

Mayor de Blasio Discusses NextGen Neighborhoods



Chair Shola Olatoye with Mayor Bill de Blasio at Wyckoff Gardens.

NYCHA continued its series of discussions with residents about NextGen Neighborhoods with a town hall at Wyckoff Gardens in Brooklyn on January 11. Mayor Bill de Blasio attended the forum with Chair and CEO Shola Olatoye and General Manager Michael Kelly to discuss NYCHA's plan

to build 50 percent affordable and 50 percent market-rate housing at the developments on underutilized land.

The Mayor and the Chair took questions from residents for nearly two hours, not only about the NextGen Neighborhoods proposal, but also about repairs at the devel-

opment, funding issues, and other resident concerns.

NYPD Housing Chief James Secreto and officers from the local precinct were in attendance to field questions regarding law enforcement. Borough President Eric Adams and Stephen Levin, the City Council Member repre-

senting Wyckoff Gardens, also answered some questions.

Mayor de Blasio and Chair Olatoye emphasized that the NextGen Neighborhood program will not privatize any public housing, deprive any current resident of his or her housing, or raise anyone's rent. Rather, the program will generate funding to help repair the existing housing at NextGen Neighborhood developments. (See Top Ten Myths about NextGen Neighborhoods on page 5.)

NYCHA will continue to meet and discuss these projects with all of the residents at NextGen Neighborhood developments. Additional community engagement meetings are scheduled for Wyckoff Gardens and Holmes Towers in March.

City Council Hearing at Holmes Towers

At a City Council hearing held at Holmes Towers on January 26, Chair Shola Olatoye stated that the NextGen Neighborhoods program will move ahead, with important input from residents and community members. Wyckoff Gardens in Boerum Hill, Brooklyn, and Holmes Towers, in the Upper East Side of Manhattan, are the first two sites approved for the program. Between 30 to 40 additional sites across the City are being considered.



EVP for Legal Affairs and General Counsel David Farber, Chair Shola Olatoye and Vice President for Development Nicole Ferreira at a City Council hearing held at Holmes Towers.

CONTENTS

VOL. 2 FEBRUARY 2016 NUMBER 2

2 Staff Appointments and Promotions

3 Rent Collection Training

New Mobile Options for Rent Payments

Webinar on Rent Collection

4 First NextGeneration NYCHA Quarterly Report

5 Top 10 Myths About Next-Gen Neighborhoods

6 Best Wishes 2015 Retirees!

7 Free Tax Preparation Services

8 Employee Organization Focuses on Shared Concerns

Residents Thank Patterson Houses Caretakers

Photo at right: Thank you Property Management staff for shoveling NYCHA out from Winter Storm Jonas!



NYCHA Notes

Congratulations



Karen Caldwell, former Managing Director of Amundi Alternative Investments, was appointed Chief Financial Officer and Executive Vice President in January 2016. Ms. Caldwell is responsible for all financial planning, accounting, and reporting, as well as payroll, insurance, energy, and treasury activities for NYCHA's annual operating budget of \$3 billion and five-year capital budget of \$2.45 billion.

Ms. Caldwell is an innovative financial leader with expertise across all major asset classes and a strong background in asset management and restructuring of unprofitable businesses. While Managing Director at Amundi Alternative Investments, Ms. Caldwell managed \$500 million to \$1 billion investment funds. Prior to that, Ms. Caldwell managed diverse financial trading, sales and treasury desks at LaSalle Bank and Chase Bank, respectively.



John McCormick, formerly Director of the Office of Facility Planning and Administration, was appointed Vice President of the Department of Real Estate Services in January 2016. This department oversees NYCHA's central office, commercial, and non-residential ground floor real estate space portfolios, as well as marketing and lease negotiations with private landlords and commercial tenants. Under Mr. McCormick's oversight and the NextGeneration

NYCHA plan, the department is developing longterm strategies for maximizing revenue and uses of ground floor space throughout NYCHA's developments.

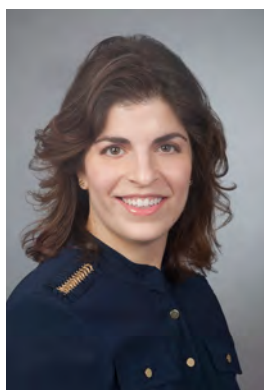
Mr. McCormick joined NYCHA in 2003, having served most recently as Associate Commissioner for Finance and Administration in the NYC Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications. Prior to that, he worked in the private sector as Director of Corporate Property Management at American Express and Assistant Vice President at Lehman Brothers.



