, 5:00 PM – 8:00 PM on Mondays and Wednesdays
- Norwalk Public Library, Belden Avenue from 2:30 PM. to 8:00 PM on Thursdays; and from 9:00 AM – 1:30 PM on Saturdays.
- South Norwalk Library from 3:00 PM – 8:00 PM on Tuesdays; and from 9:00 AM – 1:30 PM on Saturdays.

Employment Tip of the Month Reference List

Prepare a list of three people to use as references for a job. Make sure you have their full contact information (name, address, company, title, phone, email) and have asked for their permission in advance, and bring copies of your reference list to your job interviews. Good choices of references include previous managers and peers from your former employers, including volunteer activities, or teachers or instructors of education and training programs you have attended. Avoid using personal friends and family as references. It's a good idea to contact your references in advance with specifics about what the job requires, so that the reference can be prepared to best help you with your job search.

Be Frugal – Do It Yourself

There's more to thrift than just shopping sales. Cook and bake - Stop wasting your money on eating out. Plan your meals at the beginning of the week, get groceries and stick to your plan. Pick up a few cookbooks at the library—whether you're looking for quick meals, healthy snacks or sumptuous desserts, there's a cookbook to meet your needs.

The HUSKY Infoline

HUSKY Infoline is your one stop shopping website for all your HUSKY needs. HUSKY Infoline is a specialized unit of the United Way of Connecticut/2-1-1 that provides information on the HUSKY program to working families, individuals, agencies, providers and other interested parties. The HUSKY Health Program is Connecticut's state health insurance program. www.ctunitedway.org/husky.html

NHA Testifies Before Labor Committee in Hartford to Advocate For Increase in Minimum Wage

Lisa Roger delivered testimony before Connecticut's Labor Committee on January 31st, advocating for bill SB 387 to increase Connecticut's minimum wage currently at \$8.25 per hour by 75 cents per year for the next two years and then indexed to inflation. In her testimony, Lisa stated, "Many people wrongly assume that only high school kids or drop-outs receive minimum wage at \$8.25 per hour. The fact is that 10% of all workers in Connecticut earn less than \$9.75 per hour, the proposed minimum wage rate for July 2014. Of these, 80% are 20 years and older, and 80% have at least a high school diploma." In total, 42 people presented testimonies both in favor and opposed to raising the minimum wage.

FREE Credit Counseling Workshop

Do you know your credit score? A good credit score is one of the first steps toward home ownership or lower finance rate for purchasing a car. Did you know that your car insurance rate is based on your credit rating? At this *free* workshop, you'll receive free credit counseling, learn the best financial practices, learn how to reduce your bills and pay off debt. Achieve financial stability with a better understanding of how to manage your money and credit. This FREE workshop will be held at Leroy Downs, 26 Monroe St.; Wednesday, March 5th, 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM. Preregistration is required. Transportation may be available with advance notice. For additional information or to register, please call 203-838-8471 X135 (Guillermo) or X187 (Emily).

Got College Dreams?

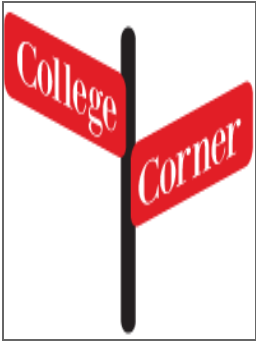
We can help!

Call Carla, 203-838-8471, ext. 176.

Email: cconwa@norwalkha.org.

Upcoming Career Fairs – Find the right job!

Meet companies looking to hire in Fairfield County and attend free seminars to help you navigate this changing job market successfully. **Admission is FREE!** Bring copies of your resume and dress for success. This is the *largest* event of its kind in Fairfield County. Last year's job fair included over 60 employers! Career Resources 17th annual community career fair, held in partnership with the Workplace, Inc., and the Connecticut Department of Labor is scheduled for THURSDAY, MARCH 14th in BRIDGEPORT at Housatonic Community College, Beacon Hall Event Center, 900 Lafayette Blvd. Free admission, free parking, and free information about community resources. Register online at <http://www.ctworkssw.org/careerfair>. Additionally, a career fair sponsored by "Monster" is scheduled for TUESDAY MARCH 19th in NORWALK at the Norwalk Inn and Conference Center, 99 East Avenue, 10AM – 2PM.



