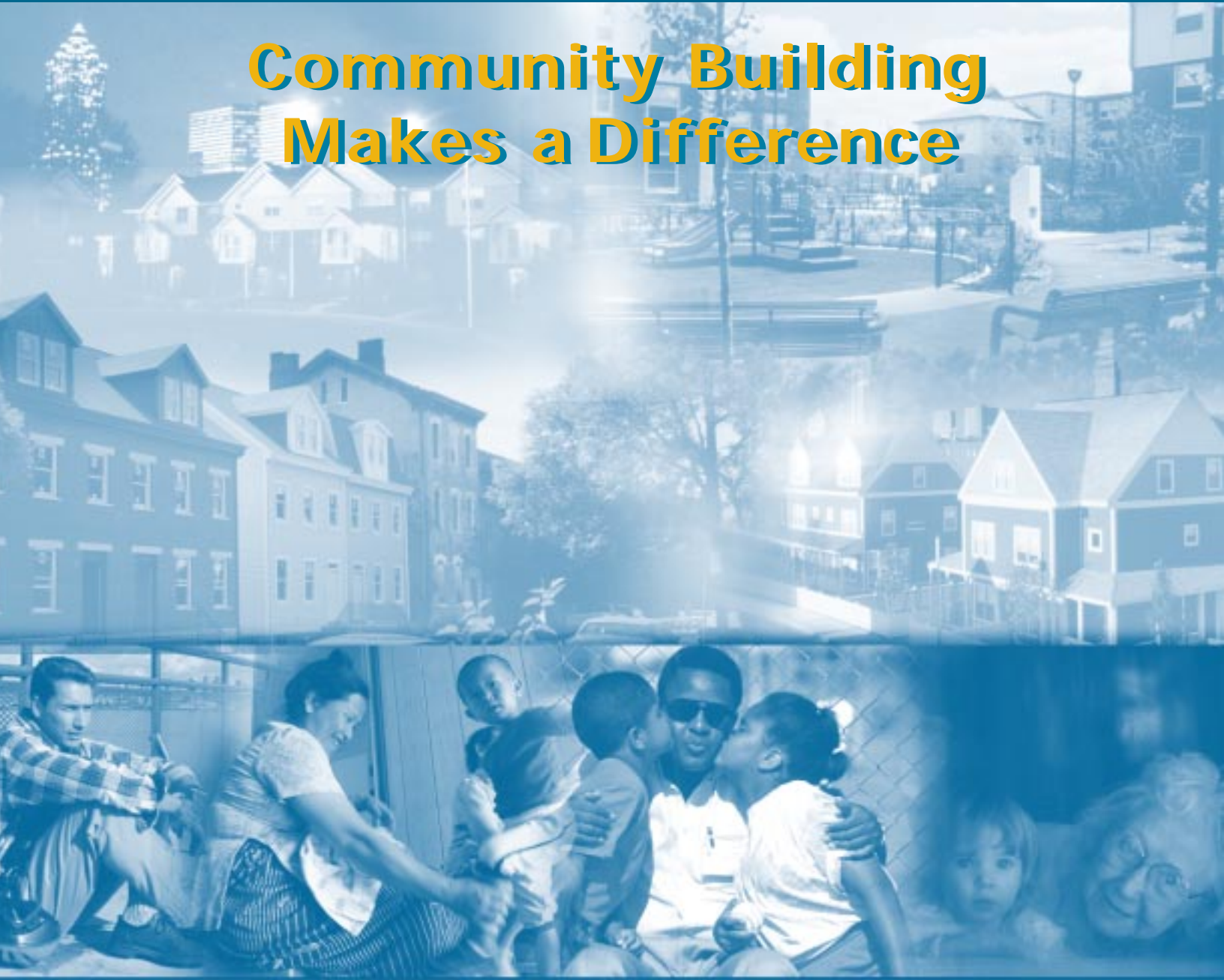


# HOPE VI:

## Community Building Makes a Difference



February 2000



U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
Office of Public and Indian Housing  
Office of Public Housing Investments  
Office of Urban Revitalization





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**February 2000**

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# Foreword

**A**t the beginning of a new century that will bring changes in so many spheres, our underlying thinking about public housing issues is also beginning to shift.

Once we simply asked: “How can we provide affordable housing for poor people?”

Now, although the management and supply of public housing will always be critical concerns, we are beginning to pose a new, more complex question: “How can we transform our public housing stock into bridges of opportunity to help people get out of poverty?”

A large part of the answer, as is becoming increasingly clear, is to reduce the isolation that separates public housing residents from the opportunity structures of the larger community.

Since its beginnings in 1992, the HOPE VI Urban Demonstration Program has worked to reduce isolation where it is most severe: in the largest and most distressed public housing projects in the nation. The program set out to rebuild the physical plants of the developments,

but HOPE VI aimed also to transform lives. The program was designed to open new paths for public housing residents, linking them to jobs and a better future. This status report discusses that second set of goals: the supportive services and community building efforts of HOPE VI in cities across the country.

Community building, as explained in this book, is an approach that combats the isolation of public housing residents in several ways. It increases the skills of individuals so they can take better advantage of mainstream opportunities. It also strengthens public housing communities so they may better support the self-sufficiency efforts of individuals and families. Also, it fosters partnerships among housing authorities, residents, local organizations, and the business community that link residents with a world of resources that can help fuel their quest for a better life.

The HOPE VI experience has much to teach those who cherish the goal of making public housing into a bridge to a better future, and this book captures many of these valuable lessons.



—Andrew Cuomo  
Secretary of Housing and  
Urban Development



# Preface

**T**he HOPE VI program—as the evidence in this book demonstrates—is indeed cause for hope in communities where once there was none. Residents who once despaired of changing anything about their situations are transforming their lives. Innovative partnerships are being developed with local institutions that reconnect long-marginalized people to mainstream opportunities. Public housing residents in growing numbers go to work each morning with a new look of pride in their eyes, and they come home at the end of the week with a paycheck in their pockets. And crime is being dramatically reduced by neighbors who are rediscovering the link between their community's prospects and their own.

None of this is happening by accident, or simply as a result of the handsome new buildings or freshly landscaped grounds that are a part of physical revitalization efforts. It is happening because of the critical provision written into the original HOPE VI legislation to address people and opportunities as well as bricks and mortar. From the beginning, HOPE VI has been about taking practical steps to create a community that supports family life, children, and the aspirations of people who have been marginalized and cut off from life's opportunities.

HOPE VI offers residents ways to access, pursue, and secure the benefits of these opportunities. In many cases, this first means help dealing with health or family problems, shortcomings in education,

negative habits, or the self-defeating attitudes that are the legacy of growing up in poverty and hopelessness.

The innovative thinking that public housing authorities and residents have brought to the HOPE VI process and the imaginative partnerships they have forged with area businesses and other institutions are heartening. Even better, they are replicable.

To that end, we have worked to fill this book with many useful—and sometimes sobering—lessons learned, detailed examples, and practical tips on making such programs work for people. Perhaps the most valuable lesson of all is that there is no cookie-cutter, one-size-fits-all approach to achieving this kind of success. As made clear by our profiles of seven housing communities and the dozens of supplementary best practices included in the appendix, many different approaches are possible and desirable. Each community must find its own way, building on its own special mix of strengths and opportunities. The strategies of community building must involve the genuine commitment of the housing authority to changing the way it operates and thinks about both its function and its residents.

Readers are urged to visit HOPE VI communities, meet and talk with the residents, and see these programs for themselves. Visitors will come away not only with a feeling of optimism, but also with a sense of long-pent-up energy released at last and applied to positive activities

such as creating new hope for children, jobs for their parents, and the kind of communities anyone would want to live in. This book is dedicated to that spirit and the people working to harness it.

Systems alone, even reformed systems, cannot change people's lives. But they

can help or hinder, thwart or support the efforts of good people to change the way things have been. HOPE VI is giving many public housing communities an opportunity—and the means—to do just that.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Arthur J. Naparstek".

—Arthur J. Naparstek  
Senior Associate, The Urban Institute

Grace Longwell Coyle Professor,  
Case Western Reserve University



# Introduction

**H**OPE VI represents the most dramatic change of direction in the 60-year history of U.S. public housing policy. The program promises nothing less than full transformation of the nation's most distressed public housing projects—places that have been both physically and socially devastated by extraordinary concentrations of poverty and years of disinvestment.

Congress wanted change in 1993 when it authorized \$300 million in HOPE VI Urban Revitalization Demonstration funding. HOPE VI was aimed at rebuilding the most physically distressed public housing in the worst neighborhoods of the nation's largest cities, and it was intended to foster self-sufficiency and empowerment among public housing residents. The program mandated not just bricks-and-mortar changes but also the provision of supportive services for residents. According to a Senate report on the 1992 bill that initiated HOPE VI:

The goal of HOPE VI is threefold: (1) shelter—to eliminate dilapidated, and in many dangerous instances, structures that serve as homes for hundreds of thousands of Americans; (2) self-sufficiency—to provide residents in these areas with the opportunity to learn and acquire the skills needed to achieve self-sufficiency; and (3) community sweat equity—to instill in these Americans the belief that with economic self-sufficiency comes an

obligation to self-responsibility and giving back to one's community.<sup>1</sup>

The Senate report commented that “Public housing residency, for many reasons within the last two decades, has all too often become a way of life, instead of a bridge to a better life.” HOPE VI was intended to remedy this pattern by providing supportive services such as literacy training; job preparation, training, and retention; personal management skills; daycare; youth activities; health services; community policing or security activities; and drug treatment. Throughout the rest of the decade, Congress has continued to support the program and, over 6 years, has provided a total of \$4.2 billion to fund HOPE VI in approximately 130 public housing developments.

Housing authorities, residents, and their community partners have now accumulated more than 5 years of experience with this ambitious program. This publication examines best practices that have emerged from the community-building and supportive services side of HOPE VI. The HOPE VI program is known both for its physical revitalization of deteriorated, outmoded public housing projects and for its success in self-sufficiency and community-building activities. These lessons in community building may be applied to all efforts to increase opportunities for residents of low-income neighborhoods. The information in this book, therefore, should

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<sup>1</sup>Senate Report 102-356, Committee on Appropriations, August 3, 1992, p. 40.

be of interest not only to public housing staff and residents, but also to local and national policymakers, along with private-sector community stakeholders, community-based nonprofit organizations,

advocacy groups, service providers, and all others striving to alleviate poverty through community revitalization and the creation of sustainable communities for all. ♦

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Barbara A. Mikulski". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Barbara" and the last name "Mikulski" being more prominent.

—Senator Barbara Mikulski

# Acknowledgments

**T**he authors wish to thank Andrew Cuomo, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, for his unwavering commitment to the inner cities of America and this nation's poor people as reflected in the support that the department has provided to this effort. We extend a special thanks to Elinor Bacon, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Office of Public Housing Investments, for her guidance on this work and the HOPE VI program.

The authors are deeply grateful to Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-Maryland), ranking member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee for the Veterans Administration, Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies, who is the initiator and long-time proponent of HOPE VI legislation. We also thank Senator Christopher Bond (R-Missouri), chair of the Appropriations Subcommittee, for his continuing interest in and support of HOPE VI, particularly

in fostering broad community participation.

We also wish to thank Milan Ozdinec, director of HUD's Office of Urban Revitalization, who provided a thoughtful early reading of the manuscript; and Ron Ashford, who coordinates the Community and Supportive Services Technical Assistance Program for the HOPE VI sites. The authors also thank Milda Saunders, formerly of the Urban Institute, and Carolee Gearhart of Aspen Systems Corporation for their contributions to the manuscript.

This book would not have been possible without the cooperation of housing authority directors and staff, public housing residents, and their community partners, who are making the vision of HOPE VI a reality in cities all around the country. We thank them for generously sharing their time, experiences, and wisdom with us. ♦



# Contents

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Preface</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>Acknowledgments</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>Chapter 1: HOPE VI—Making Changes</b>	<b>1</b>
Why the HOPE VI Approach Was Adopted	3
Effects of HOPE VI on Lives, Neighborhoods, and Institutions	4
<b>Chapter 2: Many Paths to Excellence— Profiles of Seven HOPE VI Sites</b>	<b>9</b>
Seattle—Shifting the Paradigm	10
Columbus—A Catalyst for Neighborhood Revitalization	17
Atlanta—A Technology-Oriented Elementary School Anchors a Mixed-Income Neighborhood	23
Oakland—Reclaiming a Community Through Partnership	31
Milwaukee—Family Resource Center Combines Many Services To Foster Employment	40
Baltimore—Providing Comprehensive Social Services	47
El Paso—VISTAs of a New Community	53
<b>Chapter 3: Lessons Learned</b>	<b>61</b>
General Lessons	61
Additional Lessons	62
HOPE VI and Community Building	68
<b>Appendix: Best Practices Using a Community-Building Approach to Self-Sufficiency</b>	<b>69</b>



# Chapter 1

## HOPE VI—Making Changes

The HOPE VI program, with its ambitious mission to transform the most distressed public housing projects in the nation, works on both improving the physical quality of public housing and expanding the opportunities of its residents. Although the physical improvements it has created have often been dramatic, the HOPE VI program may ultimately be judged more on its effectiveness in helping low-income families improve the quality of their lives and move toward self-sufficiency than by its accomplishments in bricks and mortar.

This book primarily addresses the people side of the HOPE VI story. It describes how housing authorities, residents, and their community partners are working with an approach that we call *community building*. Community building is an approach to fighting poverty that operates by building social and human capital.<sup>1</sup> It differs from conventional social service provision in that it is an asset-oriented, people-based approach. It supports people in poor neighborhoods as they rebuild social structures and relationships that may have been weakened by decades of urban ills—outmigration, disinvestment, and isolation (exhibit 1.1).



Seattle's NewHolly builds stronger communities and better opportunities.

The HOPE VI program rests on community building. It involves the participation of both public housing residents living at HOPE VI sites awaiting revitalization and the surrounding community. The spirit of HOPE VI is one of consultation and collaboration among the housing authority, affected residents, social service providers, and the broader community.

This book reports in detail on seven HOPE VI sites where the community-building approach has been tried with heartening success: NewHolly (formerly Holly Park) in Seattle, Washington; Rosewind (formerly Windsor Terrace) in Columbus, Ohio; Centennial Place (formerly Techwood/Clark Howell Homes) in Atlanta, Georgia; Hillside Terrace in Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Lockwood Gardens in Oakland, California; Pleasant View Gardens (formerly Lafayette Courts) in Baltimore, Maryland; and Kennedy Brothers Memorial Apartments in El Paso, Texas.<sup>2</sup> Compared with other public housing projects, these sites had high rates of welfare dependency, minority concentration, and single-parent families. They also tended to have high crime rates and were considered by neighboring communities to be havens

<sup>1</sup> See *Community Building in Public Housing: Ties that Bind People and their Communities*, by Arthur J. Naparstek, Dennis Dooley, and Robin Smith. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, April 1997. See also *Community Building: Coming of Age*, by G. Thomas Kingsley, Joseph McNeely, and James O. Gibson. Baltimore, MD: The Development Training Institute and the Urban Institute, April 1997.

<sup>2</sup> An Urban Institute/Aspen Systems research team visited these seven HOPE VI projects in the winter and spring of 1999.

## Exhibit 1.1

### HOPE VI and the Principles of Community Building

HOPE VI differs from other public housing legislation by incorporating the principles of community building. These principles evolved from a 1992 report of the Cleveland Foundation Commission on Poverty. The commission report laid out a blueprint to replace fragmented, deficit-driven, top-down programs with approaches that were comprehensive, asset-driven, and guided by individual public housing authorities, residents, and their neighbors—in short, a community-building agenda.<sup>3</sup> According to Senator Barbara Mikulski, ranking member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee for the Veterans Administration, Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies, the Commission's 1992 report was influential in defining the intellectual basis for the HOPE VI program. The following principles lie at the core of the community-building approach<sup>4</sup>:

- *Involve residents in setting goals and strategies.* Resident involvement requires collaboration, inclusion, communication, and participation. Experience has shown that top-down solutions imposed on communities do not work because they tend to undermine the spirit of local initiative necessary for long-term success. Local communities need to be actively involved in shaping strategies and choices.
- *Begin with an awareness of assets as well as problems in the community.* Assets include both material and human resources, such as experience, skills, and the demonstrated readiness to commit energies to a sustained effort. Communities that lie near the downtown area or a community institution—such as a college, university, or health center—hold tremendous potential if the right incentives or supportive services are put in place.
- *Work in communities of manageable size.* The HOPE VI program structures its efforts on a relatively small scale, one housing project at a time. Further, it often replaces large buildings and developments with smaller ones, in an effort to deconcentrate the poor. The program does not target changes across an entire housing authority or city, but demonstrated success may invite a citywide ripple effect.
- *Tailor unique strategies for each neighborhood.* Workable solutions tend to be community specific, because neighborhoods have different characteristics, resources, natural advantages, strengths, traditions, potential community partners, and leadership. One size does not fit all.
- *Maintain a holistic view of service delivery.* Since poverty is the result of interlocking problems that reinforce and complicate one another, service delivery must be comprehensive and integrated. For example, a mother on welfare cannot hope to get to work without childcare, transportation to work, healthcare for herself and her children, job training, and perhaps counseling and followup as she adjusts to the challenges of a new routine.
- *Reinforce community values while building human and social capital.* The ability to set norms and standards of acceptable behavior is a basic function of community. At its core is a body of shared values to which the members of the community subscribe. One sign of a public housing community coming to life is when residents begin to work together to reassert responsible standards and positive values. Activities such as community policing, security programs, and resident participation in setting standards for behavior begin to deter the corrosive values of the crime and drug culture, opening the way for positive community values to flourish.
- *Develop creative partnerships with institutions in the city to provide access to opportunities.* The establishment of community partnerships is a powerful tool to deal with the isolation and marginalization of poor people. Partnerships with businesses and other private-sector organizations, mandated in the HOPE VI legislation, are proving to be the key to job training, job placement, and the supportive services that make it possible for family heads to work. They give residents access to a wide range of opportunities and resources.

These principles guided the development of community building through supportive services and resident engagement in the seven sites visited. They are woven throughout the profiles in chapter 2 and the best practice examples in the appendix.

<sup>3</sup>The Cleveland Community-Building Initiative: The Report and Recommendations of the Cleveland Foundation Commission on Poverty. Cleveland, OH: Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences, Case Western Reserve University, 1990.

<sup>4</sup>For more information, see *Community Building in Public Housing*, op. cit.



for drug trading and a negative influence on the neighborhood.

Chapter 2 presents the seven best practice case studies. Chapter 3 presents lessons learned from the case examples in chapter 2, and the more diverse best practices in HOPE VI and other public housing developments are collected in the appendix.

In order to write this book, the authors examined program documents, visited nine sites, and carried out face-to-face interviews with housing authority staff, residents, and community partners. The research team chose these seven best practice case studies in consultation with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The project contacted all housing authorities engaged in HOPE VI programs for suggestions on best practices to include. Given its focus on case examples, best practices, and lessons learned from the HOPE VI experience, this work is not a formal program evaluation. However, considerable efforts were made to report objectively on what was observed, noting areas that needed improvement.

## Why the HOPE VI Approach Was Adopted

Since it was authorized in 1937, public housing has grown to the point where it now provides low-cost shelter to 1.4 million needy households. The great majority of these projects are neither large nor distressed. In accordance with HUD mandates, most provide decent, safe, and sanitary housing. About one-third of all public housing units nationally are in one- and two-story structures (including some scattered-site single-



Graduation celebration at HOPE VI site Lockwood Gardens marks the moving of residents from welfare to work.

family units), and another 23 percent are in buildings with three to six stories.<sup>5</sup> In the mid-1990s, only 75 of the 3,400 local public housing authorities managing the program exhibited serious management deficiencies (that is, enough deficiencies that they warranted designation as *troubled* by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development).<sup>6</sup>

But by the late 1980s, much of public housing—especially in large cities—had become deteriorated and physically isolated from amenities and opportunity. In 1992 a federal commission estimated that approximately 86,000 units—about 7 percent of the total public housing inventory—were distressed.<sup>7</sup> These projects also often became breeding grounds for crime and drugs. These events had serious implications for the individuals and families that lived there and for the communities that surrounded them.



Holly Park, Seattle, before revitalization.

One basic source of problems has been the isolation of public housing. Historically, local politics has often sought to physically separate the poor from mainstream society, and this clearly had its impact on public housing. The large highrise and barracks-style projects that became the focus of the HOPE VI program were frequently located on isolated sites—behind freeways, on leftover parcels near industrial developments, or simply at great distances from other residential neighborhoods. Even when placed adjacent to other residential communities, they were typically designed to be cut off from them, for example, with massive superblocks with internal roadways that did not connect to the surrounding street pattern.

Conditions in larger and more distressed projects placed stresses on the most conscientious housing authorities. Low tenant incomes and limits on the percentage of income that tenants had to pay for rent created a substantial gap between rental revenues and actual



NewHolly, Seattle, after HOPE VI revitalization.

<sup>5</sup> Connie H. Casey, *Characteristics of HUD-Assisted Renters and Their Units in 1989*. Washington, DC: Office of Policy Development and Research, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1992.

<sup>6</sup> *Public Housing that Works: The Transformation of America's Public Housing*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1996.

<sup>7</sup> *The Final Report of the National Commission on Severely Distressed Public Housing: A Report to Congress and the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development*. Washington, DC, August 1992.

operating costs. Additional federal funding was required to bridge this gap, while maintenance and repair costs were increasing with the aging of the stock. Under these circumstances, the constrained federal budgets of the 1980s put considerable pressure on housing authority finances, frequently resulting in physical deterioration in many projects. Ineffective local management sometimes compounded financial problems. To be fair, however, it should be remembered that the lawless, uncontrolled environments of the worst projects made sound operations difficult or impossible, even for the most skilled managers. The one-for-one replacement rule—in force since the early 1970s—forbids any demolition that would result in a reduction in the number of public housing units, making it very costly and difficult to demolish the worst projects even when the local housing authorities wanted to do so. The demolition itself would have been affordable, but funding to develop replacement units was rarely available.

### **The National Commission on Severely Distressed Public Housing**

As social and physical conditions worsened, Congress appointed the National Commission on Severely Distressed Public Housing in 1989 to find ways to address the issue. Over 18 months the commission visited public housing projects in 25 cities (where the members interviewed residents, boards, housing authority staff, and housing experts) and held a series of public hearings to gather additional evidence. Its report identified five core problems:

- Residents fearful of moving about in their own homes and communities because of the high incidence of crime.

- High unemployment and limited opportunities for the meaningful employment of residents.
- Programs designed to address distressed conditions with too little funding, too late.
- Programs designed to assist residents of public housing paradoxically providing disincentives to self-sufficiency.
- Families living in physical conditions deteriorated to such an extent that the housing was a danger to their health and safety.

The commission recognized these problems as urgent and recommended a variety of reforms for congressional review and action. These included eliminating unfit living conditions, revising laws and regulations to promote income mixing in public housing developments, adjusting the public housing operating subsidy to reflect the needs of severely distressed projects, providing increased funding for supportive services, creating a national system to coordinate services that enable residents to become self-sufficient, devising a system to require housing authorities to solicit resident input, promoting economic development opportunities for residents, establishing a model planning process, encouraging housing authorities to pursue private and nonprofit management options, and developing a new system to appraise the performance of housing organizations.<sup>8</sup>

### **Effects of HOPE VI on Lives, Neighborhoods, and Institutions**

Because HOPE VI was intended to demonstrate that major changes could be made in public housing and in the lives of its residents, it is fair to pose



Public housing tutoring programs, such as this one in Seattle, help immigrant children work on their English.

the following questions: What kinds of changes has this program accomplished? What is the significance of these changes? What can we learn from the nation's experiment with HOPE VI as we continue to debate housing and community development policy? This work examines the differences that the supportive service side of the HOPE VI program is making:

- ...within the HOPE VI communities.
- ...in the lives of individuals and families who live in the HOPE VI developments.
- ...in the larger communities where the developments are located.
- ...in the way that housing authorities do business.

The answers from our site visits are outlined in chapter 2. The remainder of this chapter briefly highlights some key observations of changes—themes that will be revisited at greater length in the site profiles in chapter 2, the lessons learned in chapter 3, and the best practice examples in the appendix.

### **Change in the HOPE VI Communities**

**Building new community institutions.** HOPE VI rebuilding plans, as discussed in this book, did not call for building housing alone. Along with the revitalized

<sup>8</sup>Drawn from a summary analysis in Abt Associates, Inc. *An Historical and Baseline Assessment of HOPE VI: Volume 6, Cross-Site Report*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, August 1996.



Residents take pride in landscaping around revitalized buildings in Oakland's Lockwood Gardens.

housing, the HOPE VI sites also constructed new community centers to house and more closely coordinate the many supportive services that help make a working lifestyle achievable for those formerly dependent on welfare. New multiservice centers that house services such as childcare, afterschool programs, computer labs, employment services, training, recreation, and healthcare are common at HOPE VI sites. Such broadly conceived centers include the Quigg Newton Community Learning Center in Denver; the Family Self-Sufficiency Center in the Crozer-Keystone Health Center in Chester, Pennsylvania; and many more. These new community institutions also supplied meeting space for the resident council and other groups from the development and often for neighborhood groups.

The rebuilt Centennial Place in Atlanta, Rosewind in Columbus, and Pleasant View Gardens in Baltimore have new police substations onsite or nearby. In Oakland's Lockwood Gardens, a community-policing program took several years to patiently persuade residents—who were previously under the thumb of the drug lords dominating the development—to cooperate with law enforcement. These new community-policing arrangements have dramatically reduced

the presence of drugs and violence that had controlled the public areas of these public housing projects prior to HOPE VI. "You see people sitting on their porches now," comments Sharon Harrison-Brown of the Oakland Housing Authority. "It's a regular community now. A poor one, but a regular community."

The new institutions developing in HOPE VI communities take many forms: Greater Baltimore Medical Center's clinic, located just across the street from Pleasant View Gardens; Soweto Academy, an afterschool program in the Walsh Homes in Newark, New Jersey; the resident-created Homeboys Industries that is creating jobs for youth in the Pico Aliso and Aliso Village public housing developments in Los Angeles; the Neighborhood Equity Fund, a small community foundation for the Santa Rosa area in Tucson, Arizona; the Orquestra Sinfonica Juvenil in San Juan, Puerto Rico, which uses musical training to bring together children from the Manuel A. Perez development with a second public housing development where intergroup rivalry and tension had previously characterized their relationship.

#### ***Building new opportunity structures.***

The Centennial Place Elementary School in Atlanta provides a striking example of a change in opportunity structure in a HOPE VI site. Community leaders had long pointed out that, although the Techwood Homes project was situated across the street from the Georgia Institute of Technology, not one child from the public housing project had ever gone to Georgia Tech. Then, an unprecedented partnership between the housing authority and the Atlanta public schools—with Georgia Tech faculty guiding curriculum development—created an outstanding technology-oriented magnet school. This elementary school, in the context of the new HOPE VI mixed-income community that sur-

rounds it, will provide Centennial Place's public housing children with the academic base to do well in middle school and high school. In the natural course of things, some of these children will be in a position to attend Georgia Tech.

In Los Angeles a coalition of community organizations and trade unions is training youth from the Pico Aliso and Aliso Village public housing developments in the construction trades. The job-training and entrepreneurial programs, computer labs, and links with local colleges evident in other sites further demonstrate these new opportunity structures.

### ***Changing Lives***

#### ***Reducing the isolation of residents.***

The multipurpose centers in the rebuilt HOPE VI communities also link the HOPE VI site with the neighborhood that surrounds it. Often, the multipurpose centers are placed strategically on the edge of the HOPE VI development so that nonresidents can easily walk in to use the services, facilitating interaction between residents and the larger community. People from all over the city use the recreation center at the revitalized Kennedy Brothers HOPE VI development in El Paso. The childcare center in Baltimore's Pleasant View Gardens is the largest in the city, and two-thirds of the children it serves come from outside the HOPE VI development. Community groups come to take advantage of the convenient meeting space in Rosewind in Columbus. In Atlanta the Centennial Place Elementary School, located onsite, is a technology-oriented magnet school that draws children of families from all income groups. The fact that neighborhood residents now come to the once-shunned public housing development represents an important change—a significant reduction in the historic isolation and negative stigma attached to public housing and its residents.



HOPE VI programs forge links between residents and community resources in many ways. Many HOPE VI programs have developed partnerships with employers around the city. In Chicago the Walgreens retail store chain has a special program that trains HOPE VI residents in several cities in retail service and store management. Several colleges and universities have become community partners with HOPE VI communities: Delaware County Community College, Baltimore City Community College, Pima Community College in Tucson, the Community College of Denver, the Metropolitan State College of Denver, Bloomfield College in New Jersey, South Seattle Community College, Milwaukee Area Technical College, El Paso Community College, Georgia Tech, Swarthmore College, and Widener College. The colleges offer computer training, job-readiness skills, entrepreneurial business skills, and preparation for the GED and College Board tests. In Seattle the Children's Art Museum operates an onsite arts program for the children of NewHolly.

**Strengthening community norms that value work.** Visitors entering the new multipurpose center at Milwaukee's Hillside Terrace come face-to-face with



Residents vote for members of Rosewind Resident Council, an active partner in HOPE VI.

the "Wall of Work." This wall-sized glass cabinet of the sort used to display sports trophies holds various photographs: a woman at a desk, a man wielding a hammer at a construction site, a woman standing in front of a school bus. These are portraits of Hillside residents, taken a week or two into their new jobs—for many of them, their first real jobs. The display makes tangible and solidifies the sort of change in values that the HOPE VI program is fostering. Its ever-increasing display of photographs of friends and neighbors celebrates the victories of individual residents in their progress toward self-sufficiency.

**Bridging to self-sufficiency.** HOPE VI implementation occurred in the context of welfare reform. The national Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, which set lifetime limits of up to 5 years for a person of working age to receive welfare, changed the old welfare system. Operating in this new environment, housing authorities placed a great deal of emphasis on overcoming obstacles to work and placing residents in employment—many with impressive results.

In Milwaukee between 1995 and 1998, the percentage of long-term Hillside Terrace families with some level of earnings rose from 27 percent to 69 percent. During the same period, the average annual income of long-term residents with earnings rose from \$9,353 to \$12,346 per year.

At Lafayette Courts in Baltimore, family incomes averaged \$6,099 in 1993 and only 14 percent had any earned income. Welfare dependency was the norm. By March 1999 only about one-third of the 152 Lafayette Court families who returned to Pleasant View Gardens were still receiving public assistance. Family incomes now average \$8,641 and 26 percent of household heads are wage earners.

An assessment process in Seattle's Holly Park in 1997 found that about two-thirds of the 392 residents were unemployed. By December 1997, 91 residents had started to work. A year later 66 were still working—two-thirds of those in full-time permanent positions. Special training making use of English as a second language techniques enabled six immigrant residents to open onsite childcare businesses.

### **Creating Change in the Larger Community**

**Using HOPE VI to leverage community-wide improvement.** Before their revitalization, HOPE VI sites were neighborhood eyesores that contained concentrations of extreme poverty and functioned as havens for drugs and crime. HOPE VI revitalization often became a catalyst for change in the whole area.

In Columbus, for instance, the housing authority chose to take not only the HOPE VI community of Windsor Terrace, but also the entire surrounding neighborhood of South Linden as its investment area. The housing authority placed its new headquarters in the nearby dilapidated and underused Four Corners business district. This decision leveraged a city commitment to build a new neighborhood transit center, fire station, and police station in Four Corners. This in turn caused Akzo/Nobel, a coatings factory adjacent to the public housing development, to remain in the neighborhood rather than relocate to the suburbs. The company invested \$32 million in refurbishing the plant and encouraged its employees to volunteer in the neighborhood school.

In El Paso the HOPE VI coordinator and AmeriCorps\*VISTA volunteers worked with the community to apply to have the area designated a federal Empowerment Zone (EZ). In Seattle private

developers put up new market-rate homes across the street from revitalized NewHolly. Oakland, Atlanta, El Paso, and Baltimore all report that new businesses are being established in the vicinity of HOPE VI communities.

### **Changing the Way the Housing Authority Does Business**

**Changing the mission.** Perhaps the most profound change observed in the HOPE VI sites is a reformulation of the mission of a housing authority. “Instead of the limited, well-defined mission we used to have,” comments Dennis Guest, executive director of the housing authority in Columbus, “we now find ourselves responsible for at least coordinating everything that touches the lives of our residents.”

In Seattle the housing authority formally adopted a new mission statement in 1997 “to enhance the Seattle community by creating and sustaining decent, safe, and affordable living environments that foster stability and increase self-sufficiency for people with low incomes.” As a consequence of this shift, comments Doris Koo, deputy executive director of the Seattle Housing Authority, the authority begins to take on something like the broad, community-oriented mission of the turn-of-the-century settlement house.

**More creative partnerships.** Although many housing authorities are accustomed to contracting for services from outside service providers, the HOPE VI partnerships tend to be more varied and creative, involving more than a straightforward two-party contract.

In Baltimore, HOPE VI has led the housing authority to shift from the traditional contract-for-service mode to more decentralized arrangements. There are two models. At Lexington Terrace, the housing authority has contracted with a

third-party agency, The NOAH Group, to oversee the provision of HOPE VI supportive services. At Flag Courts, the supportive services are provided through a joint venture between the East Harbor Village Center, the EZ managing organization, and The NOAH Group.



Residents learn construction skills through HOPE VI rebuilding activities.

In Seattle the NewHolly Campus of Learners program involves 10 providers—from the Private Industry Council’s Career Development Center to the Seattle public schools to the Most Abundant Garden Project—creating a multifaceted educational effort that is continually fine-tuned through regular meetings among partners.

The HOPE VI job-placement programs work through partnerships with the business community. Businesses agree, often in exchange for tax credits, to give low-income public housing residents a chance at a job. In Milwaukee the housing authority invited Maximus, a for-profit employment services business that specializes in moving clients off welfare, to set up a branch office in the Hillside Terrace community center. Lockwood Gardens in Oakland and Pleasant View Gardens in Baltimore set up preapprenticeship programs with the AFL’s carpenters and painters union,

to prepare public housing residents for careers in the skilled trades. Colleges and universities—from the Milwaukee Area Technical College to South Seattle Community College to Georgia Tech—are working with the HOPE VI communities.

**Thinking outside the box.** The experience of working with the large resources and unusual freedom of HOPE VI has given housing authorities a taste of working in an entrepreneurial fashion. The housing authority in Seattle decided to act as its own HOPE VI developer, earning enough developer credits to finance a significant number of scattered-site public housing residences. In another nontraditional move, Seattle has set up a 501(c)(3) organization to support the NewHolly Campus of Learners program after the HUD grant ends and has begun fundraising from individuals, foundations, and corporations. When the Columbus Housing Authority failed to win a HOPE VI grant to revitalize its Linton Gardens project, it sought instead to involve all groups that might take an interest in or could possibly benefit from the redevelopment. The planning document for the project names more than 30 community partners—businesses, associations, nonprofit organizations, and local government agencies. All these examples indicate a willingness to find new ways to get things done.

This chapter has introduced the HOPE VI program and highlighted the themes developed in more detail throughout this book. Chapter 2 profiles seven HOPE VI developments—sites that have used the community-building approach in such a way as to be considered exemplary. Chapter 3 highlights lessons that may be learned from the HOPE VI experience. The appendix highlights outstanding individual programs from HOPE VI sites and other community-building efforts in public housing. ❖



# Chapter 2

## Many Paths to Excellence— Profiles of Seven HOPE VI Sites

**T**he HOPE VI program granted housing authorities a near-unprecedented degree of control in reaching their program goals. The various HOPE VI developments, achieved through local planning, took on the unique shapes of their varied contexts. Each housing authority, drawing on its own style and traditions, made choices from among the potential community partners available in its own city, and engaged the unique energies and ideas of each set of residents and neighborhood stakeholders.

This chapter contains profiles of the way the HOPE VI program expressed itself in seven public housing communities:

- NewHolly (formerly Holly Park) in Seattle, Washington.
- Rosewind (formerly Windsor Terrace) in Columbus, Ohio.
- Centennial Place (formerly Techwood/Clark Howell Homes) in Atlanta, Georgia.
- Hillside Terrace in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
- Lockwood Gardens in Oakland, California.
- Pleasant View Gardens (formerly Lafayette Courts) in Baltimore, Maryland.
- Kennedy Brothers Memorial Apartments in El Paso, Texas.

The profiles incorporate material from onsite interviews with housing authority executives and staff, residents, and community partners. They capture the richness of the community-building experience in public housing.

The HOPE VI sites profiled here demonstrate varied and individualized approaches. In Seattle's NewHolly, the Campus of Learners program became the defining theme of the extensive community partnership that provided HOPE VI supportive services. The Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority made the HOPE VI revitalization of Windsor Terrace a catalyst for the redevelopment of the surrounding Linden neighborhood. In Atlanta a new magnet elementary school—created through a community partnership that included Georgia Tech—became the anchor for the new mixed-income community of Centennial Place. In Milwaukee the multiservice Hillside Family Resources Center became the locus for coordinating supportive services to help families of Hillside Terrace move from welfare to work. In Oakland the HOPE VI program worked through community partnerships and resident involvement to focus on halting the reign of drug lords in Lockwood Gardens. In Baltimore's Pleasant View Gardens the lesson of HOPE VI lies not just in what supportive services are offered, but *how*—with better coordination and greater effectiveness. In El Paso the housing authority



Milwaukee's Hillside Terrace is now a safe place for children to play.



used the AmeriCorps\*VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) program with HOPE VI's community services to channel residents of Kennedy Brothers Memorial Apartments into key leadership and service roles.

Sometimes tradeoffs were made in response to outside pressures, such as the strict time limits of the welfare-to-work legislation in Wisconsin, the coming of the Olympics to Atlanta, or the mayor of Baltimore's citywide initiative to get public housing families out of high-rise buildings. Often, housing authorities faced a choice between moving along expeditiously in response to such outside pressures, or slowly building up, step by step, the grassroots support and involvement of a broad range of residents.

Relocation of residents presented another tough issue. Some housing authorities made sincere efforts to follow all original residents who had to leave the HOPE VI site, whether temporarily or permanently, in advance of construction activity. Others did very little to stay in touch with those who were relocated. Consequently, in those cities, residents who did not return after development slipped through the cracks during what often turned out to be a long, drawn-out relocation process, extending for 2 years or more.

Although all housing authorities made use of Section 8 subsidies to relocate some families into private apartments, there was rarely any strategic vision for the use of Section 8. The Section 8 program tended to work with individual public housing families on a case-by-case basis, rather than reaching out to strengthen and develop supportive services in the receiving communities.

Another issue with built-in tradeoffs was the strategy of introducing a mixed-income community in order to reduce the concentration of poverty at the

HOPE VI site. Such shifts changed and often weakened the constituency of the resident leaders who had come to the fore when the HOPE VI project was getting under way.

Despite the tradeoffs made, the projects described here are exemplary. They show what the HOPE VI program can achieve through community building.

**Two-thirds of the adult residents were unemployed. Almost half of the Holly Park households received the majority of their income from welfare ...**

## Seattle—Shifting the Paradigm

### The Challenge

By the early 1990s, Holly Park in South Seattle was the most distressed public housing project operated by the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA). With its concentration of welfare-dependent families and its reputation for crime and drug activity, Holly Park was considered a problem neighborhood and a negative influence on the low-income area that surrounded it.

Holly Park also had the challenge of being a multiethnic community. In all, 35 percent of households were African American, 3 percent were Hispanic, and 15 percent were non-Hispanic whites. The remaining 47 percent reflected a

variety of heritages—mostly Southeast Asians, but also families from countries such as Russia and Ethiopia. Holly Park's minority, immigrant, and refugee population spoke a dozen different languages—from Amharic (spoken in Ethiopia) to Vietnamese. Some of these immigrant adults were unable to write in their native languages. Many residents had little education. Only 28 percent had a high school education and 15 percent had no formal education at all.

In addition, Holly Park families were very poor. The 1993 median income was \$7,012 for Holly Park families, compared to \$43,900 for Seattle overall. Welfare dependency was high. Two-thirds of the adult residents were unemployed. Almost half of the Holly Park households received the majority of their income from welfare—much higher than the average of 28 percent for public housing families across Seattle.