David Pristin was appointed Executive Vice President for External Affairs in January 2016, and retains his title as Chief of Staff. Mr. Pristin is charged with developing and shaping the external brand of the agency as it aligns with the NextGeneration NYCHA vision for safe, clean and connected communities. In addition, he manages the day-to-day operations of the Chair's office, providing direct support to the Chair in the planning and execution of policies

and directives, while communicating with NYCHA departments on agency initiatives and serving as a liaison to the Authority's external partners.

Mr. Pristin served in several key positions in the New York City Council. As Director of the City Council's Policy Division, he worked with Council leadership to develop and execute its policy priorities. Working across a wide range of issues, including housing, health, education, public safety, and economic and workforce development, Mr. Pristin managed the drafting of dozens of Council policy reports and policy speeches. As Special Assistant to the Speaker, Mr. Pristin developed strategic plans with senior staff to move Council priorities forward. And as a Policy Analyst in the Legislation Division, Mr. Pristin researched complex issues, drafted legislation and analyzed the budgets and performance of several major New York City



Karina Totah joined NYCHA in 2014 as Senior Advisor to the Chair, and was also appointed Vice President for Strategic Initiatives in January 2016. Ms. Totah has driven the planning and production of NextGeneration NYCHA, the Authority's 10-year strategic plan, and she is responsible for leading its implementation and monitoring. In addition, Ms. Totah oversees the Internal Audit and Assessment group to ensure that work across the Authority is performed in

an effective and high-quality manner, and is aligned with the Authority's mission and goals.

Ms. Totah worked to strengthen public-private partnerships across various U.S. cities as a strategy consultant, real estate developer and affordable housing investor. She was Director of Programming for Talking Transition, a pioneering civic engagement initiative; Development Director for 21c Museum Hotels, a 24-hour contemporary art museum and boutique hotel concept that anchored downtown revitalization efforts in several cities across the country; and Senior Analyst with HR&A Advisors, where she helped to seed public-private initiatives in urban real estate, including for the creation of pedestrian plazas along Broadway in Times Square and Herald Square and the redevelopment of South Street Seaport.



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Rent Collection Training Provides Staff with New Tools and Insights



Deputy General Counsel Sam Mordi describes NYCHA's rent and fees collection process at a January 12 training session at 90 Church Street. The Law and Management Services Departments coordinated a total of six training sessions for almost 700 Operations employees.

The first two weeks of the new year began with training for property managers, assistant property managers and housing assistants across NYCHA for one of the most important and sometimes sensitive jobs—collecting the rent. NYCHA's Rent Collection Initiative is a key part of NextGeneration NYCHA, as rent and related fees provide about one third of the

Authority's operating budget. NextGen NYCHA calls for increasing revenue through rent collection by \$10 million annually.

"How we measure the rent collection rate for each development has been simplified, effective January 1, so that the result of the Rent Collection Initiative can be properly assessed," said Accounting and Fiscal Services Department

Deputy Director Adham Choucri, who explained new metrics and reports at the start of the training session held on January 12. Each development will be assigned a target rent collection rate, based on its prior performance.

Operations managers and supervisors are learning more about the new reports and expectations for accountability at monthly borough meetings, which the Queens/Staten Island Property Management Departments has already completed.

"Rent Demand"

Rent collection begins with asking for it! But like all steps in the rent collection process, there are carefully prescribed methods and procedures,

with forms to record each step in the process. The "rent demand" may be made in person, by phone, or in writing, explained Sam Mordi, NYCHA's Deputy General Counsel, who conducted the training. "You have to show tenants respect and then they will respect you. It goes both ways," he noted.

However, if rent is not paid by the 15th day of the month, and the resident owes two or more months' rent, a Petition and Notice of Petition must be legally served. If a proper rent demand cannot be demonstrated by documentary evidence, Mr. Mordi warned, any case for non-payment that NYCHA may bring to Housing Court could be dismissed.

New Mobile Options for Rent Payments

Paying rent just got easier and more convenient!

NYCHA is proud to introduce a new mobile option that allows residents to view and pay their rent bill from anywhere—through the convenience of mobile devices. Paying rent elec-

tronically is the safest and most reliable method of ensuring that rent payment is received, and now the capability is literally at residents' fingertips through their smartphone or tablet.

Benefits include:

- enroll in e-Bill;
- make a one-time payment;
- view your payment history; and
- receive payment and billing notifications.

Visit www.nyc.gov/nycha to learn more about Mobile Pay, other NYCHA payment options, and the convenience of online, paperless rent statements.



