Dear Residents,

As I prepare to retire, I realize how lucky I have been to work in this great organization lead by Curtis Law for over 41 years! His incredible vision brought NHA nationwide recognition and many awards including the 30 million-dollar Choice Neighborhood grant, the largest grant ever received in Norwalk! Spending these 41 years here at Norwalk Housing Authority, I’ve been lucky to see families move from searching for basic needs to seeing their children have educational choices, so they can dream, attend and graduate from college, thus changing their lives forever. These children are living what my mother always told me—when you pursue higher education, you will always carry that success with you. These were the best meetings I got to attend!

There is a season for everything, and this is the season for me to expand my pursuits beyond my housing career. In this year’s sabbatical, I’ll be delving more deeply into gardening, photography, and fitness, interests that I haven’t had the time for. When the coming year is done, I’ll know what career interests to pursue. It’s important for me to leave you with one very important thought. Residents are the reason for NHA policy - they know they desire what the lease guarantees—a safe, peaceful home for their families. Residents rely on the many details NHA policies provide to ensure these rights are fulfilled. Individuals can seek exceptions to policies, but it is NHA's responsibility to create a comprehensive framework to provide housing of choice. I’m proud of the work we’ve done together to make sure these rights became reality.

I want to thank my fabulous and creative co-workers who consistently seek excellence and whose commitment reflects that they want NHA to provide exceptional services like they would want for their families. Please continue to seek ways to improve outstanding programs, stretch beyond what people tell you is likely and have fun along the incredible journey!

With thankfulness and gratitude!

Candace Mayer
Deputy Director

SAVE THE DATE

Norwalk Housing Foundation’s 20th Anniversary celebration and annual scholarship award ceremony will take place at Stepping Stones in Norwalk on June 20th. 5:30pm Refreshments and hors d’oeuvres. 6:00pm Program. Juanita James, President & CEO of Fairfield County’s Community Foundation will be our keynote speaker. We look forward to sharing our special day with you.

Want to OWN your own HOME?

NHA Federal Public Housing and Federal Section 8 residents may qualify for mortgage subsidies for up to 15 years!

First-time Homebuyers Certification Program

This FREE program is presented by Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust on May 12th, 9:00AM – 5:00 PM. The program provides information about becoming a homeowner, which takes the confusion out of home-buying. You’ll be guided step by step through the process including reviewing your finances, determining how much you can afford, reviewing your credit, shopping for a home, obtaining a mortgage, preparing for the closing, and more. This popular class fills up quickly! Pre-registration is required, space is limited. The Norwalk location for this presentation is not yet finalized. Contact 203-838-8471 Marie (x186) or Nadine (x681) to learn the steps you can take TODAY to become a homeowner! Transportation available to NHA residents only with at least one week advanced notice.

Have you filed your Taxes?

If you haven’t, there is still time to file your taxes for FREE! Dial 211 from your to mobile device to find a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site near you. IRS certified volunteers are trained to help you file your taxes and secure valuable tax credits such as the Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit. Would you rather file your taxes online? If you earned $66,000 or less in 2017 file your taxes for free online at www.myfreetaxes.com.

Artist showcase at the SoNo Library

Please stop by the South Norwalk Public Library Community Room on Tuesday evening, May 1st from 6:00-7:30PM to enjoy an Artist’s Showcase. The work of acclaimed local artist Conan Robinson of Washington Village is currently being featured on the walls of the library and will be celebrated at the Showcase. Conan creates artworks in multiple mediums, such as acrylic, Prismacolor, and pen and ink. His portraits and abstracts are influenced by elements in the natural and urban worlds, and he is known for his modern, flowing interpretations of current social and world events through vibrant color and movement. The Library is located at 10 Washington Street. Refreshments will be served.
Mind Matters

When we engage in “brain boosting” activities we help our brain organize and keep track of information. When we learn something new, we increase the number of connections among neurons in our brain. These neurological connections are called synapse connections; and the more we have, the more likely we are to increase brain power and less likely to exhibit signs and symptoms of dementia. When we stop stimulating our brain, mental capacity begins to decline. The neurological networks in our brain weaken and eventually become lost. So what can we do to stimulate our brain? Thirty minutes a day of these activities can make a huge difference:

• Crossword puzzles
• Board and card games
• Read or listen to audio books
• Paint
• Read aloud at least ten minutes each day
• Play Sudoku
• Study a foreign language
• Learn to play or sing a new song
• Compose a new piece of music.