Holly Park's 102-acre site, with its wooden cottages built in the 1940s for defense workers, was impossible to maintain in the rainy climate of the Pacific Northwest. Divided in half by a right-of-way for high-tension wires, Holly Park was also separated from the surrounding community by a confusing internal street layout and its marked social stigma. These were the social and physical conditions that challenged the housing authority in 1995 when it received a \$48 million HOPE VI grant for physical revitalization and \$1 million for supportive services for residents.

### NewHolly Today

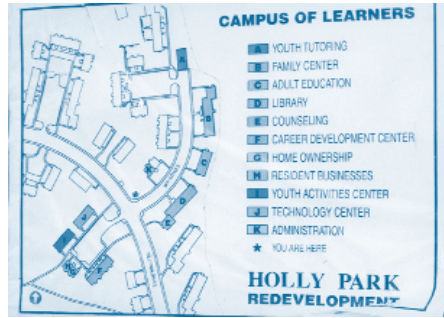
The following social and economic gains were found in NewHolly by the end of 1998, resulting from the HOPE VI approach:

- The Private Industry Council (PIC) Career Development Center assessed 392 residents in 1997



and found that 91 residents began working in a first job by the end of 1998, earning an average wage of \$8.47 per hour.

- Between 1997 and 1998 the Seattle Public Schools Challenge Grant program provided computer training to more than 113 Holly Park residents of all ages.
- Catholic Community Services' Youth Tutoring Program provided 2,386 tutoring sessions.
- The number of books borrowed from the Holly Park branch of the Seattle Public Library tripled between 1997 and 1998.
- In planning for the HOPE VI redevelopment and social service program, the Holly Park Resident Council broadened participation by simultaneously translating proceedings of resident meetings into as many as six different Southeast Asian and West African languages.
- A newly formed resident-owned moving company helped Holly Park residents with the relocation process.
- A dozen residents with modest English proficiency trained as childcare workers in classes that featured English as a second language. Six residents are now operating their own childcare businesses, while the others are employed in childcare centers.
- Between 1996 and 1998 the incidence of serious crimes in Holly Park dropped from 568 to 350, according to police statistics. The number of residential burglaries declined from 120 to 45, thefts fell from 206 to 153, and car thefts dropped from 116 to 86. The number of aggravated assaults reported fell from 64 to 34.
- In the place of the old, problem-ridden Holly Park, an attractive,



Campus of Learners services, now located in remodeled units, will soon be housed in the community center to be built as part of the NewHolly construction program.

mixed-income development called NewHolly is rising and is stimulating private housing development.

- A new learning and family resource center sits on the edge of the development, offering to the entire community access to a South Seattle Community College branch campus, a Seattle Public Schools technology lab, a Seattle public library, a career development center, a day-care center, and a youth tutoring program, among other services.

### How They Did It: Holly Park's Campus of Learners

HOPE VI brought a new wave of thinking into the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA). One of the first housing authorities to win a HOPE VI grant, the SHA received \$48 million in 1995 to tear down and replace Holly Park.

Doris Koo, deputy director of the SHA, notes, "HOPE VI began to challenge some fundamental beliefs concerning the mission of the housing authority. Is our mission that of owning and managing property—giving people a roof over their heads? Or is it to provide shelter that is part of a healthy environment, within which families can prosper, dignity can be restored, and children can aspire?"

Considering the effect of the transformation of a large public housing community

on the larger community that surrounds it is another shift in focus. As SHA Executive Director Harry Thomas reflects, "Although we originally focused on Holly Park, our thoughts and notions have expanded to include the whole southeast side of the city."

This shift in focus infused and energized the Holly Park HOPE VI supportive service program, which came to be known as the Holly Park Campus of Learners. Campus of Learners (COL) is the name by which HUD recognizes a variety of unfunded housing authority educational initiatives. Seattle's COL—a multiagency collaboration drawing on a variety of housing authority program funds—has many goals. These include creating a service-rich environment within public housing that promotes resident self-sufficiency. This reverses the isolation of public housing and its residents because they create ties with the nonprofit and business communities. Lifelong learning is fostered, and parents are involved with their children's education. Before full rehabilitation was completed, the SHA created a convenient temporary campus by clustering several converted mobile office units and other facilities around a semicircular drive, to house different COL agencies. Construction was completed on the new COL site in fall 1999.

The experience of working with the COL program under HOPE VI has started the housing agency along the path toward a new paradigm: more reliance on community organizations to build the environment that links residents with the resources they will use to attain self-sufficiency and greater consciousness of the positive role that public housing developments can play in the communities that surround them.

Several agencies work together to maintain Holly Park's COL. These organizations include those specializing in

## Exhibit 2.1

### Partners in HOPE VI at NewHolly

- **The Seattle/King County Private Industry Council (PIC).** PIC operates NewHolly's Career Development Center, offering job-search assistance, vocational and basic skills testing, interview preparation, and translation assistance. PIC arranges for childcare and supportive services, coordinates Campus of Learners services, and maintains a calendar of events.
- **The Atlantic Street Family Center.** This 80-year-old settlement house opened an onsite family center to offer parent education and family support, outreach to adolescents, family enrichment activities, as well as classes in health, safety, nutrition, financial management, and citizenship. It also organizes cultural celebrations and "talking circles" where immigrants can practice to improve their English.
- **South Seattle Community College.** The community college operates a branch campus at NewHolly, offering adult basic education, vocational skills training, computer training, and high school equivalency classes.
- **Child Care Resources.** Child Care Resources, an advocacy and technical assistance organization, conducts training for childcare workers and businesses, assesses childcare needs and resources, and advises the housing authority on childcare issues and strategies.
- **Holly Park Library.** The Holly Park Library, an onsite public library, provides a variety of afterschool activities, such as help with homework and reading. The library, which is open until 9 p.m., three evenings per week, also offers computers for word processing and Internet access.
- **Seattle Children's Museum.** Trained staff from the Seattle Children's Museum operate an afterschool arts enrichment program at NewHolly.
- **Refugee Federation Service Center.** This community-based organization provides advocacy services for refugee families.
- **Friends of P-Patch.** This gardening organization, operated by the Most Abundant Garden Project, helps residents grow vegetables and flowers for sale and personal use.
- **Seattle Public Schools.** Through a May 1, 1998, memorandum of agreement, the Seattle Public Schools agreed to provide student data for participating NewHolly families, to link NewHolly children with all available educational supports, to involve parents, to work with PIC's Career Development Center to coordinate summer youth employment programs, and to work with other agencies. The public schools also provided the expertise to upgrade donated computers for an onsite computer lab for adults and children.
- **Holly Park Community Council.** This resident advocacy and community mobilization organization provided youth services and a youth intervention specialist for Cambodian youth, as well as providing resident relocation services.
- **Catholic Community Services.** Catholic Community Services operates an onsite youth tutoring program.
- **Neighborhood House Early Head Start, Emerald City Early Childhood Development Center, and resident-owned childcare facilities.** These are some of the various childcare facilities that support working families at NewHolly.

employment training, education, the arts, library services, and gardening (exhibit 2.1).

#### How the Collaboration Works

Each organization within the Campus of Learners contributes its special expertise, but the collaboration is unusually close

and inventive. One example is the English as a second language (ESL) training that focuses on building the vocabulary needed for a specific job. This kind of training is often a component of PIC job-training efforts. Trainees are coached on an as-needed basis in the specialized vocabulary of trades as diverse as carpentry, electronics

assembly, and childcare. Teachers offer group classes and, if necessary, accompany trainees to their job sites to help them identify the vocabulary they must master.

The joint agency training in childcare work is a striking illustration of the COI's collaborative style. For example, Child Care Resources recently held a



Children of immigrant families use learning resources in the Holly Park branch of the Seattle Public Library.



4-month class that trained a dozen residents as childcare workers. Staff from Child Care Resources presented the technical material in Saturday classes, covering such topics as early child development, appropriate curriculum, legal issues, and reporting requirements. A professional ESL teacher, hired by PIC, attended these classes and noted the job-related words and phrases. The ESL teacher then took charge of the classes on Monday and Wednesday nights to work on vocabulary. Vocational ESL training uses pictures, role playing, and props—going from the concrete to the abstract—in order to convey the cultural concepts behind the words. For example, the teacher might build on the idea of providing specific toys and games to get across the general concept of providing appropriate educational activities for young children.

When the classes ended, PIC placed the trained workers in jobs. Using a similar collaborative approach, PIC offered vocational English classes that upgraded the skills of interested childcare workers, allowing them to become owners of their own home childcare businesses.

Weekly interagency coordination meetings held at a nearby public library keep the staff of participating organizations aware of other COL coalition members' activities. Physical proximity fosters informal interaction and collaboration. In fall 1999 the COL moved into a new facility located at the main entrance of NewHolly. The new facility is designed to encourage partners to work together:

- The Learning Center will house PIC's Career Development Center, the South Seattle Community College branch campus, the Seattle Public Schools technology lab, a small business development center, and Catholic Community Services' youth tutoring program.
- The Family Resource Center will house the Atlantic Street Center's family and youth development programs; the Seattle Children's Museum's afterschool arts program; a garden program; the homeowner-ship program; office space for COL, Head Start, and Emerald City Child Care; a multipurpose meeting hall; and the Community Living Room, an informal gathering space.
- A third, smaller building will house leasing, purchasing, and maintenance services for residents.

## Changing Lives

The Holly Park Campus of Learners has helped many residents make changes in their lives since it opened in June 1997. A December 1998 evaluation by Business Government Community Connections, a Seattle-based consulting firm, reports significant changes. PIC's Career Development Center has assessed more than 392 residents (assessment is now required by a NewHolly lease addendum). When assessments began, 224 residents (66 percent) were unemployed. Approximately two-thirds of the assessed residents asked

for the center's help to develop career goals and seek employment.

By December 1997, 91 residents had entered employment with a first job and 75 of them had found their jobs through the center. By December 1998, of the 91 employed, 66 were still working. Of those, the majority (44) were working in full-time permanent positions, 8 were in temporary work, and 14 were in permanent part-time positions. The average wage across the board was \$8.47 per hour.

## Encouraging Earning

Of the 117 residents who were employed at the time of the initial program assessment, 82 percent were still working at the same jobs as of December 1998. The Career Development Center helped 11 residents find new jobs, and 3 residents found new jobs on their own. Twenty-one residents were not employed at the time of the evaluation study, but were working with PIC on language skills, citizenship, job searches, and other pre-employment activities.

Entrepreneurial activities were encouraged. In addition to the 6 residents who completed the Child Care Resources training and opened their own onsite childcare businesses, 20 residents participated in a community-supported agriculture project, Friends of P-Patch, where they grew and sold produce from their NewHolly gardens to local subscribers.

## Encouraging Learning

The COL is about learning as well as earning. More than 113 children, youth, and adults received computer training through the Seattle Public Schools Challenge Grant Program from 1997 to 1998. Catholic Community Services' Youth Tutoring Program provided 2,386 individual tutoring sessions,



and 84 percent of participants reported improvements in their grades and study skills. The number of books circulated by the Holly Park branch of the Seattle Public Library tripled.

An important function of the Campus of Learners is dealing with the low education levels of many NewHolly families. As many as 15 percent of the residents assessed by PIC's Career Development Center in 1997 were found to have no formal education at all. Twenty-eight percent had the equivalent of a grade 12 education. Only 10 percent had any postsecondary education. Seventeen students participated in a two-semester basic skills class at the Career Development Center. By December 1998 one student had obtained a GED, two seemed likely to attain their degrees during 1999, and the others had improved their basic skills (exhibit 2.2).

### **Resident Organization and Leadership**

The Holly Park Community Council, the resident organization, has been actively involved in HOPE VI. An active partner with the housing authority, the council provides continuous input on programs as they are implemented. The council's long-term president, Doris Morgan, helped build resident support for the original HOPE VI application to HUD. However, the transition to a mixed-income community created significant tension among ethnic groups in Holly Park. For example, in May 1998 a group of East African residents made formal complaints of employment discrimination by the council on its contract with the housing authority, which found no reasonable claim in October 1998. The group then brought its complaint against

the community council and the housing authority to the Seattle Office of Civil Rights. The appeal was denied in May 1999. The Equal Employment Opportunities Commission reviewed the claim and, in June 1999, found no reasonable cause. Although the discrimination charges were not found to have a basis in fact, they embarrassed the housing authority and politicized the atmosphere of resident participation. Doris Morgan remains an honored and respected resident leader. She was the recipient of the Jefferson Award and the Nordstrom Diversity Award. Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis and Senator Robert Taft, Jr., founded the Jefferson Award, envisioned as a Nobel Prize for public service.

Many NewHolly families have active community ties in ethnic organizations and churches in the Greater Southeast Seattle neighborhood. Since only traditional public housing residents can participate in the Holly Park Community Council, its influence seems to be lessening, following the creation of NewHolly as a mixed-income community. Although public housing families are the majority in NewHolly, people tend not to identify as such. In 1999 the housing authority began a series of facilitated meetings that resulted in the development of a new, block-level resident organizational network. These meetings have eased some of the tension in the community.

## **Exhibit 2.2**

### **Immigrant Begins Her Own Childcare Business**

Thanks to the training provided by PIC and Child Care Resources, six Holly Park residents are operating their own successful home childcare businesses. One of these residents is Sen Doan, who emigrated from Vietnam with three young sons about 5 years ago to join her husband and eldest son who were already in Seattle. Sen learned English and became an outstanding childcare worker. Sen's supervisor shared her achievements with Child Care Resources, which offered Sen the chance to enter training in 1998 so that she could start a childcare business of her own.

In summer 1998 Sen hung up her business sign, made business cards, and talked to friends and neighbors. By fall, her licensed home childcare business was filled to capacity, with a waiting list. One contribution to this success, Sen believes, is the support she received through the Holly Park Child Care Providers Information and Support Group, a project of the Holly Park Family Center. The ongoing training, encouragement, and opportunities to talk with other business owners are essential. "My business is hard. It's a lot of stress," comments Sen. "It's good to have people help you at the beginning so you can know what to do."

Sen's dream for her family is coming closer. They plan to purchase a home in the NewHolly redevelopment. They look forward to planting their roots in their new country as proud homeowners and business owners.

### **Creating Change in the Larger Community**

The old Holly Park was a problem neighborhood within a low-income area of Seattle. Today, it is a neighborhood asset. The first redeveloped blocks of Holly Park, now called NewHolly, form a pleasant neighborhood of two-story, single-family houses and duplexes. The HOPE VI plan called for demolishing all

893 original units and replacing them with 1,200 new units. The revitalized NewHolly will include garden apartments and single-family homes—a mixed-income community with 400 rental units allocated to very low-income households that would qualify for public housing, 400 tax-credit rental units for low-income households, and 400 affordable homeownership units.

The winding streets that isolated the development are being rerouted and integrated into the surrounding neighborhood. The \$48 million HOPE VI investment was leveraged by more than \$160 million in local funding from the state, the city of Seattle, Fannie Mae, Seafirst/Bank of America, Key Bank, the Federal Home Loan Bank, and others. A light-rail system—proposed to run from Sea-Tac International Airport through Seattle—will stop at the corner of Martin Luther King, Jr. Way and Othello Street, adjacent to NewHolly, stimulating commercial development in the neighborhood.

### **Housing On- and Offsite**

Of the 893 households in the old Holly Park, 393 decided to move to NewHolly. Of the residents who did not return, 226 families moved to other public housing, 242 went to Section 8 rental housing, 16 moved to homeownership offsite, and 16 moved outside the system without help from the housing authority.

In designing NewHolly as a mixed-income community, the housing authority took advantage of the recent easing of the federal one-for-one replacement rule for public housing units. However, the city of Seattle, as a condition of its participation in HOPE VI, stipulated that no net units be lost as a result of the conversion. The solution, arrived at after intense negotiation and high creativity from all sides, is an example of how the housing authority has developed new

ways of using community resources and working through collaborative arrangements. The housing authority was able to reduce density in its family housing and introduce a mixed-income community at NewHolly, while leveraging different kinds of resources to increase the total number of low-income units available in the city.

To achieve this win-win solution, the housing authority developed a unique partnership with South Seattle's nonprofit community development corporations. There were three primary partners—the Low-Income Housing Institute, the Lutheran Alliance to Create Housing, and the Plymouth Housing Group (which is part of the Church of Christ network). The housing authority acts as its own HOPE VI developer, earning fees, that it then uses to help finance affordable housing projects undertaken by these community groups. The housing authority subsidizes a portion of units, which then serve the same income group as public housing.

Changes in the housing authority's relationship with the neighborhood came about partly in response to feedback on the old ways in which the housing authority did business. While meeting with neighborhood organizations during the HOPE VI planning process, staff heard complaints that the housing authority did not work with neighborhood groups and seemed to have little concern for the effects of its developments on the surrounding neighborhoods. The SHA had a limited sense of mission, which tended to keep the housing authority's role primarily custodial, rather than expanding into its most proactive role of helping residents move from dependency to self-sufficiency.

Through its attractive design, the mixed-income composition of its residents, opportunities for homeownership, and the new COL facilities, NewHolly has



Holly Park children create masks and gain confidence through ongoing afterschool art classes taught by Seattle Children's Museum staff.

become a force to encourage neighborhood economic development. In response to the HOPE VI redevelopment, new commercially built homes are springing up across the street from NewHolly. In collaboration with the housing authority, the surrounding community has formed a planning group called MLK@Holly Neighborhood Planning Association to take on the broader role of integrating the HOPE VI plan into the existing fabric of the community. The housing authority also works with the Seattle Police Department, the Holly Park Community Council, the Holly Park Merchants, Friends of Othello Park, and the Rainier Chamber of Commerce to promote public safety. NewHolly homebuyers will also form a homeowners association to build additional links with the existing community.

NewHolly has become a desirable neighbor in South Seattle. The \$48 million HOPE VI investment, plus more than \$160 million in local funding and

planned investment, is spurring private investment in the area. The new COL facilities, located at the main entrance to NewHolly, seem well-positioned to draw neighborhood families and break down barriers between public housing and surrounding community residents.

## **Changing the Housing Authority's Way of Doing Business**

Although long known as capable and progressive, the Seattle Housing Authority operated somewhat independently of the larger community in the past. SHA staff tended to see the organization as responsible to government and its residents, but not as a player in the community as a whole. Although long engaged in partnerships with community agencies to deliver human services to residents, the housing authority tended to seek out organizations with specific expertise to remedy disparate, separately defined resident deficiencies, such as inadequate job skills, poor English skills, or lack of reliable childcare resources. Through the COL, however, the housing authority has moved to a new kind of partnership—a collaborative, community-resource, community-building model that has much in common with the traditional settlement house approach.

The Campus of Learners concept involved building a new collaborative. But relying on outside agencies to deliver housing authority services meant handing over as much as 20 percent of the HOPE VI grant to a collaborative whose members are not part of the housing authority—who may even have criticized the housing authority at times.

## **Reconsidering the Settlement House Model**

A key partner in the Campus of Learners partnership is the Atlantic Street Center, which is modeled on Chicago's Hull House and New York's Henry Street Settlement House. The settlement house model holds key components to the approach that the Seattle Housing Authority is developing for NewHolly.

**"We are now creating a collaborative—a group of people whose charge is not to say, 'My client, your client,' but to consider 'our clients.'"**

Traditionally, settlement houses developed to help groups of immigrants make their way into U.S. society and viewed the individual and family in the context of the community. The settlement house workers followed an enabling model—linking individuals and families to community support structures that would enable them to achieve their goals. As with today's community-building model, the settlement houses worked to champion community norms, such as hard work, family, honesty, and the value of education. The settlement house model, in its reliance on community resources, is predominantly collaborative because it is dependent on community resources.

The more traditional approach—with one agency defining its mission solely as child advocacy for children and another solely as advocacy for women, and so on—can lead to a fragmented, even adversarial approach to problems within

family and community. An employment services agency might seek childcare slots to enable its clients to go to work, but would have no mandate to create, for example, any of the culturally appropriate childcare resources they are missing. However, the idea of creating new resources might arise quite naturally in the context of the Campus of Learners everyday problemsolving interactions among the staff of different agencies. Says Koo, "We are now creating a collaborative—a group of people whose charge is not to say, 'My client, your client,' but to consider 'our clients.' A group that can say, for example, 'So-and-so's kid just dropped out of school—let's deal with the family situation.'"

Bringing in new agencies also opens up new networks, which is another plus for the public housing authority. South Seattle Community College, for example, has relationships with educational institutions such as the University of Washington and Seattle University, as well as with business and civic groups such as the Seattle Chamber of Commerce and the Rainier Chamber of Commerce. These new, more extensive networks have the potential to link NewHolly residents to a wider world and enrich the program for years to come.

## **Developing a New Mission Statement**

HOPE VI challenged some fundamental beliefs about the basic role of the housing authority, how to work with its partners, and its relation to the community. Even the organization's formal mission statement changed. The former mission statement read as follows: "The mission of the Seattle Housing Authority is to provide, within a financially sound framework, decent, safe, and affordable housing for low-income persons in an



environment that enables residents to live with dignity.” The new mission statement states: “The mission of the Seattle Housing Authority is to enhance the Seattle community by creating and sustaining decent, safe, and affordable living environments that foster stability and increase self-sufficiency for people with low incomes.”<sup>1</sup>

The new statement retains the housing authority’s historic concern for the quality of housing provided. It also extends the agency’s mission from building and maintaining physical structures to creating *living environments*—a concept that encompasses the psychological, social, educational, and cultural environments, as well as ties to the neighborhood and the city. The new mission statement also assumes direct responsibility for helping residents achieve self-sufficiency—the underlying goal of the COL program and HOPE VI.

In a striking departure from past practice, the Seattle Housing Authority has set up a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization to raise money for COL activities after the HOPE VI grant ends. The total development cost for the COL is estimated at \$9.1 million. At the start of the capital campaign in February 1999, the housing authority already had \$5 million in hand—\$1,915,000 from HOPE VI, \$2,835,000 from the housing authority’s developer fees, and \$250,000 from the city of Seattle. The housing authority hopes to raise \$4.1 million in new funding—by October 1999, it had generated more than \$2.1 million from existing sources. By establishing an independent funding stream, the housing authority hopes to institutionalize the COL concept and ensure its place as a permanent part of NewHolly.

## Columbus— A Catalyst for Neighborhood Revitalization

### The Challenge

In the early 1990s, Windsor Terrace had a reputation as the worst area for welfare dependency, crime, and drugs in the city of Columbus. It was a primary contributor to the high crime rates in the run-down, low-income area of Greater Linden that surrounded it. The sound of gunfire after dark punctuated the night air on a regular basis.

The Linden community surrounding Windsor Terrace was also in trouble. Originally settled in the late 1800s through land grants to Civil War veterans, Linden was annexed to the city of Columbus in 1921. For several decades it remained a largely white, working-class, residential community with a thriving commercial corridor on Cleveland Avenue, a prominent north-south artery. In the 1950s, however, new suburban shopping centers to the north began to sap its economic vitality and decades of disinvestment followed. Storefront businesses closed their doors, property values sank, and crime increased.

Built in 1959 on Columbus’ near north-east side, Windsor Terrace contained 442 low-rise row units, spread across 40 acres. By the early 1990s, despite the efforts of the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA), age, disrepair, and vandalism had taken their toll. Windsor Terrace’s infrastructure—sidewalks, streets, parking, curbing,

landscaping, and trash facilities—were in serious disrepair. The building of Windsor Terrace concentrated low-income people in the area, and the construction of interstate highways to the west, east, and south further isolated them.

In the early 1990s nearly half (48 percent) of the commercial sites in Linden’s once-thriving business district lay vacant. Six percent of residential sites were vacant. The Linden area ZIP Code—43211—had more public assistance recipients than any other ZIP Code in the city. According to the 1990 census, 60 percent of Linden households were poor. Median household income was only \$9,091. With one of the fastest-growing job markets in Ohio, Columbus had the classic problem of the poor being isolated from considerable opportunity in the wider community. It seemed impossible for local community



The rebuilt Rosewind features variations in design, parking spaces, and play lots.

leaders to turn Windsor Terrace around when only 6 percent of household heads were gainfully employed. Nonetheless, transformed as the new Rosewind, Windsor Terrace was to become the catalyst for revitalization of the Greater Linden community.

<sup>1</sup>Adopted September 15, 1997.

## Rosewind Today

Rosewind, the renamed Windsor Terrace, can boast these dramatic improvements:

- Gang activity has diminished and crime is down. Police reports show that since 1993 car thefts fell by 55 percent, burglary fell by 16 percent, and aggravated assault dropped by 60 percent.
- By early 1999, 160 of the 230 family household heads were wage earners.
- The nearby Four Corners business district, refurbished by the city with new streetlights, crosswalks, trees, and trash receptacles, is breaking ground on \$11.5 million in planned investments, including a new CMHA headquarters building, a bus station, a fire station, and a police substation.
- As of the beginning of 1999, HOPE VI had leveraged \$14.5 million in city infrastructure investments for the Linden area.
- Akzo/Nobel Coatings, Inc., a local manufacturer, opted to remain in its location adjacent to Rosewind and has made \$32 million of improvements in the plant.
- Of the 41 new workers hired by Rosewind's developer, the Sherman R. Smoot Company of Ohio, 13 were Windsor Terrace residents, 3 came from other public housing, 3 came from the Youthbuild program, 8 came from Linden, and 10 were low-income residents from other parts of the city. Working in partnership with Columbus Public Schools Adult Education, Smoot trained 32 of those low-income people, including 12 Windsor Terrace residents.
- A microenterprise ownership training program, called Risktakers and

Profitmakers, graduated 22 South Linden residents, creating 7 new businesses with 17 new jobs.

- In 1998 CMHA's Block-by-Block Community Leadership Grants program, funded by HOPE VI, awarded six grants worth \$26,000.
- Rosewind is now an attractive, mixed-income development of low-rise brick buildings containing 230 units, approximately half its former density. A new 42,000-square-foot administration building houses employment services, a daycare program, an afterschool program, and community meeting rooms.

## How They Did It: HOPE VI Revitalization as a Neighborhood Catalyst

To the CMHA, the \$41 million HUD HOPE VI grant, received in 1994 to rebuild the dilapidated, 40 acre Windsor Terrace project, meant more than just the transformation of a troubled public housing project. The goal was the revitalization of the Greater Linden area and, in particular, the Four Corners business district on Cleveland Avenue three blocks west of Windsor Terrace. Housing authority leadership believed that unless the local economy of the Linden area improved, a rebuilt Windsor Terrace would be a vulnerable oasis in a desert of urban disinvestment. Although they believed in the potential of the area, they were convinced that neither Windsor Terrace nor the Linden neighborhood could make much progress separately. Strengthening the economy of the larger area was a critical strategy, if only to allow the public housing development to retain the benefits of rebuilding. They decided to use housing authority resources, in addition to HOPE VI funds, as economic leverage and to work with Windsor Terrace residents

and a broad coalition of community groups to revitalize the Linden community. The housing authority's vision for Windsor Terrace was broad and contextual from the start.

After receiving an additional \$1 million Community-Building Grant from HUD in 1996, the housing authority agreed to extend the community-building target area well beyond the boundaries of Rosewind—the rebuilt Windsor Terrace's new name. The housing authority stipulated that the target area extend to the entire community revitalization area designated by the city of Columbus, containing approximately 1,200 households and an estimated population of 4,000, with a 1990 average annual income of \$13,800 per household and a poverty rate of 56 percent.

In 1996 the housing authority began to investigate the feasibility of building a new \$3.5 million headquarters building at Four Corners, a run-down, underused commercial area near Windsor Terrace. A \$2.5 million housing authority maintenance facility was also planned nearby. But the housing authority made these moves contingent on the city making substantial additional investments of its own at Four Corners.

"We chose a neighborhood that needed a lot of work and had somewhat high risk," explained Dennis Guest, executive director of the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority. Yet, the anticipated public and private investments materialized. Guest is confident that Rosewind was the initial investment that set it all in motion. "Rosewind was a catalyst for the whole area. Without Rosewind, none of this would have ever happened."

Revitalization of the Linden area was a housing authority priority from the beginning. It was also part of the Linden area's understanding with HUD as it began its HOPE VI project. Nevertheless, the tradeoff involved was the limited



participation from public housing residents. The housing authority adopted a policy of extending its community-building activities to the Linden community and encouraged residents to work through community organizations rather than housing development organizations. Housing authority leadership considered it a long-term necessity to focus on the Linden area—even choosing to invest its own resources and corporate presence in the neighborhood. In the short term, however, this policy may have hampered community building in Rosewind itself.

The Four Corners initiative begun by the housing authority also includes a \$2.5 million Central Ohio Transit Authority neighborhood transit center, a \$1.2 million police substation, and a new \$1 million fire station, all on Cleveland Avenue. The transit building will provide space for many services and amenities that the neighborhood currently lacks: a daycare center, healthcare offices, an employment center, a coffee shop, and a laundromat. The city spent approximately \$500,000 to make Cleveland Avenue a welcoming gateway into Linden from I-71, by installing new pedestrian lights and trash receptacles, painting crosswalks, and planting trees. Including \$1.5 million in Rosewind infrastructure costs, \$5 million on Cleveland Avenue reconstruction, \$1.5 million in Community Development Block Grant funds, and \$833,000 in Urban Infrastructure Recovery funds, the city of Columbus invested a total of \$14.5 million in South Linden.

Although the housing authority used HOPE VI funds primarily for Rosewind and its residents, the intent was to coordinate the services and programs developed with these funds to serve a broader-based community-building program for South Linden residents. This dual approach was designed to protect

the public investment in Rosewind after the 3-year funding cycle ends. Major commitments by the housing authority and the city led the way for a host of smaller initiatives in the Linden area. Faith-based and community groups as well as businesses have added to the effort to revitalize Greater Linden, with programs that range from job training and employment services to housing, health, educational, and recreational programs.



Tiles painted by Rosewind children decorate the entry wall of the new community center.

Encouraged by the new climate in the area, Akzo/Nobel Coatings, Inc., situated one block east of Rosewind, decided not to move to the suburbs. Instead, the Dutch-based producer of chemicals, coatings, healthcare products, and fibers invested \$32 million to expand and modernize its Linden plant, receiving a \$1.4 million, 5-year tax abatement from the city. As part of the remodeling project, the company shifted its truck delivery area to the back of the factory building, away from Rosewind and the Windsor Academy, an alternative public elementary school located on the block between Rosewind and the plant. Company employees take an ongoing interest in the community, tutoring Windsor Academy children and even turning out one Saturday to help erect a large wooden climber, shaped like an old sailing ship, in the new playground at Rosewind.

## Changing Lives

Windsor Terrace is only a memory today. Rosewind, an attractive model HOPE VI mixed-income development, occupies its place. With 230 units—about half the former density—Rosewind includes a new 42,000-square-foot administration building that houses the HOPE VI staff, the resident council, and supportive services such as infant-toddler childcare, Head Start, and an afterschool program.

In February 1999, 160 of Rosewind's family household heads were wage earners. As a reflection of this change, the average rent in the development, based on a percentage of income, is approaching \$200 per month, up from the former average of \$130 per month. More Rosewind families are employed than in the past, having received help from employment and supportive services to take advantage of the strong job market in Columbus. However, as Cheryl Thomas, CMHA community-building facilitator, is quick to point out, many residents must gain promotions above their entry-level positions in order to reach truly self-sufficient salaries.

HOPE VI has changed the lives of Windsor Terrace residents. Windsor Terrace had always been a "closely knit community, but it was badly neglected," according to Jacqueline Broadus. A long-time Windsor Terrace resident and president of the Rosewind Resident Council throughout the HOPE VI development period, Broadus now serves by mayoral appointment on the housing authority board of directors. HOPE VI, she explains, "took away the stigma" of living in Windsor Terrace.

Former residents were permitted to move to the new Rosewind if their rent payments were current, their house-keeping met lease requirements, current police records showed no recent drug-related or criminal activity, and they

agreed to participate in the needs-assessment process and create an individual development plan.

As in many other HOPE VI sites, Windsor Terrace was not fully occupied at the beginning of HOPE VI. Of the 359 residents who occupied units at the start of relocation prior to demolition, only 89 returned. Columbus' experience of a below-25-percent resident return rate is mirrored in many sites throughout the country. What happened to those who did not return? Consider the following outcome in Columbus:

- Eighty-nine residents chose permanent relocation using Section 8 certificates.
- One hundred and eight residents chose to be permanently relocated to other CMHA properties.

- Forty residents were evicted due to nonpayment of rent and other lease violations during the 2-year relocation period.

- Thirty-three residents are unaccounted for, and it is not clear what has happened to them.

The CMHA administrators were well-intentioned, and they set forth a number of reasons why residents did not return. For example, they claim that residents using Section 8 certificates or choosing to relocate to other public housing properties did so for several reasons. Some residents had wanted to get out of public housing to obtain rental housing in the private market. Others did not want to participate in the community service requirements as put forth by the resident council. For many, the lengthy 3-year construction period was a major

disincentive. These families, particularly those with children, did not want to face a second major household move after settling in a community.

In spite of the fact that the housing authority offered prior residents opportunities to return, the issues related to relocation were serious. For the most part, a system for keeping in touch with those residents who left the site was not in place, and contact with residents was not consistent. It is now clear that relocation policies that offer more support to all residents are needed. This lesson learned is discussed further in chapter 3.

### Crime

The crime problem that made living in Windsor Terrace dangerous and stressful has abated. One reason, according to staff, is that those most involved in criminal activities were reluctant to comply with the employment assessments and housekeeping inspections that were part of the new way of life at Rosewind.

"Crime is one thing we don't worry about now," remarks one elderly Rosewind resident who has lived in Windsor Terrace since 1961. "We don't hear anything about breaking and entering or domestic violence or fighting. It's really quiet over here." The North End Posse, the Windsor Terrace Crew, and other gangs have left. Police statistics confirm this impression. They show declines, often dramatic, in many types of crime in the South Linden area since the implementation of the HOPE VI grant. The number of reported vehicle thefts dropped 55 percent, property destruction went down 42 percent, and burglary fell by 16 percent (table 2.1). Arrests for aggravated assault dropped 60 percent.

## Table 2.1

### Crimes Reported in South Linden Area, 1993 and 1998

Type of Crime	1993	1998	Change (percent)
Murder and manslaughter	9	7	-22
Forcible rape	26	19	-27
Robbery	117	97	-17
Aggravated assault	178	70	-60
Burglary	527	444	-16
Larceny (purse snatching, theft from car, shoplifting)	465	470	+1
Vehicle theft	401	182	-55
Property destruction	497	289	-42
Drug abuse arrests	105	111	+6
Disorderly conduct	35	6	-83

Source: Columbus Division of Police Uniform Index Offenses, Community Liaison Section

## Employment

HOPE VI supportive services helped many Rosewind families begin the move to self-sufficiency. By February 1999 the Rosewind Social Services Support Program, coordinated under contract by the Columbus Metropolitan Area Community Action Organization, completed a needs assessment for 176 families and produced individual development plans for 35 household heads. The social services program had provided job-search assistance to 25 residents, and 12 residents had obtained employment through program referrals.

Rosewind's new administration building provides a convenient, central location for several supportive services, making everyday logistics easier for working families. Built with HOPE VI construction funds, the building houses a daycare center, Head Start, an after-school program, and community meeting rooms, as well as staff offices and the resident council. The community action agency operates Head Start and the daycare center. These two enterprises employ five residents. Two other residents got training at Rosewind and have moved on to other facilities. In the afternoons, four Rosewind residents, who are also VISTA volunteers, operate an after-school program that provides recreation, tutorial, and nutrition programs for school-age children. The building hosts scouting and other children's activities. The VISTA volunteers also work with senior residents. They run errands for the seniors, perform light housekeeping chores, take them bowling, and help organize fundraising activities for them.

HOPE VI construction activities provided training and job opportunities for a significant number of Rosewind residents, other public housing projects, and the Linden community. The Sherman R. Smoot Company agreed that at least 30 percent of its new hires would be

## Exhibit 2.3

### Training and Hiring Welfare Recipient Pays Off

The very first Rosewind resident that Smoot hired became a project assistant trainee, who later moved on to take responsibility for the physical setup and day-to-day operation of an onsite construction office. Four years later this woman, a second-generation Rosewind resident, is still working for Smoot. "Some think when you hire welfare recipients, it won't work without some special subsidy," says Crystal Stowe, communications consultant for the Smoot Company. "In Elizabeth's case, she took the opportunity and has grown with it. What Smoot has offered in additional training she has built on. Now she understands the Smoot system well enough to be able to train someone else. She is a tremendously valuable resource for our company and sets the tone for the effort."

Section 3-eligible (that is, people earning one-third of the area median or less).

The Smoot Company surpassed its goal during the heavy-construction period of 1996 when it hired 41 new workers, 37 of whom were considered low-income hires. Of the 37 workers, 13 were Windsor Terrace residents, 3 came from other public housing, 3 were from the Youthbuild program, 8 were from Linden, and 10 were low-income residents of other areas of the city. Smoot collaborated with Columbus Public Schools Adult Education to train and certify 28 Section 3-eligible people in such fields as carpentry; masonry; electricity; plumbing; and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning. The trainees received prevailing wages for the different trades in residential construction. Smoot also signed a contract with Rosewind Payroll, Inc., a resident business set up by the resident council to manage the payment of Section 3 trainees. A year later, 15 of the 32 trainees were employed, one was still in training, and two were in college (exhibit 2.3).

The Smoot Company also developed an applicant database of more than 800 public housing and area residents seek-



Residents learn childcare skills at Rosewind's new daycare center.

ing employment. The database was used to fill Section 3 construction jobs at Rosewind, at the Four Corners construction sites, and as a source of referrals for other employers throughout Columbus.

In another HOPE VI employment initiative, Brainstorms, Inc., a local consulting firm, operated a microenterprise ownership training program—the Risktakers and Profitmakers Business Course—for residents of Rosewind and South Linden. Twenty-two students, all residents of the



Linden area, completed the yearlong course in 1998. One year later, 7 existing businesses were generating 17 new jobs. Brainstorms, Inc., was successful in securing \$300,000 in loans to assist business startups for Linden residents.

The housing authority entered into a memorandum of understanding with the nonprofit Rosewind Resident Council. The resident council screens applicants for Rosewind units and places residents in HOPE VI-related jobs. A newsletter, *The Rosewind Chronicle*, notifies residents of meetings and services available in Rosewind and South Linden.

## **Creating Change in the Larger Community**

"I don't want to sound flip, but the HOPE VI program has been the best thing to come along for citizens of this Linden area since Martin Luther King." This is how "Mr. Linden," Clarence Lumpkin, a long-time community activist and founder of the Greater Linden Development Corporation, sums up how demolition and reconstruction of a distressed public housing community under HOPE VI sparked the revitalization of an entire neighborhood. Beginning in 1974 Lumpkin's organization led a communitywide grassroots effort, leading to a broad development plan for Greater Linden that is now being implemented.

## **Community Partnerships**

Through formal and informal partnerships, the housing authority helps to strengthen and knit together Rosewind and the Linden area. The community action agency acts as the contract administrator for Rosewind's HOPE VI social service programs, running early-childhood development programs in Rosewind and throughout Columbus. St. Stephen's Community House, a

community-based agency that provides healthcare and daycare services, youth sports programs, and other social services, serves Rosewind and neighborhood residents. St. Stephen's Community Homes is committed to building 30 affordable infill houses in Linden and helping low-income residents to buy them through homeownership classes and downpayment assistance. Another St. Stephen's program brings together 10 Rosewind adolescents with student mentors from Ohio State University. Brainstorms, Inc., is training budding entrepreneurs in the reinvestment area and providing technical assistance to the Rosewind Resident Council for eventual management of the daycare center in the Rosewind administration building.

**The housing authority urged its residents to become active in the area advisory council, rather than create a parallel structure for neighborhood involvement.**

HOPE VI funds support a specialist for Columbus' neighborhood development division for 5 years. This specialist, who works directly with the HOPE VI coordinator and the community-building facilitator, will coordinate city programs and supply technical assistance to the Greater Linden Advisory Committee and the community reinvestment area advisory council. HOPE VI funds also support the four VISTA positions at Rosewind. The housing authority has formal contracts with these organizations and the Sherman R. Smoot Company.