Webinar on Rent Collection Improvements

The Department of Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) launched a NextGeneration NYCHA Webinar Series on January 12 with a presentation by Director of Management Services Lillian Harris on NYCHA's new tools and approaches for rent and fee collection.

"This initiative will help us become more effective in collecting rent and identifying ways to better assist residents falling behind by providing access to resources and support," Ms. Harris said.

Following a PowerPoint presentation, Ms. Harris responded to questions from community liaisons for elected officials.

"Our goal is to bridge communications between NYCHA and elected officials and various stakeholders on issues impacting their constituents," said IGR Director Brian Honan.

The webinar series of eight presentations includes topics that the legislators indicated are of interest to their constituents. The next presentation, scheduled for March 2, is on NYCHA's public/private partnerships and its new 501(c)(3) Fund for Public Housing.



Dir. of Mgmt. Svs. Lillian Harris

First NextGen Quarterly Report Demonstrates Progress



On January 21, the Authority released its NextGeneration NYCHA 4th Quarter 2015 Report, citing progress made during the first eight months implementing the Authority's 10-year strategic plan. The report focuses on the plan's 15 strategies that will transform the way NYCHA does business to create safe, clean, and connected communities. "By changing how NYCHA is fund-

ed, operates, (re)builds, and engages with our residents, the Authority will overcome the challenges of declining government funding and aging infrastructure," Chair and CEO Shola Olatoye stated in the report.

At the time of the plan's announcement, NYCHA had \$17 billion in major repair needs across its public housing portfolio. In addition, the average repair times throughout the portfolio exceeded 20 days at OPMOM developments. The Authority has made significant progress in these areas and has introduced innovative technologies and new work practices that will further improve service to residents.

At the Executive Board Meeting held on January 27, Chair Olatoye presented a summary of progress that highlighted 10 accomplishments

Report Highlights:

- Secured forgiveness of \$100M annually from the City
- Released MyNYCHA App
- Reduced completion time of maintenance requests from 21.4 days to 8 days at OPMOM developments
- Reduced emergency service levels by 7%
- Improved rent collection by 10% at OPMOM developments
- Selected ESCO to manage first EPC to lower energy consumption at up to 80 developments
- Developed new design standards
- Rolled out recycling program at 99 OPMOM developments
- Issued RFPs for 100% affordable new housing
- Launched Fund for Public Housing

(see box). "At our release of our NextGen initiative last May, we publicly made a commitment for quarterly reports on progress on our 15 strategies to show how we're doing and where there is room for improvement," Chair Olatoye recalled.

"While we have made an auspicious beginning, there are many challenges ahead," she later noted. "Change is

never easy, but with the help of dedicated employees, along with residents and our many partners, we will secure the future of public housing for future generations of New Yorkers."

The first NextGen quarterly report is available to view [here](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/nycha/about/nextgen-nycha.page) or at: <http://www1.nyc.gov/site/nycha/about/nextgen-nycha.page>.

Rent Collection Training (cont.)

Rental Assistance Referrals

Although eviction for unpaid rent is an outcome that NYCHA and the City want to avoid, the training included detailed information regarding Housing Court proceedings also contained in a new manual recently compiled by the Law Department and distributed at the training sessions. Training also included important information on rent assistance referrals and emergency assistance grants that can help families in arrears.

NYCHA has entered into an agreement with the Human Resources Administration (HRA) to provide emergency assistance grants to residents facing eviction for non-payment of rent or chronic rent delinquency. To facilitate this

process, NYCHA is now placing a 35-day hold on evictions for these cases.

Property management



Housing Assistant Denise Parker

staff also learned about community-based organizations

that provide residents with financial counseling, financial literacy workshops and other means for financial self-sufficiency. Most residents pay their rent on time and when they are delinquent on rent they are usually faced with other, more complex issues causing loss of income.

"Operations staff have a wealth of knowledge to share," Mr. Mordi later said. "They are always willing to learn new tools and procedures that will assist them in collecting the rent. The comprehensive Housing Court Proceedings Manual developed by the Law Department with assistance from Operations and other departments represents a major effort that will provide another valuable resource."

Housing Assistant Denise Parker at Jefferson Houses in Manhattan said, "even though I have been with NYCHA for 29 years, I gained more knowledge about how to handle certain cases in Housing Court and I was also glad to learn that we can contact our Law Department for assistance."

"It's good that the training emphasized new ways to help tenants," said Assistant Property Manager Dorcas Perdue at Carey Gardens in Brooklyn, "like contacting the Social Services Department in HRA or community agencies. We never want to see families lose their homes for not paying rent."

