



Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Chelsea Andrews
Executive Director

May 3, 2023

HOC AT-A-GLANCE: April 2023

April's highlights:

- HUD Grant for Stability Vouchers
- The Laureate Opens its Doors to Residents
- Highlights from our Resident Services Division
- Updates from our Housing Resource Division
- Real Estate Development activities
- Mortgage Finance Division update
- Finance Division update



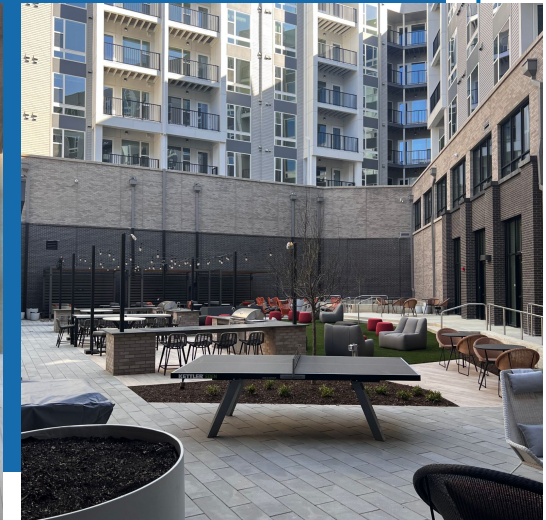
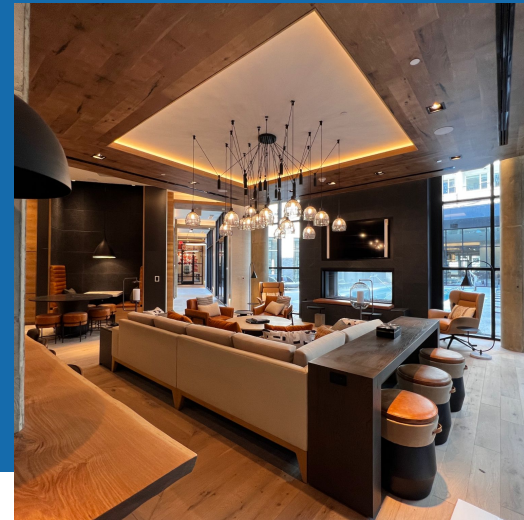
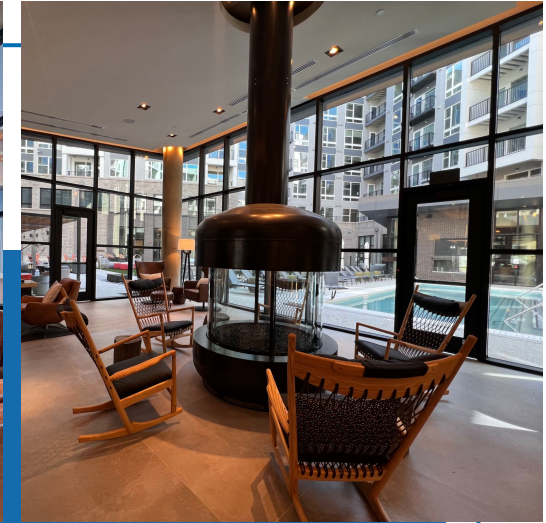
ED's Choice for Spotlight:

HUD Grant Award

- HOC awarded 25 Stability Vouchers to provide rental assistance.
- HOC will accept these vouchers in partnership with Montgomery County's Continuum of Care.
- In the state of Maryland, HUD awarded Stability Vouchers to HOC (25 vouchers) and Rockville Housing Enterprises (5 vouchers), with a total value of \$4,870,352.

The Laureate Opened Its Doors to Residents

- The Laureate is a 268-unit mixed-income, mixed-use new construction project located in Rockville.
- HOC's first development to utilize the Housing Production Fund.
- First resident moves occurred in April.
- HOC will host a grand opening event on June 8, 2023.



RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Service Coordination and Programming

- Customers were referred to our partners to receive food and other assistance.
- Resident Counselors performed wellness checks with customers.
- Customers with delinquent rent were referred/connected to the COVID Rental Assistance Program, the Emergency Rental Assistance Program, and the Housing Stabilization Program.
- HOC's customers continue to receive referrals (e.g., unemployment assistance, Temporary Cash Assistance, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, etc.).
- Virtual briefings for new voucher recipients.
- Resource Services team continues to provide services to persons with disabilities.

RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Service Coordination and Programming

Workshops:

- **April 18:** Facilitated Resource Sharing workshop
- **April 19:** Facilitated the Fundamentals of Housing workshop

Resident Well Being:

- **Activities for Youth:**
 - **After-School Programs:** Safe Zones program at Cider Mill continued in April.
 - **STEM Enrichment:** On **April 4, 6 and 11**, HOC held STEM enrichment programs for youth at Cider Mill.



RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Service Coordination and Programming (cont.)

Resident Well Being

- **Activities for Youth and Families:**
 - **Meet and Greet:** Staff facilitated meet and greets to introduce/re-introduce counselors to residents and provide information on HOC programs.
 - **Recreation:** Staff hosted an ice cream social and community bingo at Magruders Discover (**April 5**); Easter Egg Hunt at Tanglewood (**April 7**); and a movie night at Washington Square (**April 10**).



RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Service Coordination and Programming (cont.)

Resident Well Being

- **Activities for Seniors:**
 - **Digital Equity:** On **April 1** Social Work interns facilitated an introductory/101 computer workshop at Arcola Towers
 - **Arts for the Aging:** On **April 1** and **20**, staff facilitated an art activity at Arcola Towers entitled "I've Gotta Be Me: Portrait Fan." On **April 13**, an activity was facilitated at Waverly House entitled "Blues Guitar and Dance."
 - **Health and Wellness Services:** On **April 10**, a Diabetic Shoe Clinic was facilitated at Arcola Towers and Waverly House.



RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Service Coordination and Programming (cont.)

Resident Well Being

- **Activities for Seniors:**
 - **Food and Nutrition:** The Bauer Park Senior Nutrition Lunch Program reopened on **April 3**, offering an opportunity for addressing nutrition and senior socialization.
 - **Recreation:** Staff hosted arts and crafts activities for customers at Fenton Silver Spring on **April 5**.



RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Service Coordination and Programming (cont.)

Relocation and Re-Certification Assistance

- The Resident Services Division continued to assist customers on an ongoing basis with relocations and other needs related to renovation projects.
- Staff provided continued outreach and assistance to customers who have failed to submit all required documents for re-certification by the stated deadline.

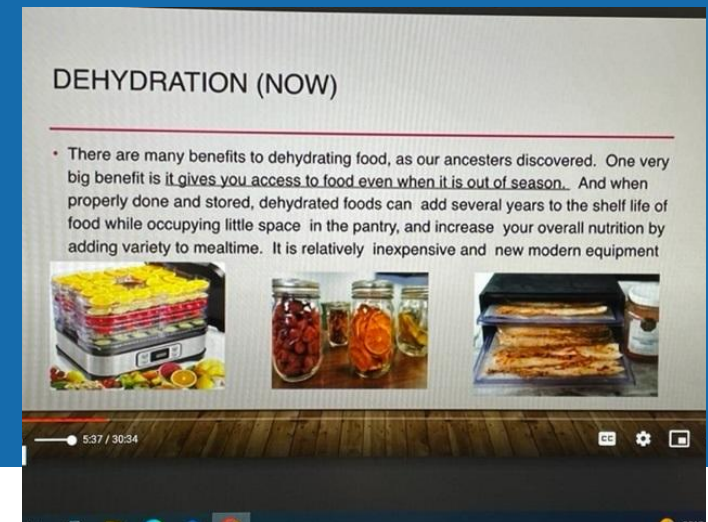
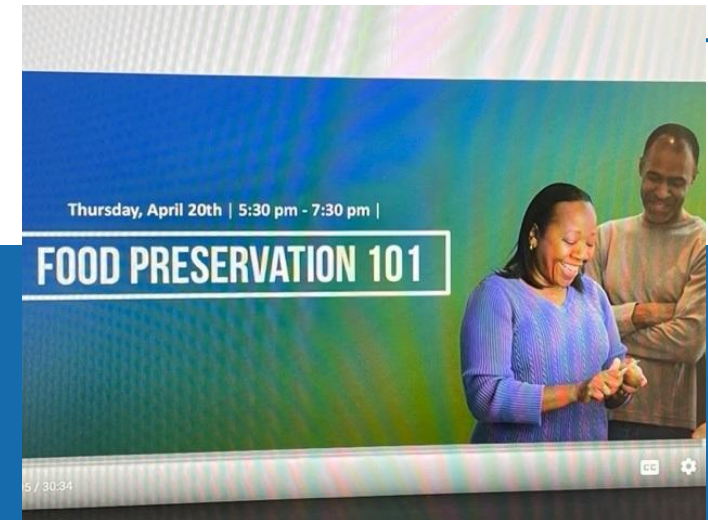
Rental Assistance