Along with the formal contracts and major investments of the housing

authority and the city, there is a host of smaller initiatives, some of which are faith based. Within easy walking distance of Rosewind, the Greater Liberty Baptist Church of God in Christ has established its onsite Cupe Learning Center, with a bank of computers used for employment training. Urban Concerns, a project of Zenos Ministries, has established an afterschool tutoring center that serves many Rosewind families. The group has started a neighborhood kindergarten and plans to add one grade each year as the children grow.

## **Building Community Leadership and Reinvestment**

In the past, Windsor Terrace residents were not an integral part of the larger community and were not actively involved in neighborhood activities and governance. This pattern began to change once the HOPE VI grant led Columbus to designate Rosewind and the surrounding area as a community reinvestment area in 1994. The housing authority urged its residents to become active in the area advisory council, rather than create a parallel structure for neighborhood involvement. Six Rosewind residents serve on the council, along with Linden residents, neighborhood organizations, and public and private entities. Subcommittees cover such areas as economic development, neighborhood and capital improvements, housing, social services, safety, and youth activities. The subcommittees make recommendations on funding for projects, the council discusses and approves projects, and the city authorizes expenditures.

Through this type of participation, Rosewind residents are becoming part of the larger community. For example, Jacqueline Broadus, longtime president of the Rosewind Resident Council, is a member of the Greater Linden Community Reinvestment Area's advisory

council and an advisory member for the Columbus Metropolitan Community Action Organization's Northeast Action Center. It is possible, however, that the presence of experienced community leaders in these organizations to some extent may have slowed the development of fresh, indigenous leadership among Rosewind residents.

The community reinvestment area is a city entity and 46 percent of its almost \$3.7 million initial funding came from the partnership with HOPE VI. Its funding consisted of \$1.15 million in city of Columbus Community Development Block Grant funds, \$833,000 in city of Columbus Urban Infrastructure Recovery Funds, \$1 million in HUD Community Building Demonstration Funds, and \$700,000 in HOPE VI social service funds. The advisory council oversees disbursement of a significant amount of resources. For example, between 1995 and 1999, the council approved 26 grants totaling approximately \$891,000. Grants included \$50,000 for a community reinvestment area redevelopment plan, \$60,000 to St. Stephen's Community Homes for construction, \$250,000 for a homeowners' repair program, \$16,456 for teen jobs at the faith-based Urban Concern, Inc., and \$10,500 to the Windsor Terrace Learning Center's Job Skills Education Program.

The housing authority's Block-by-Block grant program, funded by HOPE VI, demonstrates the commitment of the housing authority to community building in the Linden area. In January 1997 the housing authority offered Linden neighborhoods the opportunity to compete for grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000. Eligible projects must enhance community relationships, employment, housing, social networks, and neighborhood services and encourage "demonstrations of community pride." Six grants were awarded for a total of \$26,000. Winning proposals ranged

from cleanup activities and tutoring projects to resurrecting the 13th Avenue Labor Day block party. Beyond the value of the specific proposals, however, the housing authority wants the Block-by-Block awards to develop leadership in the community, according to Guest. "Community building is a slow process," he emphasizes. "There is no guidebook, you just feel your way along."

**The housing authority's Block-by-Block grant program, funded by HOPE VI, demonstrates the commitment of the housing authority to community building in the Linden area.**

### Changing the Housing Authority's Way of Doing Business

"The world is changing for housing authorities," comments Guest. "Instead of the limited, well-defined housing mission we used to have, we now find ourselves responsible for—coordinating at least—everything that touches the lives of residents."

In the past, public housing tended to be a self-contained enterprise, defined primarily in terms of the housing supply itself. Public housing residents were often set apart by physical and social barriers. But some housing authorities are taking an outward-facing stance, seeking resources in the larger community and establishing collaborative relationships with city agencies and a wide variety of community organizations to meet the needs of residents.

Long considered progressive, the CMHA has encouraged resident involvement, built community centers in its developments, and found ways to give residents access to needed support services. Under the auspices of HOPE VI, the housing authority continued to carry out these activities, but with a difference. For example, when it failed to win a HOPE VI grant to revitalize its Linden Gardens project, the housing authority looked to nontraditional funding, considering the establishment of a community partnership with the Builders Industry Association, to build 20 to 25 affordable rental and homeownership units, plus a 60- to 80-unit elderly project. The housing authority plans to tear down Taylor Terrace, an obsolete high-rise building for elderly people, and replace it with new housing for elderly and mixed-income residents. The planning documents for the project name more than 30 community partners, including the local offices on aging.

## Atlanta—A Technology-Oriented Elementary School Anchors a Mixed-Income Neighborhood

### The Challenge

According to those closely associated with it, at the heart of everything that has been done in Atlanta's dramatic transformation of public housing was an irony. "It was the appalling fact," recalls Dr. Norman Johnson, then special assistant to the president of the Georgia Institute of Technology, "that not one



Centennial Place, Atlanta, before HOPE VI revitalization.

child from Techwood Homes had ever crossed North Avenue to attend Georgia Tech.”

Here, literally across the street from a desperately poor housing project named for it, sat the Georgia Institute of Technology, a vast resource that was both a powerful symbol of and gateway to opportunity. But, because of a complex tangle of mutually reinforcing factors—poor education, the marginalization of the poor, the stigma attached to living in public housing, low self-esteem, a scarcity of positive role models, a lack of connections to the world of work and higher education, and low expectations concerning school performance, career aspirations, and community behavior—some of the people most in need of the opportunities presented by Georgia Tech were unable to access them. The red brick towers of Georgia Tech lay to the north. The corporate headquarters of Coca-Cola lay a few blocks to the west, just across the paradoxically named Luckie Street. Yet the residents of Techwood Homes and the adjacent Clark Howell Homes were not able to use these or other resources available to most other citizens of the boomtown of Atlanta.

Living barely a mile north of Atlanta’s thriving downtown business district, the families of Techwood/Clark Howell were isolated not only from opportunities but also from the most basic amenities. The nearest supermarket was more than 2

miles away, and recreational facilities appropriate for young people were virtually nonexistent.

By the beginning of the 1990s, most of Techwood’s 783 resident families—98 percent African American—had been in the welfare system for many years. Over the years, the once clean, modern Techwood Homes housing project, dedicated by President Franklin Roosevelt in 1936, had been transformed by the presence of too many people with too many problems and too few resources. Techwood had become the thing it had once replaced—a slum. A total of 284 of the 1,067 original units were in such bad condition that they were no longer even occupied.

The typical Techwood resident family now lived on less than 10 percent of the area’s median income. Vandalism, drugs, and other criminal activity demoralized Techwood residents and caused them to be shunned by the more fortunate citizens of Atlanta, who did not tarry after dusk on Luckie Street.

The situation at Techwood was repeated in one after another of Atlanta’s deteriorating, socially isolated housing projects—and all of this in a city that had attracted national attention as an urban success story.

## Centennial Place Today

Atlanta’s selection as the site of the 1996 Olympic Games, and the intense civic pride that accompanied it, provided the Atlanta Housing Authority (AHA) with the leverage it needed to transform Techwood and create a new model for public housing in Atlanta. The model was a mixed-income community owned by the housing authority but operated under the asset management approach, using the expertise of a private-sector

firm experienced in managing low-income housing developments. The Olympic Village was to be built directly across the street from Techwood, putting the HOPE VI project in the spotlight.

Some of the dramatic improvements that followed include:

- Centennial Place Elementary School, a state-of-the-art technical magnet school, was built, with the housing authority’s cooperation, on the former Techwood grounds, with an unprecedented \$12 million commitment by the Atlanta Public Schools and generous support from area corporations. Children of Coca-Cola and Georgia Tech employees attend classes alongside the children of families living in public housing. Neighborhood children, who have first priority, make up half of the student body of 500. The other half come from families living above the poverty level or outside the neighborhood.
- Centennial Place, a 900-unit development, houses residents of different racial, ethnic, and income groups side by side in apartments, townhouses, and soon-to-be-built single-family condominiums.
- Georgia Tech faculty helped design the school’s innovative math and science curriculum and interviewed prospective teachers. A kindergarten teacher, Margaret Edson, won the 1999 Pulitzer Prize for drama for her off-Broadway first play, *Wit*. The school’s waiting list includes working and professional families, some of whom live across the city.
- The old Techwood neighborhood is now home to families eligible for public housing who are working toward self-sufficiency, working



families of modest income, and middle-class families. Nearly 43 percent of residents have incomes greater than \$35,000 a year and 20 percent have incomes greater than \$55,000 a year. The ethnic demographics also represent a change from the old Techwood: 51 percent of residents are African American, 29 percent are white, 12 percent are Native American, and 8 percent are Latino.

- The housing authority's job training and placement program, carried out in partnership with the Atlanta corporate community, has placed 53 residents with participating businesses. Taxes paid by these newly employed residents amount to \$63,348 per year.
- Crime has plummeted. Between 1994 and 1998 assaults in the old Techwood/Clark Howell properties fell from 325 to 23, robberies from 85 to 2, burglaries from 56 to 8, narcotics crimes from 84 to 6, and vandalism from 66 to 12 cases. No homicides have been reported since 1995.
- The housing authority's Public Housing Management Assessment Program score—a scale from 1 to 100 that HUD officials use to judge the overall performance of public housing authorities—rose from 36 to 97 in 4 years.
- A new \$4 million YMCA fitness facility with a daycare center and a new police substation have been built next to each other.
- A new retail center anchored by a national grocery chain will be built two blocks away.

When it was announced that another 83 units in Centennial Place would soon be available for occupancy, 1,100 applications were submitted in 10 days.

## How They Did It: Reconnecting Public Housing Families With the Mainstream

The critical element that opened the door for change, according to AHA Executive Director Renee Lewis Glover, was the selection of the city in the early 1990s as the site of the 1996 Olympic Games. The eyes of the nation would be on downtown Atlanta, where Techwood Homes, Clark Howell Homes, and two adjacent highrise buildings—1,702 units in four complexes, all badly deteriorated and crime ridden—comprised the largest concentration of public housing in Atlanta. But Glover, then chair of the housing authority's Board of Commissioners, was determined that something more than physical renovation should be done. She set about lining up support for a deeper and more lasting transformation, and her leadership proved to be critical.



Atlanta's Centennial Place after HOPE VI revitalization.

What the housing authority needed, she argued, was a comprehensive strategy for reconnecting public housing residents to mainstream life and opportunities. An evolving plan called for the housing authority to accomplish this through the creation of mixed-income, privately managed housing built around attractive amenities, a practical welfare-to-work job training and placement program, and an array of key supportive services. In the case of Techwood/Clark

Howell Homes, renamed Centennial Place, the linchpin would be a new elementary school of outstanding academic excellence that would anchor a mixed-income neighborhood.

"Provided with the right type of environment and the right opportunities, public housing-eligible families can become part of the mainstream," says Glover, who was named executive director in 1994. "The challenge is to create an environment in which they can thrive. And there we can learn from the best practices of the private sector."

Atlanta's selection in 1993 as a first-round HOPE VI site brought an infusion of \$42.4 million that could be used toward the goals outlined by Glover, with more to follow. The housing authority forged partnerships with other Atlanta-based entities such as Coca-Cola, NationsBank, BellSouth, Georgia Institute of Technology, All Saints Church, the YMCA, and other local organizations that could help Techwood residents realize their goal of self-sufficiency in a supportive environment.

Centennial Place, the first successful mixed-income public housing development and one of the most sophisticated public-private ventures in the country, was planned and developed by the newly formed Integral Partnership of Atlanta. The partnership is a joint venture involving the housing authority, an Atlanta-based urban real estate development firm known as the IntegralGroup, and McCormack Baron & Associates of St. Louis. The AHA retains ownership of the property, while McCormack Baron—an experienced property manager that has done pioneering work in creating affordable housing—markets and manages the complex.

"The state of Georgia has also been very supportive," says Glover, "by changing the law to allow all the public housing authorities in Georgia to compete for tax

credits—thus making it possible for private developers to work with housing authorities to create mixed-finance/mixed-income communities—as well as by codifying the mixed-income model and making special tax credit allocations directly to housing authorities.”

Centennial Place’s particular appeal centered around a unique elementary school from whose windows youngsters could look out on the transformed Techwood, the Coca-Cola headquarters building, and the towers of Georgia Tech, to which they were now linked by an innovative curriculum designed for them by members of the Georgia Tech faculty.

### **The Challenge of Relocation**

Invited to give their input concerning the planned demolition and the creation of a mixed-income community, residents expressed the fear that more affluent families would displace them. The level of trust toward the housing authority was low among residents, due to decades of bad feelings and perceived broken promises. The initial talk of asset management and privatization did little to reassure residents about HOPE VI. In addition, the tremendous time pressure from the upcoming Olympics gave the housing authority little leeway to overcome a decade-long distrust in order to forge a working relationship with residents.

A formula was developed through a process involving the developer, the resident planning committee, and the housing authority. Of the 900 new units in the completed Centennial Place, 360 (40 percent) would be designated as market rate, 360 (40 percent) as public housing units, and 180 (20 percent) designated for other low- and moderate-income families.

Using HOPE VI funds, the housing authority would assume 40 percent of

the debt, 30 percent would take the form of private debt, and the final 30 percent would become private equity. Public housing residents would pay only 30 percent of their adjusted income, as in other public housing developments, and other low-income residents would pay a subsidized rent. The 360 new public housing units represented about 46 percent of the number of usable public housing units in the old Techwood/Clark Howell Homes.



Resident trains in childcare skills at Atlanta’s Centennial Place.

The housing authority negotiated an agreement with residents that addressed a broad spectrum of concerns and guaranteed replacement housing and the right to return as new units became available. The housing authority continues to work with original residents on a family-by-family basis, using Section 8 certificates, other available public housing, and assisted homeownership programs. In August 1996 all 677 of the former families of Techwood/Clark Howell who were still eligible for public housing were invited to apply for replacement housing. Of the 345 who responded, 78 have moved back in as new units became available, 169 have chosen to remain in Section 8 housing, 90 in other public housing, 1 in a nursing home, and 1 in a homeownership opportunity. Six others were evicted, deceased, or moved without notice since the invitation date. Of the 332 former residents who did not respond to the

invitation to move back, 149 have chosen to remain in Section 8 housing, 74 in other public housing, and 1 in a nursing home. Of the nonresponding group, 108 were evicted, deceased, or moved without notice.

“Based on the letters we have received, many of those who did not return are very happy at their new sites,” says Glover. “We’ve been able to provide them with some real opportunities. It helps that there is a decent market for Section 8 housing in Atlanta. But the key to maximizing this resource is making sure that the program is operating well, with good landlords who are doing their job, managing properties well, and being held accountable.”

“The question of if and where to relocate became the first chance many of these residents ever had to make a major decision about their own lives,” according to Doug Faust, assistant director for housing operations. “We provided transportation for them to go out and personally inspect multiple housing opportunities. Housing authority staff were assigned to each site, specifically for this purpose, and residents were presented with a wide array of choices. The bottom line is that everybody was either successfully relocated or moved back.” It should be noted, however, that in Atlanta and many other sites, even excellence in personally serving residents did not add up to an overall strategy for the use of Section 8 vouchers or for working to extend community building to strengthen the service provision network in receiving neighborhoods.

### **Centennial Place Elementary School: Building Opportunity, Building Community**

Dr. Norman Johnson, a former special assistant to the president of Georgia Tech, played a key role in organizing



support for the school. Johnson believes Centennial Place Elementary has made an important contribution. The school provides a training ground where children from a low-income neighborhood can get the academic skills they need to succeed at a rigorous middle school and high school and ultimately take advantage of resources such as Georgia Tech. It also acts as a magnet for social and economic integration in the neighborhood.

Johnson had been involved in the push for a new school since the late 1980s, as the feeling grew among Georgia Tech faculty that the college's commitment to recruiting and supporting minority students ought to begin with creating ties to minority schoolchildren across the street. In 1992 Johnson and his colleague Eric Pickney, a staff member assigned to coordinate services for the residents of Techwood Homes, persuaded the Atlanta School Board to commit \$12 million toward tearing down the old Fowler Elementary School in Techwood and creating a brand new elementary school in its place. The next year, Johnson began serving on the Atlanta School Board, including a term as president.

**A new kind of academics.** In planning for the new elementary school, the board decided to allow the school's dynamic new principal, Dr. Cynthia Kuhlman, to recruit an entirely new faculty. This prepared the way for an educational experiment that would be unencumbered from the start by old ways of doing things.

Georgia Tech faculty and other experts sat on the panels that interviewed prospective teachers. (Residents were also invited to participate but did not.) Georgia Tech faculty helped design a curriculum that would maximize a child's ability to succeed in a global society and move naturally into the opportunities offered across North Street at Georgia Tech.

Kuhlman made a special effort to recruit male teachers (13 of the 45 teachers are men), which she regards as an important presence for children from single-parent homes. Although no reliable indicators of academic progress will be available for at least 4 years, the buzz of busy, engaged children in the classrooms offers credible promise for the school's mission.

**... technology-rich classrooms and an innovative curriculum provide students with daily opportunities to become comfortable with science and technology ...**

The result of this collaboration is a child-centered, community-based elementary school for grades K–5 that emphasizes science, mathematics, and technology. Thanks to partnerships with Georgia Tech and a number of Atlanta-based companies, technology-rich classrooms and an innovative curriculum provide students with daily opportunities to become comfortable with science and technology, while developing their own creativity and spirit of inquiry.

There are five multimedia computers in every classroom. The schoolwide computer network has Internet access. Teachers receive laptops. Classrooms are connected by video monitors, which are attached to VCRs and digital and video cameras. A state-of-the-art technology lab features Gateway Destination Stations—six mobile units on carts that can handle everything from Internet and cable access to laser disks and CD-ROMs. Kindergartners use PowerPoint to make presentations, while a group of third

graders recently did a project on the solar system in which they measured the distances between the planets and displayed their findings on an Excel spreadsheet. Participatory arts activities are ongoing.

In July 1999 the school switched to a year-round calendar—45 days on, 15 off. One of the benefits of this arrangement is that remediation is offered regularly during the 15-day breaks, along with various enrichment programs. Children learn at their own pace. Specialized instruction is offered to students with speech impairments, learning disabilities, and other special needs.

Centennial Place Elementary welcomes parental presence and involvement. The Parent Center has computers, phones, and other resources. Under the Techlinks program, a parent can take home a computer to use in return for 11 hours of volunteer work a month. On Saturday mornings there are workshops on parenting skills and teaching and, for kids, reading and preparing for the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. Housing authority staff work closely with the school to respond to concerns such as the need for parents to take a more active role in their children's education or helping to defuse a problem situation at school.

The adjacent YMCA houses additional resources, including childcare for children ages 2 to 5, an afterschool care program for children of working parents, and a family development center. Georgia Tech faculty and staff, along with other working people, also use these resources, providing role models and connections to mainstream opportunities. The elementary school uses the YMCA for recess activities. Nearby Sheltering Arms, a nonprofit facility supported by the United Way and private donations, offers daycare for children up to 2 years old. All these facilities increase the attractiveness of the neighborhood.

Kuhlman says she has had inquiries from parents living in other neighborhoods (whose children attend Centennial Place School) about the availability of apartments in the development.

Such evidence of parental interest in the HOPE VI community underscores the strategic value of the location of the Centennial Place School. The old Fowler School had been located in a cul-de-sac in Techwood with the sole purpose, as Johnson characterizes it, of “serving the reservation.” Johnson favored building the school in a location accessible to the whole community.

“You are never going to have a mixed-income neighborhood without a great school,” was Johnson’s argument before school officials, civic leaders, and other neighborhood stakeholders, including representatives from Georgia Tech. “It’s as simple as that. So if we want to turn this community around, having an elementary school that works is the key. Getting it out of that cul-de-sac was the first crucial step.”

Renee Glover agreed. She arranged for an even swap of land—the old Fowler Elementary School site, which belonged to the board of education, for 1.25 acres of the 44-acre Techwood housing project. The former plot became part of the new development; the latter, the site of the new school.

#### ***Working with neighborhood leaders.***

Techwood Park Inc. (TPI), a nonprofit organization founded in 1992 and made up of residents and other neighborhood stakeholders, joined the fight for a new school, Johnson recalls. Although the organization had no funds of its own to contribute, the group pulled together under the leadership of Milton Jones (now with NationsBank) and helped sustain community support for the new school and legitimize it in the eyes of the city, the school board, and other corporate and civic partners.

“What TPI did,” Johnson concludes, “was bring the community leadership on board.” That leadership was to prove instrumental in the development not only of the elementary school but a number of ancillary projects in the surrounding neighborhood as well. Community and corporate leaders included Ingrid Saunders-Jones, vice president for community development at Coca-Cola, and Sam Williams, then with Fortman Properties, who now heads the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce. Johnson explained that Georgia Tech also stayed the course and continued to insist that Centennial Place School had to do more than provide a decent education for the children of the neighborhood. It had to be the first step on a serious career path out of poverty. There was consensus among the partners on this strategy.

**“You are never going to have a mixed-income neighborhood without a great school .... It’s as simple as that.”**

“In an environment where race exists as a factor in everything, just beneath the surface,” says Johnson, “it takes a broad-based coalition like the one TPI helped pull together. It takes a group like this, watching the ball all the time and keeping the long-term best interests of the neighborhood community on the table, to bring an ambitious project like this to completion. They did not bring dollars, but they did bring moral and community capital, which was essential to the project.”

When students graduate from Centennial Place Elementary they attend nearby Inman Middle School and then Grady High School, both with fine reputations.

“The travesty,” says Johnson, looking back, “was that Fowler was producing kids who could not compete at the middle school level and fell even further behind when they reached high school. By then, Georgia Tech—or any other place of higher education—was hopelessly beyond reach.” Now, thanks to the state of Georgia’s new Hope Scholarship program, students who graduate from high school with good grades and meet other requirements can go on to state schools, essentially tuition-free. Johnson believes that, before long, young men and women will be looking out of the windows of Georgia Tech at the rooftops of Centennial Place where they grew up and at the elementary school where it all began for them.

#### ***Moving Toward Self-Sufficiency: The Work Force Enterprise Program***

To be eligible to live in Centennial Place, the head of the household and all able-bodied family members of school or employable age must be either employed, in school, or actively enrolled in an employment preparation program. The housing authority’s own Work Force Enterprise Program has become a model for welfare-to-work programs. Located onsite, convenient to Centennial Place residents and the neighborhood, the program has attracted an impressive list of corporate and other partners from the Greater Atlanta community.

The program was designed through the Techwood/Clark Howell HOPE VI planning committee process, with the input of public housing residents and research done by the Georgia Department of Labor on currently marketable skills. It was launched in May 1997 through a contract with Goodwill Industries, Inc. After the yearlong pilot program, the housing authority brought in the YMCA (as program manager) and

the Work Force Enterprise Program to the Centennial Place community center.

In the program, case workers help applicants articulate their career and family goals and identify personal and other barriers (such as substance abuse problems, educational deficits, or childcare or transportation needs) that have stood in the way of successful employment. The caseworker then pulls together the supportive services necessary to move applicants toward self-sufficiency and tracks them through the career-readiness training process.

Residents first undergo an assessment to determine their degree of readiness and need for remedial work or for alcohol or substance abuse rehabilitation. This is followed by a daylong orientation program that culminates in the resident signing an agreement that spells out attendance and other expectations and probes his or her seriousness about work. Each resident is then assigned by a case manager to one of four tracks. Residents who score 85 or above on their life-skills/career-readiness test may move directly into the internship/community service component, followed by the YMCAs computer class or some other specific employment training, given their interest and aptitude. Others, following their community service stint, move directly into a career placement opportunity. Those who lack the requisite life skills or career readiness must begin with that, while others are encouraged to address issues that, if neglected, will undermine their best efforts.

The program offers assessment and referral services in the case of substance abuse or an abusive domestic situation. Participants with educational deficits receive remedial education, literacy training, and preparation for the GED. The housing authority or the Fulton County Department of Family and Children Services, which recognizes the

Work Force Enterprise Program as an eligible activity under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, provide childcare and transportation help where needed, as well as tools, uniforms, and medical care.

Residents maintain their TANF benefits throughout their participation in the Work Force Enterprise Program. Staff identify and occasionally help to create appropriate positions, coaching residents through the application and interview processes. Case managers then continue to follow up on and support the progress of their clients as successful employees for 1 year.



Atlanta afterschool program reinforces learning.

The program addresses two other common but often difficult-to-acknowledge barriers to employment—lack of motivation and paralyzing fear of the unknown—by teaching basic life skills. Issues here include managing money and stress and finding positive ways of handling conflict. The life-skills training involves 4 days of intensive motivational and visionary training, led by a dynamic facilitator experienced in working with families struggling for self-sufficiency.

The innovative PaceSetters program, established by resident Irene Baraniuk (who is now the program coordinator for the Work Force Enterprise Program) with the help of Toastmasters International, offered residents a chance to gain confidence through public speaking. An inten-

sive 12-week followup component focuses on what Baraniuk likes to call “the recovery of good grammar.”

Participants also perform community service—helping with the program, at the daycare center up the street, or at nearby schools or churches. In addition to reinforcing new “people” skills and values, the community service stint helps residents experience community collaboration. This in turn can awaken a new sense of personal responsibility and community, according to Baraniuk, who cited her own experience.

The housing authority established performance-based contracts with service providers. It monitored them on a monthly basis and conducted regular site visits. Annual evaluations include participant surveys. It was resident feedback that persuaded the housing authority to change Work Force Enterprise Program providers, moving the program to the YMCA at Centennial Place, where it would be more easily accessible and subject to a more consistent philosophy. A self-contained GED program is now offered at the community center as well.

The Work Force Enterprise Program delivers jobs through its corporate partners. To date, the housing authority has recruited 61 business partners, including such companies as Georgia Power Company, Citizens Trust Bank, the Ritz Carlton, the YMCA, and Marriott Corporation. Companies participate in various ways—from supplying positions, mentors, and training to underwriting career fairs and other opportunities for meeting prospective employers. Local businesses can receive a tax credit of up to \$8,500 per resident employed.

## Changing Lives

Through July 1998, 127 residents had enrolled in the job-readiness component, with 91 (or 77 percent) having



completed the course. Forty-one residents had enrolled in technical training classes, with 17 (41 percent) having completed that course. Eighty-five had enrolled in the community service segment, 55 (78 percent) having completed it. Forty-nine are enrolled in GED classes, with one having already earned her diploma. Twenty residents have successfully completed the PaceSetters public speaking program.

Many residents have already embarked on new careers. By spring 1999, 53 residents had been placed in jobs with a

variety of area corporations. These newly employed residents, many of whom once received welfare benefits, now generate taxes equal to \$63,348 a year. As many as 22 residents hold jobs generated through AHA's HOPE VI contract with the YMCA of Metropolitan Atlanta, and a few placements have been made with AHA construction contractors and subcontractors.

HOPE VI funds also pay for job-training programs and childcare for resident families that are trying hard to become self-sufficient. Thirty-one residents are currently receiving assistance for day-

care, and 54 older children are participating in constructive, monitored after-school programs, thanks to HOPE VI funding (exhibit 2.4).

All applicants to Centennial Place, whether new or returning, must undergo a criminal background check. The screening process, according to John Spillers, director of protective services, is applied to everyone—not just the head of the household. Residents receive identification cards and decals for their vehicles. Where once strangers came and went as they pleased, gated parking areas now require a coded card for access.

New public housing residents receive a HUD booklet that spells out their rights and responsibilities. The AHA acknowledges the rights of residents to live in decent, safe, and sanitary housing; to have repairs performed in a timely manner; and to organize as residents without harassment or retaliation from property owners or management. The booklet details resident responsibilities such as conducting oneself in a manner that will not disturb one's neighbors, not littering the grounds or other common areas, and reporting any defects to management. These rights and responsibilities, developed with the input of a resident planning council, are enumerated in even more specific language in the lease itself, according to Peggy Patterson, assistant manager of Centennial Place. "No live-in boyfriends. No drugs. No defacing of property," she explains. "Two violations and you're out. And if your guests do it, you did it." There have been two such evictions in 3 years.

Village Management Company of Atlanta, the private management company that operates Centennial Place, continues to monitor residents to make sure they pay their rent on time, have a means of livelihood, or actively pursue a life plan. Home visits determine whether families are keeping up the property. "We don't accept people who intend to just hang

## Exhibit 2.4

### From No Experience to Full-Time Employment

In the summer of 1997, Techwood resident Shereka Brown was a young mother of three, with no job experience except in construction. But she confided a dream to her case manager: She had always wanted to be a bank teller but believed no one would ever hire her for a position of such public visibility and responsibility. Having gained a new confidence from her Work Force Enterprise Program classes, and encouraged by her case manager and program staff, she offered to work gratis at Citizens Trust Bank for 1 month. Bank officials were so impressed by Brown's work that they enrolled her in their bank teller training program. When she scored the highest in her class, she was hired as a full-time teller at the bank's East Point office, where she has since been promoted to commercial banker. Brown was recently recognized by National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials as a public housing resident success story. Rodney Carter tested out of the job-readiness class and moved directly into technical training. After completing a 17-week computer skills program through YMCA Training Inc., last February, he received several job offers ranging from \$10 to \$14 an hour. He is now working as a customer account clerk for AT&T. Cederick Hoskins completed the job-readiness class in December 1998. Having pursued his identified interest and demonstrating aptitude with staff support, he applied to the Atlanta Technical Institute for Autobody and Fender. He is now in training, with the prospect of earning a good living for himself and his family.

Angela Harris started the program as a young mother of two who had her GED and some additional training but, by her own admission, lacked the motivation and confidence to go out and find a job. Motivational and visionary training provided the encouragement she needed. Having expressed a desire to work with children, Harris completed the program and landed a job as a case manager working with young people in the YMCA's Leaders in Training program. She continues to grow personally and professionally.

out,” says Patterson. “They need to be employed, in school, or in a recognized training program—and that means every able member of the family.”

## Creating Change in the Larger Community

When she pulls into the Centennial Place School parking lot at 6 a.m. these days, Cynthia Kuhlman often passes joggers—people of all races, who clearly feel comfortable using the once-avoided thoroughfare at dawn. In the early morning hours and after work she sees Georgia Tech faculty and staff, Coca-Cola executives, and working people coming in and out of the Y—either stopping by for a workout or picking up their children from daycare.

The presence of hundreds of well-kept homes with a growing number of working families has clearly had a positive effect on the surrounding community, as has the dramatic reduction in crime in and around Centennial Place. Between 1994 and 1998, assaults in the Techwood/Clark Howell area declined from 325 to 23. Robberies and burglaries also fell—from 141 to 10, with no homicides reported since 1995. Narcotics crimes fell from 84 to 6. Cases of vandalism fell from 66 to 12. A new neighborhood police substation—built with funds raised by Techwood Park, Inc.—now sits next to the YMCA.

The three new institutions at Centennial Place—the YMCA, the police substation, and Centennial Place Elementary School—supply social infrastructure that is, according to Johnson, critical to the success of Centennial Place and the new community forming around it. The three components are education, security, and a place for pursuing activities that develop the social fabric of the community.

The transformed urban setting has encouraged commercial development as well. A new Holiday Inn opened in 1997

at the corner of North and Luckie, which observers say would have been unthinkable a few years earlier. A large retail center, to be anchored by a national grocery chain, is planned nearby. Condominiums are going up just to the south of Centennial Place.

As a result of the success of Centennial Place Elementary School, a second charter school is now being developed, again with all new faculty, at another new AHA mixed-income housing development—the Villages of East Lake, 10 miles east of downtown. It will include a daycare center for children ages 2 months to 4 years.

**The presence of hundreds of well-kept homes with a growing number of working families has clearly had a positive effect on the surrounding community ...**

## Changing the Housing Authority's Way of Doing Business

Centennial Place Elementary School itself might never have existed, along with a good many other new neighborhood institutions, had not the housing authority been willing to cooperate with Techwood Park, Inc., and other community partners in a way that was entirely new for public housing management. “Renee Glover and her people realized that public housing as we knew it could no longer exist,” according to Johnson. “It was time to look at the bigger picture of the community and to decide to be part of it.”

The Atlanta Housing Authority's decision to make Centennial Place and several other public housing developments mixed-income communities—developed, managed, and marketed by a for-profit partner—led to a redefinition of its own role in providing what Renee Glover prefers to call *assisted housing* to families in need.

“We no longer see ourselves just as a property manager,” says Renee Dixon, director of resident services. “We see ourselves as a catalyst and a community builder, facilitating and overseeing the services our residents need to move toward self-sufficiency, and offering a diverse range of housing products that can help them in that transition.”

## Oakland—Reclaiming a Community Through Partnership

### The Challenges

**I**n the 1980s and early 1990s, Lockwood Gardens, a public housing project in Oakland, California, was like Beirut, according to Lockwood Gardens security officer Jerry Williams. “Residents were being held hostage in their own homes.” Yet the major source of crime and violence—the four infamous drug dealers who ruled the neighborhood—paradoxically provided the only employment and the closest thing to a career ladder for its 372 families. Drugs were big business in Lockwood Gardens. When one local drug czar died, he was borne to his final rest in a horse-drawn carriage, followed by a 4-mile-long funeral cortege.





Lockwood youth learn renovation skills through union preapprenticeship program.

There were four murders in the project in 1992. Criminals treated the neighborhood with such contempt that bodies from murders in other parts of the city were dumped there. Lockwood and nearby Coliseum Gardens, another public housing project, shared the highest per capita homicide rates in the city. What street lighting existed had been rendered useless by vandals. On a moonless or cloudy night, remembers long-time resident Edith Brown, you couldn't see your hand in front of your face. Residents could not call a taxi or order out for a pizza. Vendors were reluctant to enter Lockwood Gardens.

Lockwood's 396 lowrise and semi-detached living units—most of them dating back to 1939—were in poor shape, despite efforts by the Oakland Housing Authority (OHA) to keep this outsized, 22-acre project in good repair. Two dozen units were completely unusable. There was no place for children or young people to play, although there were, say residents, plenty of opportunities for

trouble. Edith Brown remembers young males shooting dice. Catherine Smith's son was killed by accidental gunplay.

Supportive services were few and residents worried that their children were cut off from opportunities in the wider community. And families of Asian background, who made up 21 percent of the population of Lockwood and Coliseum Gardens, found themselves a minority within a minority, isolated from most of their fellow residents and from access to opportunities by barriers of language, culture, and immigrant status.

Residents themselves, mostly single women trying to raise families on severely limited incomes, felt powerless to change the environment or to gain access to opportunities for a better life for themselves and their children. There was no way out, residents cynically joked, but in a casket.

## Lockwood Gardens Today

Dramatic improvements have occurred at Lockwood Gardens:

- Drug activity has greatly diminished. Between 1993 and 1997, arrests for drug possession and sales fell by 84 percent. The number of assaults reported dropped 70 percent, and incidents of theft and larceny fell by 72 percent. Parents allow their children to stay outside after dark. There have been no homicides in Lockwood Gardens in the past 7 years.
- Fifty-nine residents were employed in construction and other jobs generated by HOPE VI. At two job fairs, jointly sponsored by OHA and the Bay Area Urban League, some 100 public housing residents obtained job information, submitted 225 job applications, and received 125 employment offers.
- A groundbreaking preapprenticeship program for young workers, created through a partnership with the American Federation of Labor–Congress of Industrial Organizations' carpenters' and painters' unions and based at Lockwood Gardens, has trained more than 35 graduates, 90 percent of whom are now employed with salaries ranging from \$10.40 to \$30.50 per hour.
- Thirty-six residents have qualified for the GED, 48 have passed the U.S. citizenship test—20 of them have already been sworn in as citizens—and 52 Vietnamese and Cambodian residents have improved their English language skills.
- Three resident-initiated health fairs have drawn an average attendance of 500 community and public housing residents.
- Across the street from Lockwood Gardens, a new village center, based at Havens Court Middle School and the adjacent Lockwood Elementary School, provides a safe place and constructive activities for young children and older youth. With the help of a \$100,000 HOPE VI grant, additional programs will now be developed in response to community priorities established by a newly formed village council that includes public housing residents.
- All of Lockwood Gardens' 372 original units will ultimately be replaced by newly refurbished units within the development. No net units will be lost. The number and configuration of bedrooms are being altered to accommodate large families.
- The HOPE VI program has been expanded to include the public housing project of Chestnut Courts (with an additional HOPE VI grant) as well as the lower Fruitvale area,

a business district located 2 miles from Lockwood. Over the past 2 years, a HOPE VI partnership of the housing authority with the East Bay Conservation Corps and the Fruitvale Community Collaborative has resulted in the renovation of 75 business facades, stemming the flight of businesses from the Fruitvale area. Through coordinated and leveraged efforts, 36 new businesses were started (two by public housing residents) and 83 jobs were created.

### How They Did It: Building Partnerships

“The people of Lockwood Gardens had agreed it was time to do something,” Council President Bob Craig recalls. “First there was the community policing and then additional security officers. When the fence went up, and the speed bumps, and the bright lights, it all started to come together. And we said, ‘They are going to do something.’”

“It begins with the recognition that a public housing resident is as much a citizen as anyone else and has the same rights and responsibilities as any other citizen,” says Harold Davis, retiring director. “Part of our job was to get people inside and outside public housing to realize that and to encourage residents to become involved in the community. In other words, we respect our residents, but we have expectations for them. And we have found that people, in the main, will respond to that challenge, if given the opportunity.”

Through HOPE VI, the OHA has worked to forge partnerships with residents and community organizations. From the beginning of HOPE VI, the housing authority decided not to become a service provider. Instead, it would play a

broker role, working collaboratively with a variety of nonprofit organizations and public agencies in the Oakland and East Bay area. In the process, the housing authority has had to let some initial supportive service partners go, but then has taken on new ones with a better fit. This evolutionary, collaborative spirit has given OHA considerable flexibility. It has also made a richness and breadth of resources available for community building in Lockwood Gardens (exhibit 2.5).

## Exhibit 2.5

### Lockwood’s HOPE VI Partners

- Asian Community Mental Health Services provides outreach, organization, and translation services.
- The Bay Area Urban League provides assistance with job placement and a peer group support program for resident parents.
- The Boys & Girls Club provides recreation, antidrug education, and learning activities, including computer training. It also offers coaching and mentoring, esteem-building classes, field trips, and help with homework.
- The East Bay Conservation Corps has developed a learning center that provides basic literacy and numeracy services, GED preparation, and pre-vocational skills training.
- The East Bay Small Business Development Center is providing technical assistance and training in self-employment and small business development for public housing residents and for businesses in the surrounding community with the potential to employ public housing residents.
- The University–Oakland Metropolitan Forum is providing HOPE VI program evaluation.
- The International Child Care Resources Institute, a nonprofit research and technical assistance organization concerned with childcare, provided training for Lockwood residents to become childcare workers. The institute is also working with the resident association to locate a facility and develop an onsite child development center and childcare worker apprenticeship program.
- A strong partnership with the Alameda County Department of Social Services provided training and case management for public housing residents. The department funds many private nonprofit organizations to deliver social services in the county and works to encourage collaboration among participating agencies. The department has a memorandum of understanding with the housing authority to track public housing families and provide services.

The housing authority often provides space for the agencies to bring them on-site and, in some cases, will also provide initial support for up to 3 years with the agreement that the agency will then cover its own expenses.

Several other groups such as the Police Activities League, which provides overnight camper scholarships for youth, and the city of Oakland, which supports various programs, play more

informal roles in developing opportunities for resident youth and adults.

### **Resident Involvement**

A critical factor in the progress made has been resident involvement and the participation of a strong resident council. Lockwood's resident council, whose five officers are elected for 2-year terms, holds monthly open meetings to gather input from residents. The council has constant access to housing authority staff and helps to communicate and explain decisions and emerging opportunities to the community. It helped shape the screening criteria for residents of the revitalized Lockwood Gardens and the physical design of Lockwood Gardens. The council also worked with the Child Resources Institute on the new Child Development Center.

The Lockwood Gardens Resident Council was also influential in persuading the Unified School District to locate the area's new village center (the second of only three in the city) at Havens Court Middle School.

