

Roof Replacements Start at Queensbridge Houses



GM Michael Kelly with Mayor Bill de Blasio at Queensbridge Houses. At far left is NYS Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan and at far right is NYC Councilmember Jimmy Van Bramer.

On August 24, Mayor Bill de Blasio and General Manager Michael Kelly announced the start of rooftop replacement construction at Queensbridge Houses in Long Island City, underscoring a core commitment of NextGeneration

NYCHA to preserve and maintain NYCHA's precious housing stock.

"Having a roof over your head isn't good enough if it leaks all the time," said Mayor de Blasio. "We're investing \$300 million to replace roofs

at NYCHA developments across the City to attack decades of neglect that for too long has been the status quo. NextGeneration NYCHA goes beyond fixing what's broken and lays the groundwork to make NYCHA physically and economically healthy for generations to come."

"Today, we announce the beginning of our comprehensive roof replacement plan, restoring 66 of our worst roofs throughout New York City," said General Manager Michael Kelly. "This not only fulfills an early commitment made to NYCHA residents, it is also one of the most aggressive efforts we've taken to curb the presence of leaks and mold at our buildings.

Under the leadership of Chair and CEO Shola Olatoye and Mayor de Blasio, NYCHA is fulfilling the vision of Next Generation through addressing our infrastructure problems head-on—changing our operating structure, rehabilitating our developments, and sealing our most distressed buildings."

Leaky roofs are the main cause of water and moisture entering a building, and the accumulated moisture contributes to mold, leaks and physical damage to the building structure. These vital repairs will decrease the number of leaks in the most affected NYCHA buildings, and move the Authority to-

(cont. p. 7)

Hello...NYCHA Calling



Brooklyn Borough Deputy Director Gary Watt and Property Manager Tena Morgan (at left) discuss the rent collection rate at Gowanus Houses at a STAT Revenue and Rent Collection meeting on August 20. At right (l-r) are Sr. VP for Operations Brian Clarke, General Manager Michael Kelly and Management Services Department Director Lillian Harris.

"Hello. This is the New York City Housing Authority. We're calling to remind you that your rent and other charges are due on the first of the month. Our records indicate that you have an overdue balance..."

Beginning in August, the first round of "robocalls" went out to residents with rent and other charges in arrears at Mott Haven Houses and Sack-Wern Houses. Residents

at Jefferson Houses with outstanding balances received automated payment reminder letters instead; residents at Brownsville Houses received both robocalls and rent reminder letters.

These efforts are part of a pilot driven by the Rent Collection Task Force to test the effectiveness of new tools and approaches. Results of Pilot 1 will be compared to similar developments that

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Thank you to Catherine Santiago and the General Services Department. See p. 8 for why.

NYCHA Notes

Two New Employee Organizations Join the Mix

In June, we reported on the newest employee organization—LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning). Since then, two more employee organizations have entered the scene. In fact, there are so many em-

and crises affecting employees and residents, and provide a forum for engagement of executive management.

For information on CoNEO, you may contact Mr. Cox by email or at #525367.



From left are Linda Zhang, Kenneth Cox, Valerie Pepe, and Edith Irizarry-Oviedo, some of the founding members of CoNEO.

ployee organizations that one of the new ones—the **Coalition of NYCHA Employee Organizations** (CoNEO)—has been formed to provide all of them with a forum to address shared concerns.

"The formation of the Coalition is a direct offshoot from a NextGeneration meeting that Chair Olatoye held with employee organization representatives in April," said Kenneth Cox, a founding member of CoNEO.

The group will encourage increased participation in employee organizational activities, promote the health and wellbeing of employees, mobilize for major initiatives

The **NYCHA Emerging Leaders Association** (NYCHA ELA), established in April, provides an opportunity for engaged employees from across NYCHA departments and disciplines to interact personally and professionally. Its mission is to "create an Authority-wide platform for networking and collaboration among NYCHA's emerging leaders with an emphasis on encouraging and supporting one another in career progression and personal and professional growth."

NYCHA ELA also focuses on resident engagement activities "to bridge the gap between developing profes-

Congratulations on the following appointments and promotions.



Nicole Ferreira rejoined NYCHA in February 2015 as a Senior Director in the Development Department. As a leader of the senior team, Ms. Ferreira oversees the development pipeline and ensures the development process is timely and well-organized. She is also responsible for leading the team to execute NextGeneration NYCHA strategic initiatives for both the preservation and new construction of affordable housing.