- Staff provided face-to-face, telephonic and electronic outreach and assistance to customers with applications for the CDBG and other rental assistance programs.

RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Service Coordination and Programming

- Provided food and other resource support to 420 HOC customers through partnerships with: Manna Food Center, Emmanuel Brinklow Seventh Day Adventist Church, Montgomery County Senior Nutrition Lunch Program, Capital Area Food Bank’s Senior Brown Bag, and My Groceries To Go Programs.
- **April 20:** Food Preservation Program held at Washington Square which explored the history of food preservation and its benefits.

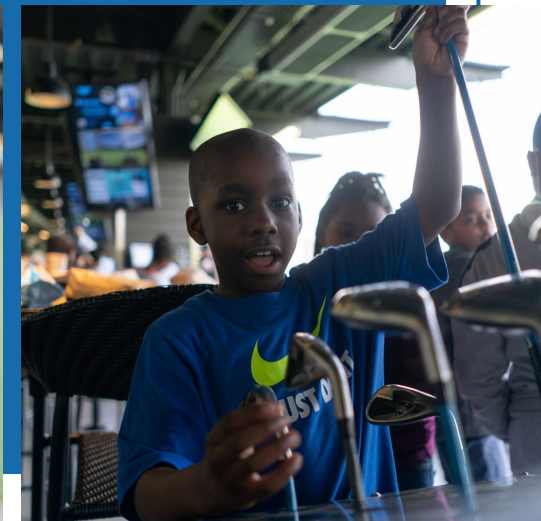


RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

HOC Academy

Youth Education/Enrichment:

- **April 15:** HOC Academy facilitated a Family STEM Festival in the HOC Kensington gym.
- **April 15:** HOC Academy facilitated a TopGolf field trip for youth at Tanglewood Apartments.
- First Generation College Bound Program participants continued to work with their coach and prepare for college.



RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

HOC Academy (cont.)

Adult Education and Workforce Development:

- **April 13:** Employment Fair was held at Cider Mill, designed to expose customers to organizations and job opportunities, including current HOC positions.
- **April 17 - May 17:** HOC Academy staff began facilitating a Microsoft 365 training course in partnership with Montgomery College. Course will run through May 17, 2023.



RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Financial Literacy

Financial Literacy Coach continued to work with HOC's customers and individuals on the Housing Path waitlist:

- Provided one-on-one financial literacy coaching to 15 HOC customers and four (4) individuals from the Housing Path waitlist.
- Facilitated financial literacy workshops: four (4) HOC customers and one (1) individual from the waitlist attended the workshops.



RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

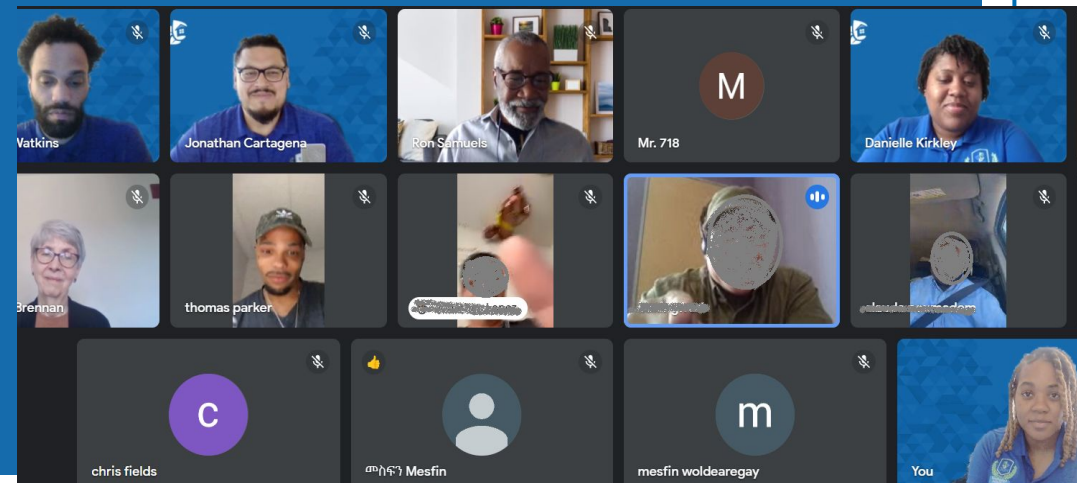
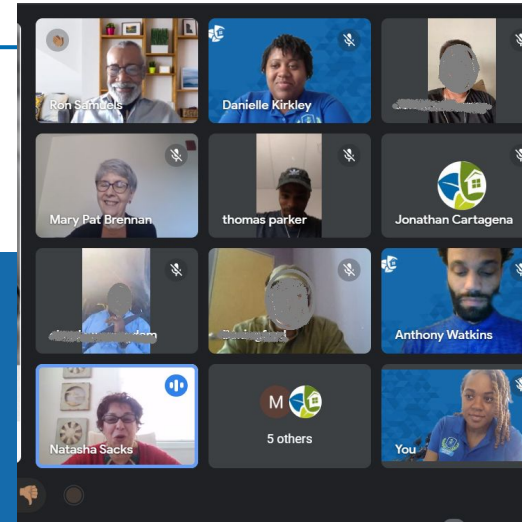
Supportive Services

- Program served 225 participants by conducting home visits with program participants, providing case management services, and paying rent and utilities.
- Continued to help Emergency Voucher recipients secure housing by providing housing location services, as well as financial assistance for application fees, security deposits, moving expenses and household items.
- Program staff continued to implement the Rent Supplement Program, which provides a shallow rental subsidy (up to \$600 monthly) to county residents, including a large number of seniors on fixed incomes. staff increased program participation to 276 participants this month, only 24 participants shy of the 300-person program target.

RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Fatherhood Initiative

- **April 21:** Program graduated 24 fathers from the February cohort
- Thirty four (34) fathers were enrolled for the cohort that will begin in May 2023
- **April 28:** HOC Academy and a special iFly indoor skydiving event was held for fathers and their families



RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Social Work Internship Program

- HOC hosts Bachelor of Social Work (“BSW”) and Master of Social Work (“MSW”) student interns.
- Interns are assigned Resident Counseling responsibilities and receive customized training for tasks, weekly supervision from their field instructor, and monthly group supervision organized by the Service Coordination Manager.
- Interns must serve at least three (3) clients, conduct a “macro” project, and develop and implement a group project during the academic year.
- This year we had a total of seven (7) interns, five (5) BSWs and two (2) MSW students.

HOUSING RESOURCES UPDATE:

Housing Choice Voucher (“HCV”) Program

- Currently, 145 families with issued vouchers are searching for suitable units to rent; and 132 contracts are pending execution. Two Hundred (200) families were selected from the HCV waitlist last month.
- The utilization rate has remained at 96%.
- During April the Division received four (4) requests for voucher extensions beyond the initial 90-day period. Three (3) of the four (4) extension requests warranted a referral to the Human Rights Commission and the Commission on Civil Rights for possible discrimination.