Technical assistance from local resources is credited with building resident awareness of the potential of HOPE VI and opportunities for resident involvement. Lockwood received a Tenant Opportunities Program grant from HUD for resident leadership training and capacity building in 1995, but only a small portion of the funds has been spent thus far because the multipurpose building was not ready, says Sharon Harrison Brown, head of resident and community services for OHA. Resident council members have been active participants in the budget task force and as advisors to the HOPE VI process in general. For example, the housing authority backed the resident council's recommendation that Lockwood's new Child Development Center be open to families from the

surrounding community as well as to Lockwood residents.

Brown serves as liaison with outside service providers and works with the resident council to facilitate community-building activities. The fact that Brown has a small staff of one or two persons onsite at Lockwood Gardens greatly facilitates the liaison work with residents and community partners.

**Technical assistance from local resources is credited with building resident awareness of the potential of HOPE VI and opportunities for resident involvement.**

### **Responding to Resident Concerns**

Residents identified five major areas of concern at a meeting with the HOPE VI technical assistance team and housing authority management in fall 1996:

- A shortage of childcare services—a serious obstacle to holding a job.
- The absence of training programs tied to real jobs and focused on adults.
- The lack of adequate transportation to job opportunities.
- Their children's isolation from opportunities across the city.
- The lack of convenient computer training facilities for residents.

There has been progress with respect to all of these concerns.

**Childcare.** An onsite Head Start program provides supervised care and early education for 34 preschool-age children from the neighborhood, 22 of them Lockwood residents. An onsite Child Development Center will accommodate up to 50 children ages 2 months to 5 years. Thirteen home-based family day-care centers operating in public housing developments and in nearby Section 8 sites provide care for 114 children, 88 percent of whom are public housing residents. This service is also available nights and weekends to accommodate the hard-to-meet childcare needs of those residents who work retail and swing shifts.

**Training adults for real jobs.** Twenty-one of the first 25 graduates of a childcare training and certification program, set up in partnership with the International Child Resource Institute, are now licensed family daycare providers. They serve Lockwood and the surrounding community and earn an average of \$1,970 a month. The Child Development Center will prepare 40 to 50 paid childcare apprentices to qualify for advanced certification by the state of California. Hands-on learning under the supervision of a trained professional over 3 to 6 months, depending on individual skill levels and performance on periodic tests, will be supplemented by courses in early-childhood development provided by Peralta Community College.

Early in the HOPE VI program, it was found that many residents were unable to get jobs associated with HOPE VI construction because they failed a drug test. Although the Lockwood community was quite successful in reducing drug-related crime, it may not have been as successful in reducing personal drug use to boost employability.

A partnership with the American Federation of Labor's carpenters' and painters' unions coordinated by the



America Works Partnership has trained more than 35 young public housing residents, ages 17 to 24, for careers in the building trades. Ninety percent of them found employment at good pay. About 25 percent of the trainees are Lockwood residents. Support groups help the newly employed deal with the challenges of the workplace and pursue a career path as well as juggle the different demands that come with being a working parent.

**Transportation solutions.** Housing authority staff and resident representatives, working with the East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation and the East Bay IDA Collaborative, embarked on a demonstration project a year ago to test a novel concept—the use of individual development accounts to enable families to save for a family automobile and insurance. This type of account was developed as a practical incentive to help families in poverty save toward a home, education, or family business startup. Under the program, eligible individuals or families can set aside up to \$500 a year, which is matched two-to-one by a consortium of foundations and local banks as part of the banks' compliance with the Community Redevelopment Act.

Since outstanding fines or warrants—or inability to pass the written test for a driver's license—form barriers to obtaining a current driver's license for some residents, the housing authority is working with police and the city of Oakland to address these problems. The housing authority is also exploring the development of jitney or shuttle services to help residents commute to jobs around the city.

**Linking Lockwood youth with opportunities in the larger community.** The HOPE VI program, in conjunction with the East Bay Conservation Corps and the Fruitvale Community Collaborative, created jobs for some 80 neighborhood youth in a variety of community

improvement projects. The young people, including Lockwood residents, helped renovate more than 75 storefront façades in the commercial district of Fruitvale. The Boys & Girls Club of Oakland has brought expanded recreational and education programs to Lockwood, as well as to nearby Coliseum Gardens. The Boys & Girls Club afterschool program, known as the Brain Factory, is designed to sharpen skills and enrich children's sense of wider possibilities. The program is drawing growing numbers of resident youngsters. Field trips introduce older youth to opportunities for higher education and training.

More than 150 youth participate monthly in onsite programs aimed at building self-esteem and confidence and improving school readiness. Teachers report that students participating in these programs are more attentive in class, hand in completed homework consistently, and appear more willing to speak out appropriately in class. Improved test scores at nearby elementary and high schools are partly attributed to the program. During the past 3 years, nine teenagers living at Lockwood and other Oakland HOPE VI sites graduated from high school and are attending 4-year colleges, including New York University, the University of California, California State University, Santa Clara University, Occidental College, and Mills College. One student was valedictorian of her high school class.

**Computer training for residents.** To meet the wide range of computer-related interests expressed by residents, the housing authority identified a number of service providers willing to provide onsite training in software programs, using the Internet, and computer programming and repair. The Oakland Citizens Committee for Urban Renewal, which has already established working partnerships with several area companies, is

helping to install six high-tech computers with Internet access in Lockwood Gardens' new multipurpose center. Training and technical assistance will be provided by the Oakland Unified School District's adult education program. Second hand computers—30 have already been donated by Pacific Gas and Electric and other individuals and businesses—will be installed in the individual family units of residents who have completed the center's computer orientation program. These residents will be given the option of taking additional courses at nearby junior colleges.



Partnership with Boys & Girls Club provides summer recreation and practice in social skills for Lockwood children.

In July 1999 Lockwood Gardens' long-awaited new 10,400-square-foot multipurpose building opened its doors. In addition to a new computer learning center, it brought together under one roof the satellite offices of Head Start, the Boys & Girls Club, and the Bay Area Urban League. The building also houses a city-funded, resident-run year-round lunch program for 150 youth, onsite offices for resident services staff, maintenance and security staff, the resident council office, and meeting rooms.

### **Bridging Cultural Barriers**

One challenge of community building at Lockwood is the existence of different ethnic groups, cultural traditions, and languages—with the consequent potential for misunderstanding and conflict. The residents of Lockwood Gardens are

76 percent African American, 22 percent Asian, 1 percent white, and 1 percent Hispanic. The Asian residents speak several different languages, including Chinese, Laotian, Vietnamese, and Cambodian. It was difficult to involve Asians in community planning and problem solving, because most of them seemed to seek a low profile.

To help Asian residents take a greater role in the community, the housing authority worked with Asian Community Mental Health Services, which now provides individual and group counseling to youth and children to develop confidence and enhance self-esteem. Through home visits and town meetings, the agency encourages residents to become involved in community affairs and provides them with translation services.

The Asian community group also offers weekly classes in citizenship and English as a second language. It is attempting to identify some resident leaders with good English language and social skills who can serve as spokespersons among Asian residents and between Asians and other residents. Multicultural potlucks, organized by the residents' association, promote mutual respect and social interaction among ethnic groups.

### **Resident Relocation**

At the beginning of HOPE VI, residents expressed concern about whether the 140 families who left their homes in the first phase of construction would be cut off from the opportunities developing onsite and in the community. The concern was intensified when, after construction had begun, a dispute with the contractor stopped all building progress for almost 2 years.

OHA has made a concerted effort to track and stay in touch with the 140 former Lockwood families. It offered all HOPE VI-funded supportive services to

the offsite families, including job training, English as a second language, GED preparation, life skills, and other training. A quarterly newsletter, *Staying In Touch*, of which six issues have now appeared, goes out to all original Lockwood Gardens families. Written by both staff and residents, it enables these families to keep up with new developments and opportunities at Lockwood Gardens, as well as news of old friends and neighbors. *Staying In Touch* contains profiles of residents, household safety tips, information about new recreational or vocational programs at Lockwood, and progress reports on the renovation process.

**At the beginning of HOPE VI, residents expressed concern about whether the 140 families who left their homes in the first phase of construction would be cut off from the opportunities developing onsite and in the community.**

Staff also helped families displaced by renovation to find other housing. Fifty-three families took the option of Section 8 vouchers and moved on to subsidized private rentals. OHA has a policy of placing Section 8 facilities across a broad area, rather than concentrating them in a few neighborhoods of the city. The remainder of the Lockwood families chose to relocate elsewhere in public housing.

Relocated families are eligible to move back as new units become available,

and they have priority over other applicants. But they must meet a new set of standards established by Lockwood Gardens residents, including more stringent rules on timely rent payment. Housing authority staff make home visits to families requesting to return to assess housekeeping and maintenance habits. Police records and recent rent payment histories are also checked.

### **Lockwood's Community Policing Program**

In the late 1980s, Lockwood Gardens was the most crime-ridden of Oakland's public housing developments. Under HOPE VI, Lockwood Gardens residents are experiencing the full benefit of a community policing partnership, first introduced in the early 1990s, under which OHA's own security force is headed by an officer of the Oakland Police Department.

Police Corporal Malcolm "Jerry" Williams opened the first community policing office in Lockwood Gardens in 1992. For 7 years before being assigned to Lockwood, Williams had been a tough, by-the-book cop. At that point, he decided the only way he was going to make community policing work was to change his traditional approach and mindset. "The only time most people in neighborhoods like this ever see a policeman is when he comes to arrest somebody," Williams comments. To counter this impression, Williams spent a year just getting to know the residents, playing with the children, and talking to people.

"I tried to be nonjudgmental. I didn't criticize the things they were doing or what seemed to make sense to them. Even drugs. They believed drugs were helping them get money and so forth. But as their innate wisdom about the harm these activities were doing to



themselves and the neighborhood's children would surface in conversation, I quietly affirmed their good sense. They had to begin to see it for themselves before they could want to change."

By the following year, residents were helping Jerry—as they now called him—put up wanted posters with the pictures of the four drug dealers who formerly controlled the neighborhood. Armed with Williams' personal cell phone number, they would call him at all hours, even at home, with tips.

"You can't get emotionally involved when somebody is angry and cussing at you," says Williams, who is a certified drug expert with a college minor in psychology. "You need to step back and listen—to feel what's going on behind the words. You can't let your ego get in the way. You need to try to see the whole picture." The approach has paid off. Small children and young people crowd around his car when Williams drives into Lockwood Gardens each morning. Their parents see that. An important change has occurred in Lockwood Gardens. The cop on the beat has become a role model.

Williams has been teaching other officers on both the housing authority security force and the Oakland Police Department how to use the Lockwood approach at other public housing sites, while the police department has provided critical training and support.

HOPE VI reconstruction included enhanced physical security measures, including improved street lighting, security fencing around the perimeter of the development, and limited entry to Lockwood Gardens. Just as important, residents began to show a growing willingness to take responsibility for their own community's safety and quality of life.

In a focus group of 56 public housing residents in Oakland, 86 percent said

## Table 2.2

### Perception of Changes in Feelings of Safety Among Oakland Public Housing Residents, 1996 and 1999

Comment	Percentage Agreeing:	
	1996	1999
"I feel safe alone at night inside my apartment."	45	86
"I feel safe alone at night outside my apartment."	45	65
"I feel safer living in my building than I did 3 years ago."	55	78

Source: Oakland Housing Authority Drug Elimination Program Report 1999

they now feel safe alone at night inside their apartments—up from 45 percent in 1996 (table 2.2). More than three-fourths (78 percent) said they feel safer living at their housing site than they did just 3 years ago.

"You see people sitting on their porches now," says Brown. "It's a regular community now. A poor one, but a regular community." This new perception of security has been key, she says, not only to getting residents to come out to meetings and get organized, but to getting outside organizations to come in and partner with them around those concerns.

There have been no homicides in Lockwood Gardens in the past 7 years. Drug-related crimes and other incidents have been substantially reduced. According to police statistics, 24 assaults were reported in Lockwood Gardens in 1997, 8 in 1998. The incidence of drug possession and sales fell from 63 to 10. Between 1995 and 1997, the incidence of theft and larceny fell from 23 to 5. In the same period, the number of cars reported stolen declined from 18 to 6, and robbery fell from 5 to 1.

Reducing the crime rate in Lockwood Gardens won Lockwood and OHA excellent press from the local media and good will from City Hall, which had identified the development as a priority problem area. Public perceptions of Lockwood Gardens began to change for the better, and all this led to increased cooperation from government and other agencies.

"People are coming to us now," says Brown, "and telling us they want to work with us."

### Changing Lives

HOPE VI is changing lives at Lockwood Gardens. The following are examples of progress made by summer 1999:

- Fifty-nine residents were employed as part of the HOPE VI effort.
- Thirty-five residents completed a preapprenticeship course in the building trades. At least 30 have since found jobs in construction.
- Thirty-six residents passed their GED tests.

- Forty-eight residents passed the U.S. citizenship test; 20 were sworn in as citizens.
- Nine teenagers living at Lockwood and other Oakland HOPE VI sites graduated from high school and are now attending 4-year colleges.

Other data tell a story of more personal but, for many residents, equally important strides:

- Thirty-eight parents received counseling, mentoring, life skills, budgeting, self-awareness, nutrition education, and parenting support services through Lockwood's Parent Empowerment Program, initiated and staffed by residents with the support of the Bay Area Urban League and United Way.
- Eighteen residents graduated from leadership training courses; 52 Vietnamese and Cambodian residents improved their English language skills.
- Sixty youth hired by the East Bay Conservation Corps to participate

in community service projects such as the Fruitvale storefront façade renovation program are acquiring employable skills, self-confidence, the ability to work with others, and a sense of connection to the community.

- Thirty-one public housing residents completed an entrepreneurial training course. Although most have not yet started a business, participants say they feel more empowered and have gained self-esteem have become more confident, are more comfortable exercising leadership, and trust more in the "establishment."

## Exhibit 2.6

### How the Preapprenticeship Program Changed Lives

Dolly Collier says her life has changed dramatically as a result of participating in the preapprenticeship program. A former welfare mother with three children to raise and no marketable skills, she is now bringing home a regular paycheck as a working apprentice on her way to a long-term career in the building trades. What is more, she finds she has become a role model, not only to her children but also to her neighbors, several of whom have since enrolled in the program. Collier found the training program itself a life-altering and maturing experience.

Daniel Wright was, by his own description, "a high school washout" with no particular life plan, who seemed headed for trouble. In fact, it took more than one try and encouragement from two people who believed in him—his construction trade skills instructor, Ted Strong, and a Lockwood neighbor, Annette Clark—for Daniel to get through Lockwood's preapprenticeship program. In the end, he grew to take so much satisfaction in what he was learning about tools and construction processes that he willingly attended part of another session to make up some of what he had missed.

Today, Wright surveys the building site on which he is working to note the growing number of new homes he has had a part in building. He is looking forward to the day, about 4 years from now, when he could be making \$27 an hour. But he also says that someday he might like to go back into the classroom to teach construction. At the end of the shift he heads home for dinner, deliberately avoiding some of his old pals who just want to "hang out." He knows he needs to be clear-headed tomorrow morning when he presorts the sections of wood and other materials for the carpenter whose shoes he'd like to fill someday. "It makes me happy to see something I've built," Wright confides. "I never experienced anything like this before. And at the end of the week," he flashes a warm smile, "there's a paycheck."

### Preapprenticeship Training

In 1995, OHA was one of 21 housing authorities that were awarded a Resident Apprenticeship Demonstration Program—a \$250,000 HUD grant. This new preapprenticeship program, designed for young workers ages 17 to 24, was intended to prepare low-income and public housing residents for lifelong careers as skilled tradespersons earning a living wage. The carpenters' and painters' building trade labor unions agreed to provide the instructors and give priority consideration for employment to skilled graduates of the program. Nationally, the program has placed 225 of its graduates in construction jobs.

Lockwood Gardens' program draws on the two union locals, aided by the planning and technical assistance of the America Works Partnership: Working Together for Jobs™. The America Works Partnership is an independent national nonprofit organization that fosters partnerships with federal agencies, national foundations, and other organizations to bring employment to Oakland and other cities. Other community partners of the Lockwood Gardens program include the Oakland Unified School District, which

provides students with help in GED preparation, and the state of California, which operates certification programs in lead abatement and hazardous waste removal. The 12- to 15-week program combines classroom learning, hands-on experience, life skills, and work-readiness training.

Of the more than 35 graduates from Lockwood Gardens' first four America Works classes—three-quarters of whom were high school dropouts with poor career prospects—31 percent are now employed and earn between \$10.40 and \$30.50 per hour. Most have entered union apprenticeship programs in painting, drywall, and carpentry.

In April 1998 the Oakland and Miami housing authorities were selected from 21 participating housing authorities to take part in a new five-city training initiative overseen by the America Works Partnership. Oakland's project coordinator, Donna Levitt, is working to develop sustained community and institutional commitment, building additional partnerships with the Port of Oakland and the Building and Construction Trades Council of Alameda County, and working with area contractors, labor unions, and service providers to help Lockwood's graduates get and keep well-paying construction jobs.

### Creating Change in the Larger Community

The housing authority leveraged community and Oakland Public Schools support to turn Havens Court Middle School—located just across the street from Lockwood Gardens—into a village center. A village center is not a physical place but an approach that helps a community conceptualize bringing a variety of supportive activities under one umbrella. Havens Court has become a beacon school—a safe haven for youth

and a center for afterschool activities and adult education. Residents of the surrounding community also take part in the educational, recreational, vocational, and supportive activities of the village center at Lockwood Gardens. The Lockwood village center also provides a comfortable gathering place for various community-building activities.



Workers revitalize Lockwood Gardens, Oakland.

A newly formed village council—including representatives from Lockwood, neighborhood residents, and community organizations—convened to identify community needs such as training in conflict resolution, parenting skills, and how to find jobs is planning further initiatives. HOPE VI funding will enable the center to expand its activities beyond the school to other locations in the community, according to Ben Fraticelli, executive director of the Community Health Academy at Havens Court Middle School. Fraticelli, a community liaison with the University of California at Berkeley School of Public Health, coordinates the village center activities.

The housing authority, at the urging of Lockwood's resident council, helped to establish Tender Loving Care, a health-monitoring and risk-factor-awareness program for pregnant women that has been shown to lower rates of hypertension, cigarette smoking, child maltreatment, and subsequent pregnancies. The program is based at Lockwood

Gardens, but, at the residents' insistence, it extended its services beyond Lockwood residents to 100 pregnant women living on welfare or low incomes in other distressed neighborhoods.

Lockwood Gardens has ceased to be a base for crime and drug activity that spreads out to affect the whole neighborhood. Indeed, Lockwood's successful drug-elimination efforts and anticrime effort have served as a catalyst for the housing authority's overall community policing strategy, resulting in reductions in crime and drug-related activity in several neighborhoods. The success of Lockwood Gardens' community policing and antidrug effort, along with its other community-building and outreach activities, led the city of Oakland to establish a Weed and Seed program in the area.

The impact of HOPE VI and the spirit of community being fostered at Lockwood Gardens are being felt by the surrounding community as well. The HOPE VI grant that transformed Lockwood also supported activities in Coliseum Gardens and the Lower Fruitvale neighborhood. Chestnut Courts, another Oakland public housing project, received a \$400,000 planning grant in 1995 and a \$12.7 million HOPE VI grant in 1998. New businesses are springing up in Fruitvale, about 2 miles from Lockwood, with plans for erecting housing and a community center adjacent to the nearby BART station. Meanwhile, the housing authority, the Spanish Speaking Unity Council, BART, and the city have come together around a new transit village project, which will include scattered-site public housing and a childcare center for commuting parents. In the Fruitvale area:

- The Fruitvale Community Collaborative (a subsidiary of the Spanish Speaking Unity Council) is conducting community organizing activities.

- La Clinica de la Raza and the Spanish Speaking Citizens Foundation are jointly implementing an “It Starts Now” program in Fruitvale, emphasizing good work habits and employable skills.
- The Spanish Speaking Unity Council is providing self-employment and business development assistance in Fruitvale.
- Eighty-three units demolished at Chestnut Courts are being replaced by 120 units—some of which will be reserved for homeownership or rental at income levels above the very low-income cutoffs for public housing families.
- Fifty-four new units of scattered-site housing in three locations have been brought online in recent months.
- Eighty-three new jobs and 36 new businesses were created in the Fruitvale business district.

## Changing the Housing Authority’s Way of Doing Business

“We’re certainly more focused these days on the marketability and viability of our housing product on a long-term basis under HOPE VI,” says Ralph Carey, director of housing management of the Oakland Housing Authority. “This is a big change from the old fix-it-up-for-a-while mentality that once prevailed. Nowadays we find ourselves thinking in terms of programs that will make us less dependent or will open up new opportunities for the residents.”

According to Carey, the housing authority also finds itself doing business these days with “people we’ve never dealt with before, such as state tax credit and bond finance people, lawyers, and financial experts who can put deals together that

could make us less dependent, in the long run, on HUD subsidies.”

“In the old days we would simply hire an architect to design the job and a contractor to execute it. Today we hire a developer who will, in turn, hire the architect and put together the team that can realize the project. We act as the overseers, keeping an eye on the health of the project, its marketability, and so on. We’re becoming asset managers.”

**... the housing authority also finds itself doing business these days with “people we’ve never dealt with before, such as state tax credit and bond finance people, lawyers, and financial experts ...”**

The screening of potential residents is also a new function of the housing authority. It also provides leadership training for residents and must consider services such as childcare and job-readiness training. “HOPE VI has opened up opportunities we hadn’t had the resources to develop before,” says Carey. But it is often up to the housing authority to go out and find the additional resources to actually build a needed facility or provide an ongoing service onsite.

OHA also finds itself acting as the broker between residents and all manner of service providers and other outside resources—including the city of Oakland, with which it has become engaged in a number of collaborative projects, some involving the larger community.

“Public housing used to exist as kind of an island, cut off from the rest of the community,” says Carey. “Part of our new mission is not only to change that image but that reality.”

## Milwaukee— Family Resource Center Combines Many Services To Foster Employment

### The Challenge

Hillside Terrace was a neighborhood trouble spot. Drug dealers operated an open-air market, posting lookouts at the project’s two entrances and shooting out streetlights to mask nighttime illegal activities. Cul-de-sacs created by street closings that were part of the original site design further baffled pursuit. Residents could not order pizzas for delivery to their homes because drivers were reluctant to deliver there.

Hillside Terrace’s reputation was so bad that in November 1992 the housing authority had to offer a vacancy to 200 families before finding one that would venture to move there. “Most families on the waiting list would rather go to the bottom of the list and wait for more than 10 years for another development than accept one of the housing units at Hillside Terrace,” recalls Ricardo Diaz, executive director of the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee. In 1995 Hillside’s vacancy rate was 6.5 percent—twice that of the housing authority as a whole.

Despite the strong local job market (currently less than 5 percent unemployment), many Hillside residents had lost



touch with the expectation of employment and the culture of work. Approximately 83 percent of the family households had no earned income. The median household income was \$7,404, approximately one-third of the city's median income. Welfare dependency was high. Seventy-eight percent of households received some form of public assistance—yet the state of Wisconsin was about to adopt one of the toughest welfare-to-work measures in the country. Housing authority leadership saw HOPE VI's main direction as helping residents to begin working right away and then providing the ongoing assistance to build skills and move up a career ladder.

Built in 1948 as housing for wartime workers, Hillside Terrace in the early 1990s was the most distressed project in the public housing inventory. Located on the northeast side of Milwaukee, close to downtown but isolated by highways to the south and west and light manufacturing facilities to the east, the 24.5-acre site encompassed 552 family units and a 44-unit highrise building for the elderly. Its hilly site was subject to flooding. Despite almost \$12 million of modernization at Hillside between 1980 and 1994, the project was rated in only fair condition at the time of the HOPE VI grant.

## Hillside Terrace Today

■ About \$3.2 million of the \$45.7 million HOPE VI grant financed the transformation of the fortress-like 1978-vintage Hillside Terrace Boys & Girls Club into the 29,000-square-foot Hillside Terrace Family Resource Center. HOPE VI Amendment Funds added \$1 million for supportive services. The housing authority's community partners—Maximus, a for-profit employment services provider; the Milwaukee

Area Technical College; the Hillside Family Health Center; Daycare for Children, Inc.; and the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Milwaukee—use the center as a base of operations to provide employment and supportive services to Hillside residents and the neighborhood. The expanded center opened in September 1997.

- HOPE VI reduced the density and isolation of Hillside Terrace. The housing authority razed 118 units, replacing 79 units in nearby scattered sites. The reconstruction upgraded interiors and exteriors, as well as cable, electrical, heating, phone, water, and drainage systems. The original through streets were restored. Green space was added and the development was configured to create 12 microneighborhoods, each with its own resident mentor. Hillside Terrace has become a community asset and an attractive place to live. In contrast to the 200-to-1 turndown rate before HOPE VI, 152 offers were made to potential tenants in 1997 with only 6 refusals.
- Between 1995 and 1998, the percentage of Hillside's heads of household who had some income from wages more than tripled, rising from 17 percent to 60 percent. "There was a savings of more than \$1 million in TANF payments to Hillside Terrace households between 1996 and 1999," according to Housing Authority Director Ricardo Diaz.
- During the same period, the percentage of households that were completely dependent on government supports dropped 31 points.
- Between 1995 and 1998, the average wages of long-term Hillside residents with earnings rose from \$9,353 to \$12,346 per year. Hourly wages ranged from \$7.00 to \$12.17—an average of \$8.25 per hour.
- Between September 1993 and October 1996, Hillside's resident employment program helped to place 139 residents in a variety of private- and public-sector jobs. During HOPE VI construction, 44 residents worked with contractors at Hillside Terrace. Four worked with contractors offsite. As many as 37 residents worked with onsite community agencies, such as the Boys & Girls Club and Day Care for Children, Inc.
- Twenty-four residents gained work experience through temporary housing authority jobs, such as Hillside Terrace's 18-month resident employment coordinator position and several janitorial slots.
- HOPE VI funding supported a driver's education class, which helped 75 people to obtain their driver's licenses—leading some residents to gain employment as drivers of school buses and other vehicles.
- Between 1995 and 1997, reports of serious crimes at Hillside Terrace fell by 40 percent—from 75 to 45.



Thanks to the Hillside Terrace Family Resource Center, Center Manager Ann Wilson's grandson gets a healthy start in life.



## How They Did It: The Many Roles of Hillside Terrace Family Resource Center

During the past 4 years, housing authority staff have been working with residents, employers, and social service providers on barriers to work. “We looked at all the issues that have historically prevented people on welfare from going to work,” explains Diaz. “We tried to address all the constraints we could think of—lack of education, inadequate employment training, not knowing how to look for a job, difficulties with day-care, and inadequate healthcare. We tried to build a bulletproof program, so there could be no excuse for residents not going to work.”

The programs at the Hillside Terrace Family Resource Center, operating through partnerships with community organizations, reflect much more than a desire for convenient access to services. The center exemplifies a specific service strategy and provides a new structure of opportunity for residents. An attractive, modern brick structure built (literally) around a preexisting youth recreation facility, the center consolidates all the elements of the self-sufficiency program in one location and links residents to the larger community. The center is the physical embodiment of the housing

authority’s determination to holistically address all possible obstacles to self-sufficiency. While multipurpose community buildings may be found in many public housing developments, this one is unique in its strategic focus on the transition to employment and self-sufficiency.

Milwaukee Mayor John O. Norquist commended the employment focus of the Hillside Terrace Family Resource Center. “The center is an investment in the future of public housing residents,” he commented at the June 12, 1996, groundbreaking. “It’s the kind of government-community partnership that will help families get off welfare and get into the economic mainstream.”

Removing obstacles to work had a special urgency in Wisconsin, a state that launched one of the earliest and toughest welfare-to-work laws in the country in 1997. Wisconsin’s TANF legislation—often referred to as W2—provides only 24 months of welfare payments in a lifetime. Unlike many other states, however, once the Wisconsin clock began ticking, neither study toward a general equivalency diploma nor participation in most other general skills training programs could halt its countdown. Given the strict state interpretation of eligible activity under Wisconsin’s W2 and a strong local job market (less than 5 percent unemployment), the housing authority emphasizes early employment. It works to help residents get into entry-level, temporary, or subsidized jobs as soon as possible and then provides them with ongoing assistance to build from there.

Wisconsin welfare reform put tremendous pressure on the housing authority as it implemented the HOPE VI program. While the housing authority worked through the process of forging

partnerships and keeping residents involved, it was also necessary to meet W2 requirements for immediate outcomes. The situation required a real balancing act. It is possible that, because of the W2 constraints for moving residents to work within a tight timeframe, the HOPE VI program at Hillside developed as a more centralized operation than it might have otherwise. The resident organization, Hillside Family Organization, Inc., was incorporated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit in 1995. The housing authority has long encouraged its participation and provided support services to the group. During the early stages of HOPE VI, however, observers noted a lack of resident buy-in, and it is possible that the necessary haste to comply with W2 curtailed the time available for building broad support among residents.

Three years after its opening, there is every indication that the new Hillside Family Resource Center is functioning as intended (exhibit 2.7). The HOPE VI community partners use the center as a base of operations to provide employment and supportive services to Hillside residents and others in the neighborhood. The three-story structure sits at the edge of the development—one entrance opening on the Hillside Terrace development, the other fronting on Sixth Street—inviting participation from the neighborhood beyond.

The first thing a visitor sees when entering the center is the “Wall of Work”—a large wood and glass cabinet with an ever-changing display of 8” x 10” color photographs of Hillside residents at their jobs. Opposite this display is a reception area and building management offices. In the words of Ann Wilson, a longtime Hillside resident who manages the center, it is a “resource-full building.”



Education and training programs make Hillside Terrace’s closeness to downtown Milwaukee jobs a plus for residents.

## Exhibit 2.7

### Community Partners Operating in the Hillside Family Resource Center

#### Employment Services

In Milwaukee's HOPE VI program, everything starts from the goal of employment and self-sufficiency. Maximus, a private-sector provider of job development and placement services, partners with the housing authority, maintaining a satellite office with five employees on the third floor of the Hillside Family Resource Center. Maximus acts as the coordinating agency for TANF in Wisconsin and several other states. Maximus staff perform skills assessments, provide motivation and job-readiness training, match residents to jobs, and keep placed workers in jobs through followup. The agency offers prescreened, work-ready jobseekers to its business clients. It also offers them federal tax credits as an added inducement. Clients with substance abuse issues are referred to a specialist in the main Maximus office.

The Hillside office's three family employment planners serve about 170 people through W2. Staff with clients who receive only food stamps serve another 200 people. Most clients live in Hillside or within the ZIP Code that surrounds it. In addition, two county welfare employees work out of the Maximus office, providing food stamps and Medicaid cards.

Reflecting its community location, the atmosphere of the satellite office is warm and informal. "It is friendly—more interactive than our main office. You need the relationship to serve customers better," comments Carl Johnson, a Maximus employment planner. Johnson, who grew up in northeast Milwaukee, volunteered to transfer to the Hillside office, where he serves his old neighborhood as well as Hillside.

The housing authority also employs two residents as employment coordinators. They are responsible for reaching out to and following Hillside residents who, as Diaz comments, seem likely to otherwise "fall between the cracks" of the TANF system. Residents who are having difficulty finding employment because of criminal histories, a lack of job history, or a lack of job skills are referred to temporary employment agencies. These temporary agencies work with residents to ease them into the workplace. "If the person fails to show up or experiences other difficulties, instead of

being fired, he or she is reworked into another employment slot," Diaz explains. "Instead of focusing on the failure, they focus on the positive—'you showed up for work twice last week, let's see if you can show up for work three times.'"

#### Vocational Education

In collaboration with Maximus and the housing authority, the technical college operates a computer lab in the Hillside Center. The onsite learning lab provides work-based skills and transition services at convenient hours for residents of Hillside Terrace and its neighbors. The lab tailors learning activities to a participant's workplace, occupational interests, and academic needs. Teachers at Hillside help participants to enroll in additional courses at the Milwaukee Area Technical College, which, although rarely used by residents in the past, lies within a few blocks of Hillside Terrace. Nineteen students were enrolled in December, most of them employed full-time under W2. They made use of the lab's evening and weekend hours to earn a GED or build specific vocational skills.

#### Health Services

The Hillside Family Health Center, operated by the Wisconsin Black Health Coalition and contracted through Mary Mahoney Health Services, provides free primary healthcare. The center is open Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. and until 5 p.m. on Fridays. The health facility provides primary care, case management, pre-natal care, screening and referrals, immunizations, health education, and home visitation. The nurse-managed clinic includes the services of registered nurses, nurse practitioners, physicians, medical assistants, and outreach workers. Medical staff saw and treated 929 visitors at the Hillside clinic in 1998. They referred three times as many visitors to other medical facilities for needed treatment. Mary Mahoney Health Services employs three Hillside residents as clinical assistants or outreach workers. Two work at the Hillside clinic and one works at Mary Mahoney's Metcalf Park neighborhood clinic, about 1½ miles away.

*continued on next page*

*continued from page 43*

The Hillside Family Health Center has made a big difference in the quality of life and, in some cases, the difference between life and death. Evidence of this claim is the little grandson—only a few weeks old—who site visitors saw sleeping peacefully in Ann Wilson's lap during an informal meeting at the Hillside Center. Wilson explained that last year her diabetic daughter, who was pregnant, unexpectedly lost her job and health benefits—putting her unborn child at serious risk. But the regular, free prenatal and postnatal care provided at the Hillside Family Health Center has kept daughter and grandson in good health.

### **Daycare for Children**

A partnership with Day Care Services for Children, Inc., provides convenient daycare services to working parents at Hillside Terrace. The daycare center has its own entrance on Sixth Street, which allows for easy dropoff for neighborhood children and Hillside residents alike. The daycare center at the Hillside Family Center has enrolled 54 children, about three-fourths from Hillside Terrace. Three of its employees live in the development.

### **Youth Services**

The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Milwaukee—the facility around which the Hillside Center was built—continues to

serve Hillside Terrace and the surrounding community. The club, with its high-quality gymnasium and refurbished facilities, provides recreation, a safe place for youth to stay after school, and resources to build employment skills. The club offers programs for 3- to 12-year-olds from 3 until 7 p.m. and for teens until 9 p.m.. Programs include team sports, games, cultural activities, and field trips. The club emphasizes paths to employment through computer skills classes, career development activities, and a job club. With 370 members, the club serves about 120 young people per day during the school year and up to 320 per day during the summer. Although most club members live in Hillside Terrace, about 20 percent come from the neighborhood. The Cerita M. Travis Academy, an alternative public school that serves 60 fourth- through eighth-grade boys from across the city, operates within the Boys & Girls Club facility.

### **Hillside Resident Council-**

Incorporated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit in 1995, the Hillside Resident Council has offices at the Hillside Family Resource Center. The council puts on social events and provides leadership training activities for residents. It helps Hillside low-income families (employed as well as nonworking families) make ends meet through its clothes-closet program, food pantry, and monthly bulk purchasing of groceries. By hosting a meeting every 2 months of agencies that serve Hillside residents, the council plays a key role in coordinating services.

## **Changing Lives**

The Milwaukee Planning Council for Health and Human Services' recent evaluation of the HOPE VI program at Hillside Terrace offers evidence that the housing authority is creating a mixed-income community by raising families up, not only by importing families that are already working. The study analyzes the employment and wages of 126 long-term residents, that is, current residents who have lived in Hillside since before the HOPE VI program began. Long-term resident families make up about one-fourth of all Hillside residents today. The study compares their progress with that of residents of

Lapham Park, a similar family development nearby. Lapham Park residents participated in the housing authority's self-sufficiency programs in response to W2 but did not have HOPE VI funding.

Between 1995 and 1998, the percentage of Hillside's family households with some income from earnings rose from 27 percent to 69 percent—a 42-point gain (table 2.3). In Lapham Park, by comparison, the percentage of working families also rose under the influence of welfare reform and housing authority efforts, but not as markedly—increasing from 23 percent to 39 percent. Wages also increased. Between 1995 and 1998 the average wages of long-term Hillside

residents with earnings rose from \$9,353 to \$12,346 per year. In Lapham Park, the average pay for wage earners also rose, although not as much—increasing from \$9,495 to \$11,997.

During this period, the percentage of all Hillside residents, with some income from wages rose from 17 to 60.

These dramatic contrasts reflect more than life changes for individuals and families residing at Hillside Terrace. They also reflect a change in community norms and expectations. In 1995 welfare dependency was far and away the norm at Hillside. Now the development has more families working and earning than on income support.

**Table 2.3****Changes in Employment and Wages for Long-Term Family Households***(Those Living at Hillside Terrace and Lapham Park During Entire 1995–98 Period)*

	Long-Term Hillside Residents (n = 126)			Long-Term Lapham Park Residents (n = 61)		
	1995	1998	Change	1995	1998	Change
Percentage of families with some level of earnings	27	69	+42	23	39	+16
Average annual wage for working families	\$9,353	\$12,346	+\$2,993	\$9,495	\$11,997	+\$2,502

Source: 1998 Evaluation: Hillside Terrace HOPE VI Urban Revitalization Demonstration Program, Planning Council for Health and Human Services, Inc., Milwaukee, WI, February 1999

The planning council's findings reinforce Diaz's point that HOPE VI makes a difference and that the program is benefiting families who lived at Hillside before the HOPE VI grant. "We took existing residents and increased their income," says Diaz. "We are not importing families that are already working. Our effort is to upgrade our existing resident population with jobs."

As Hillside families make the transition from welfare to wages, the housing authority disregards increases in earned income when calculating rents. Many families that paid 30 percent of their income for rent when on welfare are now earning more than their old welfare checks and paying considerably less than 30 percent of their total income toward rent. For households that experience job loss, the housing authority may temporarily allow a minimum rent of \$50. However, the housing authority does not reduce rents of residents who have been sanctioned for failure to comply with TANF regulations.

Although the goal is for residents to successfully navigate the citywide job market, the housing authority tries to strategically use housing authority jobs

and encourage agencies based in the family resource center to hire residents to give them a start in the world of work. Between September 1993 and October 1996, the resident employment program helped to place 139 Hillside Terrace residents in a variety of private- and public-sector jobs. During HOPE VI construction, 44 residents worked with contractors at Hillside Terrace, while 4 worked with contractors offsite. As many as 37 residents worked with onsite community agencies, such as the Boys & Girls Club and Day Care Services. The program also provided work experience for 24 residents through limited-term jobs, such as the 18-month resident employment coordinator positions. Another such project, the C-Team, hired residents to facilitate HOPE VI construction by taking over nontechnical tasks, such as organizing tenant meetings. The housing authority used some HOPE VI funding for a driver education class, which helped 75 people obtain their driver's licenses. This soon led to employment as school bus drivers for some residents.

There are many small signs that community norms have changed since HOPE VI revitalization. A heavy snowstorm this

past winter brought Hillside residents out of their apartments to help one another clear walkways and steps. In summer, residents plant flowers in their yards. "Hillside is neat and clean, even the day after a garbage pickup," Diaz pointed out. "People will pick up a piece of paper off the ground. This is truly a real community now." In responding to the Planning Council survey, more than 1 in 10 residents said they were satisfied living at Hillside Terrace and that the development was now a better place to live.

### Changing the Larger Community

Hillside Terrace is no longer considered a neighborhood eyesore or breeding ground for crime. The development can now work with, rather than against, its locational pluses. These neighborhood assets include the development's close proximity to downtown, the Union Sports Annex Stadium at Marquette University, and the gothic beauty of the adjacent St. John's Lutheran Church. HOPE VI strengthened a neighborhood asset by transforming the existing Boys & Girls Club into the Hillside Terrace





Resident Gladys Vaughn displays entrepreneurial crafts in her renovated Hillside Terrace apartment.

Family Resource Center. HOPE VI provided \$3.2 million for renovations to the original 1970s-era club.

As part of the physical rehabilitation effort, apartments have been modernized, exteriors and grounds made attractive, and grading and flooding problems mended. Redevelopment reduced the number of units by 118 (while replacing 79 of these with nearby scattered sites), and opened up sight lines to Milwaukee's dramatic downtown skyline. To encourage organization at the block level, the development was divided into 12 mini-neighborhoods—each visually recognizable by outdoor trim color and symbol, such as a circle, triangle, or square in the front grillwork. The housing authority appointed a resident as a mentor or outreach worker in each neighborhood.

