

# NHA NEWS

July 2014

Vol. 9, Issue 7

**Norwalk Housing Foundation  
Norwalk Housing Authority**

*Cordially Invite You to Attend  
The 16th Annual College Scholarship Awards  
Ceremony  
Friday, July 18, 2014 at 6:00 PM  
Keynote Speaker:  
U.S. Congressman Jim Himes  
Stepping Stones Museum for Children  
Mathews Park  
303 West Avenue, Norwalk, CT  
RSVP 203-838-8471 ext. 141*

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

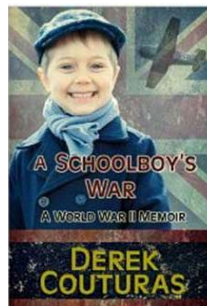
The Housing Authority of the City of Norwalk (NHA) will hold a public hearing regarding flat rent changes. The public hearing will be held on July 22, 2014 at 6:00 PM at the Leroy Downs Apartments, 26 Monroe St., Norwalk, CT. NHA is amending its flat rent policies to comply with the statutory changes contained within, Public Law 113-76, the Fiscal Year 2014 Appropriation Act. NHA will set the flat rental amount for each public housing unit that complies with the requirement that all flat rents be set at no less than 80 percent of the applicable Fair Market Rent (FMR) adjusted, if necessary, to account for reasonable utilities costs. The new flat rental amount will apply to all new program admissions effective September 1, 2014. For current program participants that pay the flat rental amount, the new flat rental amount will be offered, as well as the income-based rental amount, at the next annual rental option. NHA will place a cap on any increase in a family's rental payment that exceeds 35 percent, and is a result of changes to the flat rental amount as follows: Multiply the existing flat rental payment by 1.35 and compare that to the updated flat rental amount. NHA will present two rent options to the family as follows:

- The lower of the product of the calculation and the updated flat rental amount; and
- The income-based rent

Proposed documents are available from 9:00am to 5:00pm business days for review at the Norwalk Housing Authority Central Office, 24½ Monroe Street, Norwalk or at [www.norwalkha.org](http://www.norwalkha.org) under the header RFP/RFQ's. EHO.

## School Boy's War

NHA's very own, Derek Couturas (Section 8 Inspector) has written a poignant WWII memoir told from the perspective of a little boy: *A School Boy's War* is an insightful, heartfelt and well-crafted tale of a young boy, acutely aware and blissfully ignorant of the dangerous world he and his family struggle to survive. Funny and heartbreaking and written in a voice as powerful as Frank McCourt himself. Contact Derek to buy an autographed copy at 203-838-8471 ext. 178.



## New Way to Get Info at Social Security Offices

Beginning August 1, you will not be able to get a "verification printout" of your Social Security number (SSN) at local Social Security offices. If you need proof of your SSN, and you cannot find your card, you will need to ask for a replacement card. To get another card, fill out an application (Form SS-5) which you can get online at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov). You can take or mail your application to any SS office. To find a local office, go to [www.socialsecurity.gov/locator](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/locator). Your card will be mailed to your home in 7-10 days. And, beginning October 1, you will not be able to get a "benefit verification" letter at local SS offices (except in special situations). You can get the benefit letter online with a MySocialSecurity account or by calling 1-800-772-1213.

## 2014 LIVE UNITED Awards



Curtis Law with Harry Carey, Director of External Affairs for AT&T who presented the award.

The morning of June 3rd was a very happy occasion! Twenty-one honorees including Curtis O. Law, Executive Director received awards that were drawn by third grade students at the Geraldine Johnson School of Hope in Bridgeport. Students were asked to draw what makes them happy and each award recipient accepted their award to the music of Pharrell Williams! Distinguished speakers who know the award winners provided a warm and inspirational introduction that brought joy, tears and laughter to those in the audience. Mr. Law was recognized for his many accomplishments, such as: increasing the number of State and Federal housing complexes from 9 to 18; initiated five free after-school learning centers; created the Norwalk Reads! Program; and established the Norwalk Housing Foundation College Scholarship Program and much more. The 2014 LIVE UNITED Celebration was a memorable morning with music, breakfast tapas and amazing people doing amazing things in our community!

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## Mayor Appoints Brenda Penn-Williams to NHA Board of Commissioners

Commissioner Brenda Penn Williams is a result-driven professional with extensive experience leading people and projects. She possess an in-depth understanding of community relations with a diverse population to improve the quality of life. Commissioner Penn-Williams has over twenty years of experience in corporate planning and community relations and is knowledgeable of the community resources necessary to improve quality of life. She is a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority where she has held many positions within the organization. She attends Grace Baptist Church and is an active member of the NAACP. Commissioner Penn-Williams is most delighted in her role of wife, mother and grandmother to her twin grandsons!