Debunking the Top 10 Myths about NextGen Neighborhoods

1. **Eviction Myth:** Plan will evict residents; force NYCHA families to move or be displaced.

FACT: The purpose of NextGen Neighborhoods is to keep NYCHA residents in their home, by preserving public housing and improving resident quality of life with major repairs. NextGen Neighborhoods will not and cannot raise NYCHA rents or displace residents, and it will not lead to the demolition of public housing.

2. **Affordability Myth:** NYCHA residents can't afford to live in the affordable apartments; NYCHA is building luxury apartments.

FACT: The new affordable housing units created will serve families earning no more than 60 percent of the area median income (AMI) – which is approximately \$46,600 for a family of three in 2015. This is the minimum affordability, and NYCHA will pursue the deepest affordability possible as the program moves forward.

3. **Secrecy Myth:** NYCHA is being secretive about its real plans, attempting to deceive residents.

FACT: NYCHA is seeking resident input at the front end to inform residents about what the final plan looks like. Not having specifics at this stage of the process isn't secrecy; it's the result of a genuine community engagement process for an affordable housing and public housing preservation program, which is the first-of-its kind in New York City.

4. **Engagement Myth:** Resident engagement isn't real; resident input doesn't matter.

FACT: NYCHA has approached resident engagement on NextGen Neighborhoods in two steps:

- 1) **Informational meetings** to dispel misinformation and explain the need for and intentions of this program and what it means for the community.
- 2) **Engagement meetings** for residents to provide feedback on their priorities and community vision; inform the character of the residential/commercial mix at sites, along with its design and landscape; and identify the upgrade priorities for their buildings.

5. **Funding Myth:** The Authority could find money if it really wanted to; residents pay rent which should pay for repairs.

FACT: NYCHA is on the brink. NYCHA is confronting about \$17 billion in major repair and construction needs across the City. On average, the rent paid by residents plus the government subsidies that NYCHA receives from HUD do not fully cover the operations costs of NYCHA apartments. Moreover, rent and subsidies do not cover major upgrades, rehabilitation, and construction needs.

6. **Same Plan Myth:** The de Blasio administration's NextGen Neighborhoods program is the same infill plan as the Bloomberg administration.

FACT: **NextGen Neighborhoods Program vs. Infill Program**

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|-----|
| (a) Market rate units | 50% | 80% |
| (b) Affordable units | 50% | 20% |
| (c) Presented without resident input: | No | Yes |

NextGen Neighborhoods Program vs. Infill Program (cont.)

(d) Portion of generated **revenues dedicated to upgrades** at existing NYCHA buildings at the same location as the new buildings.

Yes No

(e) **Residents able to provide input** on upgrades to their buildings; look and feel of new construction (commercial mix, building location, design

Yes No

(f) Creation of **standing stakeholder committee** for each site, which includes resident and community representation.

Yes No

(g) **Resident employment** focus as part of new construction.

Yes No

7. **Revenue Myth:** Money generated from new construction won't go to impacted developments the way residents want it to.

FACT: Current resident parking will be addressed as part of the new construction and playgrounds impacted will be moved and improved. Improvements to existing NYCHA buildings will proceed concurrently with new construction. Residents will have a voice in determining how revenue is spent. Additionally, a Stakeholder Committee, which will include resident and community representation, will hold NYCHA accountable to spending those revenue dollars accordingly.



A town hall was held at Wyckoff Gardens on Jan. 11 to discuss NextGen Neighborhoods.

8. **Management Myth:** NYCHA can't take care of the buildings it already has; it shouldn't build more until it takes care of its existing buildings.

FACT: The program will help NYCHA take better care of its buildings using revenue generated from the market-rate apartments in the newly constructed buildings. NYCHA will continue to operate its public housing buildings, while the construction, management, and operations of the new buildings will be handled by the developer.

9. **Negative Myth:** There are no benefits for residents in this program—only negative impacts.

FACT: Really tough problems are rarely solved with popular solutions. NextGen Neighborhoods is a balanced solution (among many) to save the home of NYCHA residents; it's not a penalty. This program will help preserve public housing; give residents the opportunity to more directly guide NYCHA dollars and work to improve the quality of life in their buildings; provide much-needed affordable housing options; and create job opportunities.

10. **Selling Myth:** NYCHA is selling its property; this program is privatizing public housing.

FACT: NextGen Neighborhoods is not selling NYCHA property or privatizing public housing. NYCHA will be retaining the rights to the land where there is new construction through a long-term lease agreement and will continue to operate public housing at the developments.