Exterminations

It is mandatory that all apartments in each building be sprayed at the same time to minimize roaches/rodents moving from one apartment to another. We must have the complete cooperation of all residents in this matter for this procedure to work effectively. In order to prevent pest infestations, below are some housekeeping tips:

• Remove all trash from apartment daily
• Keep stove and refrigerator clean
• No left-over food should be left uncovered on countertops or tables.
• Sweep floors and vacuum rugs regularly
• Report all plumbing leaks to the office.

If you have any pest issues in your apartment, call in a work order at (203) 853-9091 for any extermination issues you may have.

Pay your rent - fast and easy!

To save you time and money, NHA encloses a self-addressed, envelope with your monthly rent statement. Just POP your money order or check (cash not accepted) in the envelope along with the bottom of your rent statement and drop in the mailbox! That’s it!

Prepare your child for testing

It’s that Time of Year!

April is standardized testing month in the public schools. Standardized tests are a way to let the school district know how the school and children are performing. Let’s make sure our students are ready for the test. There are several ways to help your child prepare and be ready for test day.

Reinforce Study Skills at Home

While your child may be able to do homework on their own now, it is unlikely that he/she will be able to take on the task of studying alone.

1. Set up a quiet study area for your child.
2. Plan a study schedule. It will keep both you and your child on track and prevent cramming the night before a test.
3. Break studying into manageable chunks. This helps him retain more information and reduces test anxiety.
4. Be flexible. You needn’t limit studying only to structured study time or let the responsibility fall exclusively on one parent.
5. Read together. To ace her tests, your child will need to use higher-level thinking skills, so it helps to emphasize these skills at home. After you read with her, discuss the material. Ask her to summarize what she read, identify new or unfamiliar words in the text, or predict what will happen next.
6. Ask the teacher for the testing schedule and a practice test so that you can familiarize your child with the format ahead of time so he/she knows what to expect.
7. Ensuring that your child has good school attendance
8. Stay in communication with your child’s teacher
9. Help your child learn how to follow directions carefully

Resource in part by: Reading Rockets

The Norwalk Housing Foundation (NHF) provides college scholarships to high school seniors, returning adult students, and those pursuing a graduate degree. If you are planning to attend college this fall as a full-time student you are eligible to apply. All components of the (online) application are due by April 18. We strongly advise that you work ahead on the application, as transcripts and recommendations can take several weeks to arrive after you have requested them. Please visit www.norwalkhousingfoundation.org for more information or to apply. Our website also has information on college costs, many additional scholarship programs, and more! If you have further questions, please contact Patricia Marsden-Kish at pmkish@norwalkha.org or
Want to land a new career?

Get started today and become OSHA 10 certified! Join us for an upcoming OSHA 10 session on April 23 & 24, 2018 from 4:00PM - 9:30PM. All construction jobs require workers to have their OSHA 10 certification (10 hours of safety training). *Attendance is required at both sessions.*

PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED

Norwalk residents may qualify for free training (Some restrictions apply). Call us and reserve your spot today! 203-838-8471 X681 (Nadine) or X188 (Lisa R.). Fill out a survey and application, and enclose your resume.

http://www.norwalkcni.org/services/employment.html

Return it to the NHA CNI Field office at: Smilow Life Center, 55 Chestnut Street, Norwalk CT 06854. Attention: Lisa Roger; or email to lroger@norwalkha.org

Financial Fitness Seminar

Presented by Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust on April 25th, 5:30PM – 7:30PM

Are you tired of feeling squeezed for money and living from paycheck to paycheck? Take control of your finances! It is the time to get your financial situation “in shape” and on the road to financial independence.

- Understand credit and your credit rights
- Learn how to improve and maintain great credit
- Invest in your financial future and take control
- Commit to a savings plan for the future and emergencies.

Pre-registration is required, space is limited. Seminar will be held at NHA/HOU Choice Neighborhoods temporary field office at the Smilow Life Center, 55 Chestnut Street, Norwalk. Contact 203-838-8471 Jamie (x180) or Nadine (x681). Transportation available to NHA residents only with at least one week advanced notice.

Norwalk Senior Center Open House

Open House will be held every 2nd Wednesday of the month from 10:30am-12:30pm

Bilingual Hablamos Español
(92 Cedar Court Location.)
Phone: 203-299-1500

Social Services Available:
- Assistance in applying for SSI, Food Stamps, etc.
- Meet new people
- Exercise - feel better & younger!
- Social Services Available
- Door-to-door transportation available for all members.
- Weekly Grocery shopping trips.
- Come out for a fun filled day! Meet the staff and see the activities our center has to offer!
- Refreshments & Goodies Will Be Served!!
- Hope to See You There!!!