Crime has fallen markedly since the beginning of the HOPE VI program. Between 1995 and 1997, reports of serious crimes, including robbery, burglary, assault, car theft, and murder, declined from 75 to 45 cases. The incidence of aggravated assault fell from 6 cases to 1, burglary from 20 cases to 9, and robbery from 4 cases to 1.

The decline in crime is reflected in community perceptions of Hillside. Neighborhood organizations now come to Hillside's Family Resource Center to hold their meetings. One meeting room is decorated with a set of posters—graphics celebrating Milwaukee's different neighborhoods, such as Concordia, Riverwest, and Tippecanoe. One of the neighborhoods commemorated along with the others is the new Hillside Terrace. Pizza vans and ice cream trucks now bring their wares into Hillside Terrace—indications that public fear of the development has subsided. During a recent NCAA regional basketball tournament held at the nearby Union Sports Annex, residents who knew Hillside Terrace in the old days were amazed to see so many late-model cars crowding their curbsides. Milwaukee residents who once would have shied away from leaving their cars at Hillside Terrace had parked there to walk to the game.

Over the past few years, dozens of newspaper articles have carried the story of the HOPE VI redevelopment and the positive changes occurring in the lives of Hillside residents. The highly visible success of Hillside Terrace has also created intangibles, Diaz pointed out. "Hillside changed the perception of public housing. People network, particularly in a small town like this. They know each other, talk to each other. HOPE VI may open doors for residents in ways we are not even aware of."

### Changing the Housing Authority's Way of Doing Business

The housing authority's holistic response to welfare reform, which was developed at Hillside under the HOPE VI program, has helped to expand and refine services for residents at other public housing

projects. The effects have been dramatic. The housing authority recently examined increases in income from wages of 1,319 family households that lived in public housing between January 1996 and January 1999. The average household income of this group increased about 30 percent, rising from \$10,122 to \$13,206. The total wage income more than doubled, going from \$3.9 million to \$9.6 million. The number of households with some income from wages increased more than 80 percent, from 373 to 674. The number of households with income above the poverty line rose by more than half, from 313 to 476.

The norms around work for public housing communities have changed. Says Diaz: "At our forms meetings for new applicants, we tell everyone that we expect them to work and pay rent." A recruiter for Pinkerton attends these meetings and several public housing applicants have been hired as a result of their attendance.

There are indications that the HOPE VI experience has begun to shape policies of the housing authority as a whole. According to Diaz:

- The housing authority is downsizing its projects—getting away from the larger projects with their concentrations of poor people—such as the original Hillside Terrace.
- The housing authority works to include a recreation or community center in each development as a focus for self-sufficiency activities.
- The housing authority has adopted policies of ceiling rents, earned-income disregards, and a minimum rent of \$50 per month. Policies on ceiling rents—"a lesson learned at Hillside," according to Diaz—and minimum rents are applied throughout the housing authority.



- The experience of managing the large, discretionary HOPE VI grant has encouraged housing authority staff to think “outside the box.” For example, in planning a large redevelopment project, the housing authority is considering taking on for-profit partners, using \$26 million in tax credits. It is important, Diaz believes, to hire staff who can be “flexible and accommodating.”
- The systemwide self-sufficiency programs in the context of tough, statewide welfare reform have made a difference. People living in Milwaukee’s 22 public developments earned an additional \$52 million in wages in 1997.

The transformation of Hillside Terrace has given the housing authority a public face in Milwaukee, according to Diaz. Public housing in Milwaukee, due to its reputation for being well-managed, has tended to have a relatively low profile. “HOPE VI made us a player,” Diaz added.

## Baltimore— Providing Comprehensive Social Services

### The Challenge

**B**roken windows. Stopped-up toilets. Empty apartments controlled by drug dealers. Having your purse snatched as you walk down the hallway. Bullets flying into your apartment as you sit down to a family meal. Passing boarded-up stores and dodging cars as you run across Route 40 to get to the grocery store. Not knowing a single neighbor who works.

Lafayette Courts—home to 2,227 people in six highrise and 17 lowrise buildings—was a nightmare for its almost 100-percent African American occupants and the Housing Authority of Baltimore City. Gangs and drug dealers dominated the project. People with jobs were scarce. The average annual income was \$6,096, and 86 percent of families had no earned income. The neighborhood lacked amenities such as recreational facilities and grocery stores. As the largest and oldest of the city’s four public housing family highrises, Lafayette Courts was a maintenance disaster, with antiquated heating and plumbing systems, high maintenance costs, and backlogged work orders.

The predominantly African American East Baltimore community that surrounded Lafayette Court was an old industrial area—about 30 percent residential, scarred by vacant warehouses and storefronts. Though near potential resources such as Baltimore’s downtown, Johns Hopkins University, and Johns Hopkins Hospital, the community was physically and culturally isolated. Several major thoroughfares crisscrossed the area, fragmenting it.

Public housing was home to nearly half of all East Side residents. In a relatively small area there were six public housing projects, including Lafayette Courts, Somerset, Douglass, the Broadway, Perkins Homes, and Flag House Courts. In 1990, in the two census tracts immediately surrounding Lafayette Courts, more than half of all households lived in poverty and more than one-fourth received public assistance. Less than half of the adults graduated from high school. Less than half of the working-age adults were in the labor force. Violent crime rates were approximately twice that of the whole city. The crime rate against property was three times the city’s rate.



Baltimore’s Lafayette Courts before revitalization.

The conditions at Lafayette Courts and four other highrise buildings led Baltimore Mayor Kurt Schmoke’s Family High-Rise Modernization Task Force to declare in 1992 that “highrise living was not conducive to nor supportive of family living.” As a major landlord and social service provider on the East Side, the Housing Authority of Baltimore City was committed to Lafayette Courts and the larger community. In 1993 the housing authority applied for and received a \$50 million grant to transform Lafayette Courts into the HOPE VI community of Pleasant View Gardens.

### Pleasant View Gardens Today

The revitalized HOPE VI community of Pleasant View Gardens consists of 228 attractively designed townhomes—201 public housing units and 27 for-sale homes for low- and moderate-income families. A highrise building located on a central circle, called New Hope Circle, contains 110 units designated for the elderly and space for a variety of services. The 16,400-square-foot NOAH building, Pleasant View Gardens’ Community Center, houses the property management offices, the community and support center, community meeting spaces, a childcare center, a learning lab, and a Boys & Girls Club.

- Across the street from Pleasant View Gardens and accessible to the entire

neighborhood is the new Weinberg Family Health Center. Built by the Greater Baltimore Medical Center, it serves residents of the HOPE VI community and the East Side.

- Since the HOPE VI revitalization, the median household income at Pleasant View Gardens has risen by more than \$2,500, while the number of household heads earning wages increased from 14 percent to 26 percent.
- Between May 1998 and May 1999, 62 residents participated in Pleasant View's preparatory class for the GED. The computer class had 60 participants.
- Fifteen residents obtained construction jobs on the HOPE VI site through the STEP-UP program.
- Thirty-one residents have participated in the Family Tree parent training program.
- The Intergenerational Program has paired 12 young, single parents and their children with 12 elderly residents.
- The Boys & Girls Club has enlisted 157 out of 203 school-age youth at Pleasant View Gardens and serves many more from the neighborhood.
- A new police substation in the NOAH building, built with HOPE VI funds, is staffed by community support officers from housing authority police services. Cooperative police-community efforts have reduced crime. In 1994 the housing authority police at Lafayette Courts made 145 arrests and received 2,235 calls for service. In 1998 at Pleasant View, police made 7 arrests and received 449 calls for service. Between 1994 and 1998, arrests at the development dropped 94 percent and calls for service dropped 75 percent.
- A drug store and a grocery store recently opened near the Old Town Mall, a block and a half from Pleasant View. Other stores are scheduled to open soon.
- All 27 for-sale units constructed at Pleasant View Gardens have been sold. Former public housing residents purchased 13 of those units.
- The three resident-owned businesses created during construction are still thriving.

offered. Comprehensive planning—the initial planning process and the baseline assessment—allowed the housing authority to strategically bring resources to the development and the surrounding neighborhood. The HOPE VI application, developed through the input of city officials, residents, and community stakeholders, brought together diverse viewpoints for a common purpose. The initial planning process involving all stakeholders—staff, onsite service providers, and residents—strengthened relationships among these groups. Today these stakeholders continue to meet regularly to discuss issues related to community and supportive services. Nonetheless, the time pressure of the mayor's task force and Baltimore's East Side redevelopment effort as a whole meant that HOPE VI partnerships had to be formed quickly and unilaterally by the housing authority. The tradeoff was that there was not as much grassroots resident involvement as there might have been otherwise. Participation in a citywide plan spurred the redevelopment of Lexington Terrace along with other affected public housing properties on the East Side. However, these large-scale efforts also raised fears of displacement among Lexington Terrace residents and neighboring communities.



Baltimore's Pleasant View Gardens after HOPE VI revitalization.

### **How They Did It: Coordinating Success**

"HOPE VI gave us a new way of looking at an old situation. It allowed us to step back and look at what services we offered, to offer them in a more comprehensive way and to look at a community as a whole," says Thelma Millard, director of the Division of Family Support Services. "We took the leftovers and made a good soup. Things just worked better together, were more coordinated."

The legacy of HOPE VI at Pleasant View Gardens lies not just in *which* services are offered, but *how* those services are

"HOPE VI has allowed us to look at the family as the wagon. We can ask what we need to move the family along," comments Rosemary Atkinson, supervisor of the Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) Program at Pleasant View Gardens. The FSS supervisor oversees community partners who provide services, operating under a formal memorandum of understanding with the housing authority. In keeping with the concepts of community building, HOPE VI has enabled the housing authority to develop stronger partnerships with residents and community organizations. The resulting changes in policies and attitudes have allowed

## Exhibit 2.8

### Community Partners in the HOPE VI Program at Pleasant View Gardens

#### Employment and Training

- The PACE program offers intensive, targeted services to residents who have a long history of unemployment, little or no work skills, or multiple barriers to employment. The program is a joint effort of the housing authority and the Baltimore Office of Employment Development. The housing authority provides funding and the employment office provides staff. PACE workshops include goal setting for individuals and families, job readiness, finding and keeping a job, and building on personal strengths. PACE gives priority to residents who may lose their jobs during the first year, moving quickly to find them new employment. PACE also offers career development services.
- STEP-UP is a yearlong program supported through housing authority program funds, such as the comp grant or the drug-elimination program that teaches residents construction skills through the rehabilitation of public housing developments. After classroom training, participants are assigned to apprenticeships with skilled trade workers in a variety of areas. The program's goal is for graduates to enter union apprenticeship programs at the end of their STEP-UP year.
- The Entrepreneurship Program of the Council of Economic Business Opportunities, started in early 1999, has provided technical assistance to five former Lafayette Court residents interested in starting their own businesses.
- In the Community and Support Center, FSS staff provide basic education classes, a computer learning lab, and a book-lending service. Staff work out individualized learning plans for residents to learn computer skills and study for the GED.
- Civic Works partners with the housing authority and the Boys & Girls Club to provide service learning opportunities for public housing residents. Civic Works Corps members lead youth activities at the Boys & Girls Club. Corps members and youth apprentices have also worked on landscaping and beautification projects at other Baltimore public housing developments.

#### Family Support Services

- The Weinberg Community and Family Health Center, located across the street from Pleasant View Gardens, provides primary healthcare for children and adults, dental care, eye care, substance abuse and mental health services, HIV testing and case management, social services, and an onsite pharmacy. The health center, which opened in 1998, is operated by the Greater Baltimore Medical Center. It serves Pleasant View and the surrounding community.
- The Pleasant View Gardens Child Development Center is a comprehensive educational program for children ages 2 to 14 that serves the neighborhood as well as residents of the development. Programs are being developed for infants. The center also offers a child care teacher certification program for residents who want to become professional childcare workers.
- The Boys & Girls Club, located in the multipurpose building, provides recreational, athletic, and educational opportunities for children and youth in Pleasant View and the surrounding neighborhood. This state-of-the-art facility was built with HOPE VI funds and is operated by the Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Maryland.
- The Intergenerational Program couples elderly families from the midrise building at Pleasant View Gardens with young, single parents and their children to provide intensive support and assistance.
- The Family Tree's Positive Parenting program is a 12-week parenting education program that teaches parenting skills and new ways to handle anger and stress. The Family Tree is a nonprofit organization that works with parents and children to prevent child abuse and neglect.
- Operation New Beginnings, a joint effort of FSS and Baltimore Substance Abuse Systems, Inc., provides substance abuse services to residents of Pleasant View

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*continued from page 49*

Gardens and other public housing projects. The approach links substance abuse treatment services to the FSS program and academic and job training.

- The Dr. Betty Shabazz Academy, a mentoring program, pairs girls ages 10 to 14 with professional female mentors to help them in their personal and academic development. The Baltimore Metropolitan Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., sponsors the program.

### **Community Fabric**

- Through a partnership with the police department, the new police substation at Pleasant View Gardens is staffed 16 hours a day by Community Support Officers—police personnel responsible for law enforcement duties and for addressing quality-of-life issues such as loitering, excessive trash, abandoned vehicles, unsecured doors, and insufficient lighting. The officers have also become involved in community life by

attending community meetings, working with youth, and getting to know residents. Community-oriented policing has reduced crime and disorder at Pleasant View. Between 1994 and 1998, the number of arrests dropped 94 percent and calls for service declined 75 percent.

- The homeownership program helped 27 low-income families purchase the newly built homes at Pleasant View. All of the homes were sold to families earning 80 percent of the area median income—17 low-income families and 10 moderate-income families. Each family was given a low-interest loan subsidized by funding from HOPE VI and Maryland's Community Development Administration. Housing authority staff, working in conjunction with the Baltimore Department of Housing and Community Development, marketed the homes first to former Lafayette Court residents, then to other housing authority residents and families in the community. Thirteen of the 27 units were sold to former Lafayette Court residents.

service provisions to be comprehensive, better coordinated, and family centered. Planning and management are guided more by consensus.

Pleasant View Gardens is a family-oriented, self-sufficient community. All working-age residents must participate in work or training activities and all elderly residents must carry out some form of community service. This potentially controversial requirement was arrived at by joint agreement between the residents and the housing authority. Residents had input into drafting the eligibility and screening criteria for prospective residents, resident regulations, and leases. Community-building technical assistance helped residents articulate for themselves and the housing authority the standards that would govern their new community. Ironically, the American Civil Liberties Union earlier had filed suit on behalf of Lafayette Courts residents to prevent the housing authority from imposing any preconditions for their return. Yet, the residents, working

in conjunction with the housing authority, later decided to self-impose criteria about who should be allowed to return and under what conditions.

Through FSS, residents can not only address direct employment issues but also work to overcome barriers to employment such as substance abuse, parenting difficulties, childcare or school concerns, and healthcare issues. Three housing authority staff serve as FSS case managers and refer residents to a variety of services, most of which are located onsite, in the new NOAH center. These coordinated services cover employment, education, childcare, youth recreation and development, family needs, security, and other community-building issues.

### **Changing Lives**

The HOPE VI program has paid dividends at Pleasant View Gardens. Family incomes at Lafayette Courts averaged \$6,099 in 1993 and only 14 percent of the families had any earned income.

Currently, the median household income at Pleasant View Gardens is \$8,641 and 26 percent of household heads are wage earners. Of the 152 Lafayette Courts families who returned to Pleasant View, only about 35 percent still received public assistance as of March 1999. About 75 percent receive TANF and 25 percent receive food stamps only. Atkinson proudly states, "almost everyone is in some training or education program." Forty-three Pleasant View Gardens residents have been placed in jobs, 66 have had job training, and 122 have participated in educational programs.

Since August 1998 PACE has enrolled 47 residents and placed 28 in jobs. Fifteen residents who lived in Lafayette Courts before redevelopment were enrolled in STEP-UP and participated in the construction of Pleasant View Gardens. In January 1999 the Entrepreneurship Program began its classes with 15 public housing residents, two from Pleasant View Gardens. Three of the businesses developed during construction of Pleasant View are thriving.



**Table 2.4****Changes in Criminal Activity, Pleasant View Gardens, 1994–98**

Type of Report	1994	1998	Change (Percent)
Robbery	28	2	–93
Burglary	32	6	–81
Larceny	36	30	–17
Auto theft	4	3	–25
Common assault	53	36	–32
Aggravated assault	55	7	–87
Rape	1	3	+66
Other sex offenses	2	1	–50
Total calls for service	2,235	449	–80
Total arrests	145	7	–95

Source: Housing Authority of Baltimore City

Since May 1998, 62 residents have participated in the high school equivalency program. Of these, 17 have been retested with the Adult Basic Education test and improved by an average of two grade levels. Three participants have obtained full-time jobs. One has earned her GED. Seven residents have transferred to a combined study and job training program and one has gone on to vocational rehabilitation. The computer classes have had 60 participants and 12 have since obtained employment.

Many residents have also taken advantage of the family support services at Pleasant View Gardens. Thirty-one residents have taken part in Family Tree's parenting programs. The Intergenerational Program has paired 12 young, single parents and their children with 12 elderly families, to add new, family-like ties in the community. Of the 203 school-age youth at Pleasant View Gardens, 157 are members of the Boys & Girls Club. The Dr. Betty Shabazz Academy has mentored 12 girls.

The most basic change that the HOPE VI-coordinated programs foster, Atkinson explains, is to "instill in residents the idea that 'I can control my destiny. That you can provide me with a beautiful, nice place to live—but it's really up to me. I can take it as far as I want to take it.'"

### Creating Change in the Larger Community

The creation of Pleasant View Gardens was part of a larger revitalization plan for Baltimore's East Side. Pleasant View Gardens lies within the boundaries of two portions of the Baltimore Empowerment Zone (EZ)—a federally designated area with bonding authority to fund community revitalization efforts and tax incentives to encourage private investment. Half of the development is within East Harbor Village and the other half is within the Historical East Baltimore Community Action Coalition. The Jonestown Planning Council coordinates

the efforts of the two areas. Pleasant View Gardens staff attend meetings of the council, and the planning council president sits on the board of the Pleasant View Gardens Community Association. As a result of joint efforts, a CVS drug store recently opened at the Old Town Mall, a block and a half away from Pleasant View, and a new grocery and other stores are scheduled to open there soon.

The transformation of Lafayette Courts and other public housing developments benefits the larger community because public housing constitutes such a large portion (46 percent) of East Side housing stock. The same problems that affected residents of the old Lafayette Courts—high unemployment rates, high crime rates, lack of shopping facilities and other amenities, and lack of youth recreational facilities—affected the whole East Side. In a community where virtually all of the housing (99 percent in 1990) consisted of rental units, Pleasant View Gardens has brought 27 affordable homes to the market.

Pleasant View Gardens has brought several important services for children and youth to the East Side. The housing authority's Child Development Center is the largest in the city of Baltimore. Of the 73 children enrolled in the program, 25 are from Pleasant View. The remaining 48 come from the surrounding community. The Boys & Girls Club, operating in the donated space and new facilities of Pleasant View Gardens, draws youth from across the city. The Weinberg Community and Family Health Center offers primary care, mental health, dental and eye care services, health education, emergency food and clothing, and other services to the community as a whole.

HOPE VI enabled residents to create a revitalized community of law-abiding citizens. All residents at Pleasant View Gardens are held to community standards

set forth by the lease, by community rules, and by community expectations. Lafayette Court residents with known criminal records were not allowed to return. The housing authority's community support officers patrol the property. An electronic security system monitors the common areas and community buildings. Community support officers monitor issues of crime and disorder, working closely with residents. Resident patrols serve as an additional deterrent to crime, and 19 residents have completed training for the Tenant on Patrol program. As a result of these measures, crime has declined at Pleasant View Gardens, creating a positive spillover effect for the community as a whole (table 2.4).

## Changing the Housing Authority's Way of Doing Business

Bringing HOPE VI to Pleasant View Gardens has been a learning experience for the housing authority. The housing authority has long operated a variety of supportive service activities. Before HOPE VI, the Family Support Center at Lafayette Courts embraced a family-centered approach and referred residents to other services within the community. However, HOPE VI has brought a new emphasis on planning, partnerships, and self-sufficiency.



Lafayette Courts apprentices.

The value of HOPE VI lies not only in the expansion of supportive services but also in the intensity and coordination of service provision and in the nature of the housing authority's relationships with both residents and community partners. Some of the new ways of doing things tested at Pleasant View Gardens will be applied systemwide at the three other HOPE VI developments and at other public housing projects in Baltimore.

For example, at Somerset, a non-HOPE VI development, the housing authority has constructed a new community building and is offering more comprehensive services than in the past. Housing authority staff will conduct HOPE VI-like baseline data assessments at other housing developments to guide service expansion.

The Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program is available at all of Baltimore's public housing family developments. Pleasant View Gardens' emphasis on self-sufficiency and its HOPE VI-funded supportive services have made its FSS program a model one. Although FSS is still optional at non-HOPE VI sites, staff now strongly urge residents to participate.

HOPE VI has challenged the housing authority to shift from its traditional role of operating as the controlling stakeholder, in traditional contract-for-services arrangements. From the beginning, HOPE VI, in both its physical revitalization and supportive services aspects, was a joint effort of the Mayor's office, Lafayette Courts Tenant Council, community organizations, city institutions, and outside consultants.

A great deal of process time was required for these various stakeholders to reach consensus concerning redevelopment and supportive services. Technical assistance providers reported that it took several months to gain housing authority

approval to provide community-building technical assistance directly to resident leaders, but the training paid off in the quality of participation. The HOPE VI planning process, although more time-consuming than the traditional management models to which the housing authority was accustomed, strengthened relationships, created a better product, and allowed for greater buy-in by residents, housing authority staff, and community partners. However, resident participation and community building at Lexington Terrace was probably less than it might have been without the urgency of the citywide renovation program.

The Housing Authority of Baltimore City has continued to strengthen its partnerships with key stakeholders. Once a month all onsite service providers, resident representatives, and management meet to discuss issues related to community and supportive services. In addition, residents meet once a month with management to discuss any concerns they have about life at Pleasant View Gardens. In May 1999, all members of the Pleasant View community—seniors, homeowners, public housing residents, and onsite social service providers—joined together to form the Pleasant View Gardens Community Association.

There are now four HOPE VI communities in Baltimore: Pleasant View Gardens, Lexington Terrace, Flag House Courts, and Murphy Homes, each in various stages of development. The housing authority has thus been able to experiment with various ways of structuring supportive services. The housing authority is exploring ways to maintain accountability and, in some cases, relinquish the day-to-day management of programs and services.

The memoranda of understanding between the housing authority and social service providers at Pleasant View, under which services are carried out under the

supervision of housing authority staff, have given way to more decentralized arrangements. At Lexington Terrace, the second HOPE VI site, the housing authority and the development team have contracted with a third party, the NOAH Group, to oversee the provision of supportive services. The housing authority will provide daycare services, but NOAH will provide most of the other services and report to the housing authority. Murphy Homes will operate in a similar way. The supportive services configuration at Flag Courts is a hybrid, a joint venture between the East Harbor Village Center, the Empowerment Zone managing organization, and the NOAH Group. This arrangement came about in response to the request of residents and community groups to have a more substantial role in providing services.

## El Paso— VISTAs of a New Community

### The Challenge

In the 1990s almost half of the households of the Kennedy Brothers Memorial Apartments in El Paso were dependent on welfare and another 28 percent received unemployment compensation. People who were working tended to hold minimum-wage jobs. Kennedy Brothers households had an average annual income of \$5,427, lower than the income of three-fourths of El Paso's public housing households.

The once-vibrant manufacturing sector of this Texas border town had begun to decline by the late 1980s. Spurred by the new trade rules of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), major industries continued to

move across the border to nearby Juarez, Mexico, leaving many citizens of El Paso without the jobs they had held for most of their adult lives. Due to limited skills, generally low educational attainment, and weak English proficiency, many could not reenter the labor force. At Kennedy Brothers more than 75 percent of the adult residents speak little or no English at home.

Kennedy Brothers, located in the Ysleta neighborhood in the Lower Valley, on the city's edge, was physically set apart from the surrounding community. It was set back from the street and flanked by a 50-acre vacant lot and a cemetery. Long considered the worst of El Paso's public housing projects, it was an indecorous monument to the lives of John F. Kennedy and Robert Kennedy.

Located within sight of the Rio Grande river, a barbed wire international divider with Mexico across the border, the apartments embodied a failure of the American dream for the largely immigrant residents. The 30-acre project—composed of 364 units in 61 garden-style apartments—was severely deteriorated and covered with gang graffiti. The barren yards were strewn with litter. Residents were “afraid to go outside because there were gangs, drive-by shootings, and drug dealings,” recalls decade-long resident Lucy Galvan. Fear of crime helped to further isolate Kennedy Brothers' residents.

Because of the nearby cemetery and high crime rate, El Paso residents had a saying about Kennedy Brothers: *Aqui te mataran y enterraran a la vez.* (Here they will kill you and bury you at the same time.)

Thirty of the Housing Authority of the City of El Paso's 41 public housing complexes were considered severely distressed by HUD criteria. Kennedy Brothers was considered the least desirable location for housing authority resi-

dents, according to the results of a 1993 housing authority survey.

“It was really hard for us to hear that Kennedy Brothers Apartments were considered by people throughout the city of El Paso as the worst housing complex,” according to Elsa Enriquez, then president of the Kennedy Brothers resident council. “It is very hard to make everyone understand that families in this complex are willing to do whatever it takes to remove all negative connotations attached to the Kennedy Apartments .... [We] would like to unite to combat graffiti, gangs, violence, drugs, and alcohol abuse. [We] desire to move forward and better ourselves.”

Soon, residents, in partnership with the housing authority, got a chance to move themselves and their community forward. In January 1995 the housing authority received a \$35 million dollar HOPE VI grant to revitalize Kennedy Brothers Memorial Apartments and provide supportive services to its residents.

### Kennedy Brothers Memorial Apartments Today

- A community police officer and volunteer COPS (Citizens on Patrol) work together to prevent crime. The police work with residents to solve community programs and counsel families at the first sign of trouble to prevent crime and delinquency. Crime has fallen dramatically. There is no gang-related graffiti or drug activity.
- To date, 57 residents have served as AmeriCorps\*VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) volunteers. The Kennedy Brothers AmeriCorps\*VISTA program won a national award from the National Association of Housing Redevelopment Officials in 1998.



- The Computer Literacy and Educational Services Center has provided 5,920 hours of computer experience to 592 computer users. As a result of center efforts, 2 residents are attending English classes and 12 are enrolled in college classes. Sixteen youth have completed at least one computer class.
- Twenty youth gained 200 hours of job experience and 25 residents who previously received TANF are now employed. One resident, Raul Torres, has opened a landscaping company.
- Partnerships have been established with many community organizations, including the Child Crisis Center, Project Vida, Mujer Obrera, the Ysleta Independent School District, the YMCA, and the El Paso Police Department.
- The development has been transformed physically. The complex now consists of 240 garden-style apartments grouped into clusters. Each cluster is a mini-community, and residents share responsibility for their upkeep. Each apartment building has an enclosed backyard. A new community center houses a computer literacy and education center, an economic development center, a community development corporation, an afterschool program, office space, and community



El Paso residents of the Kennedy Brothers Apartments.

meeting rooms. The new state-of-the-art Kennedy Brothers Recreation Center serves as a citywide resource. It has a regulation basketball court with retractable bleachers, an exercise room, a toddler playroom, boxing rings, a weight room, and a stage. The recreation center houses a community policing office and youth drop-in center. Residents can relax in a new outdoor park.

- HOPE VI is constructing 124 additional apartments and 50 for-sale houses on an adjacent 45-acre property, to be called Kennedy Estates. The project will be completed in 2000.

### **How They Did It: The HOPE VI Story in El Paso**

The Kennedy Brothers Apartments had assets to build on even in the midst of distress. The housing authority has a track record for working with Kennedy residents to help improve the quality of their lives, and the resident council has long been a strong force in mobilizing to better the community. Even before HOPE VI resources were available, the council established a Block Captain/Neighborhood Watch group to protect residents against crime and keep the grounds clean. After receiving approval and appropriate training from the housing authority, the residents, led by the resident council, handled the deconstruction activity. They removed and later sold plumbing fixtures from apartments that had been vacated prior to demolition, earning \$16,000 for the resident organization.

In January 1996 Kennedy Brothers stakeholders began to develop a community and supportive services plan with the aid of technical assistance. A newly appointed community-building task force guided the process, including resi-

dent and community leaders, housing authority staff, and community stakeholders. The task force developed a vision for the community, prepared a mission statement for the housing authority, and strengthened existing institutions and relationships. The Center for Sustainable Communities at the University of Texas at El Paso provided community-building technical assistance. A consultant, originally with Housing Development Partners and later with Pena Helm, assisted with both the construction and the supportive services plans. A March 1997 workshop further refined the vision for the provision of supportive services at Kennedy Brothers and planned a communitywide economic development strategy.

Kennedy Brothers developed a unique approach to supportive services, building on its own community assets: a strong resident council, a spirit of volunteerism, and a common cultural heritage. Residents organized the resident council into committees to address specific issues, a structure echoed in the HOPE VI community and supportive services efforts.

The HOPE VI community and supportive services strategy provides or coordinates services in seven areas, also known as components:

- Economic and small business support.
- Daycare.
- Computer literacy and training.
- Primary healthcare and substance abuse programs.
- Community security.
- Recreation.
- Multicultural arts.

Residents staff most of the components either as paid staff under contract to the housing authority or as AmeriCorps\*-



## Exhibit 2.9

### Programs and Community Partners

Kennedy Brothers HOPE VI support services consist of the following programs:

- The Kennedy Economic Development Center assists residents of the Kennedy Brothers community with job development and small business start-up services. The center has provided assistance to numerous residents and has referred residents to job openings throughout El Paso. The center conducted a survey to determine the education level, job skills, and vocational interests of residents. It helped two residents prepare proposals for the custodial services contract for the new community building, which was to be awarded to a resident. The center also helped Kennedy Brothers resident Raul Torres establish a landscaping company. In 1998 the center received an \$11,000 grant from the Upper Rio Grande Private Industry Council (PIC) to hire 20 youth from public housing. The youth assisted the volunteers in staffing the various program components. In 1998 the housing authority also participated in a successful effort to get a 10-square-mile Empowerment Zone (EZ) designated in El Paso—a federal program that will bring \$100 million in funds over 10 years and leverage local investment with tax breaks and other inducements.
- The Computer Literacy and Educational Services Center offers five computer courses including beginning and advanced courses in Windows 95, word processing, and spreadsheets. The center has provided assistance to more than 592 computer users for about 5,920 hours of computer use. There have been 173 graduates to date.
- Youth-to-Youth, an afterschool program for children and youth ages 4 to 14, is a joint effort of the local Capistrano Elementary School and Kennedy Brothers Memorial Apartments. Housed in the community multi-purpose center, the program pays Kennedy Brothers teens to tutor younger children. This year approximately 40 youth are registered, with 4 teen tutors. The program coordinator, Irene Campas, is a counselor at the school.
- Even Start Family Learning Center provides educational opportunities for adult residents with children under age 6, such as English as a second language, citizenship preparation, and a college preparatory course. Parenting education and parent/child activities are included in the curriculum.
- Through the HOPE VI recreation component, a group of Kennedy Brothers residents works to support recreational activities at the development. Since January 1999 many of the sports and recreation activities have taken place at the newly opened Kennedy Brothers Recreation Center. The development operates a baseball league, a basketball league, and an amateur boxing tournament. Field trips have taken young people from the development to a local swimming pool, bowling, El Paso Patriots soccer games, El Paso Diablos baseball games, and El Paso Scorpions rugby games. The recreational group also organizes nutrition and exercise classes for adults.
- Through the HOPE VI multicultural arts component, residents and AmeriCorps\*VISTA volunteers organize arts, crafts, and performance activities. Kennedy Brothers has a professional-level *folklorico* group, IMADAN. This group performs locally, across the state, and at international functions. The multicultural arts group crafted 150 corsages in May for Mother's Day and distributed friendship bracelets for children at a local health fair. HOPE VI funds contracts with local artists and arts agencies to provide mural and portrait classes, ballet and folk dance courses, street theater, and traditional Mexican-American poetry.
- The HOPE VI community security component is a partnership of the resident council, the El Paso Police Department, and the housing authority staff. A community policing office and youth drop-in center are located in the recreation center. AmeriCorps\*VISTA volunteers and the community police officer coordinate gang and drug prevention programs, Neighborhood Watch programs, and a youth advisory board. In July 1998 five residents and Craig participated in the Citizens Police Academy, sponsored by the El Paso Police Department.
- Healthcare services are provided next door to the Kennedy Brothers complex by Thomason Cares at Ysleta, a clinic funded and operated by Thomason Hospital. The clinic, which opened in 1998, offers primary care, prevention services, and substance abuse treatment. After discussions with the housing authority, Thomason decided to open its own clinic to allow it to better reach its target population: residents of the Lower Valley, including those at Kennedy Brothers.

VISTA volunteers. Both the contracts and the stipends for volunteers are funded through HOPE VI.

Housing authority community builder Terry Craig managed the day-to-day operations of HOPE VI at Kennedy Brothers Memorial Apartments. Between July 1997 and February 1999 Craig supervised the AmeriCorps\*VISTA program, coordinated the HOPE VI community and supportive services components, and oversaw building operations. She has been part program manager, part technical assistance provider, part community organizer, part construction manager, part cheerleader, and part community liaison. It was a daunting task, yet one that she handled with confidence. The assistance she received from volunteers, residents, and community members in running the onsite components was essential to her success.

### **Coordination With FIC Programs**

Another resource for Kennedy Brothers residents is the housing authority's newly opened Family Investment Center (FIC), located about 15 minutes from the development. Opened in late 1998, the 11,194-square-foot facility houses the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program for Section 8 and public housing residents and serves the 17 public housing complexes located nearby, including Kennedy Brothers. The FIC programs complement the services offered onsite at Kennedy Brothers. The center provides all the resources necessary to gain literacy and social skills, learn English, earn a GED, prepare for college, participate in employment training, look for a job, or prepare for homeownership. The facility has two self-help resource rooms, eight counseling offices, an aptitude testing room with computers, four classrooms, a library/study, a computer laboratory with 24 workstations, and drop-in childcare.

Four major community partners carry out Family Investment Center programs. The Private Industry Council (PIC) provides workforce training, literacy training, and job skills for dislocated workers and public housing families using federal Job Training Partnership Act funds. The El Paso Community College offers English as a second language, GED, higher education, and vocational education classes. The public schools offer remedial education, GED preparation, and various computer classes such as keyboarding, document production, and Microsoft Office. AVANCE, a youth development nonprofit, offers parenting, literacy, and child development education classes.

### **The AmeriCorps\*VISTA Program at Kennedy Brothers**

AmeriCorps\*VISTA is a full-time, year-long volunteer program in which people of all ages commit themselves to helping low-income people improve their communities and their lives. Volunteers receive a \$600 to \$800 monthly stipend during their service and an education voucher worth \$4,275 at the end of their service.

Since the program began in 1994, 57 Kennedy Brothers residents have served as AmeriCorps\*VISTA volunteers. Each year Kennedy Brothers selects approximately 12 residents for the program. The AmeriCorps\*VISTA program taps into the diversity of the community, from Alejandro de la Pena, a recent high school graduate, to Maria Elena Ramirez, a 31-year-old mother of six. Informally referred to as "the VISTAs," these volunteers receive technical, leadership, and community-building training through local and regional workshops. During their service year, the VISTAs attend three to five trainings sponsored by the Corporation for National Service and three to five sessions sponsored by the

housing authority. Their skills are further developed through experience within the community. The volunteers serve as staff for various program components. Some may stay with one component for the whole year, while others rotate responsibilities for a range of program experiences.

At Kennedy Brothers the VISTAs are treated as professional staff capable of designing and running programs. At the beginning of HOPE VI, the housing authority contracted with outside service providers to train volunteers and provide services. Current and former VISTAs now provide most services themselves, although Craig's job is to provide guidance and technical assistance. Outside consultants are brought in only as needed, and, whenever possible, they are Kennedy residents. The AmeriCorps\*VISTA volunteers now staff most HOPE VI tasks: computer and educational services center, economic and small business development, multicultural arts, recreation, and substance abuse programs.

The AmeriCorps\*VISTA program helped make the Kennedy Brothers' youth training program a success. In 1998 Kennedy Brothers received a grant from the local PIC to hire 20 youth from public housing for the summer. The VISTAs supervised the youth, who assisted them in staffing the components. A site visit review by the PIC showed Kennedy Brothers to be in compliance with all rules, regulations, and program guidelines. The following year the volunteers wrote a grant—without any outside assistance—to fund the summer program for 1999.

Innovative use of the AmeriCorps\*VISTA program has enabled Kennedy Brothers residents to gain employment skills and work experience while contributing to their community. The biggest plus, however, is that resident volunteers are not

## Exhibit 2.10

### Resident Stories: The Kennedy Brothers HOPE VI Experience

The Kennedy Brothers HOPE VI experience has had a profound effect on the lives of its residents, because they are able to benefit from services and programs offered, and then give back in service.

**Patricia Olivas** is a 26-year-old Kennedy Brothers resident and mother of three. Four years ago she joined Even Start, an onsite parent/child education program, and obtained her GED certificate. She was among the first group of AmeriCorps\*VISTA volunteers to be trained as community builders. After completing her HOPE VI-funded VISTA year, she was hired as volunteer coordinator for the Socorro Independent School District. Her goals are to complete her education, become an elementary school teacher, and purchase her own home.

**Alfonso Andrade** is 59 years old, married, and the father of two. After moving to Kennedy Brothers, he became a volunteer with the HOPE VI multicultural arts and recreation components, where he taught youth art activities and coached the baseball team. His involvement with the Block Team cleaning crew earned him the nickname Mr. Clean. As a result of his volunteer efforts, he was elected president of the resident council in 1996, the third council president since the beginning of HOPE VI. The following year he participated in the pilot Resident Preventive Maintenance Program and was later hired in a permanent position. He would ultimately like to own his own business, and will be able to work with the HOPE VI-funded economic development center to achieve this goal.

**Judy Balbuena** is a 37-year-old mother of three. She moved to Kennedy Brothers with her husband and children in 1993. In 1994 she was elected sergeant-at-arms for the

resident council. Later she helped carry out HOPE VI planning and resident surveys. When her family was temporarily relocated to another public housing development, Haymon Krupp Memorial, she continued to participate on the HOPE VI Advisory Committee and helped keep other relocated residents informed of events at Kennedy Brothers. The housing authority eligibility department hired Balbuena as a HOPE VI technician. She was responsible for transfers, temporary relocations, and responding to resident concerns about relocation. After returning to the revitalized Kennedy Brothers, she was selected to join the third group of AmeriCorps\*-VISTA volunteers. A few months after she began as a volunteer, she applied to the housing authority for a management technician position and she now works at the Sun Plaza High-Rise Elderly Community.

**Sergio Orozco**, a 21-year-old sophomore at the University of Texas, El Paso, is a former Kennedy Brothers resident who recently purchased his own home. After completing high school, he became an AmeriCorps\*VISTA volunteer and worked in the computer center. At the end of his HOPE VI-funded volunteer year, he enrolled at the university, where he majors in English and American literature. To help support his family, he first worked the graveyard shift on the Neighborhood Watch patrol. The housing authority then hired him as computer liaison at the computer center in the new community building. When Terry Craig, the HOPE VI community builder, was promoted in February 1999, Sergio became interim community builder. When a permanent community builder was hired in April 1999, Sergio returned to his position at the computer center. In spring 1999 he purchased a home in the Lower Valley, where he lives with his mother and younger brother.

hindered by cultural and language barriers while working within this 100-percent Hispanic community. Many of the leaders within the Kennedy Brothers community are current or former volunteers, both because the program taps into the pool of indigenous community leaders and because participation in the program builds leadership skills.

### Changing Lives

Many residents benefit from these services:

- Twenty-five residents who previously received TANF are now working in paying jobs.
- Twenty youth gained 200 hours of job experience.