Best Wishes 2015 Retirees



Rodolfo Abraham
Edward Acevedo
Melvin V. Akerman
Elie Akke
Louis F. Albani
Brenda Alexander
Francisco Alvarez
Eddie Alvelo
Lucy Andrews
Richard Apfelbaum
Anthony Aran
Joseph L. Aresco
William Armstrong
Hiram Arocho
Luis A. Arriaga
Lewis Ashley
Juan Aybar
Mauricio Aybar
Diana Badillo
Charles Bailey
Violet Balducci
Clement Barley
Brian Barry
David Bartolomey
Javan Beeks
Patricia Bigelow
Karen Blake
Leonard M. Blumensohn
Alla Blyumina
Samuel Borrelli
Callie Branche
Ralph N. Brandofino
James Brennan
Leon Brown
Florina E. Buck
George Bunch
Peter Burnett
Yvette Caban
Martin J. Caesar
Richard Calderon
Ellen Campbell
John J. Cannavo
Edna M. Capers
Ramon Capitulo
Bernice Caraballo
Marilyn Cargill
Philip G. Carlucci
Andre Caro
Pedro Carrion
Carmelo Carrozza
Humberto Castro
Luis Cevallos
Augustine Charles
Diane M. Chehab
Kenneth M. Cheung
Dominick Ciccarella
Antonio Collado
Fernando Collazo
Raymond Collins

Ramon Concepcion
Ronald Conliffe
Steven Conner
Linda Cooke
Sabrina Cooper
Sonia Cordova
Anthony Corona
Eric Cotton
Jose M. Crespo
Delfin Cruz
Julio C. Cruz
Miguel Cruz
Miguel Cruz
Pedro Cruz
James S. Cuilla
Stephen Culligan
Thomas Damico
Janet Davis
Leroy J. Davis
Massa E. Davis
William J. Dawson
Calvin Dean
Lyudmila Dekhtyar
Ramon O. Delarosa
Albert Delatorre
Immanuel Desai
Lisa Diaz
Mario Dicola
Philip J. Donovan
David W. Doran
Euclides Dos Reis
Rodrigue Dufresne
Marilynn Edwards
Ignatius H. Emmanuel
John Erhardt
Alfredo J. Fabio
Regina M. Facey
Remilda Ferguson
Walter Fields
Agustin Figueroa
Luz V. Figueroa
Frank Filosa
Meredith Fluellen
Richard C. French
Joseph Gagliano
Peter Gallagher
Sharon Galloway
Juan Pablo Garces
Miguel Garcia
Jeanette Garcia-Negrini
Brenda George
Ronald Gerhard
James Gibney
Ronald Gifford
Larry Gilmore
Amparo Gonzalez
Peter Granelle
Angela Greene
Geoffrey Gumpert

Cephus Gurley
Alvina Guy
Lizandro Guzman
Melvin Hardnett
Janice Harkins
Barbara Harrison
Stanley Hegler
Joseph Hendricks
Charles Hertzog
George Herzberg
Eileen D. Hopson
Scott W. Hryszko
Sydney Hudson
Lucas Huertas
Sheila Humphries
Willard Hunt
Mitchell Imberman
Sherrill Ivey
Yvonne Jackson-Oliver
Cavella James
Debra A. James
Alonzo Jamison
Richard Jenkins
Hector John
Deborah Johnson
Sarah Jones
Patrick Joseph
Thomas Joseph
Thomas Joseph
Juliette Joyner
Shribhagwan Kalantri
Dennis Kandell
Robert Kanowicz
Boris Karmazin
Brenda M. Keating
Curtis Key
Gregory D. Kimber
Keith King
Irina Kliger
John Kline
Scott Krikawa
Sau Lai
Ernest Lanzot
Yick Lau
May Lan. Law Wong
Joseph J. Lawrence
Michael Lee
Barry Levine
Lynette A. Lewis-Rogers
Richard Licht
Maria Linares
Donald Lindsey
Humberto A. Lopez
Jose L. Lopez
Jose R. Lopez
Kalmus Lowe
William Lucero
Jet Lun
Erlene Lynch