Yvette Andino, formerly Deputy Chief Communications Officer in the Department of Communications, has been promoted to Director of the newly created Department for Community Development. This department supports the construction of affordable housing units on NYCHA development property by working with residents, resident leaders, elected officials, and

community-based organizations to increase their understanding of and support for NYCHA's affordable housing program.

sionals and the residents we serve," said Miles Monaghan, Interim President. Planned activities with residents include community gardening initiatives, volunteer clean-up days at developments, as well as outreach related to NYCHA policy initiatives and other ways to serve residents in a more personal setting.

NYCHA ELA will also invite senior staff to be guest speakers at meetings to share their professional guidance and career advice.

For information, you may email the organization at NYCHAELA@gmail.com or contact Myles Monaghan or Elena Tenchnikova through the NYCHA directory.

NYCHA's History in Museum Exhibit

The Museum of the City of New York will feature an exhibit titled "Affordable New York" that traces more than a century of affordable housing activism and also focuses on current and future housing initiatives. NYCHA's pioneering role and current contributions are highlighted in the exhibit, which includes objects and photos contributed by NYCHA employees and retirees. The exhibit opens on September 18 and runs through February 16.

All NYCHA employees can get \$20.00 discount tickets for the kick-off symposium on subsidized housing on September 17. You may contact [The Museum of the City of New York](http://TheMuseumoftheCityofNewYork) for additional information at 212-534-1672.



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Farewell Interview with Natalie Y. Rivers



Natalie Y. Rivers
Executive Vice-President
& Chief Administrative Officer

"Everyone has a role in their own destiny."

Executive Vice President & Chief Administrative Officer Natalie Y. Rivers will leave NYCHA after more than 27 years of service on September 25.

Natalie began her singular career here as a Staff Analyst in the Human Resources Department, "to pay off a college loan," she recalled. She was soon promoted to Supervisor of the Retirement Counseling

Unit and then to Chief of Staff Relations before leaving HR to serve as Senior Advisor to the EVP for Administration.

Natalie returned to HR as Deputy Director and was later promoted to Deputy to the General Manager, Chief of Staff, and finally to EVP & Chief Administrative Officer, a position she has held for 12 years—a record not soon to be surpassed by any EVP.

Natalie has held senior leadership positions at NY-

CHA during times of change and crisis. She has seen many roadmaps, re-engineering of business processes, and administration initiatives to meet new challenges and agendas. Through it all, Natalie has been an invaluable resource not only for her corporate memory but for her forward thinking and ability to set new goals and direction.

Looking back on her career, here is some of what Natalie had to say.

What are some of your major accomplishments here?

I was never more proud of NYCHA than during our response to 9/11. I had the privilege of leading the Administration team in ensuring that all of our 90 Church Street offices were clean and safe after a reconstruction of the entire building, and that staff were comfortable and felt safe reoccupying the space.

Also, the establishment of NYCHA's Leadership Academy for middle managers, in partnership with CUNY/Baruch College. This professional development program ran for four years, and most of its graduates have advanced at NYCHA. Although the program lost its funding due to NYCHA's fiscal climate, I believe that it can serve as a model for the future.

How about disappointments?

Administration is a support function, so the fiscal constraints we face have impacted our ability to provide the level of service that we should. I'm also disappointed that I will not be here to see NextGen NYCHA take hold.

I would love to be part of the team that rights this complex organization, under the leadership of Chair Olatoye and GM Kelly. I'll be loudly rooting for NYCHA from the sidelines.

How have you adjusted so well to NYCHA's many changes?

I believe that change is good and that prior practice is not self-justification. At the same time, I feel part of my job is to use my institutional knowledge to share past challenges and mistakes and help to identify solutions so that we won't experience a repeat of what went wrong.

What are the biggest changes you've seen here?

The change to the NYCHA board structure to include resident board members. Also, I am glad to see many more women and people of color in leadership roles.

How do you keep fresh and enthusiastic?

My challenges in Administration have changed as new areas have come under my jurisdiction, such as the Customer Contact Cen-

ter, Customer Operations, Research and Management Analysis, and the Office of the EPMO. This has allowed me to expand my expertise and appreciate more directly NYCHA's impact on residents.