- Sixteen youth have completed one or more computer classes.
- Twelve residents are enrolled in higher education and two are attending English classes.
- One resident, Raul Torres, established a landscaping company.

Not all Kennedy Brothers residents have been able to translate their

AmeriCorps\*VISTA volunteer experience into employment opportunities. One reason is a lack of job opportunities in the El Paso area. While unemployment is 2 percent nationwide, it is between 9 and 12 percent in El Paso. Many of El Paso's manufacturing jobs have relocated across the border in Juarez, Mexico.

One problem for Kennedy Brothers residents is the extreme physical isolation of the development—a 15- to 20-minute car trip to downtown by expressway. Transportation to and from a place of work remains difficult for many. Even after the successful physical redevelopment and the active support services that have been established onsite and nearby, the question of how to revitalize and reknit Kennedy Brothers Memorial Apartments with the larger community is still unanswered.

Another problem is that many Kennedy Brothers residents have not gained sufficient English proficiency to take jobs in the service sector, which is now the largest part of El Paso's economy. It is possible that the HOPE VI program has not paid sufficient attention to increasing the English proficiency of residents, particularly to building their job-related vocabulary, as the Vocational English as a Second Language program at Seattle has done.

## **Creating Change in the Larger Community**

Many of the recreational and cultural activities at Kennedy Brothers enrich the larger community. The newly opened Kennedy Recreation Center is a citywide resource. The gym, stage, and sports leagues provide much-needed recreational facilities. The *folklorico* dance group, IMADAN, performs in El Paso, across Texas, and internationally. The Kennedy Brothers AmeriCorps\*VISTA volunteers collaborated with the

Child Crisis Center and other El Paso AmeriCorps groups to hold the first annual health fair for children. More than 600 residents and community members attended.

**Residents and the HOPE VI advisory council realized that an effective community at the development must include stakeholders from the surrounding community.**

Kennedy Brothers residents have fostered economic development activities in the surrounding community. Residents and the HOPE VI advisory council realized that an effective community at the development must include stakeholders from the surrounding community. Over a 2-year period, residents worked with housing authority staff and AmeriCorps\*VISTA volunteers—with ongoing technical assistance from the University of Texas Center for Sustainable Neighborhoods, Housing Development Partners, and the Urban Institute—to develop a neighborhood outreach strategy for the Lower Valley. In March 1997 the group held a workshop with business owners, neighborhood residents, and representatives of community organizations to discuss strategies for business and community development. As a result of the workshop, the group agreed to form a community development corporation, conduct feasibility studies for proposed community-based businesses, establish a revolving loan fund, provide technical assistance after creating the corporation, and pursue additional funding sources.

The community development corporation, although not yet fully operational, is currently located in the community center. Agency representatives and community residents comprise the board. In early 1999 a request for proposals for small business plans was sent to all Lower Valley residents within a one-mile radius of Kennedy Brothers. There were 13 responses. Another request for proposals is being issued for agencies to administer the loan funds.

Kennedy Brothers residents and housing authority staff have played an active role in helping the Lower Valley receive EZ designation—a national program to provide tax and other incentives to businesses in disinvested areas. Community builder Terry Craig and a group of AmeriCorps\*VISTA volunteers helped with the second-round 1998 EZ application process. They attended all of the community meetings, helped formulate the comprehensive plan, and surveyed 1,137 businesses within the targeted area. Craig and two AmeriCorps\*VISTA volunteers were selected to go to Washington, D.C., as part of the EZ lobbying effort. In 1998 El Paso became one of 15 cities in which HUD designated an EZ. As such, the 10-square-mile zone stands to receive \$100 million over 10 years and to leverage many times that amount in local investment. Craig was later appointed by the mayor to serve on the EZ advisory board.

The University of Texas Public Policy Research Center in 1998 asked Kennedy Brothers AmeriCorps\*VISTA volunteers to gather information on business opportunities in the Lower Valley, as a result of the recent construction of a shopping center. In March 1999 the city began to develop its comprehensive plan for the next 25 years. Kennedy Brothers residents and youth mobilized to attend the session for the Lower Valley.



HOPE VI funds will also increase the affordable housing stock in the Lower Valley. The development of Kennedy Estates will place 50 for-sale units on a previously undeveloped 45-acre plot.

## Changing the Housing Authority's Way of Doing Business

Despite his reputation as a bricks-and-mortar housing manager, Executive Director Robert Alvarado has played an important role in organizing residents and supporting their initiatives. As early as 1993, when the housing authority was applying for an Urban Revitalization Demonstration Project planning grant, residents were involved in selecting the site most in need of revitalization. After the site was selected, Alvarado quickly involved the residents in the planning process. Under Alvarado, Kennedy Brothers residents carried out deconstruction activity—removing and selling the plumbing fixtures from apartments before demolition.

AmeriCorps\*VISTA volunteers have become an integral part of the operations of Kennedy Brothers. Alvarado has made a commitment to employ residents and the HOPE VI-funded

AmeriCorps\*VISTA program supplies a pool of experienced candidates. The HOPE VI program also fostered the community partnerships to train volunteers. Through the volunteer program, many residents have moved on to permanent positions at the housing authority.

**“HUD wants housing authorities to lead residents to self-sufficiency, for public housing to be a temporary stop. HOPE VI is the trend of how public housing will be in the future.”**

Through HOPE VI the housing authority created a new community builder position—a combination HOPE VI coordinator, community-building facilitator, and volunteer manager. Terry Craig, who was in the position from July 1997 until February 1999, has since been promoted to director of operations at the housing authority. One of her responsibilities was

to form partnerships with outside agencies to provide services to Kennedy Brothers and prevent duplication of these services. This outreach effort has benefited the housing authority. As a result of the HOPE VI experience, the housing authority now regularly partners with other government and non-profit agencies to provide services to residents. Craig and the VISTAs have also expanded the reach of the housing authority, enabling it to embrace the Lower Valley community, form partnerships with other organizations, and participate in citywide planning activities.

Before HOPE VI, under Alvarado's leadership, the housing authority was already moving toward increasing resident and community involvement and helping residents become self-sufficient. HOPE VI provided momentum and, more important, technical assistance and funds to further these goals. Craig adds, “HOPE VI helped put things in perspective. It's not just about housing anymore. We're looking to provide self-sufficiency and homeownership.... HUD wants housing authorities to lead residents to self-sufficiency—for public housing to be a temporary stop. HOPE VI is the trend of how public housing will be in the future.” ♦



# Chapter 3

## Lessons Learned

The preceding chapter examined how seven exemplary sites implemented the HOPE VI program. The appendix supplements that examination with a number of briefer analyses covering efforts in a wide variety of HOPE VI and other public housing developments. This chapter cuts across all these experiences and examples to understand their broader implications for policy development.



NewHolly residents enjoy their revitalized Seattle neighborhood.

This chapter summarizes the major lessons learned from the countrywide community-building approach. The following more specific lessons relating to four basic functions of a healthy community are also discussed:

- Providing opportunities for employment.
- Providing opportunities for education.
- Meeting the needs of families.
- Engaging residents in the life and prospects of the community.

### General Lessons

The best practices described in this book are rich with lessons for other housing agencies, resident groups, and their community partners. Although HOPE VI community-building efforts take place in the context of thorough physical revitalization, many of the examples in the appendix are not from HOPE VI sites. These lessons, therefore, should be

helpful to people engaged in community-building efforts in any low-income, distressed community.

- *Training ground.* Public housing communities can become effective training grounds and launching pads for underprivileged or marginalized citizens who want to become self-sufficient and a catalyst for the revitalization of the larger neighborhood.
- *Need for overall strategy.* Having a strategy or master plan is essential. This includes making a detailed inventory of community assets and resources, potential partners, long- and short-term goals, and the kinds of resident activities that should be supported in order to achieve those goals. The master plan should include a strategic vision for the use of Section 8, including actions to build the capacity of receiving communities to support the efforts of the very poor to achieve self-sufficiency as well as a vision of transformation for the revitalized site.
- *Resident involvement.* Residents should be actively involved from the start in identifying the needs and priorities of the community and shaping and implementing the strategies for addressing them. Failure to include residents lengthens the process and quite often leads to lawsuits. The best people must be continually sought out and nurtured to fulfill this critical role.



Walgreens Training Academy Graduation, Chicago.

To function effectively, they must enjoy the trust of the other residents and be able to take a perspective that transcends personal agendas.

- *Keep your eyes on the prize.* Progress does not always proceed in a straight line but often advances in fits and starts. But even disappointing setbacks and failures can teach valuable lessons. Building the capacity of people and institutions to take on new responsibilities is never a simple task. The shared vision must be kept central, while strategies or mechanisms for achieving it are adjusted or rethought and new players brought into the process from time to time.
- *In for the long term.* The housing authority and its partners must be prepared to stay the course. It is important to set short-term, more easily achievable goals as well as long-term goals. It is also important to celebrate even modest accomplishments (for example, through newsletters, bulletin boards, graduation ceremonies, awarding simple plaques, or other community events).
- *Willingness to change.* The commitment of the housing authority to

change its way of operating must be both genuine and determined. Staff, where necessary, must be given the training or reorientation they need to think and act differently and must be held accountable to the new directive if the authority is to retain credibility with the residents.

- *Forging partnerships.* Seeking out and forging partnerships with experienced nonprofit and for-profit institutions in the larger community (such as police, social service agencies, civic groups, area businesses or business associations, local school systems, and community colleges) is key to delivering the supportive services—and developing the opportunities—residents need to become self-sufficient.
- *Value of localized initiatives.* Efforts should be focused on an area of manageable size: a community whose residents and other stakeholders can know each other, feel some measure of control over their environment, and have input into the decisions that affect their lives.
- *Case management and system change.* Given reasonable caseloads, the case management approach can help pull together a variety of needed services at the local level in the service of a larger vision. But larger system changes that are supportive of the integrated approach to service provision should be sought.

## Additional Lessons

A number of important lessons also emerge in four specific areas of activity: employment, education, family needs,

and resident involvement. These lessons constitute a valuable set of tips, caveats, and practical suggestions that should be kept in mind as housing authorities and resident councils organize for action.

## Employment

Providing public housing residents with access to employment opportunities is a challenge that requires thought and planning. In order to take advantage of these opportunities, however, many residents may require the aid of various support programs. Such supports can spell the difference between failure and becoming self-sufficient.<sup>1</sup>

Social networks that tie residents to actual job opportunities and to stakeholders are a critical part of a job-linkage strategy. In general, the more formal the network, the stronger the outcome for low-skilled workers. In the most effective employment programs, housing authorities identify prospective employers and tie the training process to job commitments. These results-oriented programs are grounded in actual job employment slots and real job gains for residents.

Some major corporations are beginning to draw on the untapped labor pool of HOPE VI and other public housing residents. HOPE VI supportive services and similar housing authority programs help prepare residents for employment and assist them in overcoming barriers to work, such as the need for childcare services. These corporations may participate in the Work Opportunity Tax Credit program, a federal incentive for employers that provides a 40-percent tax credit on the first \$6,000 in wages of disadvantaged and “hard-to-hire” groups.

<sup>1</sup>Some of the ideas and suggestions in this chapter are drawn from an unpublished paper, “Community Building in Support of an Employment Strategy for Public Housing Residents,” prepared by Arthur J. Naparstek and Dennis J. Dooley for the Manpower Development Research Corporation, 1996; others are from the June 1999 workshop, “Establishing a Meaningful Role for Public Housing Residents in the HOPE VI Development Process,” developed by EDETC, Inc., for HUD.



The partnership between the Walgreens drug store chain and the Chicago Housing Authority—which won a Secretary’s award at HUD’s July 1999 Best Practices and Technical Assistance Symposium—provides a model for a retail employment program with supportive services for public housing residents. In 1998, through the auspices of EDTEC, Inc., the housing authority signed a memorandum of understanding with Walgreens to install retail training centers in community facilities at two HOPE VI sites—the Cabrini Green Dantrell Davis Center and the Robert Taylor Homes Boys & Girls Club. In this partnership, Walgreens creates a training facility by installing donated store equipment, such as sales counters, display shelves, computers, price scanners, and sample merchandise. Walgreens trains residents in this onsite facility. The housing authority provides a family self-sufficiency course and job-readiness training, which residents must take before entering the Walgreens program. The housing authority’s readiness training emphasizes the “soft skills” such as courtesy, promptness, regularity, and self-responsibility that are basic to all work environments. The housing authority also provides help with childcare. The Walgreens training covers both the nuts and bolts of retail work and the importance of good customer service.

By August 1999 two dozen HOPE VI residents were employed by the drug store chain, while another 12 completed the training. Walgreens is currently working to expand this effort to HOPE VI sites in Cleveland, New Orleans, Memphis, St. Louis, and San Antonio and plans to continue setting up programs in as many as two dozen HOPE VI cities where there are Walgreens stores.

Marriott International’s Pathways to Independence program also works with public housing residents, many of them HOPE VI residents, in 18 states. This program offers both soft skills training and hands-on job training at working restaurants and lodging facilities. It helps individuals get the skills they need to begin a career in the hospitality industry, increases Marriott’s pool of qualified applicants for entry-level positions, and gives Marriott the opportunity to try out persons with employment barriers before committing to offering them jobs. Marriott estimates that Pathways to Independence costs \$5,000 for each participant. Community partners—including private industry councils, work development boards, community-based organizations, and local departments of social and employment services—reimburse just over half the cost. The remainder is considered an in-kind contribution by Marriott.



Children enjoy recreational activities at a revitalized HOPE VI site.

Employment-readiness training is key for many chronically unemployed persons to keep a job. To be truly employable, individuals need not only be able to demonstrate competency in performing some type of work, but they need to have appropriate attitudes and workplace habits. Followup counseling or support is often helpful—through mutual support groups or an ongoing mentoring program.

Access to computer technology can provide residents with salable skills and access to job-related information, job training programs, GED or literacy programs, and other resources. Access to a personal computer can become a powerful incentive for residents to participate in an educational program.

Part-time jobs can become a bridge for graduates from a computer program to work while they continue to perfect their skills. Faith-based organizations, businesses, and civic volunteer organizations can provide mentoring and leadership programs for residents.

Community service programs can be useful partners in building job skills and launching new businesses. Natural aptitudes or life experience can sometimes point the way to marketable interests and skills—with outside agencies providing the necessary screening, formal training, supervised experience, and credentials. The expertise available from entities such as the Small Business Administration can be brought in to teach residents the various aspects of starting and managing a small business.

Assessing the services needed by area residents and businesses is a good way to generate ideas for resident-owned enterprises. Community needs such as childcare or an affordable outlet for food or essential supplies can be a source of jobs for residents, perhaps even leading to full-time positions in the private sector. Work that might once have been contracted out by the housing authority can provide jobs and experience for new employee-owned companies, helping them to establish a track record of contract fulfillment and competent performance. (Code provisions may allow housing authorities to take supportive actions such as temporarily freezing the rent of residents engaged in building a new business or starting a job.)



HOPE VI job training, such as this property management program in Seattle's Holly Park, gives residents a chance to learn marketable skills.

The flow of public revitalization dollars into a neighborhood can generate opportunities for on-the-job training for residents, especially through Section 3 employment regulations. Section 3 regulations establish goals for the hiring of residents of affected public housing projects and other very low-income neighborhoods on HUD construction projects. These jobs, although temporary, may be structured to provide entry to labor union jobs or other private-sector employment. HOPE VI revitalization itself can be the source of jobs, even the beginning of a profitable career.

A public housing demolition or construction project often involves many specialized tasks, such as the removal of hazardous materials, roofing, carpentry, masonry, and other construction trades. It also could involve the procurement of support tasks such as food service. Section 3 provisions call for contractors to make their “best efforts” to hire residents. Early involvement and constant vigilance by resident representatives is the key to ensuring compliance. Another is getting the housing authority to agree to withhold partial payment at various stages of completion until a contractor's promises are kept.

Plans are put in place, agreements signed, and particular contractors often come in and out very quickly. To take advantage of the new jobs, resident representatives need to be there from

the beginning of the planning process, asking the prospective contractor such questions as: How many workers will you need to perform each task? Where will you get those workers? What kind of training will residents need to take advantage of these opportunities, and how and where can that be arranged? What services or tasks will you be subcontracting? What vendors or companies or unions do you usually work with? How many residents will you (or they) commit to hiring as workers or trainees? Where can residents acquire the skills they'll need? Residents should negotiate with the housing authority in advance to have technical advisors present—such as an architect, an attorney representing their interests, and a consultant on construction and demolition matters. Public housing authorities must create the context to support such resident involvement or it will be extremely difficult for it to take place.

Those steps necessary to “demystify” the process should be taken, and housing authorities should provide as much help as they can with this. Resident representatives need to find out who in the housing authority is going to be responsible for monitoring Section 3 compliance. With many of these contractors and some housing authorities, residents will be going up against inertia, tradition, and old habits. But it does not have to be business as usual if housing authority staff and residents agree that they are going to become agents of change.

An agreement to use minority-owned or women-owned businesses, however, should not be confused with Section 3 compliance. One does not necessarily imply the other. So residents should decide their strategy for dealing with Section 3 at the beginning of the process. Will it involve a training program? A job bank? What skills or experience do resi-

dents already have that might match certain requirements? But even people with appropriate skills may still fail to qualify. Even a skilled craftsperson will be rejected for failing the drug test given to all workers to ensure the safety of a construction site. Resident leaders need to make it clear to residents who are interested in applying that they need to be “clean” and that marijuana, for example, stays in your system for 30 days.

Housing authorities must identify appropriate community partners and make someone responsible for liaising and coordinating those partnerships. Residents should help to design and implement these programs. Having input up-front and throughout the process increases resident buy-in to the process.

Ideally, the resident advisory council should be an active participant from the start in HOPE VI and other community-building programs that will affect their lives. Residents should be involved in the planning for rehabilitation of units, demolition, and construction matters—all of which generate employment and the need for ancillary services.

## **Education**

To improve academic performance, especially among elementary school-age children, an advisory group composed of parents, residents, leaders, business people, educators, and service professionals should be formed. In Atlanta and elsewhere, this approach was successful in guiding school program design as well as community participation. Development training aimed at enhancing the knowledge and skills of all participants in the education process should be provided for administrators, teachers, counselors, paraprofessionals, and parents. A service network to provide the

full range of human services, health, and mental health resources should be set up to support the investment in educational achievement.

In order to provide educational readiness for preschool children, a similarly constituted advisory group should guide the design of integrated services. These services should include such things as pre- and postnatal healthcare; the identification and treatment of illness, environmental contamination, or handicapping conditions, which, if undetected and untreated, could reduce a child's ability to benefit from effective education; and parent support such as family literacy and parenting programs.

Early-childhood facilities and programs (both daycare and preschool) that maximize parent access and participation should be set up, along with a family support system to involve and track families from the prenatal stage onward, troubleshooting family problems and identifying needs for interventions and opportunities for improving services. Opportunities should be created for parents to develop an understanding of child development and to share these skills with other parents in the community.

A broad-based advisory group should also guide the design of educational and supportive services for adults. An educational continuum should be developed that brings together basic adult services—from GED programs and tutoring through job-readiness training and job finding to educational programs focusing on job retention and advancement.

A major component of such an effort will be the establishment of a continuing education center that serves local employers, managers, and aspiring entrepreneurs. Such services may be provided onsite or by referring residents to other resources in the community.

### **Meeting the Needs of Families**

A community board of parents, residents, service professionals, educators, and business people should be set up to guide the design and ongoing development of a basic neighborhood family center. The center is a locus for the support network of resources that keep families intact and help them learn parenting skills. Services might include family life counseling, child development screening, temporary childcare, mentoring, and family recreational or social activities. Outreach and home-visit services can be provided by residents trained to contact isolated families, identify family needs, initiate family center participation, and facilitate access to services in and outside of the center.

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An early-childhood development program in the community should be established if one does not already exist, along with flexible childcare drop-in services convenient to parents who choose to avail themselves of educational and employment services, providing additional incentive for such activity. In fact, the neighborhood family center could be built around such a childcare drop-in center. But the center should be developed specifically with early childhood activities in mind.

Here parents can interact with their children, with other parents about the care of children, and with trained staff in a hospitable, nurturing environment. Center staff work with parents to support their children's healthy development, including how to advocate for their children in school and how to work with the school in planning their children's education.

For school-age children and older youths (especially those from families headed by young, single parents with little education and work experience), programs such as mentoring, self-esteem building, and sex education can be implemented following models that have been proven effective in preventing school dropout incidents and early pregnancy.

Pioneering models have been developed that provide public housing residents with access to the full range of physical and mental healthcare and preventive education—from substance abuse counseling and treatment to prenatal care for young mothers. Recovery from substance abuse can be tied to overall healthcare, housing, education, childcare and other family services, and to supportive programs leading to full-time employment.

Community-based counseling and employment outreach centers, homeownership counseling and training, and entrepreneurship training might be offered at the neighborhood family center to help families build economic opportunities and assets.

Housing is the most basic of family needs for which the housing authority is responsible, and it is on issues of basic shelter that families in HOPE VI projects may need reassurance. News of impending demolition often spawns rumors and anxiety among potentially affected



families. The housing authority should make it clear that it will meet the needs of all residents affected by demolition activities, by giving them priority placement in other public housing projects, providing vouchers for Section 8 housing, or eventually relocating families in the revitalized HOPE VI site. Opportunities for homeownership and prehomeownership training also should be identified and promoted among residents. Nonprofit partners should be sought to help develop and market properties. A housing authority may even be able to convert some of its own underutilized housing stock into homeownership opportunities for residents, while creative financing arrangements with foundations, banks, or other lending institutions, as well as sweat equity arrangements, can help make such opportunities affordable.



Resident leaders give back to the community through participation in the Rosewind Resident Council. Left to right: Treasurer Karen Rogers, Secretary Edwina Rogers, and President Jackie Broadus.

### **Resident Engagement**

HUD requires the housing authority to consider the advice, counsel, recommendations, and input of residents and the surrounding community in its decision making throughout the development process and in designing and carrying out support services.<sup>2</sup> HUD has charged housing authorities with ensuring that residents have opportunities to partici-

pate in activities related to HOPE VI planning and development by working with the resident council, holding open meetings, conducting resident surveys, and providing technical and leadership training to interested residents.

Resident involvement is typically centered in an elected resident council. The housing agency should take steps to ensure that the resident council is truly representative of the community. HUD further requires that all affected residents be given reasonable notice of all meetings concerned with HOPE VI planning and implementation and that they be given adequate opportunities to offer input. Such meetings must be open to all affected residents and their representatives. Cultural differences among resident groups must be frankly acknowledged and considered in all planning and community processes. The housing authority must also help residents to contact a legal aid attorney and any other consultants they wish to have present at these meetings.

It is critical that residents get involved and line up technical advisors at the very beginning of the process so they will be prepared to grapple with and respond in an informed manner to each set of decisions that need to be made. The housing authority has final decisionmaking authority regarding HOPE VI funds, but it is imperative for the sake of the ongoing relationship that the input and cooperation of residents be sought before any significant changes, such as demolition or major planning studies, are authorized. The housing authority may also want to conduct resident surveys as another way of obtaining relevant input from all of the affected residents.

A number of different activities might be used to increase commitment to the community and control over community conditions by residents. These might include neighborhood celebrations and festivals that celebrate community assets and successes, the creation of a community archive and sharing of community history in some formal way, leadership training programs, or the establishment of a community resource directory.

A leadership training program provider, such as a local community college or civic organization, may carry out the training program for resident representatives, preferably at an early date and on-site or at a convenient location. Training should include goal setting and the art of running an effective meeting. HUD also carries out extensive resident training workshops.

Working together, the housing authority and the resident council should set both long- and short-term goals, with benchmarks for evaluating success. Resident leaders should strive for a sense of order and purpose at all meetings. Success with practical, short-term tasks can build confidence among residents. The housing authority should take steps to foster respect for residents among its staff, support resident initiatives, encourage the contributions of individuals, and celebrate small successes. A paid community-building facilitator can foster discussion around core values and priorities for the community and plan events to bring the public housing community together and build bridges beyond it.

The resident council should build a new spirit of cooperation among all the residents and urge them to lay aside old

<sup>2</sup>"Resident and Community Involvement," in *FY 1998 HOPE VI Guidebook*. Washington DC: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1998.



## Exhibit 3.1

### The Role of Residents in HOPE VI: HUD Guidelines

The HOPE VI program is founded on four principles with regard to the involvement of residents affected by demolition and new construction: collaboration, inclusion, communication, and participation. These principles also form a guide to resident participation outside the HOPE VI context.

#### Collaboration

Ideally, the housing authority and residents will be able to come together and develop a common vision. Residents must be invited to work closely with the housing authority in all phases of HOPE VI—from preparation of the application and planning through implementation and operation of the revitalized housing community.

#### Inclusion

The housing authority is responsible for communicating with and disseminating information to all affected residents and ensuring that all affected residents have opportunities to participate in the activities related to the HOPE VI planning and development process. Resident councils must see themselves as representatives of the public housing community at large, keep the other residents informed of developments, and bring their concerns to the housing authority. In mixed-income communities ways must be found to represent the interests and concerns of non-public housing residents.

#### Communication

The housing authority must develop a public information strategy that provides for regular communication and information sharing with the residents regarding all aspects of

the revitalization plan. It may be necessary to simplify or explain certain technical concepts and to use translators in cases where English is not spoken. Some housing authorities have found that a regular HOPE VI newsletter is an effective means of keeping residents (especially those who are temporarily relocated) updated and connected to the revitalization process.

#### Participation

Residents should be encouraged to participate in the planning and implementation of the entire process—including, for example, sitting on the selection panels that choose development partners and consultants; attending meetings with the development team, program manager, public and private lenders, the city, and other partners; and taking an active role in working or advisory groups. To ensure their meaningful participation, the housing authority must provide training (generally through community partners) to residents on the fundamentals of technical development issues. Residents and housing authorities should work together to identify specific needs and appropriate sources of training to meet those needs.

The role of the resident organizations will change with the evolution of the rebuilding process. It will focus on such issues as monitoring ongoing compliance, capital improvements, maintenance, supportive services, and sustaining the new sense of community. Public housing developments that become mixed-income communities will present special concerns in such areas as representation, community strategizing, and establishing new priorities for action. The challenge, however, will continue to be finding effective ways to engage residents at every level and at every phase in the life and future of their community.

SOURCE: EDTEC, Inc. *Establishing a Meaningful Role for Public Housing Residents in the HOPE VI Development Process*, Camden, NJ. 1999. Prepared for a series of workshops in June 1999.



Family takes pride in their HOPE VI home.

disappointments and resentments and move forward to a new relationship with management. Constantly bringing up old promises that were not kept—a new sink that was never installed, a light fixture that was not repaired—only gets in the way of new business and perpetuates negative feelings. Keeping affected residents updated on the progress of revitalization, and making sure they have a realistic appreciation for what is involved at each stage, can help alleviate anxieties and defuse impatience.

## HOPE VI and Community Building

Since the framing of the initial legislation, HOPE VI has rested on the twin pillars of community building and physical revitalization. The stories of the seven best practices sites (chapter 2) and the wide range of examples in the appendix show the community-building approach in action. These examples from many different settings illustrate the flexibility of this approach, its orientation toward assets rather than problems, its goal of providing individual opportunity for residents, and its emphasis on developing viable, responsive institutions to benefit public housing residents and the surrounding community.

Community building recognizes that one size does not fit all—that program flexibility, local discretion, and wide-ranging innovation are required to fight poverty and transform distressed communities.

This chapter has drawn out many practical lessons from the HOPE VI

experience. However, one simple lesson overarches them all: the HOPE VI community-building approach can be made to work under the right circumstances. This is no small accomplishment. The discretion granted by HOPE VI requires significant changes on the part of housing managers, many of whom have worked in a highly constrained and regulated environment for decades. HOPE VI requires courage and determination on the part of residents and their families. Finally, the program also requires creativity and entrepreneurialism from housing authorities, residents, and community groups. These stakeholders in communities all around the country are learning how to work together to coordinate programs; craft complex, service-intensive partnerships; and leverage many types of public and private resources. Through the HOPE VI community-building approach, these ambitious partnerships are providing new opportunities, building social and personal capital, and defeating poverty in their own communities. ♦

# Appendix

## Best Practices Using a Community-Building Approach to Self-Sufficiency

This appendix contains a number of best practices that effectively use community-building principles to help people move toward self-sufficiency. They are also cause for optimism, for they show that public housing authorities and resident councils, working together and in creative collaborations with other community partners, can make a difference.

Most of these examples are drawn from HOPE VI public housing sites around the country. These have been supplemented by others that, although they are not from HOPE VI sites, illustrate community-building techniques. All of these examples reflect the fundamental insight that the prospects of individual residents are strengthened when you improve

the ability of the community to nurture and support its members.

Research has shown that persistent poverty, the kind that endures over many years and may be passed from one generation to another, tends to be found in neighborhoods where social support systems have broken down. The health or dysfunction of community at the local level, it seems, has a great deal to do with the ability or inability of residents to have their needs met and to advance out of poverty.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, the much-discussed breakdown of the family is increasingly being understood as a result of the cultural and economic isolation of a whole community. Without the support that a healthy com-

<sup>1</sup>Anderson, Elijah. "Neighborhood Effects on Teenage Pregnancy," in *The Urban Underclass*, Christopher Jencks and Paul E. Peterson, eds. The Brookings Institution: Washington, DC, 1991.

Borjas, George J. "Ethnic Capital and Intergenerational Mobility," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* (February 1992): 123–150.

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Williams, Redford B. et al. "Prognostic Importance of Social and Economic Resources Among Medically Treated Patients with Angiographically Documented Coronary Artery Disease," *Journal of the American Medical Association* 267 (January 22/29, 1992): 520–524.

munity lends families in many aspects of their lives—such as education, health-care, employment opportunities, and reinforcement of self-esteem—families have difficulty functioning properly.<sup>2</sup>

These best practices show how the principles of community building—resident involvement, targeting of efforts, building on assets, thinking comprehensively and integratively about the needs of people, using social interactions to build social capital, and forging partnerships with entities in the larger community—can make antipoverty initiatives much more effective than programs that focus narrowly on, for example, jobs or housing.

Lack of access to a decent education or to training in marketable skills limits one's ability to obtain and keep a job. A young mother who cannot find affordable, dependable childcare will have trouble staying employed. Any number of difficulties may seem overwhelming: a chronic health condition in need of careful management, a child with special needs or school problems, substance abuse or violence in the home, or uncontrolled crime and drug activity in the neighborhood. Thus, the bigger picture—and the needs of the entire family—must be kept in mind in crafting a realistic initiative aimed at creating self-sufficiency.

Similarly, in order to support families in their aspirations for a better life, a community needs to function effectively in four areas:

- Providing opportunities for employment.
- Education.
- Meeting families' needs (including healthcare, childcare, youth recreation, and other services).

- Engaging residents in the life and prospects of the community.

The best practices that follow illustrate some of the many innovative ways in which HOPE VI communities and other public housing developments are carrying out these four crucial functions of the healthy community. Each category is prefaced by a few short remarks highlighting the kinds of activities that can lead to progress in that area and some of the assets and resources these communities have found helpful in addressing those challenges.

**Lack of access to a decent education or to training in marketable skills limits one's ability to obtain and keep a job.**

## Employment

*When he runs into people who despair of giving breaks to public housing residents because "they will only disappoint you," Michael Grey, himself a San Antonio public housing resident and a successful entrepreneur, finds himself thinking, "What if there's at least one person? Because if you can find that one person and help them get started, and other residents see them being successful, then others will want to follow."*

Partnerships with businesses, government, and local nonprofit agencies are a key component of a successful employment program. Such collaborations can provide actual positions for which residents can be specifically trained, often

using trainers and mentors from a particular company. They can also provide an opportunity for business executives to get to know public housing residents and see their value as employees.

It must be kept in mind that it is not merely a matter of finding work for people, but of helping them acquire the people skills or personal development that will allow them to keep those jobs. Addressing personal or family problems that could prevent residents from succeeding at employment is also critical to any serious workforce initiative.

Demolition, rehabilitation, and construction projects undertaken under HOPE VI, through Section 3 provisions, can provide jobs and apprenticeships in the building trades. Residents and resident organizations can take advantage of other opportunities related to physical rebuilding, such as moving services, tracking relocated residents, and providing construction site food service.

Community service can provide a training ground for residents where they can learn marketable skills, practice good work habits, and establish a track record of constructive activity. Community colleges and other groups with expertise can develop training or technical assistance for residents who want to start their own businesses.

By helping to stabilize the neighborhood—reducing crime, increasing homeownership and building community facilities—HOPE VI projects tend to encourage development and therefore increase employment in surrounding areas. An employment strategy is apt to be more effective, therefore, if it takes this larger picture into consideration. It should also focus on specific goals. Activities in the area of employment that should be encouraged, for example, are those that:

<sup>2</sup>The Cleveland Community Building Initiative. *The Report and Recommendation of the Cleveland Foundation Commission on Poverty*. Cleveland, OH: Mandel School of Applied Social Science, 1992, 97–115.



- Reconnect the resident labor force to the mainstream job market.
- Create access for residents to effective training and job-placement programs that lead to genuinely marketable skills and real jobs with a future.
- Address personal and other barriers likely to impede progress toward self-sufficiency—such as lack of transportation or childcare, substance abuse or other health-related problems, educational deficits, and attitudinal or motivational problems.
- Reestablish the community as a competitive business location.
- Provide entrepreneurship training and ongoing technical assistance and advice for residents who wish to start a business.
- Maximize opportunities for employment, service provision by residents, and career training generated by HOPE VI demolition, rehabilitation, construction, and associated programs.

The kinds of assets and resources that could help foster such activities would include:

- Employer-driven or union-run training programs (with curricula and standards set by the employers or unions), especially those willing to invest in residents' skill development over several years and to offer individuals more than one chance to succeed.
- Meaningful employment opportunities in surrounding neighborhoods.
- A lead labor force development organization that could provide a whole continuum of services from job-readiness training and motiva-

tion development to a centralized job bank.

- Community colleges or nearby universities willing to provide entrepreneurship classes (if possible, onsite) and technical advisors to residents interested in starting their own businesses.
- Available funding to pay residents for performing community service projects, coordinating that work, and providing necessary training or supervision.
- Large-scale public housing construction, demolition, or rehabilitation projects.

Some examples of best practices in this program are in public housing communities around the country follow.

### HOPE VI Spawns Jobs at Pittsburgh's Allequippa Terrace

In just the past 3 years, more than 200 residents of Allequippa Terrace, a HOPE VI site in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, have secured employment.

The keys to success, say residents and housing staff, have been starting with jobs that were already available or about to become available, matching residents' aptitudes and skills with these opportunities, helping them acquire needed skills, and addressing personal barriers and family needs that might have hindered success.

The physical revitalization of Allequippa Terrace opened positions in property management, resident services, and resident relocation services for those affected by the HOPE VI demolition. The housing authority ensured that interested residents had a chance to apply for

the onsite construction jobs. The program also implemented ongoing job development and placement efforts across Pittsburgh.

At Allequippa Terrace, HOPE VI training programs include educating students about computers, improving basic and academic skills, and developing communication and interpersonal skills. Additional training programs cover the construction trades and other technical and specialized skills.

Residents learn job-readiness training, résumé writing, and interviewing skills. Life-skills counseling and behavior and self-esteem building are also available. The Allequippa Terrace HOPE VI community and supportive services staff work to ensure that such essentials as childcare and transportation to and from work are in place.

A HOPE VI employer advisory committee advises on employer needs and expectations, oversees the development of job preparation curricula, and helps cultivate job opportunities for Allequippa Terrace residents. The committee includes program funders, community residents, educational institution staff, and local employers.

The well-coordinated effort has paid off. Of the 200 residents who have obtained jobs through the program, 189 are currently employed at an average wage of \$6.78 per hour. Of these, 133 are full-time, 43 are part-time, and 13 are temporary employees. Another payoff: the young people and other residents of Allequippa Terrace now see 189 of their neighbors getting up every morning to go to work and coming home at the end of the week with a paycheck and an air of greater self-confidence.

## **Resident Entrepreneurs Establish a Profitable Employment Agency in Chester**

In the HOPE VI community of Lamokin Village in Chester, Pennsylvania, residents have formed a company that places other public housing residents in training and job opportunities. In all, the resident company is responsible for some 66 new jobs. “We were all on welfare,” founder Barbara Muhammed comments, “and now we’re all working.” McBLWT, as this resident-owned corporation is known, was originally created to do landscaping and maintenance in the five housing complexes for which it is named: McCafferty (Ruthel), Bennett, Lamokin Village, William Penn, and the Towers. Resident leaders from each complex came together to form the corporation. “We get along well,” says Muhammed, formerly president of the resident council, “because this is a small, homebody type of town.”

McBLWT employs 15 staff members who are paid an average of \$7 an hour. It was in the course of training residents to do landscaping and maintenance work, and mentoring them in such job-readiness issues as promptness, language, dress, and business etiquette that group members realized they could also be preparing residents for other jobs, leading to expansion into other areas.

McBLWT created a 4-week training program for residents leading to certification in asbestos removal through union local 413 and has trained 11 persons thus far. McBLWT continues to work with the union on training in general construction. The Chester Housing Authority employs four other residents trained by McBLWT as part of the tenant maintenance and custodial force. During

HOPE VI relocation, Muhammed and seven other residents helped the housing authority move 30 residents in 30 days.

It all began, says Muhammed, with a modest planning grant from the Chester Housing Authority, under its HOPE VI program, to do a business plan. “The accounting department helped us understand payrolls, W-2 forms, and immigration forms. They contracted with someone to teach us how to run a business.

**“We were all on welfare ... and now we’re all working.”**

McBLWT used an automated data processing firm to handle check writing, payroll, and taxes. Muhammed cautions resident businesses to get a lawyer and keep tax payments current.

“We started with no money. Today we have \$50,000 in the bank,” says Muhammed. “I attribute it all to good, tight management and a high employee retention rate. We’ve never had a lapse in service or payment, which is often a problem with resident-owned businesses—defaulting and being inconsistent.” The housing authority’s willingness to provide a full range of technical assistance, she says, is a big factor in McBLWT’s success. The resident entrepreneurs also drew on two local colleges, Swarthmore and Widener. The colleges “reached out to us and made it clear they are on board for HOPE VI.” The experience seems to have stimulated resident leaders to think about other possible opportunities—for example, creating a CDC to build housing in the area.

## **Resident-Owned Construction Business Is Building a New Future in San Antonio**

“People in public housing, you can’t give up on them. They’ve been so down and depressed so long, some of them are suspicious about any hand that is stretched out to them. But reach out anyway. They may surprise you. And themselves.”

These are the conclusions of Michael Grey, founder of McGee’s Construction in San Antonio, Texas. The company, which did more than \$200,000 worth of business last year, began as a resident-owned enterprise in the Wheatley Court public housing development. The construction company is an example of how a housing authority can use its own needs coupled with a rigorous training course in entrepreneurship to successfully launch a resident-owned business. At present, McGee’s (the title is a play on Grey’s initials) has four contracts with the San Antonio Housing Authority as well as several other outside contracts to do roofing, fencing, and lawns, and make apartments ready for new tenants. Grey won the Entrepreneur of the Year Award from the San Antonio Housing Authority and the Resident Success Award from the National Association of Housing Redevelopment Officials in 1999.

McGee’s employs five other public housing residents, one full- and four part-time. Two former employees have moved on to start their own businesses, and Grey and his foreman have moved out of public housing and into a new, independent life. He hires high school students from the Sutton Homes, Willow Courts, and Victoria Courts developments to work weekends, in the

summer, and after school. “I try to talk to them and show them that it can be different for them, too,” he says. “If they don’t have their GED, I encourage them to get it.”

In 1994 Grey was one of several residents hired to work on a construction crew under a maintenance program funded by the housing authority’s Department of Economic Development (DED). Grey impressed housing authority staff with his initiative and hard work. When the job ended, the housing authority offered him a full-time job as a maintenance helper. It was Stephanie Robinson of DED, he recalls, who first encouraged him to consider starting a business of his own.