Inna Magazinnik
Emely Maldonado
Eapen Malicakal
Jovica Markov
Olimpio Martinez
Mario Mastrangelo
Victor Matos
Russell Maydan
Robert McEntee
Sonia M. McFeeters
Ruth McGee
Linda McKay
Patrick McQuaid
Marcos Mederos
Nancy Medina
Edwin Mendez
Salvatore Milioto
Nina Miller Mejia
Flona Mincy
Karl Mischler
Carlos Montes
Carmen Morales
Edward Morales
Josue Morales
Philip Morales
Edmond P. Morrissey
Anthony Mosley
Margaret Mumford
Gregory Munroe
Sandra J. Murchison
Sara Nanton
Linda Narine
Eugene Nelson
Zoraida Newman
Jeffrey M. Niederhoffer
Michael Nieves
Enrique Nunez
Alan Nyman
Gerald T. O'Hara
Michael O'Neill
Moises Ocampo
Salvatore Oddo
Samuel Omoh
Edgar Oquendo
Jesse Orange
Leonardo Ortiz
Miguel A. Ortiz
Ramon Ortiz
Wilfredo Ortiz
Wilfredo Ortiz
Stephen Paige
Gennaro Palumbo
Betty Parsons
Maria Partsinevelos
Clifford M. Penn
John Pepel
Evelyn Perez
Jose Perez
Nelson O. Perez

Robert Persaud
Elizabeth Pesin
Louis Petersen
Carolyn Petillo
Philip Petrone
Rochelle Petty
Martin F. Phelan
Santa Pimentel
Steven Piscitelli
Eugene Powell
Sylvia I. Powell
Grantley Prescod
Fernando Ramirez
Lailani Raphael
Karl Reichert
Miriam Resto
Veratta L. Rhames
Willie Rice
Elaine Richardson
Antonio R. Riera
Francis E. Rivera
Victor Rivera
Frank J. Rivers
Edward Robinson
Henry Robinson
Louise Robinson
Philip Robinson
Perfecto Robles
Bernard Rodriguez
Harry Rodriguez
Barbara Rosa
Louis Rosario
Esther Ruiz
Linda Ruppert
Surinderpal Sabharwal
Carmen Saez
Ahmad Saffaf
Eary Sailsman
Jose Sandoval
Carlos Santiago
Ricardo N. Santos
Robert Schweiger
Joseph Schweizer
Darryl Scott
Kathleen Scott
Moises Serrano
Matthew Settembrino
Jagdish K. Shah
Michael Shearin
Jerrold Shien
John Shkreli

Donna Simon
Bibi Singh
Eugene Sinkler
Edward Smieya
Ernestine Smith
Barry Stabile
Ralph J. Stabile
Kenneth Stephens
Gerald C. Sternberg
Russell Stevens
Anita V. Stockett
Frank J. Taylor
Glenmore Thomas
Valsa Thomas
Aaron Thompson
Randy Thorne
Miriam Torres
Ralph Torres
Vito Troffo
Peter B. Trujillo
Dario Ungania
Mohinder Uppal
William D. Vasquez
Jose A. Vazquez
Sylvia I. Vega
Carmen Velazquez
Victor Villaronga
Robert Wachsmuth
Thomas Wagner
Howard S. Webb
Christopher Wells
Brenda J. Wells-Arrington
Baron White
Charles E. White
Joann White
Bethenia Whitehurst
William G. Wick
Marie Wight
Jennie Williams
Pallas A. Williams
Sharon E. Williams
James N. Willis
Annette Wimms
Alice Wolfe
Ravenna Won
Yeung Wong
Shak Wah Yau
Linda Youmans
Evangelos Zaphiris
Alexander Z. Zhomitsky

Virtual VITA Tax Prep Can Save You Time and Money



Free tax preparation and e-file services are available at select NYCHA Community Centers now until April 13, 2016.

Food Bank for New York City has partnered with NYCHA's Office of Resident Economic Empowerment and Sustainability (REES) to offer FREE tax prep services to NYCHA public housing residents and NYCHA Section 8 voucher holders through the Virtual Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. This service is also available to anyone earning \$53,000 per year or less.

What is Virtual Tax Preparation? At select NYCHA and Jobs-Plus locations, an intake coordinator scans your tax documents, returns them immediately, and your tax return is completed remotely by a Food Bank tax preparer. Virtual VITA is extremely fast and saves you time.

See the list of VITA locations below for all five boroughs.

VITA LOCATIONS

Bronx

Northeast Bronx – Edenwald Community Center

Sponsor: Mosholu Montefiore Community Center

Where: 1150 East 229th St. (between Laconia Ave. & Schieffelin Ave.), Bronx, NY 10466

When: Tuesdays and Fridays (6pm – 9:30pm), Saturdays (11am – 2pm)

Directions: 5 train to Baychester Avenue

Phone: (718) 652-0246

South Bronx – St. Mary's Park Community Center

Sponsor: BronxWorks

Where: 595 Trinity Avenue (between Pontiac Pl & E. 149th St.), Bronx, NY 10455

When: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays (10am – 1:30pm), Wednesdays (6pm – 9:30pm), Saturdays (10am – 1pm)

Directions: 2 or 5 train to Jackson Ave.