## FREE Meals offered WEEKLY by the Bridgeport Rescue Mission

In partnership with the Norwalk Housing Authority, The Bridgeport

Rescue Mission Mobile Food Kitchen serves FREE hot take-home dinners weekly in Norwalk weekly:

- Washington Village Learning Center on Tuesdays, 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM
- Meadow Gardens, 49 Meadow St. on Thursdays, 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM
- Roodner Court Learning Center, 261 Ely Ave. on Fridays, 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Ryan Park (off Day St.), on Sundays, lunches starting around noon



### Financial Management Tip of the Month: Have a Savings Plan

Don't wait until you see what's left over from your paycheck before setting aside some money for saving. If you wait until you've met your other financial obligations you most likely won't ever have

a healthy savings account or investments. Commit to set aside a minimum of 5% to 10% of your salary for savings BEFORE you start paying your bills. Also consider having money automatically deducted from your paycheck and deposited into a separate account.

### Calling Everyone With College Credits

Go Back to Get Ahead is a program by the Connecticut State Colleges & Universities, the Connecticut Board of Regents for Higher Education, and the State of Connecticut that allows students and adults to work their degree! All students who meet the eligibility criteria qualify for the program regardless if you are a full or part-time student. If you are looking for an opportunity to get ahead, here's your chance! Call: 1-844-GBTGA-CT (1-844-428-4228) | <http://www.GoBackToGetAhead.com>

### DSS Changes Application Process for NEW Medicaid Applications

Four long-term-care application centers will now receive and process NEW applications for nursing home and Medicaid waiver home care. The centers are in DSS field offices in Waterbury, Bridgeport, Hartford, and New Haven. To find which center you should use, click [here](#) or go to [www.ct.gov/dss](http://www.ct.gov/dss) and search for long term care application. You must mail new applications to the appropriate center or apply online at [www.ct.gov/dss](http://www.ct.gov/dss).



### Janitors Needed!

Driver's license, high school diploma or equivalent and MUST HAVE one year of janitorial service experience. \$13.00/hr. Send resume to Norwalk Housing Authority, 24 1/2 Monroe Street, Norwalk, CT 06856 -0508 or email [nruffi@norwalkha.org](mailto:nruffi@norwalkha.org) by 7/15/2014. **NO PHONE CALLS**



### Lease Reminders...

Residents are reminded that it is a lease violation to have a person who is not on the lease live in the apartment, or to use any NHA apartment as an address to receive mail. Lease violations can lead to termination. Please be mindful that your lease states, "The composition of the assisted family residing in the unit must be approved by the NHA. The family must promptly notify the NHA in writing of the birth, adoption, or court-awarded custody of a child. The family must request NHA approval to add any other family member as an occupant of the unit".



### Opportunity For NHA Resident Owned Businesses

Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 is a law that provides a hiring preference to low-income persons and businesses who are qualified applicants for positions of certain HUD-funded projects, including construction projects. Residents of NHA and low-income residents of Fairfield County qualify as Section 3. HUD's Section 3 Business Registry is a listing of firms that have self-certified that they qualify as a Section 3 Business (51% of the business is owned by Section 3 residents; OR 30% of full-time staff are Section 3 residents; OR your firm provides at least 25% of the total dollar amount of its subcontracts to Section 3 Businesses). If you qualify, self-certification is easy. Register your business at <https://portalapps.hud.gov/Sec3BusReg/BRegistry/BRegistryHome> to be included in a searchable online database that can be used by housing authorities including NHA to invite Section 3 businesses to submit Requests for Proposals (RFPs) or bids for HUD-funded projects. For further details, contact Lisa at 203-838-8471 X188, or email [lroger@norwalkha.org](mailto:lroger@norwalkha.org).

### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

#### DUNKIN' DONUTS

219 East Avenue

East Norwalk (across from East Norwalk Train Station)

Full-time and Part-time positions available. Ask to speak with the manager on site.



### Healthy Minds, Healthy Communities

Mental illness is one of the few remaining taboo subjects in our society. Yet one out of five Fairfield County residents experiences a mental health problem—approximately 187,000 people. The Fairfield County Community Foundation (FCCF) released a new report, Healthy Minds, Healthy Communities that looks at challenges, possible solutions, and action steps that came out of more than 70 hours of "Community Conversations." These small group conversations were held in Fairfield County and have raised awareness about mental illness and given residents a voice and a chance to be part of finding solutions.



To view the report, visit [www.fccfoundation.org](http://www.fccfoundation.org). FCCF hopes you use this report to begin your own conversations.



## Roodner Court Learning Center Student Shines!



Roodner Court Learning Center proudly celebrates Donte Cobb! Donte has participated in quite a few contests and his work has paid off. In April of this year Retention Group, Inc. and Housing Authority Property Insurance, held a national annual Playground Safety Poster and Essay Contest. The theme was "Have No Fear-Playground Safety is Here!" Donte Cobb won first place in the 6-8 year old essay writing category! He also received

honorable mention for his participation in the CT Duck-Stamp Drawing Contest. Congratulations on jobs well done!