“They needed someone to do pavement and cement,” says Grey, “so they hired someone to teach us how to do that. Stephanie got me in the program, helped me get some contracts within the housing authority, and helped me find some employees.” The housing authority provided classes on negotiating contracts, marketing, finding and retaining employees, and bookkeeping. Seven other residents also completed the course.

The best part of the program, according to Grey, is that “you can continue to draw on its expertise and technical assistance for up to 2 years after graduation. The first year, you can use it as much as you want.”

Grey says he also learned a lot by attending HOPE VI conferences. “That’s when I realized the program was really good, more advanced than others. In the San Antonio program, they get more involved with us—and stick with us. You can tell that they enjoy their work. They give us advice, watch us, and help us correct our mistakes.

“When I first got some money, I had to learn how to slow down, to save and invest it. One thing Stephanie taught me was to save and think about tomorrow. Before this program, I was always hustling. But hustlers only know how to get in and get out. Here they teach you how to get in and stay in,” he continued. “There’s something to be said for making money in the right way. I get positive publicity now, and no one can take my money away from me.”

### **In Kansas City, Residents Organize To Gain Construction Skills and Subcontracts**

Getting organized early—and getting a good handle on the jobs that would be involved in HOPE VI construction at Kansas City’s Guinotte Manor—paid off for the Guinotte Manor Tenant Association (GMTA). The tenant group set up a resident-owned limited-liability partnership with Premier Development Group, an experienced private construction contractor. GMTA holds a controlling share (51 percent) in the partnership, which provides management support and training for residents. This arrangement enabled GMTA to subcontract with the general contractor at Guinotte Manor for the construction of three townhouse apartment buildings, a job worth approximately \$1 million.

The partnership has so far bid on and won \$200,000 worth of contracts with the Housing Authority of Kansas City (HAKC), Missouri, for janitorial work and lawn care at five projects.

To fulfill these contracts, the partnership hired 13 residents, all graduates of HAKC’s preapprenticeship training program. The partnership subcontracts the

licensed plumbing and electrical work that comes to qualified contractors.

The HOPE VI-funded preapprenticeship training program began in December 1998. The local community development corporation and Premier Development provided the training. Of the 63 residents who enrolled, 28 completed the preapprenticeship training and found construction jobs. Of these, 13 were hired by the partnership. Five who did not immediately find construction work temporarily took jobs doing maintenance work through Premier Development.

Before entering the preapprenticeship program, residents underwent assessments by the Full Employment Council, a privately run organization in Kansas City that manages U.S. Department of Labor welfare-to-work funds and other funds related to job training and placement. A 3-day job-readiness class introduced participants to the construction industry and job readiness, including topics such as attitude, dress, punctuality, money management, and work site safety. (Participants had to test drug free.) In an 8-week intensive course, Habitat for Humanity provided hands-on experience building new homes with the program furnishing transportation and lunches.

The 28 graduates became, in effect, a talent pool of available pretrained workers from which the contractor and subcontractors could draw to meet Section 3 requirements for hiring low-income residents on HUD construction sites.

The housing authority also contracted with the partnership to train two residents to fill administrative and operations construction management positions associated with HOPE VI revitalization.

## **In Los Angeles, Homeboy Industries Points Gang Youth Toward Jobs for a Future**

Nothing stops a bullet like a job.

That was the idea behind the creation of Jobs For a Future (JFF), an employment center for at-risk youth in east Los Angeles. In the early 1990s, residents of the Pico-Aliso neighborhood of east Los Angeles were troubled by what they saw as an increase in violence and gang involvement among their youth. The Pico-Aliso area contains four HOPE VI sites: Pico Gardens, Aliso South, Aliso North, and Aliso Village.

If young people had jobs, the residents were convinced, they would be less likely to become involved in these dangerous and self-destructive behaviors. So residents worked with Father Gregory Boyle of Dolores Mission, a local Catholic church, to create employment opportunities.

It began with community service. Crews of at-risk youth were paid to perform community improvement tasks such as gardening, light construction, and graffiti removal. Building on these positive work experiences, JFF made referrals to preapprenticeship training programs at the housing authority and elsewhere, thereby placing 260 high-risk youth in jobs in 1998 alone. Of the employed youth, 70 percent (180 of 260) were still employed after 30 days.

In 1992 the agency established Homeboy Industries. Homeboy Industries currently operates three community-based enterprises: a silk-screening business, a bakery, and merchandise featuring the Homeboy logo. This small business will log \$500,000 in sales this year. Merchandise income totals approximately \$6,000 per month from tee shirts,

sweatshirts, mugs, and caps. The bakery has had financial struggles, but was saved by a \$150,000 grant from KPWR, a local radio station. It is now under contract to bake 600 loaves of bread a day for Fresco Baking Company.

The employment project is a partnership among Dolores Mission Church, Proyecto Pastoral at Dolores Mission, residents of Pico-Aliso, the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles, and police and education agencies. Proyecto Pastoral houses and monitors the RAP program, a mentoring program that helps youth who have been released from jail or detention camps make a successful transition through mentoring, counseling education, and job training. JFF also offers the Clean Slate tattoo removal program, which gives a fresh start to young people who want to trade their old street identity for a career with a future.

Because of Homeboy Industries, former members of warring gangs now may be seen working side-by-side. "Guys who used to shoot each other are working together," says Father Boyle of Dolores Mission Church, clearly enjoying the picture. "What could be more symbolic of a new beginning than seeing enemies working side-by-side?"

## **Gang Members Move on to Careers in Construction at Los Angeles' Pico-Aliso Development**

Since July 1996, the Los Angeles Conservation Corporation and the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles have provided preapprenticeship training in the construction trades to Pico-Aliso youth. Of the 22 young residents who have enrolled in the program, 17 (including some former gang members) now hold full-time jobs as carpenters,

plumbers, laborers, electricians, and conservation corporation employees, and in other areas.

In March 1998, after several developments had become HOPE VI communities, the program expanded and the conservation corporation began to provide Pico-Aliso youth with entry into seven building trades. The corporation strengthened the program's educational component and intensified case management support. Training includes a college-bound component. Supportive services include mentoring, career development counseling, healthcare, transportation, and childcare. Program activities include outreach, recruitment, training, and hiring of corps members. JFF provides extensive outreach and recruitment efforts for former and current gang members age 18 to 23 from Pico Gardens and Aliso Extension. The Pico Aliso resident council assists with recruitment efforts.

Working closely with the East Los Angeles Skills Center, the conservation corporation instructs participants in the basics of construction-related jobs, giving them skills training and hands-on knowledge of various tools. The project's 24 hours of instruction alternate 1 week of community service with 1 week of individualized academic classes.

Community-based work experience training projects include refurbishing a single-family home with the East Los Angeles Community Corporation; tree plantings, landscaping, and garden bed construction for Dolores Mission Church; repairing the East Los Angeles Skills Center's irrigation system; and assisting the housing authority maintenance staff with repairing, painting, and cleaning vacant units. Participants receive a stipend while attending school and wages for work performed. The Los Angeles Skills Center provides educational assessments; GED, college, or



trade school preparation, and English as a second language classes. The program provides tools, uniforms, safety gear, and a toolbox outfitted with appropriate equipment. Graduates get grants for education.

At the end of the preemployment phase, the youth can enter apprenticeship programs offered by one of the building trades unions, pursuing specific careers (given their interests and abilities) as carpenters, painters, electricians, plumbers, or laborers. The housing authority provides referrals to union apprenticeship programs and employment opportunities on Pico-Aliso construction sites and continued case management services.

### In Baltimore, the Housing Authority and the Unions STEP-UP to the Challenge

The secret to the success of the Housing Authority of Baltimore's STEP-UP program, director Samuel Little believes, lies in the one-on-one relationships between public housing residents and skilled union journeymen.

Getting the unions involved in the program, says Little, was not all that hard. "We pointed out how much construction business was brought into town by the housing authority. 'If you want a piece of this,' we said, 'you have to change business as usual.' And it has worked well." Residents are paid to learn high-demand skills and gain entry into the unions, which have expanded into the rental construction market and have, as a result, been seeking to diversify their dwindling membership. The result, says Little, has been a winning situation for the unions and the housing authority:

- Of the 300 residents screened by the Baltimore Jobs Training Partnership Act Program (JTPA),

150 were interviewed and 72 were selected as participants.

- There have been 67 full-time job placements at an average starting wage of \$8.28 an hour.
- Forty-three apprentices have entered construction trade unions; 22 of those are enrolled in union apprenticeship programs.
- After just the first year, the state reported that it had benefited from \$96,000 worth of subsistence/benefit reduction.
- Eighty percent of each class successfully completes the program and is placed at jobs with a wage at or above \$8 an hour.

**"We try to take a family-centered approach. We ask ourselves what can we do to keep the family on the right track while the mother goes to work."**

After acceptance into the program, participants begin a 2-month preemployment training to introduce them to the trades they will learn. They receive safety instruction and learn how to use basic construction tools and read a blueprint. Training and certification in lead-based paint abatement and removal is also included. Work-readiness training teaches workplace norms about matters such as punctuality, attendance, dealing with authority, and dealing with a gender and ethnically diverse workplace.

Since the majority of participants are women, the program has been diversifying its vocational offerings to include educational services, hospitality, and building inspector training. "We have also had to structure our program so that it works for women by building in things like childcare and other supportive services," says Little. "We try to take a family-centered approach. We ask ourselves what can we do to keep the family on the right track while the mother goes to work. If the kids are doing well in school, then she won't worry and can concentrate on her job." Through a special arrangement with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, childcare and Medicare benefits continue for 21 months after the mother enters the program.

Participants are assigned to building rehabilitation work sites and HOPE VI-funded construction sites. Each STEP-UP apprentice is assigned to work with a union-affiliated journeyman on a one-to-one basis for 60 to 90 days. Apprentices rotate through several different trades during the course of the yearlong program. By year's end, they will have completed 144 hours of trade-related training as well as classroom instruction, literacy classes, and career development activities.

While working at the construction sites, participants attend evening classes. Participants lacking a high school diploma must study toward their GED, others may take remedial courses in math or literacy. Counseling and support services are available throughout the program. A special Apprenticeship Assistance Program provides substance abuse counseling.

Initiated as a cooperative effort of the union-affiliated Baltimore Building and Construction Trades Council and the Housing Authority of Baltimore City,

STEP-UP has since secured the cooperation of the Baltimore City Public Schools, the Department of Social Services, Baltimore City Community College, JTPA, and the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council. The program has an advisory board of eight people that includes representatives of the residents, the unions, and the local welfare and JTPA agencies.

### **Residents Schooled in Career and Self-Management at a Tucson Community College Are Getting—and Keeping—Jobs**

HOPE VI staff working with the Connie Chambers HOPE VI community in Tucson, Arizona, found an important resource in the form of nearby Pima Community College. Staff worked with the college to develop a preemployment class for both public housing and neighborhood residents: Career and Self-Management. (Pima already had relevant experience through a similar program titled Women in Progress, running under a contract with the city.) Pima staff had developed a network of education and employment services and prided themselves on their 85-percent job placement rate.

The housing authority has offered the self-management course three times and more than 40 students have completed it. Half have chosen to continue their education with GED classes, courses at Pima, or specific job-training programs.

The curriculum bolsters personal development and employment readiness. The personal development component includes sessions on positive self-esteem, organizational skills, learning styles, goal setting, and money management. The

employment-readiness component includes job shadowing (spending time at the workplace observing a worker) and sessions on time management, career options, stress management, skills inventory, interview preparation, business dress, and workplace development. Local employers come to class to conduct mock employment interviews with participants. These interviews are videotaped so that students may later review and critique them.

**Pima staff had developed a network of education and employment services and prided themselves on their 85-percent job placement rate.**

The 3-week course involves 90 hours of classroom instruction and 30 hours of related activities. Family Self-Sufficiency program staff provide case management. As students enrolled at the community college, all participants may access the full range of services available to regular Pima students. Everyone who completes the course receives six college credits from Pima Community College.

### **Borinquen Plaza Retail Center in Philadelphia: Finding Jobs at the Supermarket**

The plan was developed in 1993 to stabilize a struggling inner-city Philadelphia community. It includes a new retail shopping center, 250 units of rental housing, homeownership opportunities,

and a daycare facility. These projects became part of the 10-year strategic plan developed by public housing residents in collaboration with the Asociacion de Puertorriqueños En Marcha (APM).

Today, 200 housing units have been completed, the daycare center is open, the homeownership project is getting under way, and many residents shop and work every day at Borinquen Plaza Retail Center. The center includes a 40,000-square-foot supermarket, a 4,000-square-foot retail space, and another 2,500-square-foot plot set aside for future development.

The Borinquen Plaza Retail Initiative created 75 permanent jobs for community residents. In addition, 43 neighborhood residents transitioning off welfare have received job training or employment experience. A career ladder is now in place for residents interested in supermarket operations.

Although Borinquen Plaza is not specifically tied to a HOPE VI site, it offers a model for similar undertakings in depressed neighborhoods where public housing residents and their neighbors are ready to begin to move toward self-sufficiency as a community.

How did it happen? In response to the proposal by the resident/APM partnership, Community Development Block Grant funds provided the resources for acquisition, demolition, and relocation. The city department of commerce provided funding for predevelopment activities and gap financing. The Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) provided a 10-year, \$1.4 million loan at 5-percent interest as well as technical assistance in the development process. The William Penn Foundation and other private philanthropies provided gap financing.

Other partners stepped up to provide critical pieces. A grant from the city's health and human services office helped leverage jobs. Fannie Mae American Communities Fund provided equity for the project and the Wilmington Trust Bank supplied permanent financing for the project at 8-percent interest over 20 years. Philadelphia Works First, a private industry council (PIC), provided funds to employ people transitioning off welfare. Brown's Thriftway, the company brought in to operate the new supermarket, offered onsite training for community residents. APM coordinated activities.

Borinquen Plaza now provides easy access to quality services and goods for a community that has been without these generally taken-for-granted amenities for 30 years. And the success of the retail center, which eliminated four acres of urban blight, has opened the doors for the development of other commercial ventures.

## Education

*"Ask yourself: What's the fundamental thing families look for in a neighborhood? If we were going to turn this community around, it was clear we had to have a good school."*

*Tom Costello, Interim Executive Director, St. Louis Housing Authority*

Education is universally acknowledged as the key to opportunity, to economic survival, to bettering one's condition. Without a command of basic skills, (including standard English), a sense of how to evaluate and solve a problem, and some sense of how the parts of a society work, it is very difficult to function as a productive citizen.

Families living in marginalized or dysfunctional neighborhoods often have difficulty gaining access to the kind of education needed to realize their goals

for themselves and their children. Schools are being challenged to address a wide range of needs—from early childhood education to remedial and continuing education for adults. Successful schools tend to reach out beyond the school walls to enable families to provide effective educational support in the home. This is done by helping very young children acquire the skills they will need when they enter school and by supporting and reinforcing school lessons.

There is no universally applicable formula for effective urban education. However, the neighborhood school can be a center for community-building activities. It is a place to which public housing families can have easy access, where community groups can mobilize, and where a cluster of interrelated programs can be situated. These include programs that address the needs of neighborhood adults both as parents and breadwinners. Atlanta's Centennial Place Elementary School illustrates how, through partnerships with higher education institutions and institutional support from the public school establishment, an elementary school can become a powerful magnet for creating a mixed-income community.

Community-based activities in the area of education that ought to be encouraged and fostered include those that:

- Encourage and enable high academic performance, especially among elementary school children.
- Provide educational readiness for preschool children.
- Expand educational opportunities for adults—both to acquire the training and skills development necessary to get and hold a good job and to grow in their understanding

of their children's development and the role they can play.

The kinds of assets and resources that could foster and support such activity might include:

- Families interested in being involved in their children's education.
- Residents, business people, and professionals willing to use their skills and resources to support school activities and skill development in parents.
- Educators ready to commit time and effort both in and outside the classroom.
- A facility of sufficient capacity to support planned use without overcrowding.
- Innovative models for urban education, development of school staff, and parent involvement.
- Access to the resources and expertise of key resources—such as libraries, institutions of higher learning, cultural organizations, facilitators, and technical consultants—whose control lies outside the immediate community.
- Facilities and other personnel that can provide early-childhood development supports.
- Informal networks of residents with knowledge, skills, and time to invest in young children.
- A core group of families headed by people interested in economic advancement and improved family stability.
- A group of professionals involved in adult education, job training, placement, and career development programs.

- A group of employers committed to developing the human resources needed in their businesses.
- Physical facilities appropriate for adult education.

Some examples of best practices in this program area follow.

## **Children and Parents Progress Together at Baltimore Elementary School**

Serving the whole family is the hallmark of Baltimore's City Springs Elementary School, an innovative facility that serves a wide range of children and adults "regardless of background," according to principal Mary Welchel. This includes families living in two nearby public housing complexes—Perkins and the HOPE VI community of Flag House Courts. With the help of several community organizations and businesses, City Springs Elementary has brought together under one roof not only a standard elementary school program but also primary healthcare services, mental healthcare services, opportunities for parent volunteerism, and classes in adult literacy and parenting skills.

In recognition of the fact that children's health impacts school performance, not to mention families' time and energies, children ranging from infants to 12-year-olds get comprehensive care at the school's City Springs Wellness Center. A full-time nurse/wellness coordinator staffs the center. A nurse practitioner comes in twice a week; a pediatrician, once a week. The center provides immunizations, treats children with asthma, and dispenses and monitors regular medication including drugs for behavior problems. Mental health needs of City Springs pupils are addressed through a

partnership with Johns Hopkins Medical Center in East Baltimore, which provides professional mental health staff.

As one of six Baltimore public schools in the New Schools Initiative, City Springs functions much like a charter school. The school teaches by the innovative direct-instruction teaching method. Direct instruction is a highly structured program that uses phonetics and recitation in small groups to achieve reading mastery. With this method, many City Springs kindergartners matriculate to first grade with a second-grade reading ability.

**The school encourages parents to get involved with their children's education, to upgrade their own skills, and to volunteer some of their time.**

Community partners support the literacy emphasis at City Springs. The school participates in Baltimore READS and Reading by Nine, an initiative of *The Baltimore Sun*. Under the Books and Breakfast Program, volunteers read to the children during breakfast. From 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., AmeriCorps volunteers coach students in reading, spelling, and language in small groups. The 100 Book Challenge has students signing contracts to read 100 books yearly. There are field trips to local bookstores, and publishers donate books. At lunch time, volunteers from Colliers and Pinkerton, a real estate company that is a major partner of the school, read aloud to third, fourth, and fifth graders.

Colliers and Pinkerton employees also donate children's clothing and participate in school beautification projects. Through Colliers and Pinkerton, an executive in private management began to work with City Springs' principal as a mentor. Last year Flanagan Brothers Construction built a playground for the school and Max's Restaurant, in Fells, Point, raised \$7,000 for new computers through a golf tournament. Bell Atlantic has recently joined the group of corporate supporters.

The school encourages parents to get involved with their children's education, to upgrade their own skills, and to volunteer some of their time. "A large number of parents come in mornings," says Welchel. Ten to 15 of them assist with breakfast and others come by to sit in on the 10-minute morning assembly where classes talk about their accomplishments. Report card conferences with parents take place monthly. Family Fun Nights throughout the year provide an opportunity for parents to come together with their children and their teachers to eat, chat, and play educational games.

A parent liaison program—a partnership with the Maryland Department of Social Services—trains parents to work as in-class volunteers and counts those hours toward fulfillment of their Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) work requirement. The school has six AmeriCorps volunteers, three of whom must come from the community. (Two years with AmeriCorps earns a 2-year college scholarship.) One parent who started as a volunteer is now a qualified teacher.

Welchel, who has guided City Springs' transformation for the past 5 years, can and has transferred teachers who do not take to the school's program. Her biggest dream, which she hopes to realize next



year, is to have a special sixth-grade class in the building—for girls only. “So many of our children become single mothers,” says Welchel. “I’d like to have an academic program along with a leadership component that could help them see that they can have a life beyond Perkins and beyond the Inner Harbor.”

### **St. Louis’ Jefferson Elementary School: Transforming a Disadvantaged Inner-City School Into a Community Asset**

It was the missing piece in the revitalization of the Carr Square area of downtown St. Louis and the key to attracting larger numbers of working families to the rebuilt Murphy Park housing development, explains Richard Baron. Tom Costello, interim executive director of the St. Louis Housing Authority, agrees. “Ask yourself: What’s the fundamental thing families look for in a neighborhood? If we were going to turn this community around, it was clear we had to have a good school.”

For some time, Baron, president of McCormack Baron & Associates, the for-profit residential development and management company responsible for the transformation of Murphy Park, had been hearing the same thing from his marketing staff: if you want to attract working- and middle-class families back into the inner city, convenience of location, high-quality market-rate housing, security, and expert management of the property are not enough. In the end, parents want to know about the quality of the schools.

Jefferson Elementary School, located just across the street from Murphy Park (formerly known as the George L. Vaughn Apartments), was the obvious candidate. With the end of mandated school busing in St. Louis in sight, it was now possible to establish an elementary school that would serve the immediate neighborhood and draw strength from community involvement. Baron, a gifted civic entrepreneur as well as a businessman of recognized success, determined to commit his energies to Jefferson. But the school, marked by decades of poverty, busing, and neighborhood indifference, would require a major transformation. The physical plant and curriculum were behind the times. (A replacement for the 20-year-old mimeograph machine was one of the things on the staff’s wish list.) What chance to implement a modern, cutting-edge curriculum, even if funds were available, when 80 percent of the faculty had, by their own admission, never touched a computer mouse?

With the cooperation of the housing authority and the COVAM<sup>3</sup> Community Development Corporation—a kind of public housing “village” council—Baron rallied corporate, institutional, and municipal backing for the project. Baron took his case on behalf of the Carr Square/Murphy Park community and Jefferson School to Civic Progress, a high-powered group composed of the CEOs of St. Louis’ 40 largest companies, the president of St. Louis University, the mayor, and other influential persons. Baron pointed out the tax advantages of contributing to a low-income housing development. He also successfully lobbied for new legislation that would make these contributions eligible for additional state tax credits. Each \$100 a compa-

ny donated (through the nonprofit COVAM) would cost only about \$28 after taxes.

Baron managed to raise several million dollars in corporate contributions, one observer recalls, but he also got something more: a moral investment. Having put their names and resources on the line, these companies and institutions now had a stake in seeing Jefferson succeed. Additional offers of help soon followed.

A community board hired a new principal, Dr. Ann Meese, and the “upskilling” of the school’s faculty began. The University of Missouri/Columbia helped design a curriculum that would make use of new learning techniques and communications technology donated by area corporations. A Danforth grant helped train Jefferson faculty in its use. Southwestern Bell wired the school with fiber optic cable and for access to the Internet. Mercantile Bank helped install an adult technology lab to assist in the transition to work.

The St. Louis Department of Social Services’ Caring Communities program provided an anti-substance abuse coordinator and a behavioral therapist. The school also linked up with an adjacent health clinic operated by the city of St. Louis.

The local community responded enthusiastically. Of the 425 children enrolled at Jefferson in spring 1999, 300 were from the immediate neighborhood, compared to 75 previously. Meese hears inquiries about available housing in the mixed-income community of Murphy Park from colleagues who would like to get their children into Jefferson. The school is now equipping neighborhood

<sup>3</sup>COVAM refers to the names of the public housing communities it represents: Carr Square, O’Fallon Place (a nearby predominantly Section 8 development), and Vaughn Residences at Murphy Park.

children with the skills and positive self-esteem they will need to succeed.

"It's the level of private-sector involvement," says Meese, "that has given us the ability to address those barriers. I could not have done the things I've been able to do in this short period of time without that kind of support. Just having the dollars available to buy what we needed made all the difference."

Unlike the partners in Atlanta's Centennial Place Elementary—who were given the green light to make sweeping changes in physical plant, curriculum, and staff—Baron and the housing authority had to work with an existing facility and, with the exception of a dynamic new principal, incumbent staff. For that reason, however, what they accomplished is a model that could be realized in more communities.

The revitalization of Jefferson did not occur as part of a HOPE VI project. However, its use of neighborhood organizing and citywide resources to make a distressed local school into a community asset and an anchor for a new mixed-income neighborhood represents the kind of approach fostered by HOPE VI. Indeed, the Jefferson story is already being replicated a mile away at the Darst-Webbe public housing project, another community about to be transformed into mixed-income housing under HOPE VI. There, Carr Square area residents are working to upgrade the Blewitt Middle School.

### **San Francisco Replicates Computer Learning Centers at Five HOPE VI Sites**

One type of facility that seems to hold real promise for residents of public housing trying to move toward self-sufficiency is the computer learning

center. In the San Francisco area, 13 such centers are currently in the works, including 5 at HOPE VI sites.

Such centers have already introduced 125 residents to computer applications. Classes are offered in Word, Access, and PowerPoint as well as e-mail and the Internet. A computer learning center can also provide the tools (and coaching) for progressing on other fronts.

"We have software geared toward GED and SAT preparation," says Belinda Jeffries, director of the San Francisco-based Computer Learning Center (CLC), a citywide program staffed by several San Francisco area churches. "And we have a résumé workshop for residents that simulates an actual office. We also help them improve their typing skills."

The program appears to be cost-effective. With Jeffries as the only paid staff member, volunteers do most of the actual training. It is Jeffries' hope that as residents attain proficiency, they will qualify as trainer/coaches to staff 13 more centers modeled on this one.

"The Hayes Valley HOPE VI site," says Jeffries, "will be our first fully designed Campus of Learners with a central learning center and units wired for computers." Jeffries has been in touch with a computer recycling company that has promised several hundred computers.

The first CLC was initiated 2 years ago in a building at 18 Egbert Street, which still houses CLC's central office. Earlier this year Jeffries and her colleagues realized that the demand was great while the course offerings were too limited, and having only one location excluded too many people.

When Jeffries suggested carrying the concept to as many as 18 public housing sites, the residents liked the idea so well that they insisted on serving as a de facto planning committee. "They have

expressed the want, need, and desire to participate," says Jeffries. "Everyone—residents and staff—has taken a look at themselves and seen where they need improvement. Funding came from private, corporate donors. We've had wonderful volunteers—former teachers, students, engineers."

In November 1998 CLC signed a memorandum of understanding with the city's Unified School District. San Francisco State University agreed to provide not only technical assistance, but also tutors, through the Office of Community Service Learning.

In spring 1999, with funding from corporate and private donors, the first CLC in a public housing community opened its doors at the HOPE VI site at Valencia Gardens. Adults attend morning classes in computer literacy and job readiness; youth come by in the afternoon for computer work, tutoring, and informal counseling. They write articles for CLC's newsletter, work on the Internet, or play educational games. There are 16 students in the program and 5 tutors.

### **Learning and Employment Come Together in Denver's Quigg Newton**

By pulling together under one roof a wide range of services previously offered at scattered temporary locations, the new Learning Center at the Denver Housing Authority's Quigg Newton Homes is expected to dramatically increase the effectiveness of employment and life improvement activities. To date, 60 percent of the TANF residents have been helped to find employment.

The Quigg Newton Community Learning Center, made possible by HOPE VI funds, is a place where public housing residents and neighbors come

together to learn, receive needed services, develop career opportunities, and find new employment. It is also a place to hold neighborhood meetings and events.

The Basic Skills Lab, operated by the Community College of Denver, provides career counseling as well as administrative support. There is a Family Literacy Program as well as a HIPPY (Home Instructional Program for Parents in Youth) program, operated by Metropolitan State College of Denver. The Denver Department of Human Services provides TANF and food stamp services onsite. The local PIC and the Mayor's Office of Employment and Training offer employment services. These programs are funded entirely by the partners.

The Learning Center houses a Head Start program that accommodates 80 children. Catholic Charities operates a childcare center for 100 children, infants to school age, and trains residents to be childcare providers.

HOPE VI provided funding for initial support services in temporary locations along with a grant for construction. The Mayor's Office of Employment and Training provides computer equipment. In addition, partners lease space in the community center, with proceeds used to cover building maintenance costs.

### **Vietnamese Families in Kansas City Learn Survival English**

The inability to speak understandable English can be a barrier to securing not only gainful employment but also basic services needed for survival. In Kansas City's Guinotte Manor housing development, where a sizeable group of Viet-

namese families reside, the housing authority is introducing a program known as Survival English.

Also open to non-public housing residents from the surrounding neighborhood, the program will help participants learn to communicate what they need in six life skill areas: healthcare, transportation, housing, goods and services, employment, and education.

**Soweto Academy  
answers the need of  
resident youth to have  
an afterschool 'family'  
to teach them things  
they need to know in  
order to make it in  
a tough world.**

The Della Lamb Community Services Agency is developing the curriculum under contract and in collaboration with HOPE VI staff and residents. The ESL project team includes a teacher, a bilingual resident hired to assist with the class, and an acculturation specialist. The class will address specific needs identified by the residents themselves and respond to the needs of individual students as they arise.

A field trip at the conclusion of each module will give participants firsthand experience, in the presence of mentors, in each life skill area. The resident assistant will also act as case manager, supporting and tracking the progress of class participants while conducting outreach to the community as a whole.

### **Newark's Soweto Academy: Afterschool Learning for Life**

The bell that ends the school day may mean that classwork is done for a while, but in Walsh Homes, a Newark, New Jersey, public housing development, there are still important lessons to be learned and somebody to make sure young people learn them. Created in 1992 by two determined Walsh Homes residents, Raymond Thomas and Dorothy Dobbins, Soweto Academy answers the need of resident youth to have an afterschool "family" to teach them things they need to know in order to make it in a tough world.

Supervised by a New Jersey-certified teacher with more than 20 years of experience, the afterschool program is a safe environment in which youngsters can play and continue to learn. With an average daily attendance of 40 students, the academy's deeper purpose is preventing substance abuse, defusing or correcting behavioral problems at school, and building life skills through training and exposure to strong, positive role models. Through conferences and parent visits, academy staff also work closely with parents.

The academy recently received city approval for the SunUp nutritional program. It is supported through partnerships with the Newark Housing Authority, residents, and the Rutgers Cooperative Extension's 4-H program. Additional partnerships have been created with literacy programs at Bloomfield College and Lutheran Redeemer Church.

Soweto Academy, now funded through HOPE VI, will soon move into the new Walsh Homes Community Center.



Results have been so promising that the Newark Housing Authority is looking to replicate the program at other housing sites. Seven Walsh Homes residents work at Soweto Academy—six as teaching assistants and one as a maintenance worker. As a result of this experience, one teaching assistant has been able to move off welfare to a well-paying job.

## **La Orquesta Sinfonica Juvenil in San Juan: Getting Along in Time**

Music has a way of bringing people together, even across cultural or economic boundaries. This is the philosophy behind the Orquesta Sinfonica Juvenil (Youth Symphony Orchestra) of San Juan, Puerto Rico. The project brings together—into a single ensemble—youngsters from the Crisantimos y Manuel A. Perez (a HOPE VI site) and Ernesto Ramos Antonini housing developments, two housing communities that historically have been rivals. The program's goal is to use the experience of making music to foster self-esteem, positive attitudes, community pride, and more positive relationships among the young residents of the two developments.

The Corporation for the Musical Arts coordinates the program and provides teachers, instruments, and uniforms. The La Nueva Puerta de San Juan collaborative provides assistance with student recruitment and monitoring, transportation, development activities, and program management.

Monday through Friday, students at Perez Elementary study music appreciation, reading music, and playing instruments. They practice in classrooms made available for that purpose. The students also participate in special cultural enrichment activities in and outside the community. The experiment

brings together 120 children, ages 5 to 12 years.

The ensemble has played twice at the Luis A. Ferre Fine Arts Center, at many government activities, and at commercial shopping centers. Thirteen of the fledgling musicians have been accepted as students in the Escuela Libre de Musica Ernesto Ramos Antonini, a select secondary school operated by the Puerto Rico Department of Education.

The Orquesta Sinfonica Juvenil has been counted a success and the Corporation for the Musical Arts—which developed the project in cooperation with the Manuel A. Perez Elementary School, the HOPE VI project, and La Nueva Puerta de San Juan—is looking to replicate it elsewhere.

**“We try hard to tie all of the classroom and computer work to the vocational piece. In the chair-building module, for example, the students themselves decided to use the computers to create marketing flyers.”**

## **In Maryland, Experiential Education Gives Adjudicated Youth a Fresh Start**

The Living Classrooms Foundation, a 15-year-old private educational nonprofit organization, uses experiential education—learning by doing—to help adjudicated youth in Maryland find a

more satisfying and productive future in a program called Fresh Start.

Geared specifically toward youth who have been through the court system, Living Classrooms' Fresh Start program uses an experiential approach to develop academic, social, and vocational skills. Although not a HOPE VI program, Fresh Start provides a model for working with troubled youth.

“Ten years ago,” says program director John Dillo, “we used maritime activities as the hook—building a boat, maintaining a boat, sailing a boat. Ten years later, we do some things differently. The maritime industry in Maryland has declined, so we focus on construction and repair.”

The 9-month Fresh Start program is divided into five 8-week segments:

- **Segment 1. The toolbox module.** Participants learn how to build a tool box, receive a set of tools, and learn how to use them.
- **Segment 2. Building chairs and selling them for profit.**
- **Segment 3. Construction skills.**
- **Segment 4. Boat building and repair for profit.**
- **Segment 5. Internship.** A job outside the shop.

The program offers basic skills remediation, GED classes, and computer classes. “We emphasize education throughout the whole program,” says Dillo. “We would like our guys to leave with a GED, but some enter at only a fifth-grade level, so they spend many hours in the classroom.”

One day a week is devoted to computer class—learning basic keyboarding, graphics, and different operating systems such as Windows 95. “We try hard to tie all of the classroom and computer work to the vocational piece,” says Dillo. “In



the chair-building module, for example, the students themselves decided to use the computers to create marketing flyers. They used their math to figure out how much to sell each chair for and to calculate the profit.”

Each session serves approximately 20 students. Every 8 weeks a group graduates and a new group enters. A ratio of one staff member for every five students allows for individual attention.

“Our main focus is education: getting a GED or a high school diploma,” says Dillo. “We are currently working with the Maryland Department of Education to enable participants to get academic credit for the time they spend here. What we’d prefer is that they return to school, but after spending so much time away, they tend to be so far behind they just drop out. And once they get a GED, they can no longer access school-based funds for counseling.”

The typical participant is a 17- to 18-year-old male. No young women have been referred to the program thus far. As soon as the Maryland Department of Juvenile Justice refers a youth to the program, Fresh Start staff do an initial screening for serious violent offenders and sex offenders. Two rounds of interviews follow and staff meets with the student’s parents or guardians and juvenile counselor.

The Maryland Youth Residence Center has a Fresh Start dorm, and staff escort these participants to the learning facility every day. Other participants live in group homes. Youth who require counseling receive it either at the group home or from Fresh Start counselors. Fresh Start has also built relationships with several employers and unions (some of which have been formalized with contracts).

For the past 5 years, Fresh Start has tracked its graduates. Program staff

follow graduates for 3 years, contacting them at least once a month to gather information about their current situation, housing, and employment. Staff check state administrative data to keep track of re-arrests or probation violations.

“One of the things we’d like to do more with is aftercare,” says Dillo. “When juveniles turn 18, they are no longer eligible to receive services. So we need to find other ways, like having a staff member call them every day, to check in with them and make sure they are still on the right track. Down the road we’d like to have a transitional facility where our graduates could stay for 6 months and learn other life skills.”

## Meeting the Needs of Families

*“Families are an important natural resource,” says Carol Shapiro, director of La Bodega de la Familia, a New York addiction recovery program. “Families need care and nurturing. So we spend a third of our time with the user, a third with other family members, and a third with the family as a unit.”*

Although the family is the basic unit and key mechanism of the community, it still requires the support of the larger community. When communities fail to support families, families have trouble fulfilling their basic roles of protecting, nurturing, and passing on values and behavioral standards to its children.

In recent years, this fundamental truth has become clearer than ever. The community and the family are inextricably intertwined: what hurts one hurts the other, what strengthens one strengthens the other. The changing structure of the family brought about by a combination of social and economic forces has made it increasingly difficult to care for children. Economically stressed inner-city families in particular have had to

cope with very little support from the community.

Childcare, early education resources, and health resources have been scarce. Minorities and poor people suffer disproportionately from such chronic health problems as hypertension and diabetes and are more subject to adverse events such as stroke. Yet, these conditions are controllable through health education and the modification of personal habits. Young women of the inner city are less apt to have adequate prenatal care, resulting in a higher risk of infant mortality, chronic childhood illness, and retardation. Poverty also breeds substance abuse and addiction, which attack the natural sources of strength of a family. Poor families are vulnerable to crises because they possess fewer resources to cushion them from an unexpected job loss or other reversals.

Meanwhile, the bureaucratic fragmentation of health and social services programs, and their orientation toward an individual’s deficits, have kept them from dealing with the family as a whole, and consequently from developing an approach that builds on family strengths and assets and aims to maximize self-sufficiency.

Three guiding principles have emerged that seem to be helpful in guiding the development of family-oriented services:

- (1) A good program should build the family’s capacity to successfully carry out its key functions of material support, care and nurturing, and the education of its members.
- (2) Services should be easy to use and flexible, so that they fit family needs instead of the reverse.
- (3) Programs should be designed to support the goals established by the families themselves.

Some of the kinds of activities in this area that should be encouraged are those that:

- Enhance basic family and parenting skills.
- Address the special health needs of inner-city and minority families.
- Educate families in the maintenance of good health and nutrition.
- Keep families intact through crises.
- Strengthen family-to-family connections.
- Build attachment to, and increase the commitment of, families to the community—where necessary, addressing the language and cultural barriers that obscure a common stake in the community.

The kinds of assets and resources that could help foster such activities would include:

- Centralized facilities (community centers, libraries, or community schools) that could house support network services and provide a communal place for family-oriented programs and activities.
- Childcare facilities (including infants, toddlers, and afterschool care for older children).
- Educational facilities that serve diverse needs.
- Healthcare professionals or agencies willing to cooperate in developing an onsite facility or otherwise creating easier access to healthcare and preventive health education for residents.
- Safe houses and emergency shelters for women and children who are victims of abuse.

- Facilities for counseling and mentoring on a range of family-related issues.
- Communal associations such as churches or mosques, block clubs, parent groups, and play groups that are involved in and support family activities.
- Recreational and employment programs for teenagers.
- Neighborhood celebrations and festivals that build consciousness of the history, traditions, and hopes of the community

Some examples of best practices in this program area follow.

**"Recognizing that many aspects of family life affect health, the medical center also provides financial counseling, an onsite WIC office, computer training, GED preparation, and parenting classes."**

### **Health Clinic Brings Range of Family Services to Baltimore's Neighborhoods**

The Greater Baltimore Medical Center has been helping Baltimore families stay healthy for 100 years. Now, at the start of another century, this venerable institution has begun to rethink its notions of health and accessibility.

Working with the Housing Authority of Baltimore City, the medical center has opened three satellite community and family health centers in Baltimore neighborhoods. One is located across the street from the HOPE VI community Pleasant View Gardens, in a facility provided by the housing authority. A second, located at the City Springs Elementary School, serves students and their families as well as two nearby HOPE VI communities—Lexington Terrace and Flag House Courts. The medical center recently opened a third center, La Familia Health Center, in the Linwood area—the first in the city to specifically serve a Latino community.

Each of the centers provides the array of services necessary for families to get healthy and stay healthy—including adult and pediatric primary health services, women's health services, eye care, dental care, mental health and substance abuse treatment and counseling, HIV case management and support, pharmacy services, and social services. Other activities include community outreach and educational activities such as health fairs; screenings for diabetes, breast cancer, high blood pressure, and HIV; and cholesterol and pregnancy tests.

Recognizing that many aspects of family life affect health, the medical center also provides financial counseling, an onsite WIC office, computer training, GED preparation, and parenting classes. The center is also working with the community on clothing distribution, a food bank, and back-to-school health fairs. It will soon begin a new 3-month job training program at its hospital in nearby Towson, Maryland, and has hired a job-readiness specialist to assist with job searches, résumé preparation, and interviewing.