Phone: (718) 655-7610

South Bronx – BronxWorks

Note: This is a Jobs-Plus site that only serves NYCHA residents of Betances, East 152nd St.-Cortlandt, and Moore Houses.

Where: 391 East 149th St., Suite 520 (near 3rd Ave.), Bronx, NY 10455

When: Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays (9am – 7pm), Fridays (9am – 5pm), Saturdays (9am – 2pm)

Directions: 2 or 5 train to 3rd Ave.-149th St.

Phone: (718) 993-8880

Soundview – Goodwill Industries of Greater NY

Note: This is a Jobs-Plus site that only serves NYCHA residents of Clason Point, Monroe, and Sack Wern Houses.

Where: 1620 Bruckner Blvd. (at Morrison Ave.), Bronx, NY 10473

When: Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays (9am – 4pm), Wednesdays and Thursdays (8am – 6pm), Saturdays (10am – 4pm)

Directions: 6 train to Morrison-Sound View Ave.

Phone: (347) 291-8050

Brooklyn

Bedford-Stuyvesant – Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation

Note: This is a Jobs-Plus site that only serves NYCHA residents of Armstrong I & II, Marcy, and Lafayette Houses.

Where: 630 Flushing Ave (Enter on Tompkins Ave), Brooklyn, NY 11206

When: Mondays and Tuesdays (10am – 7pm), Thursdays and Fridays (10am – 4:30pm),

Last Saturday of the month (11am – 3pm)

Directions: G train to Flushing Ave.

Phone: (917) 267-5590

Brownsville – DB Grant & Associates

Note: This Jobs-Plus site only serves NYCHA residents of Van Dyke I & Brownsville Houses.

Where: 330 Powell St. (between Blake Ave. & Dumont Ave.), Brooklyn, NY 11212

When: Mondays and Wednesdays (10am – 12 noon)

Directions: 3 train to Junius St. or L train to Sutter Ave. or Livonia Ave.

Phone: (347) 599-9653

Bushwick – Bushwick/Hylan Community Center

Sponsor: DYCD/Grand Street Settlement, Inc.

Where: 50 Humboldt St. (between Varet St. & Debevoise St.), Brooklyn, NY 11206

When: Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays (11am – 1pm), Wednesdays and Fridays (6pm – 8pm)

Directions: J, Z or M train to Flushing Ave.

Phone: (718) 453-8116

Coney Island – O'Dwyer Community Center

Sponsor: HeartShare St. Vincent's Services HSVS

Where: 2945 West 33rd St. (between Mermaid Ave. & Surf Ave.), Brooklyn, NY 11224

When: Tuesdays and Thursdays (6pm – 9:30pm), Saturdays (1pm – 5pm)

Directions: D, F, N or Q train to Coney Island-Stillwell Ave.

Phone: (718) 946-0519

East New York – Penn-Wortman Community Center

Sponsor: CAMBA

Where: 895 Pennsylvania Ave. (between, Wortman Ave. & Stanley Ave.), Brooklyn, NY 11207

When: Mondays and Wednesdays (6:30pm – 9:30pm), Saturdays (2pm – 5pm)

Directions: 3 train to Pennsylvania Ave. and B20 bus to Wortman Ave. & Pennsylvania Ave.

Phone: (718) 649-1371

Manhattan

East Harlem – Jefferson Houses

Organization: Hostos Community College

Note: This is a Jobs-Plus site that only serves NYCHA residents of Jefferson Houses.

Where: 335 East 111th St (between First & Second Ave.), New York, NY 10029

When: Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays (8am – 6pm), Fridays (9am – 2:30pm)

Directions: 6 train to 110th St.

Phone: (917) 492-0274

Lower East Side – Boys and Girls Republic

Sponsor: Henry Street Settlement

Note: This is a Jobs-Plus site that only serves NYCHA residents of Wald and Riis II Houses.

Where: 24 Avenue D (at 3rd St.), New York, NY 10009

When: Call to make an appointment.

Directions: 4, 5, 6, L, N, Q, R to 14th St. and M14D bus to E. 3rd St. & Ave. D.