Also, our highly committed employees keep me going—if they can do it, so can I.

What do employees need to understand better?

Employees need to understand why they are asked to do something in a certain way, not just what they are asked to do. We need to know and understand how all the pieces of an operation connect to the whole process. This happens through communication and is what I tried to do with the Let's Talk initiative that brought Customer Contact Center staff and development staff together to see how they could work more cohesively.

What would help employees succeed here?

Everyone has a role in their own destiny. You've got to be open to—and don't shy away from—opportunities

and you've got to put in the work to make that opportunity a reality. Also, exposure is important. Talk to people and seek out a mentor. Don't be afraid to ask. I have mentored and have been mentored here.

What is NYCHA's and public housing's future?

Public housing is a must for this City due to its high cost of living. So public housing has to exist, but it may look different going forward. It is incumbent upon NYCHA and its stakeholders and partners to figure out how to preserve and maintain this precious resource. There are limits to what the City, State and federal government can do for us; this is the challenge ahead of NextGen NYCHA.

What would you like to add?

I leave NYCHA thankful to residents who kept me grounded; the Administration team for their unconditional support; colleagues who have stuck by me; and for all the opportunities I have been afforded. All of this has helped me become the woman I am today, and I like that person!

Get to Know NYCHA Leadership: Say Hello to Bomee Jung



Bomee Jung
Vice President for Energy and Sustainability

“Collaboration and transparency...get the best results.”

Bomee Jung joined NYCHA as Vice President for Energy and Sustainability on July 6.

Prior to that, she served in various leadership positions at Enterprise Community Partners, Inc., a national leader in greening affordable housing, and on the City’s Planning Commission.

During her tenure with Enterprise, Bomee is credited

with securing New York City’s adoption of the Enterprise Green Communities Criteria as its required standard for affordable housing; designing and managing a Weatherization Assistance Program joint venture that piloted a portfolio-based model; and leading Enterprise’s Sandy initiative, which developed tools for long-term resiliency of multi-family affordable housing.

In 2002, Bomee founded GreenHomeNYC, a volunteer-

driven not-for-profit that promotes sustainability. In her first career, Bomee developed Internet-based applications for digital agencies and start-ups.

She holds a bachelor’s degree in Comparative Literature and Japanese from the University of Georgia and a master’s in city planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and serves on the board of Asian Americans for Equality, Inc., a city-wide affordable housing organization.

What is your mission here?

I lead the team responsible for the development of an Authority-wide, comprehensive sustainability agenda in support of NextGeneration NYCHA. The Department of Energy and Sustainability was recently reconfigured and realigned under Capital Projects to provide a better platform to pursue a broader sustainability mission. This mission includes providing a comfortable and healthy indoor living environment for residents, as well as managing energy, water, and waste effectively.

What are your early impressions coming here?

To support the success of NextGeneration NYCHA, we now need to develop a comprehensive sustainability agenda to get us back on top as the largest and best housing provider in the City. We have incredibly dedicated staff here and I know many of them will have great ideas about how to meet our four core sustainability challenges of healthy indoor environments, energy, water, and waste management.

What changes lie ahead for your area?

We’ve invested many years in building strong energy competency. We’ll need to re-invest there, both at the central office and in the field, applying the same discipline to these other three key sustainability areas: indoor environments, water, and waste management. At the same time, we’ll first need to perform a sustainability inventory to take stock of all the work we are doing across the Authority, and with the NextGen goals in mind, make smart decisions about how to best support the ambitious goals of the Mayor’s “One City, Built to Last” plan for sustainability.

What related programs here provide additional opportunities?

The FEMA-funded Superstorm Sandy recovery program provides an opportunity to improve not only the storm resiliency of the affected developments but also to invest in systems that will perform better every day.

How would you describe

your management style?

I spent my formative professional years in the technology industry, where a high value is placed on collaboration and transparency as the best protection against the inevitable errors that individuals will make. I also learned that the important thing is not to design the perfect product, but to design the product you can ship quickly to your users so that you can get real-world feedback and iteratively improve the product.

In a similar way, my mission in NYCHA requires working with and coordinating the efforts of many departments to do more of the things that work for us and fix the things that don’t work for us. When it comes to indoor environments, energy, water, and waste, I see my team’s role as more like connective tissue than muscle. We’re here to support the interaction of the big muscles—Capital Projects, Operations, and Community Programs and Development—to work together toward a shared vision of sustainability at NYCHA.