HOUSING RESOURCES UPDATE:

RENTCafé Used to Support Online Annual Recertifications

- HOC introduced use of RENTCafé to assist with annual recertifications.
- Customers with recertifications effective April 2023, required to submit electronic annual recertifications.
- Overall, 405 out of 693 customers submitted their paperwork electronically.
- Fifty-nine (59) customers were recommended for program termination effective April 1, 2023. The Resident Services Division worked in collaboration with the Housing Resources Division to assess client needs and to determine why recertifications were not being completed.

HOUSING RESOURCES UPDATE:

RENTCafé Used to Support Online Annual Recertifications (cont.)

Resident Services Counselors assisted twenty-eight (28) families with the recertification requirement and overturned the termination. Termination proceedings will continue for thirty-one (31) families for the following reasons:

- 29 – Failed to respond to counselor outreach
- 2 – Deceased

Housing Resources Division will continue to work collaboratively with Resident Services to assist customers facing termination

HOUSING RESOURCES UPDATE:

Emergency Housing Vouchers (“EHVs”)

HOC has an allocation of 118 Emergency Housing Vouchers.

- 100 families have successfully leased units.
- Four (4) families with issued vouchers are searching for suitable units to rent.
- Staff are reviewing two (2) certification packets to determine program eligibility.
- HOC requested ten (10) additional referrals from HHS for the EHV Program.



HOUSING RESOURCES UPDATE:

Family Self Sufficiency (“FSS”)

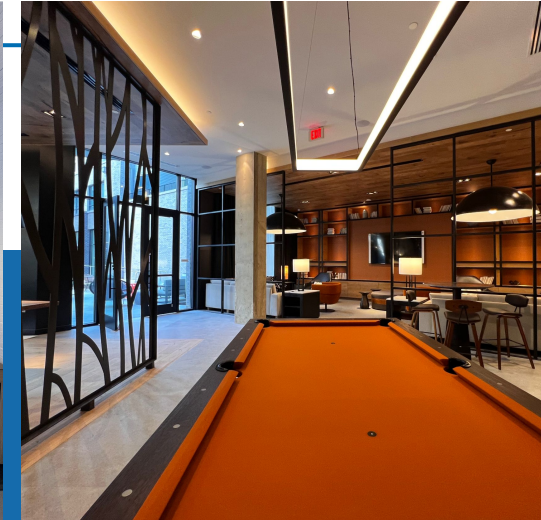
- FSS staff continued their recruitment efforts, with current enrollment consisting of 369 families
- Six (6) new families enrolled into the program, with three graduations occurring in April.
- **April 18:** HOC staff met with Worksource Montgomery to assess a range of resources for residents (i.e., local job centers, social services, etc.)..
- FSS Case Managers continue to work with customers on their long- and short-term self-sufficiency goals.



REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT UPDATE:

The Laureate

- First set of residents moved in April.
- Common areas and amenities nearly fully furnished.
- The residential portion achieved a 27% leasing rate and overall 5% occupancy rate.
- HOC's UpCounty Customer Service Center, which features approximately 7,400 sq. ft. of office space will be relocated late summer 2023 and will welcome clients to our new offices.



REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT UPDATE:

State Partners:

- Real Estate Development (“RED”) team met with the Maryland Community Development Administration (“CDA”) to discuss HOC's volume cap needs to support our Single Family Mortgage Program and future Low-Income Housing Tax Credit development transactions, including the transformative mixed-income, mixed-use, sustainable Hillandale Gateway project, etc.
- Meeting was well received by Governor Wes Moore's newest appointees, and representatives were excited and receptive to our requests to fund these respective priorities accordingly.

MORTGAGE FINANCE UPDATE:

Working with Our Stakeholders

- Collaboration with RED team in requesting additional volume cap from the State of Maryland CDA.
- Webinar hosted by the Greater Capital Area Association of Realtors and Mortgage Finance single-family team.



FINANCE UPDATE:

HOC Awarded Additional FEMA Support

- Finance Team continues to work with FEMA for reimbursement of eligible COVID-19 expenses.
- In addition to the \$680,147 received in March 2023, FEMA approved another \$16,085 in April.
- Staff will produce final application to cover eligible costs covering July 2 thru May 11, 2023.



FEMA

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

THE END