NHA News College Corner

20 High School Seniors have requested NHF Scholarship Applications. Many NHA students are realizing that college or post high school training degrees are very important to their success after high school. If you are a high school senior and have not contacted Carla Conway, do so now at 203-838-8471, ext. 176. Also, full-time students in college who are not in the NHF Scholarship program should contact Carla.

Don't be fooled by for-profit schools. If you do not want to go to a 4-year college and want a different type of career that is mechanical, technical, health services, office support or other, you should look at NCC, or other community colleges which offer a variety of 2-year programs ending with an associate degree including auto mechanics or various medical support areas. Don't be fooled by the for-profit college ads that offer certificates in medical/health fields, auto mechanics, computer technology or office skills. You can find many of the programs they offer at a community college for less money with a degree that will be far more impressive and you won't have to take out big loans.

The 2013 NHF Scholarship Application is available at NHA office and on NHA website or by email. Contact Carla Conway to get on the application list so you can learn of other scholarships. Phone: 203-838-8471, ext. 176. Free help with applications and essays is available through Sara Sullivan at NHA's 20 West Learning Center.

Dates to Remember.

FEDERAL FAFSA Deadline is by Midnight Central Time June 30th, 2013. The Federal Award is up to \$5,550 and is income based.

High school students in all grades should prepare early for college. Contact Carla Conway to start preparing for college in lower grades through great free college prep programs. Get your College Toolkit for Scholarships and a list of "tuition free" colleges for low-income students.

Housing Authority Insurance Group (HAIG) Scholarship is now available online at the HAIG website (Google it). All public housing and section-8 residents who have over a 2.0 GPA and have lived in NHA subsidized housing for over 1-year may apply. Applicants will submit their own applications but must have a resident verification statement from NHA. Winners are selected through lottery.

College Information and Support Programs for Middle School & High School Students who want to go to College and their Families is available at the 20 West Ave. Learning Center Call 203-852-1144 and speak to Wendy Gerbier.

Now is the time college scholarships are becoming available. High school seniors should contact Carla Conway, NHA College Scholarship Coordinator, at 203-838-8471, ext. 176. Confused about colleges, Ms. Conway has information on majors and colleges that will fit you. Also, contact the NAACP and go online to: 100bmoms.com for scholarships. Community service is important. So Volunteer! Carla has written an instructional guide *Toolkit for Scholarships* listing all documentation you should keep on hand for scholarships and how to prepare it.



Youth Mentoring Available!!

Check and Connect will partner youth with a caring mentor to improve their school attendance and grades. This program is nationally recognized to improve a family's life!! All mentors carefully evaluated. For information contact Mark Covello at 203-838-8471 x 186.



Creative Arts Combine Writing and Art in February Classes.

The NHA Creative Arts Center has been focusing on the theme of Fables, Myths and Stories. Students learned the difference between fables, myths, and stories and are able to identify the differing characteristics. Students worked in groups to develop their own fables and myths, creating original characters and plots. Given the opportunity to use their creativity combined with literacy proved to be an amazing combination!

Path to Success

20 West is hosting a Path to Success event for middle and high school students and parents on March 20th, 5:30pm-7:30pm. The event will provide an exposure to different careers by area professionals. The evening will offer an opportunity to talk with professionals who can provide information on what training and education is needed for their specific job. Please contact Tiana Brown, 203- 852-1144 ext. 106.



Meadow Garden's Student of the Month Star is Cristopher Mendieta

Star Student for the month of February was Cristopher Mendieta! Cristopher is a sixth grader who attends the Meadow Gardens Learning Center and is truly a STAR because of his hard work, commitment to academics and Learning Center programs/activities. He is really an awesome student, who loves to complete his homework and master his Vmath Lessons. Cristopher is a great role model for students, and because he loves math; often times he will help other students. He displays excellent leadership skills when working with other students and participating in on-site activities and discussions. Cristopher Mendieta is surely a great example of why Meadow Gardens ROCKS!!



Young Artist at Washington Village Learning Center

Sean Paul has displayed a talent for drawing since kindergarten. Over the years Sean Paul has impressed staff and kids alike with his beautiful and detailed drawings of cartoon characters, different animals, people and the list goes on. Now in the 3rd grade Sean Paul drawing abilities continue to improve. This is clear in his beautiful drawing of the Mona Lisa. The Mona Lisa is a work of art created by the great Italian artist Leonardo da Vinci. This work of art is considered to be the best known work of art in all the world. We look forward to seeing his love and passion for drawing continue to develop.