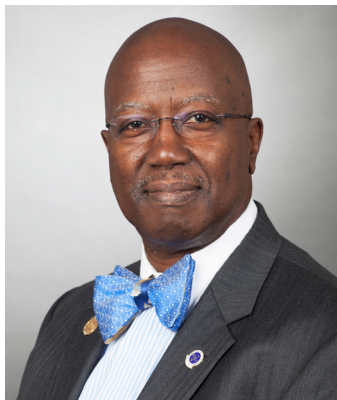
How will you obtain the cooperation of residents for efficient use of resources?

People usually make reasonable decisions based on their options. It is critical to have a strong working partnership with residents as well as external organizations. Rather than asking residents for “changes in their behavior,” our job is to provide a better set of choices.

For example, it’s very common in New York to open windows when it’s too hot in January, but this actually makes it colder in the lower-floor apartments and wastes energy. We can do a campaign to ask folks not to open windows (and we may very well ask), but if the apartment wasn’t too hot to begin with, there would be no need to open the window. Certainly trust and communication are key, so a part of our challenge is to always build trust and communication, even when we’re in really challenging circumstances.

Bomee has invited employees to email their sustainability ideas to:
Bomee.Jung@nycha.nyc.gov.

Get to Know NYCHA Leadership: Say Hello to Chief Nelson



Gerald Nelson
Vice President for Public Safety

"Back Home in Housing"

Gerald Nelson joined NYCHA as Vice President for Public Safety on August 3. He began his career in 1973 as a patrolman in the then-NYCHA Housing Police Bureau and recently retired as Commanding Officer of Patrol Borough Brooklyn North after more than 40 years of service with the NYPD.

In his role as Vice President for Public Safety, "Chief" Nelson is responsible for plan-

ning, organizing and directing all of NYCHA's public safety services and activities. This includes ensuring the provision of general law enforcement, criminal investigation, fire suppression and prevention, rescue and emergency medical services, disaster responses, nuisance abatement, and code enforcement. With this broad mandate, Chief Nelson plays a vital role in leading Next-Generation NYCHA efforts to achieve safe com-

munities for residents and employees.

The Office of Safety and Security and the Office of Emergency Preparedness report to the Vice President for Public Safety and are part of NYCHA's newly formed public safety program.

He holds a bachelor's degree in government and public administration from John Jay College and a master's degree in public administration from Marist College.

Is there some culture shock in coming to NYCHA after a 40-year career in the NYPD, even though you began your career in NYCHA's then-Housing Bureau as a patrolman?

Yes, even though I am back home in housing, the culture at NYPD is quasi-military. The reporting lines are strictly controlled through the chain of command. Here, there are other ways to get information to and from people, and to get their input, besides the formal hierarchy. That's a big change and it can be helpful.

You've only been here about two weeks. What are your early impressions?

All the people on my team that I have met are dedicated professionals who really care about what they are doing.

There is so much that I thought I knew about housing from my early preparation but after being here, and at my first public hearing, I see there is a lot more to learn. This can be something like just knowing acronyms but also some issues, players and the different perspectives among NYCHA and its partners, and

it takes a while to catch up with the nuances in the relationships. In some instances, I had looked at certain individuals or issues that affect us from a different position and I now understand them more fully, which I think can work as an advantage.

Your job responsibilities cover many different areas [see above]. How do you approach and assess all these different concerns?

You need to know how to motivate and inspire your key personnel, and give them the tools and resources they need. You also need to form partnerships with other organizations that work with you. No one can be an expert on everything. From my former career, I know many of the key players at the NYC Office of Emergency Management, New York Criminal Justice Agency, the NYPD, and other agencies that we will be working with to put a comprehensive public safety plan in place.

What are your early goals?

I came here with a 60-day plan of action that we will

begin to look at seriously in September. Right now, I am reviewing my requested "wish lists" from my Directors of Safety and Security, and Emergency Preparedness; meeting with NYCHA executives and my counterparts at other agencies; introducing myself at resident meetings and Family Days at developments; and attending events such as the recent public hearing on the annual plan. All of this will give me a fuller idea of our issues, NYCHA teams, partners and concerns.

What from your NYPD career will be most helpful here?