## Primary Healthcare in the Community: Milwaukee's Hillside Family Health Center

The Hillside Family Health Center supplies free primary healthcare for residents of the revitalized Hillside Terrace HOPE VI community and its surrounding Milwaukee neighborhood. The nurse-managed clinic in the Hillside Family Resource Center provides primary care, case management, prenatal care, asthma and dental screening and referrals, immunizations, health education, and home visits. Services are available Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. and on Fridays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The center taps the services of registered nurses, nurse practitioners, physicians, medical assistants, and outreach workers. Medical staff saw and treated 929 visitors at the Hillside clinic in 1998—referring three times that many to other, more specialized medical facilities for needed treatment.

The center is operated by the Black Health Coalition of Wisconsin, Inc., and contracted through Mary Mahoney Health Services. Incorporated in 1988, the Black Health Coalition has long been in the forefront of health issues that affect African Americans and other underserved groups in Wisconsin. The group fights for availability of care and the development of a coordinated system of care. Its activities include advocacy, research, technical assistance, and education and training. The coalition is made up of healthcare professionals, social service agencies, professional organizations, and grassroots groups. The coalition began with 12 organizations but has since grown to 26 organizations and 19 individual members.

Three Hillside residents work for Mahoney Health Services as clinical assistants or outreach workers. Two work at the Hillside clinic and one is assigned to the Mary Mahoney clinic at Metcalf Park, located about 12 miles away.

## Oakland Agency Coordinates Supportive Services for Asian Families

“Asians tend not to ‘self-report,’ but instead keep family problems within the family,” says Alan Shinn of Oakland’s Asian Community Mental Health Services. Yet Asian families experience a range of problems—racial tensions, substance abuse, or health or family problems. And, for some refugees, traumatic memories of violence and death may complicate adjustment to a new life.

Further complicating matters, the East Bay Asian community includes many different nationalities—some 14 languages and dialects. It has taken years for the organization to get families to identify with the generic term *Asian*, says Shinn. It is a continual challenge, he adds, to find translators and English-proficient resident leaders who can link up these different ethnic groups and connect Asians with the rest of the community.

The 24-year-old comprehensive health, advocacy, and social service center has become a key partner in efforts to meet the needs of Asian families living in the HOPE VI communities of Lockwood Gardens and Coliseum Gardens. It also serves as a model of comprehensive service delivery. The organization has multilingual, multicultural staff who provide mental health services for children, adolescents, adults, families, and seniors.

Services include 24-hour crisis intervention, diagnostic evaluations, short-term mental health services, pharmacotherapy, group counseling, and family support groups. More than 500 families are served by citizenship classes, parent support groups, job-training preparation, and community improvement programs. In 1998 the organization reached more than 834 families with an awareness campaign dealing with the new self-sufficiency rules under welfare reform (launched in cooperation with four other Asian agencies in Oakland). The agency also provides case management and support services, ESL classes, citizenship classes, job training, and community projects. It offers the following programs:

- *Strengthening Asian Youth and Family* is an afterschool program for children in grades three through five at Garfield Year-Round Elementary School. In the past 2 years, more than 200 children have participated in recreational and cultural activities designed to build self-esteem and cultural pride. They also receive tutoring and mentoring from high school interns and go on field trips.
- *Cambodian American Youth Achieving Knowledge* brings Cambodian youth from Havens Court Middle School together twice a week for leadership building and rap sessions.
- *Project Emerge* (which just recently ended) formed a soccer team of youth from the Lockwood Gardens and Coliseum Gardens public housing communities with supplemental programs in teamwork, sportsmanship, and substance abuse prevention.
- *Asian Sisters in Action* facilitates substance abuse prevention, empowerment, and communication skills for girls ages 11 to 15. Asian

Community Mental Health Services acts as lead agency for a coalition of community agencies. Program counseling centers have opened in Oakland and Union City.

- *Asian Youth Promoting Advocacy and Leadership* trains interns to be peer-group leaders and community advocates who, in turn, encourage a larger number of teens to become involved in community issues. The agency acts as lead for seven community organizations that sponsor five youth leadership programs.
- *Asian Communities Empowering Teens* addresses issues of self-esteem, identity, and generational differences for girls in their teen years, and holds workshops for families and youth service providers.
- *Caring Asian Parent Alliance*, under contract with the Alameda County Social Services Department, works to prevent child abuse in Cambodian families by teaching parents better ways to communicate while becoming more involved in their children's education.
- *Community Integration Services for Asians* is an independent living program that offers developmentally disabled clients one-on-one training to help them become or remain self-sufficient. The case-management team also provides coordination and referral services and support groups for parents.

In addition, the agency's mental health consultants assist Head Start staff in assessing developmental, behavioral, and language problems in young children. Services include translation, onsite testing, facilitating parent-group meetings, classroom observation, home visits, and counseling for special-needs students.

## **Hogar CREA Drug Treatment Program**

There are an estimated 9,000 intravenous drug users in the Hartford, Connecticut, area. But until recently there were only 103 subsidized beds and no residential treatment facilities for women.

In 1997 the Hartford Housing Authority joined forces with Hogar CREA, a private nonprofit drug treatment agency, to open a 12-unit residential drug treatment center for women in the HOPE VI community of Harriet Beecher Stowe Village. (CREA stands for Center for the Reeducation of Ex-Addicts; *Hogar* is a Spanish word for *home*.)

Now, 20 women living in public housing can undergo substance abuse recovery treatment in the supportive context of their own community. A coordinated 2-year program of supportive services addresses the needs of both parents and children; the goal is to strengthen families and keep them together.

The intensive program takes a comprehensive and integrated approach to the family and its needs. In all, residents undergo 14 different therapies designed to reeducate them about substance abuse, self-esteem, and responsible behavior. Through individual and group counseling, classes, and activities, participants address matters such as the stresses and expectations of the workplace, public speaking, civility, conflict resolution, family, and spiritual centering.

The Families United and Nurture Project provides family therapy for mothers and children together with developmentally appropriate recreation and parenting education. By observing parent-child interactions, educators can assess children's development, making referrals or suggestions where appropriate, and help

mothers improve their parenting skills. At group meetings, mothers share experiences, ask questions, and support one another. Women in treatment participate in community workshops where they share what they have learned and encourage others to seek treatment.

Through linkages with the housing authority's family investment centers, local schools, the county department of social services, and local health clinics, CREA reaches out to other chemically dependent women. The facility will double its size in 2000.

## **Cleveland's Miracle Village Keeps Drug-Devastated Families Together**

Cleveland's Miracle Village is a model chemical dependency treatment program for women and their children. Begun in 1996 in the HOPE VI community of Outhwaite Estates, it was the first program of its kind to link substance abuse treatment, healthcare, housing, an employment program, and family-oriented supportive services in a community context. This innovative partnership of MetroHealth Medical Center and the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority keeps mothers and children together while providing long-term, intensive treatment and support.

The approach is to first deal with the addiction and then, over time and with the help of key community players, to provide community support and work to eliminate barriers to self-sufficiency and healthy functioning. The program consists of pretreatment; 3 months of intensive residential treatment in Miracle Village, a 30-unit development separated from other public housing residents; and up to 21 months of aftercare and supportive services in Recovery Village,



another clustered group of apartments in Outhwaite. Mothers receive ongoing chemical dependency treatment, family medical and dental services, wellness education, fitness classes, and parenting classes. They also may work on a GED, vocational training, and job placement; transportation is provided. Children attend afterschool programs.

A large factor in the recovery of these women, say participants, is the mutual support of the community in which they reside throughout treatment. The focus is not merely on helping one person recover from addiction, but also on strengthening the prospects of the entire family. The program views the family as a dynamic support system in which everyone gives and from which everyone draws strength.

In the first year (1996–97):

- One hundred and ninety-three women responsible for 461 children went through the program.
- Sixty-five percent of program participants remained drug- and alcohol-free.
- Twenty-five women gained employment.
- Twelve women enrolled in college or received degrees.
- Sixty-five children were reunited with their mothers.
- School-age children's grades improved significantly.
- Twenty-one babies were born drug-free during the program or followup period.

More than 250 women have successfully completed the program. Because of its size and comprehensiveness, Miracle Village has become a national model for residential drug treatment for women and their families.

## Drug Treatment Is a Family Affair: New York's La Bodega de la Familia

Family interventions can help drug users succeed in outpatient treatment, reduce drug-related domestic violence, and restore neighborhood safety. That is the premise of La Bodega de la Familia ("The Family Store"), a project of the VERA Institute of Justice. Launched in October 1996, this imaginative program operates from a renovated grocery store that was the scene of a tragic confrontation between police and local drug dealers in 1995.

**La Bodega's focus on the family and neighborhood—instead of on the drug user—distinguishes it from traditional addiction recovery programs.**

La Bodega is located in a densely populated 54-square-block area called Loisaida on Manhattan's Lower East Side—a community sometimes called Alphabet City because of its many social service providers. Loisaida is a low-income area with high rates of substance abuse, HIV infection, and violent death. Residents are about 80 percent Latino and 15 percent African American. La Bodega's staff is bilingual and its programs are culturally sensitive. More than 80 percent of the community lives in public housing. Carol Shapiro, director of La Bodega, says that she is "riveted by the intersection of our work and public housing." Although not specifically linked to a

particular HOPE VI community, La Bodega's comprehensive, community-based, family-focused approach is the sort of approach encouraged by the HOPE VI program.

La Bodega's focus on the family and neighborhood—instead of on the drug user—distinguishes it from traditional addiction recovery programs. "We are trying to change the conversation about addiction," explains Shapiro. "We want to move addiction from a justice issue to a public health issue. Families are always the first to see the symptoms."

La Bodega provides case management for families of addicts involved in the criminal justice system, 24-hour support for families and police officers dealing with drug-related emergencies, and walk-in support and prevention services for all neighborhood residents.

"Families are an important natural resource," Shapiro points out. "They need care and nurturing. So we spend a third of our time with the user, a third with other family members, and a third with the whole family unit." Clinical staff (social workers and family counselors) are responsible for case management. Field staff, most of whom have a background in criminal justice or law enforcement, act as liaison between families and law enforcement agencies and work with the parole program to prepare families to cope with released prisoners. La Bodega also works with the larger community. It operates support groups for young mothers, victims of family violence, friends and families of substance abuse offenders, and people returning from prison. La Bodega staff spend time with local youth on murals, back-to-school nights, poetry and photography workshops, and other positive activities.

La Bodega also coordinates other community and government services, handling referrals from child welfare,

probation, parole, the New York City Housing Authority, and other city agencies. The agency has had some success in building better working relationships between the community and law enforcement agencies. “We are sort of like the glue because we’re neutral,” says Shapiro. “Some drug treatment is coercive, we’re not. We try to understand all of the players.”

La Bodega de la Familia is currently funded by the U.S. Bureau of Justice Assistance; the New York Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Alcoholism Services; the New York City Department of Probation; the New York City Council; and the New York State Division of Probation and Correction Alternatives.

## **Low-Income Youth Link Up With First Tee**

The emergence of Tiger Woods as a world-class contender on the professional golf circuit has done more than glue a few million more Americans to their television sets on Sunday afternoons. It has stimulated a tremendous interest in golf as a sport among poor, minority, and inner-city children, many of whom have had little opportunity to try their hand at the game. A recent survey of young people’s recreation by the Boys & Girls Clubs of America found that young people everywhere want to learn how to play golf.

First Tee, a national nonprofit organization founded in 1998, has the mission of making golf affordable to low-income children and of promoting the values of golf, such as fairness, good sportsmanship, manners, and learning intense concentration. It works to bring golf and other recreational opportunities to underrepresented rural and urban communities. The organization operates in

partnership with the Tiger Woods Foundation, the National Minority Golf Foundation, the National Golf Architects Association, the National Course Builders Association, and the National Golf Writers Association.

First Tee has now embarked on partnerships with several housing authorities around the country and has been written into HOPE VI proposals in Columbia, South Carolina; High Point, North Carolina; and Danville, Virginia. Staff at First Tee have been working with HUD staff to find additional opportunities for involvement.

**The program teaches golf skills and values associated with the game as part of a larger life skills curriculum.**

The organization has set the ambitious goal of initiating the development of 100 facilities nationwide by 2000, with the government contributing the land and the private sector operating the golf education program.

Each local First Tee chapter is a 501(c)(3) organization that works with local volunteers and priorities, but the core model is the same. The program teaches golf skills and values associated with the game as part of a larger life skills curriculum. Donated equipment provides the young participants with everything—clubs, balls, and shoes—that they need for the game. The Arnold Palmer Foundation, for example, recently donated 3,000 youth-size golf clubs. Through that national organization, participating youth have access to jobs and scholarships.

## **Teaching Children Community: Seattle’s Inside-Out Arts Program**

Mask making. Clay figure animation. Jewelry and adornment. Boys and girls costumed as silver stars, twinkling before an audience of parents in *Tar Beach*, a play by award-winning children’s author Faith Ringold. It would create smiles anywhere. But at NewHolly, a revitalized HOPE VI community in Seattle, the universal language of arts expression serves a particularly important role since the large contingent of immigrant children who live there may speak any of a dozen languages.

“The Inside-Out Arts Program was my baby,” says Kimberly Keith, curator of outreach services. Keith has been with The Children’s Museum of Seattle for more than 6 years, starting as an outreach coordinator. “First I went out to Head Start programs, low-income housing, homeless shelters—taking our multicultural arts program with me.” The program was initially funded in 1995 through a \$65,000 drug elimination grant.

About 20 to 30 young people, ages 5 to 14, participate during the school year and up to 45 in the summer. Summer activities include field trips to a cultural institution such as a museum, followed by an afternoon visit to a park or swimming pool. These expeditions help to mitigate the cultural and physical isolation of public housing children. “We are making them citizens of the city and the world,” says Keith.

Project staff consists of three full-time staff and four part-time work-study students. Arts program staff meet regularly with other NewHolly service providers to coordinate services. The children’s arts program had long operated without its own dedicated space—setting up shop in a community

building, nearby public housing, a settlement house, and a small suite in one of the remodeled cottages that made up the setting of NewHolly's Campus of Learners program. By 2000, however, as the housing authority completes NewHolly's Learning Center and Family Resource Center, the Inside-Out Arts Program will find a permanent home alongside a public library branch, a technology lab, a daycare center, a youth tutoring program, and other services.

"The new building gives the idea of partnership new depth and meaning," says Keith. "We will have to be especially proactive now to include all of the stakeholders at NewHolly. What does the new community want? How can we continue to offer useful programs?" The Child Welfare League, another HOPE VI partner agency, leads retreats and visioning exercises to help museum staff address these questions. With the help of the arts program and in partnership with the Bon Marche department store, the children of NewHolly will create a decorative mural, which will be exhibited at the store and then installed at the new learning resource complex at NewHolly.

Many of the children who started with the program in 1995 still attend. In particular, two young men now work weekends at The Children's Museum and will soon be leading hands-on activities there. "These kids are our family," says Keith.

### All Under One Roof: Cleveland's Carl B. Stokes Social Service Mall

The King-Kennedy South highrise facility was one of the most dilapidated, obsolete properties of the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA). Renovation or demolition would have been enormously expensive. Instead, the

facility was transformed into a "one-stop shop" for social and community services: the Carl B. Stokes Social Service Mall.

The Stokes Mall, which officially opened in June 1996 under a HUD HOPE VI grant, houses 25 different social and community service agencies, including the CMHA Health Clinic (a partnership among the housing authority, Metro-Health Medical Center, and several other agencies), the Cleveland Board of Education Central Resources Center, and the Marotta Montessori preschool. Another tenant is Computer Assisted Learning Labs, created by the Urban League of Greater Cleveland in collaboration with the housing authority. The lab provides test preparation, software training, and opportunities for personal use of educational software. Approximately 150 to 200 residents use the lab weekly.

The Urban League's job search program, which has about 50 resident clients per week, enables residents to interview with employers onsite. Job developers work with corporations to provide job slots. Resident involvement is ensured because the Progressive Action Council (the public housing residents' organization), and the Resident Employment Opportunities Agency are located in the mall.

The services in the mall—which include preventive care, health education, and dental care—are open to residents of the surrounding neighborhood as well. The mall faces outward to encourage neighborhood use, which helps to break down the traditional isolation of public housing residents.

In the planning stages, the housing authority marketed the mall to prospective social service agencies by waiving the first year's rent for charter tenants. Offices quickly filled. Monthly meetings are held to facilitate collaboration and

joint programming by the mall's tenant organizations. A brochure highlights the services of each agency and the partners are in the process of developing an instrument to track interagency referrals.

### The Meaningful Engagement of Residents in the Life and Prospects of the Community

*"When you're paying the electric bill," says one former public housing resident, "you have to start worrying about turning off the TV when you go to bed, or fixing that dripping faucet before it leaves a stain—things you never had to think about before."*

An important factor in making HOPE VI programs work has been the inclusion of residents in planning and governance. People tend to take a greater interest in matters in which they have a stake and a say. Giving public housing residents a chance to invest something of themselves—their time, their energy, their ideas—in activities that affect their own future and that of their community has been critical to program success. In public housing communities where residents are progressing toward *self-sufficiency*, one will find opportunities for residents to take *self-responsibility*, both for their family and for the future of the whole community.

One example is the dramatic reduction in crime observed in formerly crime-ridden HOPE VI developments. Where crime has fallen, authorities confirm, it is because residents have been engaged in its suppression and supported in their efforts to set behavioral limits.

It is a principle of community building that one function of healthy communities is setting standards for acceptable behavior. The inability to curb crime, drugs, and gangs in their communities was a



source of great anxiety and frustration for many public housing residents in the past. Such activities also hurt residents by discouraging the neighborhood investment that might produce jobs, new housing, and amenities.

Increasing security measures and implementing the architectural principles of defensible space can accomplish only so much. Residents must themselves become agents of change by participating in the drawing up of tougher admission standards and supporting One Strike and You're Out eviction policies. It is this kind of engagement, coupled with the vigorous enforcement of these standards by the housing authority, that has clearly made the difference in developments such as Oakland's once-notorious Lockwood Gardens.

Creating opportunities for homeownership is another way to give residents a greater stake in their community, even as they move toward greater independence. The homeownership process tends to reinforce responsible habits by linking eligibility to such positive behavior as holding a job and making rent and utility payments on time. Homeownership training programs also provide training in skills such as money management, performing routine maintenance, and planning for contingencies. And owner-residents tend to take better care of property.

Residents and their organizations also have a role to play in relocation issues. Many public housing residents prefer to stay in their old neighborhoods, where they have friends and family and a new stake in the future. Reflecting this desire, resident councils have often been involved in drawing up and monitoring relocation and right-to-return policies. Other residents, when faced with relocation decisions, have opted to move on—perhaps as homeowners—to another life in another neighborhood. The goal of

community building is to ensure structures that provide choices that enable people to take advantage of the full range of life's opportunities. The choice should be theirs.

Resident engagement activities that should be encouraged are those that:

- Create opportunities for residents to use their skills, knowledge, or experience in ways that benefit the whole community.
- Provide resident advisory councils with the knowledge and understanding of the design and development process they need to participate meaningfully at every stage.
- Enhance the capacity of neighborhood leaders to bring about community development through their own actions and through encouraging others to get involved.
- Build a sense of community among residents and a sense of each individual's and family's stake in what happens to the community.
- Enable residents, as a community, to develop a consensus around shared core values and work with the housing authority and other stakeholders to establish standards for what will be acceptable and unacceptable in such matters as the maintenance of private property, disposal of waste, use of drugs or alcohol, and behavior in common areas.
- Allow residents to participate, from the beginning, in the process of assessing needs; identifying assets to build on and resources to tap; setting community priorities (for example, with respect to the relocation and return of affected families); planning and strategizing for different aspects of development; moni-

toring and evaluating each phase; and implementing the new operation.

- Keep the entire resident population—especially those temporarily relocated elsewhere—informed and connected to the community and opportunities being developed.
- Build bridges to the larger community and welcome the input of stakeholders and residents from the surrounding neighborhood.
- Allow qualified residents, armed with the knowledge they need to succeed, to explore other lifestyle options such as homeownership.

The kinds of assets and resources that could help foster such activities would include:

- A talent or skills bank.
- Opportunities for utilizing such skills or experience.
- Business professionals willing to serve as consultants to the resident council in their areas of expertise.
- Local universities, community colleges, or nonprofit organizations willing to provide technical assistance or training classes for resident leaders (preferably onsite).
- Community policing.
- Resident training and technical assistance programs such as those offered by HUD's HOPE VI office.
- A community-building facilitator based at the public housing site.
- A convenient location, preferably onsite, where training and supportive services can be provided.
- Opportunities for homeownership and homeownership-readiness education.



- Neighborhood stakeholders willing to work with public housing residents on neighborhood betterment activities.
- Local policies that further the transformation of public housing into a mechanism for helping residents move toward sustainable self-sufficiency.

Some examples of best practices in this program area follow.

### In Baltimore, HOPE VI-Affected Residents Find Not Simply Relocation but Mobility

“Housing authorities have to decide,” says Ruth Crystal of the Baltimore Regional Housing Mobility Program, “whether what they’re doing is relocation assistance or mobility counseling. Relocation has to do with getting you out of a specific public housing project. Mobility is about having choices about where you want to live and making the right one for you.”

The mobility program, which Crystal directs, uses personalized case management with a focus on the family. To date, more than 145 families affected by HOPE VI demolition and construction have been relocated successfully. More than two-thirds of these residents have chosen to relocate to areas not affected by HOPE VI. By recruiting new landlords into the program, case managers are increasing the availability of affordable housing—and thus the choices afforded to families that opt for a Section 8 voucher.

The program provides mobility counseling and search assistance to Section 8 recipients in Baltimore and five nearby counties. It is one of 16 operations to receive funding from HUD’s Regional Opportunity Counseling Program.

Residents who elect to accept Section 8 subsidies for scattered-site rentals begin with a one-on-one introductory interview. The introduction talks about opportunity areas in Baltimore and the surrounding counties and then explains the advantages of each. A case manager visits each family to become aware of all members’ concerns. The case manager also checks to see if the family has sufficient housekeeping skills to blend into a new community. Families that need help are referred to an appropriate resource.

**The case manager’s job is not to find housing for families, but to provide families with information and assistance to use to find their own housing.**

The case manager talks with family members to determine what is important to them in a community, such as a good school system, proximity to friends or relatives, or access to public transportation. The agency provides information on demographics, schools, transportation facilities, and other amenities. When a family has narrowed its choices, the case manager may drive the members around the chosen community or introduce them to other Section 8 families already living there.

The case manager’s job is not to find housing for families, but to provide families with information and assistance to use to find their own housing. When appropriate, a case manager may intervene with a landlord on behalf of a family. Landlords who balk at participating in the Section 8 program sometimes

change their minds when they meet the family in question or when a case manager can address their specific concerns.

The case manager helps the family with the move and the process of settling in. Families who move to nonimpacted areas, as defined by the county, receive a dollar-for-dollar match on their security deposits. After the move, the case manager makes followup calls to the families and their landlords, then contacts the families intermittently over the next year to help them resolve any problems that may have arisen. “Followup is crucial,” says Crystal.

She is proud of the program’s accomplishments: more than 68 percent of the families served have moved to low-poverty areas. She cautions, however, that such a program is labor-intensive, referring to the Gautreaux mobility project in Chicago. “People throw out a cost of \$1,500 per family based on Gautreaux, but that did not involve individual case management,” she warns. “The real cost of successfully relocating a family is closer to \$4,000.”

### Kansas City Resident Task Force Plays Many Roles in HOPE VI Revitalization

Residents of Guinotte Manor were brought into the HOPE VI process early, with their input incorporated into the application submitted by the Housing Authority of Kansas City. A task force, made up of several members of the elected 15-member Guinotte Manor Tenants Association and chosen by the residents at large, consulted with the housing authority on every aspect and phase of the HOPE VI revitalization process. Task force members were responsible for keeping Guinotte Manor residents abreast of HOPE VI developments. Each member was responsible for keeping a particular

group of families informed and bringing their ideas and concerns back to the full task force.

To assure meaningful participation, all members of the tenant association received training in community organizing, parliamentary procedure, goal setting, conflict resolution, sensitivity training, and how to run an effective meeting. Five or six attended each HOPE VI conference.

During the planning process, staff met twice weekly with the residents' association task force to apprise them of what was happening and to invite their input. The two groups continue to meet on a weekly basis, with HOPE VI staff serving as technical advisors to the residents' association.

Every week the HOPE VI staff issues a written report alerting residents about all pending activities and approaching decisions. The tenants association disseminates this information throughout the housing development and brings back any questions or concerns. A community meeting of all residents is held four times a year.

With the help of technical assistance consultants, the task force members have become, in effect, resident experts on the various issues affecting themselves and their fellow residents. They have participated in the selection of service providers, HOPE VI staff, architects, and contractors. The task force members have become the watchdogs and whistleblowers for the housing authority, alerting it to any problems with compliance or implementation reported by residents.

With the residents' association now serving as an advisory board to the housing authority on a wide variety of matters, a new level of trust has grown up between housing authority staff and Guinotte

Manor residents. Resident representatives explain policies and procedures to the other residents and see to it that housing authority and staff address their concerns. Staff members report that more involved residents set higher expectations for themselves, take better care of property, and exhibit a greater interest in community affairs.

**This council  
represents the interests  
of neighborhood  
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### **Residents Help Build Community Assets in St. Louis**

An innovative community task force was developed in St. Louis to support the revitalization of the George L. Vaughn Residences at Murphy Park—an ambitious mixed-finance, mixed-income development being built with \$22 million in public housing development grant funds from HUD. The project, when complete, will include 222 public housing units within a 400-unit development managed and marketed by a private management company, McCormack Baron & Associates.

A community-based neighborhood steering committee was formed to coordinate two major undertakings seen as having tremendous value for the community. The first was a comprehensive set of neighborhood revitalization activities,

including welfare-to-work initiatives, to be carried out by the state of Missouri in this inner-city neighborhood near downtown. The second was supervision of the transformation of Jefferson Elementary School into a community school.

The steering committee—composed of public housing residents and representatives from neighborhood organizations, the housing authority, and other stakeholders—is called COVAM (see page 79). Although none of these developments are HOPE VI communities, COVAM illustrates the kind of broad-based community initiative that HOPE VI encourages.

This council represents the interests of neighborhood residents and other stakeholders, such as businesses, organizations, and local governments. COVAM also functions as the oversight board for the Jefferson School, which was placed under community control through an agreement negotiated with the St. Louis School Board. Its mission includes:

- Fighting for fair housing.
- Increasing affordable housing and homeownership opportunities.
- Reducing homelessness.
- Promoting jobs and economic opportunity.
- Empowering people and communities.
- Restoring public trust.

Building on COVAM's success, a similar task force has now emerged in support of the redevelopment of the Darst-Webbe public housing development a mile or so away. Darst-Webbe is being revitalized through a \$47.7 million HOPE VI grant. The Darst-Webbe Community Task Force—with representatives of public housing residents, the housing authority, the city, neighborhood

organizations, and other stakeholders—is credited with saving the HOPE VI project there, which was in default and in danger of being revoked. Darst-Webbe will be a mixed-finance, mixed-income community with a revitalized neighborhood school structured on the Jefferson School model.

### **Neighborhood Equity Fund Will Support Resident Priorities in Tucson**

Strategizing and acting in concert to improve the capacity of the community to generate jobs and other opportunities—and to support the values of its residents—is a critical aspect of community building.

In Tucson, the residents of the Greater Santa Rosa neighborhood are working with the Community Foundation for Southern Arizona, the Enterprise Foundation, and the city of Tucson to develop the Neighborhood Equity Fund. The fund will function like a small community foundation for the Santa Rosa neighborhood and will be housed within the community foundation.

Santa Rosa is a neighborhood in the process of gentrification that contains an eclectic mix of upscale offices, historic adobe homes, middle- and lower-income families, and the Connie Chambers HOPE VI development. By focusing residents and other stakeholders on common concerns and their shared stake in Santa Rosa's future, says Bob Pollack of Tucson Community Services, the fund has helped unify the community. An advisory board made up of neighborhood representatives has been meeting over the past 6 months to set up the parameters of the fund.

The community foundation will back local investment projects felt to be in the community's long-term interest. An entrepreneur who does not meet traditional qualifications for a microenterprise loan from the Santa Rosa-based Tucson El Pueblo Credit Union may be referred to the fund. If the new enterprise is felt to address a priority identified by residents in connection with HOPE VI revitalization, the fund might guarantee the loan; and the Small Business Center at Pima Community College might help develop the business plan.

The fund will provide ongoing resources for resident priorities after the HOPE VI project is completed. It could support business loans, social and recreational programs, beautification projects, or individual development accounts for neighborhood residents.

The community foundation will administer the fund and act as fiscal agent. Foundation staff will underwrite all requests for equity investments, cash disbursements, and loans. To date, the city of Tucson has contributed \$225,000. HOPE VI contributed \$225,000, the Fannie Mae Foundation \$150,000, and the Enterprise Foundation \$100,000. The goal is to raise \$3 million. The Enterprise Foundation and Fannie Mae are assisting Tucson in its fund-raising campaigns at both the local and national levels.

### **Everything Aimed Toward Family Goals: Chester Housing Authority's One-Stop Shop for Self-Sufficiency**

Family self-sufficiency means more than a job for the head of the household. It means a family has identified goals for

itself and for its individual members, and developed a strategy for reaching those goals. It means everybody understands their responsibility to one another and for the success of the whole. In some places it takes the form of a contract signed by family members and the housing authority.

The family agrees to stay focused on its goals and to do whatever is required to continue to make progress. For its part, the housing authority agrees to provide access to opportunity and all the supportive services the family will need to succeed. Such programs are most effective when carefully coordinated and community-based—so that the successes of one family may encourage others and help establish a supportive culture of work.

A case in point is the One-Stop Shop of the Chester Housing Authority (CHA) in Chester, Pennsylvania. Housed in donated space in the Crozer-Keystone Health Center, it acts as a focal point for the housing authority's Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program. The center is located near the Ruthel Bennett, William Penn, McCafferty, and Lamokin Village developments; McCafferty and Lamokin Village are HOPE VI sites. A group of public agencies and nonprofit organizations provide a comprehensive array of services for residents out of the center.

The FSS program is results-oriented. Participants are placed in competitive temporary employment with local companies. After gaining some experience and establishing a work record, they may attain full-time permanent employment. More than 40 businesses, temporary agencies, and customer service agencies come onsite to recruit. The housing authority serves as a temporary placement site and has hired some residents full time. A 5-week property maintenance training program for residents is under development.

The program is comprehensive and integrated. FSS case managers work closely with local Department of Public Welfare case managers who are also located onsite. One-Stop Shop managers work closely with the Chester Office of Employment and Training and the Chester Job Center. Duplication of effort is minimized while the impact of resources is maximized.

Supportive services include case management, skills assessment, job-readiness programs, homeownership counseling, alcohol and drug counseling, educational development, and health and wellness programs. Case managers make more than 150 contacts with participating families; a dozen different workshops, dealing with a variety of issues, are held; and more than 20 residents interview with potential employers onsite each month. Many partners operate onsite at the One-Stop Shop:

- The Crozer-Keystone Health Center provides mental health and substance abuse services.
- Women's and Children's Health Services, a component of Crozer-Keystone, operates a wellness and fitness program for CHA residents.
- The Chester Education Foundation provides Work First, a training component that leads to short-term job placement.
- The Delaware County Family Centers coordinate family education and leisure/recreation activities.
- The YWCA provides computer classes in the One-Stop Shop's computer lab.
- The Chester Community Improvement Project provides mortgage counseling.

- The Delaware County Community College offers skills training and GED classes.

As of April 1999, 200 public housing and Section 8 participants have signed FSS contracts. Sixty-five have become employed and started escrow accounts—savings earmarked for an important family goal such as homeownership that cannot be touched for any other purpose.

**"We wanted it to be more about community and maintenance, to clean up not just crime, but also grime."**

### **Cleaning Up Not Just Crime, But Grime: Baltimore's Project ECHO**

Chief Hezekiah Bunch of the Baltimore Housing Police Force tells it this way: "When I came here in 1993, Commissioner Benson wanted to get control of the neighborhoods. We went to Chicago and stole some of their ideas from their Clean Sweeps program. But we decided we didn't want to focus on police activities. We wanted it to be more about community and maintenance, to clean up not just crime, but also grime."

The program that residents and housing police developed is called Extraordinary Comprehensive Housekeeping Operation (ECHO). ECHO combines concentrated law enforcement, social services, repair, and beautification activities at a public housing complex. Since it was launched in summer 1993, the Housing Authority of Baltimore City has

conducted more than 19 ECHO operations. More than 30 nonpublic housing communities have also used the ECHO strategy; and crime has been reduced by more than half in some places.

The program consists of three parts: pre-ECHO, the Day of Operations, and post-ECHO. The pre-ECHO planning phase involves gathering input from community leaders and city, state, and federal agencies. On the Day of Operations, more than 350 people may be deployed in two different staging areas. First, some 150 housing authority security and police officers, the county sheriff, and state police secure the area. Then teams of social workers, security officers, ECHO inspectors, housing managers, and maintenance workers go door-to-door to inspect each unit for repairs and maintenance needs and to identify families in need of social services. New security measures are instituted in the lobbies and residents are issued photo identification cards. The post-ECHO phase involves followup and implementing plans to sustain these positive changes.

ECHO is built on the cooperation of resident and community leaders, the housing authority, state and federal agencies, the Baltimore mayor's office, and several city agencies. ECHO is not specifically a HOPE VI program. However, the program—with its inclusion of residents, bolstering of community values such as keeping a residential area clean and crime-free, and coordination of a wide range of community partners—is the sort of effort encouraged by the HOPE VI program.

The cost of each sweep is approximately \$200,000. Agencies share the costs of the personnel involved. The principal expense is materials used for cleanup and repair. As part of pre- and post-



ECHO, housing authority police work with the team to look for funding to maintain and supplement gains made.

## Getting Opportunity Organized: Seattle's NewHolly Homeownership Program

A homeownership program is an opportunity for the community as well as for individual families. Homeownership helps to stabilize neighborhoods and enhances their appeal as places to live and do business.

The NewHolly Homeownership Program, developed by the Seattle Housing Authority at the NewHolly HOPE VI site, reflects a vision of the importance of homeownership in a low-income community. Of the 400 for-sale units that eventually will be brought online at NewHolly, 100 will be targeted specifically toward buyers who are at or below 80 percent of median income. In Phase I of the redevelopment, 37 of 100 for-sale units are being targeted to public housing residents and other low-and-moderate-income buyers. Buyers who are at or below 80 percent of median income will be assisted in making their downpayment with \$1.2 million in HOME funds made available by the city of Seattle.

The housing authority is working with Habitat for Humanity in Phase I to develop four homes that will be reserved for pre-HOPE VI Holly Park families with very low incomes—between 25 percent and 50 percent of the area's median income. On completion, the partners will assess the potential for two additional homes in Phase II.

The program includes education and counseling; downpayment assistance; a range of mortgage products, services,

and discounts; and housing counseling for resident training. It sets up a continuum of homeownership education and counseling called a circle of services. Providers include partners from the Fremont Public Housing Association, the Holly Park Community Council, Consumer Credit Counseling, the Washington State Housing Finance Commission, Fannie Mae, HUD's Federal Housing Administration program, the lending community, the Federal Home Loan Bank, and other agencies. The state housing commission provides homebuyer workshops consisting of a 5-hour certificate course and 6-week intensive training classes.

NewHolly residents, many of them immigrants with limited English proficiency, may receive translation support. Prepurchase counseling, with homebuyer club and individual counseling sessions held monthly, helps families clear up credit issues, learn to maintain a budget, and establish a savings plan. Postpurchase counseling helps buyers keep current with mortgage payments and provides default prevention counseling if emergencies arise.

The homeownership program, in partnership with lending institutions, offers a variety of mortgage products, discounts on mortgage loans, and specialized services for buyers. Mortgage products will include first-time buyer loan programs, FHA, VA, conventional mortgages, portfolio loan programs, and specially designed programs. All loan programs offer special discounts on closing costs for low-income buyers. Downpayment assistance is provided through a number of financing sources—such as HOME funds, housing authority mortgages, and the Federal Home Loan Bank matching savings plan—which can be layered to create a financing package affordable to low-

income buyers. In support of the neighborhood's goal of developing a truly mixed-income community, discounts are offered to market-rate buyers as an incentive to purchase homes at NewHolly.

One of the objectives of the homeownership program is to provide employment training and job opportunities for public housing residents. Four multilingual translators have been trained as homebuyer education counselors through internship programs and full-time employment by participating lending institutions. These workers spend 20 hours a week translating information—at homebuyer classes and in one-on-one homebuyer counseling sessions—and 20 hours studying the mortgage industry. Housing authority staff anticipate that this training will result in residents' obtaining permanent, full-time jobs at mortgage lending institutions within 2 years. To date, Seafirst/Bank of America has hired one public housing resident and Norwest Mortgage is in the process of recruiting two others.

The NewHolly Homebuyer Education Program is funded by a 2-year grant of \$100,000 from the Fannie Mae Foundation, \$97,000 in HOPE VI funds, and \$17,000 from the Washington State Housing Finance Commission.

The program is making a difference:

- By April 1999, a total of 211 families had completed homebuyer education. Fifty families are original Holly Park residents who chose to remain onsite and 40 are residents of other public housing projects.
- The program has counseled more than 55 families and is helping them to attain homeownership.
- Seven Holly Park residents have been identified as lease-to-own candidates for Phase I. Eight public

housing residents are in the process of receiving preapproval for mortgages. By June 1, 1999, more than 15 public housing residents were bank-qualified for a mortgage or the lease-to-own program.

- Two families, former Holly Park residents who took Section 8 vouchers rather than move back to NewHolly, have been approved for mortgage loans and are now ready to buy market-rate homes.
- Four families not from public housing have been preapproved and are ready to buy affordable homes in Phase I at NewHolly.
- Four residents hired as translators are not only graduates of homebuyer training, but they have also developed an understanding of the technical information involved in buying a home and are able to translate it accurately.

## **Homeownership Institute of the Charlotte Housing Authority**

Juanita Oates, homeownership case manager for the Charlotte Housing Authority (CHA), was troubled by the realization that, as she puts it, “there are so many families who want to own homes, but who are not ideal candidates.” Part of the reason may be financial—low income or perhaps a poor credit record—while another part may be an inadequate understanding of the process. This realization led Oates to establish the Homeownership Institute.

This intensive program, funded by HOPE VI and CHA, offers an intensive group educational experience covering all aspects of homeownership—from budgeting to home maintenance—and one-on-one help resolving any personal financial issues that may stand in the way. The program consists of 2 group sessions and 1 individual session each month for 13 months.

**The Charlotte program has had a remarkable success rate: nearly 75 percent of its graduates have bought or will shortly buy a home.**

Many of the group sessions are taught by area brokers, realtors, and bankers. Participants receive not only expert advice, but also an opportunity to build relationships with people they may later work with to buy a home. The program has built relationships with six banks, although staff do not encourage participants to seek financing through any particular bank.

Staff also work with families to overcome their personal barriers to homeownership. This may include coaching a resident on how to ask her boss for a raise, helping a potential buyer clear up a poor or misstated credit report, or helping a family learn to stick to a

budget. Participants may ask questions and explore subjects in depth.

The Charlotte program has had a remarkable success rate: nearly 75 percent of its graduates have bought or will soon buy a home. Even families with incomes as low as \$14,000 have been able to become homeowners by working with Habitat for Humanity to build their own homes using sweat equity.

In addition to partnering with area brokers, realtors, bankers, and Habitat for Humanity, the Homeownership Institute has set up an advisory council consisting of volunteers from the business community and local agencies. The council includes two mortgage bankers, a realtor, a real estate lawyer, a housing inspector, a Better Business Bureau regulator, and a mortgage consultant. The two alternates are a community development coordinator and an Urban League representative. The advisory council provides input to the program, serves as a resource for families working toward homeownership, and promotes and supports programs that provide these families with educational and financial opportunities.

“The Charlotte Housing Authority’s Homeownership Institute is specifically designed,” says Oates, “to help low-income families achieve their homeownership goals.” Anyone who is a resident of public housing or Section 8 housing or on the CHA waiting list and is interested in homeownership is eligible as long as he or she has the potential (with assistance) of becoming mortgage-ready within 18 months.



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