Be on the LOOK OUT!

NHA will be holding Resident Commissioner elections in the very near future! We are holding elections again because the newly appointed Resident Commissioner was completing the term of Commissioner Deidra Davis that will expire in May 31, 2018. Please consider if you’d like to run for this volunteer position, and contact Kras Carlucci at 203-838-8471 ext. 125.

More details to come!

Launch your business – SCORE Entrepreneurship – April 4th from 6PM - 8PM

Would you like to start your own business and be your own boss? If you have an idea and want to be an entrepreneur, but need some practical advice on how to get started, you won’t want to miss our April event. SCORE will be on-site at NHA/HOU Choice Neighborhoods temporary field office at the Smilow Life Center, 55 Chestnut Street, Norwalk on Wednesday, April 4, from 6:00 to 8:00PM for a workshop on Entrepreneurship. Please note location! Practical considerations, getting started, best business practices, financing, marketing and more will all be discussed. For additional information, or to register, call 203-838-8471 Lisa T. (ext. 678) or Nadine (ext. 681).
LEARNING CENTERS

STUDENTS AT 20 WEST PAINT LIKE MICHELANGELO!

Kids at 20 West learned about one of the most famous Italian artists of the Renaissance, Michelangelo. He was a painter, sculptor, poet, and architect, most popularly known for his sculpture, David, and his paintings that cover the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.

Sometimes you’ve got to set aside the technology that millennials are so accustomed to and experience painting the way Michelangelo did in the early 1500’s - on his back!

B2CC - High School Track
April 4 @ 6:30PM - 7:30PM

High school students (9th-12th grade) meet with 20 West staff to identify their goals for high school in order to prepare for college. This month students will answer the question, “Who am I?” and “What do I want to do in life?” They will continue the process of filtering out what they think they should do in order to help make decisions about what is important to them.

Dinner will be served. For more information, please contact 20 West Learning Center at 203.852.1144 x106.

NHA REPRESENTS CONNECTICUT AT NATIONAL CONVENTION

National After School Association Convention

Every year, thousands of afterschool professionals and leaders from all over the United States gather to get inspired, connected, learn and share at the National After School Association Convention. This year they asked our own STEM Coordinator, Sheiree Powell, to present one of NHA’s STEM programs. Sheiree presented Urban Birding: Scientific Discovery that Protects the Planet. It’s an engaging program that allows our students, Kindergarten through 12th grade, to participate in national research with Cornell University. Needless to say, Sheiree’s presentation was out of this world!

Bridge to College Career Program

Special guest speakers visit monthly to speak to students and share their stories and career paths from high school to their current professions.

Dr. Lindsay E. Curtis - Pastor, Grace Baptist Church
April 25 @ 4:30pm
20 West Ave, Norwalk

4 REASONS YOUR CHILD NEEDS TO ATTEND PRESCHOOL

Preschool provides a foundation for learning, both socially and academically that will help your child succeed in elementary school.

1. Preschool is an opportunity for growth - Preschool is often a child’s first experience in a structured setting with their peers and teachers. It’s an opportunity to learn to share, follow instructions, and begin the foundation for learning that will occur in elementary school.

2. Preschool prepares children for kindergarten - As kindergarten becomes more academic, many parents look to preschool to launch their child on the path to success in school.

3. Preschool promotes social and emotional development - In order to learn, a young child needs to feel cared for and secure with a teacher or caregiver.

4. The preschool environment is structured, although it may not appear that way. A highly structured environment helps young children learn to make friends and play well with others.

5. Children get to make choices. Children have several choices of activities, and are encouraged to follow their interests.

6. Children learn to take care of themselves and others. Children’s sense of competence and self-worth grow as they learn to take care of themselves and help others.

7. Preschool promotes language and cognitive skills. Preschool-age children’s language skills are nurtured in a “language-rich” environment. Between the ages of 3 and 5, a child’s vocabulary grows from 900 to 2,500 words, and sentences become longer and more complex and conversational.

8. Preschool teachers nurture a child’s curiosity. Preschool age children have active imaginations and learn through make-believe play.

9. Preschool activities boost pre-math and literacy skills. Young children are curious and observant, and they strive for competence in the skills that their families and society value such as reading instructions and counting money.

10. Preschool helps develop motor skills. Physical coordination improves, allowing the child to explore his or her environment while experiencing new challenges.

For more parenting tips or if you have any questions or concerns regarding your child’s development (birth-12 years old) please contact Parent Coordinator, Josie Charlot at 203.644.4720 or jcharlot@norwalkha.org.