I've spent 25 years in management positions, supervised over 6,000 employees, dealt with multi-cultural communities and had an open door policy with civilians, community leaders, and advocates. I plan to bring all my experiences to bear here at NYCHA.

This will be essential in working at NYCHA, with its partner organizations and, of course, with residents and employees to set and achieve common goals.

Lower Manhattan Flood Protection

General Manager Michael Kelly joined Mayor Bill de Blasio, elected officials, and community leaders in Lower Manhattan on August 27 as the Mayor announced a new City capital commitment of \$100 million to help protect Lower Manhattan from flooding. General Manager Kelly participated in a round-table discussion hosted by the Mayor on resiliency issues.

"Superstorm Sandy was a devastating event that affected more than 60,000 NYCHA residents, and we are committed to working with the City to be part of the solution to protect Lower Manhattan from future storms," General Manager Kelly said.

NYCHA Attorneys Make House Calls



Attorneys Harley Diamond, Rosanne Pisem, Blondine Matthews, Amanda Grannis (legal intern), Kenneth Eng (legal intern), Alison Peyser, and Seth Kramer on the roof of Manhattanville Houses.

This summer General Counsel David Farber invited NYCHA's attorneys to a series of visits to the field. Seventy-five attorneys along with legal interns accepted the invitation. These trips provided an opportunity for the attorneys to meet NYCHA's borough leadership, development management, and other teams; inspect NYCHA buildings from roof to basement; and interact with development staff to learn

about each other's successes and challenges.

The series kicked off on July 16 with a trip to the Queens-Staten Island Borough Meeting at International Towers and extended through August 14 with a final trip to the Optimal Property Management Department's (OPMD) Lincoln Houses. Approximately 14 legal staff piled into the vans that NYCHA's terrific Fleet Main-

tenance team lined up. The drivers shared their knowledge of the neighborhoods and Legal team liaisons provided a history of the developments to be visited.

NYCHA's Legal teams also visited Eastchester Gardens on July 17, where Bronx Management made them feel welcome; a Manhattan Tactical Meeting at UPACA 5 & 6 on July 21, hosted by Manhattan Borough Director Conrad Vazquez; and Manhattanville Houses with the Mixed Finance team on July 23, hosted by Mixed Finance Director Darrell Laval.

These trips gave the legal staff an opportunity to understand challenges faced by the field, including record-keeping, maintenance and rehabilitation needs, adjustments for contractors and, most challenging in the summer months, staffing needs. All legal staff were able to

observe firsthand the grace with which development and borough management teams, including OPMD and Mixed Finance, address these challenges and provide support for their staff.

The Law Department was able to open lines of communication with the field as to the challenges faced in the courts and how the field's cooperation assists Law in properly defending NYCHA in an often hostile judicial environment. NYCHA's Law Department is extremely grateful to everyone who contributed to making these trips such a success.

Thank you to Joan Rodriguez, Associate General Counsel in the Law Department's Tort Division, for this article. Articles about other department's activities are welcome.

Fence Painting Shows Community Cares

Volunteering doesn't have to be a chore. Just ask the more than 230 residents, Property Managers, Caretakers, Superintendents, development office staff, and community partners who spent a few hours on August 6 sprucing up the fences at Van Dyke Houses with a fresh coat of paint.

According to NYCHA Project Manager Helga Nyanffor, residents raised the need for new paint for the fences at Van Dyke's NextGeneration NYCHA meetings. Collaborative committees had been created to implement the ideas that arose from last year's NextGen "visioning" workshops, which focused on

increasing opportunities and improving the quality of life in the community. Healthfirst wanted to assist with this fence-painting request, and Jacqueline Howard, NYCHA's Resident Engagement Lead for Van Dyke's NextGen work, helped bring together all the partners.

"The best part was how different groups that don't usually work together all joined in," said Ms. Nyanffor.

It was a beautiful day in Brownsville, Brooklyn, thanks to support from the event's sponsor, Healthfirst, and assistance from participants like the Van Dyke Resident Association, the NYPD's Po-



Resident Engagement Department Project Coordinator Jacqueline Howard, at left, with members of some of the many community organizations that participated in the event.

lice Service Area 2, Brownsville Jobs-Plus, Brownsville Multi-Service Family Health Center, the NYC Summer Youth Employment Program, Afropunk, and the Brownsville Community Justice Center.