## Colonial Village Scholar!

NHA is pleased to announce that Jordyn Kidd, a 5th grade student at Columbus Magnet School has won 1st place in a national writing contest! This is a major accomplishment for Jordyn Kidd as well as for the Colonial Village Learning Center as she was selected from thousands of students across the country. For being the recipient of 1st place, Jordyn Kidd was awarded a \$100 gift card to Walmart. We are proud of Jordyn Kidd and all NHA outstanding students that continue to succeed in their academic endeavors.

## Summer Meals in Norwalk for Kids & Teens ALL SUMMER LONG

**FREE** nutritious meals are provided to kids and teens, 18 years and under (children must be accompanied by adult) throughout the summer when school is out. Open to **all** youth! **No paperwork – No registration – No ID required** (Meals/times vary, see Norwalk locations below. All locations closed July 4<sup>th</sup>)

Tracey Elementary School, 20 Camp St.  
Dates: June 30 – August 8, 2014  
Lunch: 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Columbus Elementary School, 46 Concord St.  
Dates: June 30 – August 8, 2014  
Breakfast: 8:30 AM – 9:30 AM  
Lunch: 12:30 PM – 1:30 PM

Brookside Elementary School, 382 Highland Ave.  
Dates: June 30 – August 8, 2014  
Breakfast: 9:45 AM – 10:15 AM

Brian McMahon High School, 300 Highland Ave.  
Dates: June 30 – August 1, 2014  
Breakfast: 8:30 AM – 9:30 AM  
Lunch: 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

**This program is being offered at different schools throughout Connecticut. Check for additional locations:**

<http://www.ctsummerfood.org>

## Let's Play Ball .. At the park that is!

Baseball is not to be played in the courtyards. Please report anyone who is violating this rule. The next window broken could be yours and you will be responsible for the repair.

## Books and More Can Be Found at the NPL!



Check out the Norwalk Public Library's website site for a listing of events and the **REQUIRED** summer reading lists for all grades! Go to [www.norwalklib.org](http://www.norwalklib.org) for details.

## Snack Trivia Challenge

The Meadow Gardens Snack Trivia Challenge was a huge hit for students during Snack Time. Instead of just handing out snacks, Ms. Ellis created a small series of student friendly Trivia Questions, that have the students jumping out of their seats to give the correct answers. For each correct answer, the student is praised and told to come on up to win their healthy snack. The Trivia Question topics range from: telling time, multiplication facts, addition facts, counting, identifying coins, spelling and random fun facts. The students love the challenge and look forward to snack each and every day. Snack Trivia, where every player wins a healthy snack! What a cool twist to learning and snacking.



From left to right Jairo Avila, Drina Bosquet, Mark Moono, Yulia Otero, Samantha Garcia, Tyleah Simms, Jahzaiah Simms, Ulysses Flores and Damian DeJesus.

## NHA's 2014 FREE Summer Program

Open to all NHA residents grades 1-12. Registration packets available at all centers (Colonial Village, Roodner Court, Washington Village, Meadow Gardens, 20 West Avenue) and the main office, 24 1/2 Monroe Street.

The fun begins on June 30th and ends August 22<sup>nd</sup>!

- 1st through 12th grade - Monday through Thursday, 9am-3pm AND
- 1st, 2nd, and 3rd graders will participate in a Summer Literacy Bonanza on Friday's, 10am-1pm.

Delicious breakfast and lunch provided every day by Bridgeport Rescue Mission. Activities include movies, art, teen and junior iron chef, Calf Pasture Beach, Latin drumming, music, science (NASA program), bike riding, gardening, girl scouts, as well as field trips. Questions? Please call the Learning Center office at 203.852.1144.



## Family Night 20 West Learning Center

It was show time for students at 20 West Learning Center. For Family Night, students performed a choreographed dance dedicated to the late Dr. Maya Angelou is a celebrated poet, memoirist, novelist, educator, dramatist, producer, actress, historian, filmmaker, and civil rights activist. The show began with the students performing their favorite quote by Maya Angelou. Loukenson Paul's favorite quote was "If you are always trying to be normal, you will never know how amazing you can be." The Boys Mentoring Program surprised guests with an amazing short comedy they filmed at 20 West Ave. The show was great and many of the parents were excited about their child's participation in the show.





## Scholarship Recipient Says Thank You!

Jeffrey Sierra graduated from Philadelphia University with a degree in Psychology in 2010 and was a recipient of the NHF Scholarship Award for 4 years. NHA recently received a moving thank you note from Jeffrey and was compelled to share excerpts of his note. Jeffrey has taken the phrase, “paying it forward” to another level. When Jeff completed his undergraduate studies, here are a few of the things he did:



- Began volunteering with an Americorps Organization in 2010 called City Year. It’s a national education non-profit that focuses on reducing the high school drop-out rate by “deploying”

teams of corps members into undeserved and under resourced elementary, middle and high schools.