Are You A Good Role Model?

Do you have the qualities of a good role model? Let's see:

Self-Esteem

A role model is self-assured and happy with who they are. If a role model displays that they have high self-esteem, those who look up to them will, too. A role model displays a streak of independence showing they do not need to follow current trends. Role models trust in being themselves. They are proud of who they are, but not cocky.

Handle Stress Positively

Being human means having to constantly deal with stress and overcome obstacles. A role model sets a good example on how to handle pressure. Athlete role models can handle stress and can come through when the pressure is on. While they may not win every game, when they fail they attempt to learn from their mistakes.

Role Models Are Trustworthy

Trustworthiness is another quality of a good role model. A role model is honest and doesn't lie. A role model possesses integrity and does the right thing even if no one is looking or they do not receive acknowledgment for their act.

Perseverance

A good role model also does what they say. A good role model delivers on their promises and can always be counted on even when overwhelmed and wants to quit. Perseverance is a key trait. Role models demonstrate that if they work hard to attain something, then others can, too. They give you dreams and goals to aspire to.

Respect for Others

How you treat others speaks volumes about who you are. A good role model listens to others and also considers opposing points of view. They treat others how they would want to be treated and is considerate of others. When making mistakes, a role model does not place the blame on others; they own up to their shortcomings

Always remember, your greatest fans are watching and imitating every move you make.



March 2013 MOMMY & ME Calendar

Tuesdays

ART/Storytime at Roodner Court Learning Center from 12:00pm-1:00pm, Bilingual Spanish & French; (Weekly Snack/Raffle/Prizes)

Wednesdays

Stepping Stones Museum, 303 West Avenue from 11:00am-12:30pm,

Thursdays (Trips/Activities)

March 7th, Norwalk Fire Department, 100 Fairfield Ave., Station 2 from 10:30am--11:30am

March 14th, New Canaan Nature Center, 144 Oenoke Ridge, New Canaan from 10:30am-11:30am

March 21st, Tunes & Tales, Main Library Child Activity Room, Belden Ave. from 10:00am-11:00am.

March 28st, Storytime/Cartooning w/Guest Author Jerry Craft at Roodner Court Learning Center from 10:30am-12:00pm

Snacks provided during all programs/trips. For details contact Ms. Autier the Early Childhood Program Coordinator at (203) 644-4720, or acraft@norwalkha.org, to schedule transportation. Space is limited & RSVP is needed for trips. Parents/Guardians who are residents of NHA, or Section 8 are encouraged to attend. Children must be 0-4 years old, and accompanied by an adult to participate, in all activities. NHA MOMMY & ME graduates will be eligible for a Free Pre-school Program in April/September 2013. Referrals based on consistent participation.

NEON Offers FREE Computer Classes



NEON is providing FREE computer classes at the Ben Franklin Center, 165 Flax Hill Road in Norwalk. Classes include beginners, intermediate, and advanced levels for

Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel; Introduction to Microsoft PowerPoint. In addition, "Introduction to Computers and the Internet" classes are offered once a month, Monday/Wednesday/Friday. The next "Introduction to Computers and the Internet" classes are scheduled for March 25th and April 17th. Space is limited, call 203-663-7443 now to reserve your spot!

Family Fun Free

Is money tight and the kids want to go do something fun? You have a few dollars and a tank full of gas, what do you do? Let's see what you can do for FREE in Connecticut with your family.

- Weir Farm National Historic Site, 735 Nod Hill Rd., Wilton, CT, 203-834-1896
- Whitney Museum of American Art at Champion, Atlantic St and Tresser Blvd, Stamford, CT 203-358-7630
- Housatonic Museum of Art, 900 Lafayette Blvd., Bridgeport, CT, (203) 332-5052
- Yale University Campus Walking Tour, 344 College Street, New Haven, CT 203-432-2300
- Yale University Art Gallery, 1111 Chapel St., New Haven, CT 203-432-0600

Call each museum before you go to check the hours of operation! Have fun and enjoy these family fun FREE activities.