Assemblywoman Latrice Walker and youth from the Seth Low and the Langston Hughes Community Centers also pitched in, with smiles on their faces and some with a whole lot of paint on their pants!

NYCHA Calling (cont.)

received no special notifications. Based on the results, the Authority will decide whether to implement these tools NYCHA-wide.

In addition to new tools, a second pilot will launch in the fall to test the benefits of supportive services and early intervention; and new, more convenient rent payment options will be tried in the winter. The task force will conduct a formal assessment of the initiative's success in the spring.

The Rent Collection Task Force began meeting in the last quarter of 2014, and improving rent collection was included as a strategy in NextGeneration NYCHA to support the "Fund" goal. One aspect of the group's early work facilitated by NYCHA's Enterprise Program

Management Office (EPMO) was to "document the current rent collection working process, identify deficiencies, and envision a whole new process that addresses some of the shortcomings of the existing process, not only to collect rent but to address arrears," recalled EPMO director Roger Kavanagh. This challenging project involved the efforts of 13 subject matter experts from seven departments who worked to create, review and approve changes to the payment processes.

There's a lot riding on the result. "Thirty percent of NYCHA's total revenue—approximately \$1 billion—comes from rent collection and fees," said Lillian Harris, Director of the Management Services Department and project director for the

initiative. "Rent collection is part of our core operation as a landlord. As our only revenue source not subject to uncertain Congressional appropriations, it is important that we focus on rent and fee collection to maximize our revenue."

NYCHA has already begun mailing rent statements earlier in the month and has redesigned the resident rent statement and property managers' rent collection report to more clearly indicate what is owed, what has been paid, and relevant deadlines. The ultimate goal of the Rent Collection Task Force and new payment collection process is to raise NYCHA's rent collected by \$30 million annually, said Karina Totah, Senior Advisor to the Chair, who is overseeing the imple-

mentation of NextGeneration NYCHA initiatives and has been informing residents and community members about NextGen NYCHA for quite some time. "The rent payment rate varies widely among boroughs and developments," she noted.

By the end of 2014, NYCHA was owed more than \$56 million in total back rent and fees. A total of 32,000 households (out of NYCHA's 176,000 households) are currently one month behind in rent and 22,000 are several months behind.

The increased revenue NYCHA gains from a higher rent collection can fund additional staff and supplies to maintain and upgrade residents' homes—a point that should further motivate residents to pay their rent on time.

Roof Replacement (cont.)

wards completing the critical infrastructure repairs committed to residents. The City has invested \$300 million over the next three years to fund roof replacements, and NYCHA is pairing an additional \$80 million in federal public housing capital funds this year to supplement this investment.

NYCHA will replace roofs on 26 residential buildings at Queensbridge, including

additionally repairing exterior brickwork, replacing window sills, and removing parapet walls to facilitate new roof railing installation. The work, which represents an \$87 million investment, includes \$60 million in funding from the City and \$27 million in federal funding. Construction is expected to be completed by July 2017.

Queensbridge Houses Roof Replacements Will:

- Preserve physical structures by safeguarding them from incoming moisture, saving money on repairing moisture damage
- Eliminate core symptoms of mold in NYCHA buildings, protecting residents and improving their quality of life
- Reduce operating expenses by making buildings more efficient

NYCHA Notable



Fernando Montejo, former advisor to the EVP for Administration, joined NYCHA directly following his volunteer service here through Civic Corps. Before long, he reached the level of Advisor to the General Manager. After dealing with the complex problems facing a major municipal agency, Fernando realized that he

wanted to continue his education with a graduate degree in city planning. But he had to decide what offer to accept—Harvard or MIT.

Anyone who has worked with Fernando will not be surprised that this bright young man, whose family hails from Peru, had such wonderful options. With his strategic decision made to attend the Housing, Community and Economic Development program at MIT, regarded as best in the nation, Fernando bid farewell to NYCHA in August.

"I want to apply what I learned here to finding solutions to challenges that face cities on a broader level," Fernando said.

Asked about returning to NYCHA after completing the two-year program, he said, "I love the idea of being a public servant in New York." NYCHANow joins the many staff members who know and worked with Fernando in wishing him best success.

News to Use

Free IT Job Training Courses



Residents attend a CCTV cable installation training course, one of the many technology training courses sponsored by REES.