Phone: (212) 254-4333

Queens

Far Rockaway – CAMBA/Arverne View Recovery Program

Where: 57-11 Shore Front Parkway (at Beach 56th Pl) Arverne, NY 11692

When: Tuesdays and Thursdays (10am – 2pm), Wednesdays (3pm – 7pm)

Directions: A train to Beach 60th St.

Phone: (718) 675-3347 Ext. 48006

Staten Island

St. George – ResCare Workforce Services

Note: This is a Jobs-Plus site that only serves NYCHA residents of Mariner's Harbor, Richmond Terrace, South Beach, Stapleton, Todt Hill, and West Brighton I Houses.

Where: 30 Bay St. 4th Floor (off Central Ave.)

When: Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays (9am – 4pm), Thursdays (11am – 7pm), Saturdays (by appointment only)

Directions: Staten Island Ferry or any Staten Island bus to St. George Terminal

Phone: (917) 338-5204

Visit <http://www1.nyc.gov/site/dca/consumers/file-your-taxes.page> for additional free tax prep locations citywide.

News to Use

Employee Organization Focuses on Shared Concerns



From left are CoNEO office holders and members Ramon Lugo, Membership Chair Anna Lee, First Vice President Linda Zhang, President Kenneth Cox, Secretary Valerie Pepe, Nilsa Gonzalez, Recording Secretary Edith I. Oviedo, and Training and Personal and Professional Development Chair Elsie Maglorie.

The Coalition of NYCHA Employee Organizations (CoNEO) held its first open house membership meeting in the 90 Church Street Ceremonial Room on January 29. One of several new employee organizations, CoNEO was formed with the unique mission of providing all employee organizations with a forum to identify and address shared concerns. The group will encourage increased employee engagement across the Authority to promote the wellbeing of employees and help mobilize for major NYCHA initiatives.

The timing couldn't be better for the new group. Yvette Andino, NYCHA's first Director of Employee Engagement and Special Assistant to the Chair, told the gathering that her position in the Chair's Office reflects NextGeneration NYCHA's goal of promoting employee engagement and working closely with employees to enhance employee culture while advancing the NextGen agenda.

CoNEO president Kenneth Cox, Administrative Staff Analyst in the Customer Operations Department, stated that a core group from other employee organizations was formed to develop CoNEO's mission statement, which was discussed at the recent meeting. "We will be meeting quarterly to share committee updates and develop plans and events," he said. "The committee chairpersons will also meet with their respective members to develop a list of interests and concerns that we will consolidate and later hope to discuss with NYCHA senior leadership."

Five committees were formed, each headed by the president of another employee organization: Health and Wellness, Membership, Outreach and Engagement, Emergency Response, and Training and Personal and Professional Development. Interested employees may contact Mr. Cox at (718) 707-5367 or by [email](#), or First Vice President Linda Zhang at (212) 306-6677 or by [email](#), for additional information.

Residents Thank Patterson Houses Caretakers



Patterson Houses caretakers at appreciation luncheon.

The residents at Patterson Houses in the Bronx held an appreciation luncheon on February 5 to thank caretakers for their hard work.

"We're doing this to let staff know that we care about them and want to work with them to get our [development] back together," said Nellie McKay, one of the event organizers.

"Staff were really happy to be acknowledged for all they do," Property Manager Stacey Fanniel later said.

NYCHA Tweeted the event

with a link to a video that shows employees gathered in the lunchroom (above).

"It really gave staff a boost and energized them at work," Supervisor of Caretakers Harrison Torres added. "When residents show they care, and want to work with us, that affects how their neighbors feel, too." Mr. Torres was the first face of the "I am NextGen" campaign.

The link to the video is available [here](#) or at: <https://twitter.com/NYCHA/status/696720128654909440>.

Remembering Ralph Pelo

Dear Editor,

The NYCHA family of retirees is saddened by the passing of longtime employee and friend Ralph A. Pelo on January 4, 2016.

Ralph was born in Brooklyn, New York. He was a charter member of the Teamsters Local 237. Through the years he held many different titles at NYCHA.

Before retiring he spent many years as an administrative superintendent. For many years Ralph gave up his evenings to teach classes on steam distribution, helping many employees succeed in advancing their careers. In the early 70's, he was in charge of the trainee career ladder program which caretakers and new employees took to obtain promotion to maintenance worker.

Ralph also served honorably in the U.S. Navy during the Korean War. Ralph is survived by his loving son, John R. Pelo; his wife, Annette; and sisters Dora Accurso and Violet Pattay, along with cherished nieces and nephews.

He will be sadly missed but never forgotten.

Anthony Cottone and the Retirees Luncheon Group