- Developed a curriculum and training for Americorps members who were serving in the schools. The trainings were on how to implement positive behavior systems in their after school classes and in small group tutoring sessions.
- Joined the Peace Corps Philippines in 2012; teaching elementary aged students Math and English and instruction is in a mix of English and Tagalog, commonly called “Tag-lish” – Tagalog + English
- Looking into Master’s programs in social work and/or counseling psychology, with a desire to become a therapist to help others and make the world a better place in that way.

Thank you Jeff for taking the time to say thank you. Norwalk Housing Authority is very proud of Jeff’s accomplishments. We wish him well and thank him for paying it forward.



## Is Your Child Currently Enrolled in Preschool?

The Norwalk Housing Authority (NHA) Head Start / School Readiness Program is a State and Federal Funded Program which offers pre-school services to children ages 15 months through 4 years old.

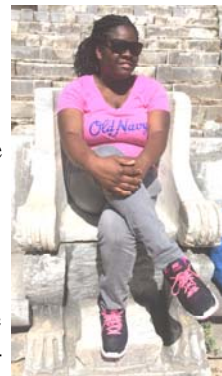
The Program has two different options:

- 6 hrs classrooms (9:00am – 3:00pm) – No fee involved.
- 10 hrs classrooms (7:30am – 5:30pm) –Sliding fee scale involved

The goal for the children enrolled at the NHA Head Start/School Readiness Program is to enable them to master social, emotional, cognitive, and physical skills, so that they can be better prepared when entering Kindergarten. The program also offers comprehensive services to the entire family based on the families’ needs while encouraging parent participation in their children’s education and encouraging them to become advocates for their children. All applications need to be complete prior to submitting in order for your child to be placed on the waitlist, **Incomplete applications will not be accepted.** A parent check off list is attached to the application. Come down to the NHA Head Start/School Readiness Program, 11 Ingalls Ave. (203-956-6216) or at 165 Flax Hill Rd (203-939-9712) to pick up an application or call for details!!!

## Rose Pierre Travels to Holy Lands for College Course

Rose Pierre, who is currently attending Andrews University with a double major in Theology and Family Studies went to Turkey, Egypt and Israel in June to do on-site studying for her Theology Major. Places visited include: Turkey: Euphesus Theater (one of seven churches mentioned in Revelation), Pamukkale; Istanbul. Egypt: Giza – The Pyramids and the Sphinx, Nazareth. Israel: Mount Sinai, Mount Olive. Rose said the trip was amazing and very spiritually enervating. Rose plans to become a case worker and a minister so that she will be able to help people both in their family interactions and in their spiritual needs. Rose graduated with stellar grades last year from Norwalk Community College and was named a Woman of Promise by NCC. She is working hard at Andrews University to keep a promise to herself to help others in as many ways as possible.



## NHF College Scholarship Program Receives 53 Full Applications

Norwalk Housing, which runs the most comprehensive scholarship program among Connecticut’s public housing authorities, received 53 applications, a record number. “The number shows how important this program is to our residents,” said NHA Executive Director, Curtis Law. “Residents know that education is the path to a better, more secure future. In Fairfield County, which is a highly educated area, people need an education to successfully compete for well-paying jobs. Passing the 50 application mark is equally impressive because of the growth of this Program. “In 1998, the program started with 2 scholarships and \$5,000” continued Mr. Law. “Last year 35 residents were in the Program and received \$177,350 plus an extra \$85,500 in leveraged scholarships. We have impressive high graduation rates and our graduates of the program are our best advocates for going to college. We could not have grown and met the needs of residents without the generosity of the people and businesses of Norwalk.” Currently, scholarship interviews are being held. The awards will be on July 18<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 PM at Stepping Stones Museum for Children. Please join us for the awards. U.S. Representative Jim Himes will be the keynote speaker and Mayor Rilling is scheduled to attend along with other elected officials and community leaders.

## Norwalk Housing Foundation Will Launch A Graduate Scholarship Program

Norwalk Housing Foundation has just received generous funding to launch a Graduate Scholarship Program from the Bauer Foundation. The Program will begin in the Spring and more news of this Program will be published in NHA News.



## It's Summer Camp Time

Channel 3 Kids Camp offers day & overnight camps for kids 6-16. The days are packed with fun educational and recreational activities (archery, swimming, performing arts & more). Visit: [www.channel3kidscamp.org](http://www.channel3kidscamp.org). To find more camps, visit [www.kids.ct.gov](http://www.kids.ct.gov) or [www.211ct.org](http://www.211ct.org) or Dial 2-1-1.