Per Scholas is offering free IT job training courses for NYCHA residents and community members (including NYCHA employees) interested in receiving their CompTIA A+ and MCTS certifications.

CompTIA A+ is an entry-level computer certification for PC computer service technicians. The exam is designed to certify the competency of entry-level PC computer service professionals in installing, maintaining, customizing, and operating personal computers. The A+ certification is sponsored by the Computing Technology Industry Association (CompTIA).

MCTS (Microsoft Certified Technology Specialist) certification proves the holder's skills on a particular Microsoft technology, such as the Windows operating system, Microsoft Exchange Server,

Microsoft SQL Server, or Microsoft Visual Studio.

New courses are available for varying levels of IT experience. Job placement assistance is offered after training completion.

Classes are held from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. weekdays.

Basic Requirements:

- Ages 18 years and older
- High school diploma or GED
- Score 10.0 or higher on the Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) in Reading and Math
- Authorization to work in the United States.

The free training classes include all books and materials, and job placement assistance after completion of training.

You may contact the REES Hotline at 718-289-8100 or RSVP online at <http://tinyurl.com/PerScholasSouthBronx>.

NYCHANow is Printed by NYCHA

Thank you to Catherine Santiago and General Services for printing and distributing 5,000 copies of *NYCHANow* for distribution to employees without desktop computers.

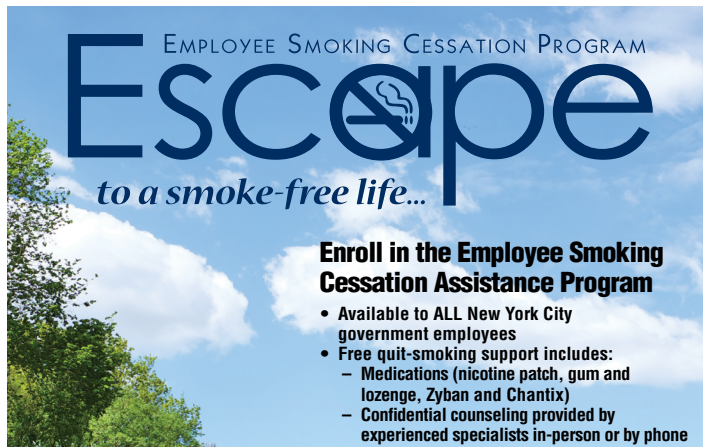
Employees who have seen these hard copies will agree that Catherine is doing an

excellent job using some new equipment now available at the print shop located at 90 Church Street.

And let's not forget Asst. Director Alex Ho in the Mail Room, who oversees the field distribution.

Great working with you.

Stop Smoking ... For Free



EMPLOYEE SMOKING CESSATION PROGRAM

Escape

to a smoke-free life...

Enroll in the Employee Smoking Cessation Assistance Program

- Available to ALL New York City government employees
- Free quit-smoking support includes:
 - Medications (nicotine patch, gum and lozenge, Zyban and Chantix)
 - Confidential counseling provided by experienced specialists in-person or by phone

ESCAPE (Employee Smoking Cessation Assistance Program) is a resource available at no charge to all eligible New York City employees who would like to quit smoking.

According to the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, whose [web-site](#) features this information, making a decision to quit is the first and most important step in successfully quitting. You will talk with a Tobacco Treatment Specialist, who will ask questions about your smoking history and your health. Based on the information you provide, the Tobacco Treatment Specialist will make recommendations on the

best approaches for quitting smoking and help you choose the best treatment.

The recommendations may include no-cost nicotine replacement therapies and/or non-nicotine pharmacotherapy medications and/or counseling.

The ESCAPE program is a personalized and confidential service to meet your needs.

To enroll in ESCAPE, call the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene at 212-676-2393 to make an appointment.

Flu Vaccination Campaign

Human Resource's Employee Engagement Unit is working with the Mayor's Office of Labor Relations (OLR) to host free flu vaccination clinics this fall. OLR is coordinating this campaign with all City agencies and plans to provide City employees and their dependents free flu vaccinations from Wednesday, September 16, 2015, through Wednesday,

November 25, 2015 at facilities throughout the City.

A proposal has been submitted to OLR for NYCHA to host a flu vaccination clinic in late September/early October. If approved, NYCHA employees will be able to attend any of the free vaccination clinics throughout the City. Stay tuned for additional information.