



Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County

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# REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

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**Chelsea Andrews**  
President

February 07 2024

## HOC AT-A-GLANCE: January 2024

### January highlights:

- Westwood Tower Staff Appreciation Breakfast
- HOC in the News
- Highlights from our Resident Services Division
- Updates from our Housing Resources Division
- Maintenance Division updates
- Mortgage Finance highlights
- Real Estate Development activities



# WESTWOOD STAFF APPRECIATION BREAKFAST:

- HOC hosted a Staff Appreciation Breakfast in recognition of staff efforts in support of the Westwood Tower Apartments emergency response



## HOC IN THE NEWS:

### Citybiz

- Citibiz.com recapped HOC's 2023 accomplishments in its Jan. 12 Baltimore/Washington, D.C. edition

### "I Hate Politics" Podcast

- Senior Vice President of Real Estate Zachary Marks well-represented HOC on the Jan. 19 podcast with political scientist Sunil Dasgupta



# RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

## Service Coordination and Programming

### Resident Well Being

- **Activities for Youth and Families:**
  - **After-School / Out-of-School Programs:** SON facilitated the Safe Zones program at Cider Mill for 30 participants
  - **Tutoring and Enrichment:** Teens at Stewartown Homes participated in the life skills tutoring program
  - **Piano Pals** offered free piano lessons **Jan. 13 and 27** at Tanglewood Apartments, facilitated by the Tacy Foundation *(pictured right)*



# RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Service Coordination and Programming (cont.)

## Resident Well Being

- **Activities for Youth and Families:**
  - **Jan. 12, 22 and 29:** Computer distributions at Magruder’s Discovery and Seneca Ridge
  - **Jan. 26:** Meet & Greet at Strathmore Court



# RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

## Service Coordination and Programming (cont.)

### Resident Well Being

- **Activities for Seniors:**
  - **Jan. 17:** Residents enjoyed bingo at Waverly House and at Forest Oak Towers **Jan. 18**
  - **Jan. 22 & 23:** Residents of Forest Oak Towers and Residences on The Lane participated in a lively performance of winter and holiday songs *(pictured right)*



# RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

## Service Coordination and Programming (cont.)

### Resident Well Being

- **Activities for Seniors:**
  - **Jan. 26:** Residents at Forest Oak Towers participated in a meet and greet with new residents
  - **Jan. 27:** Grow w/ Google informative event for Arcola Towers residents



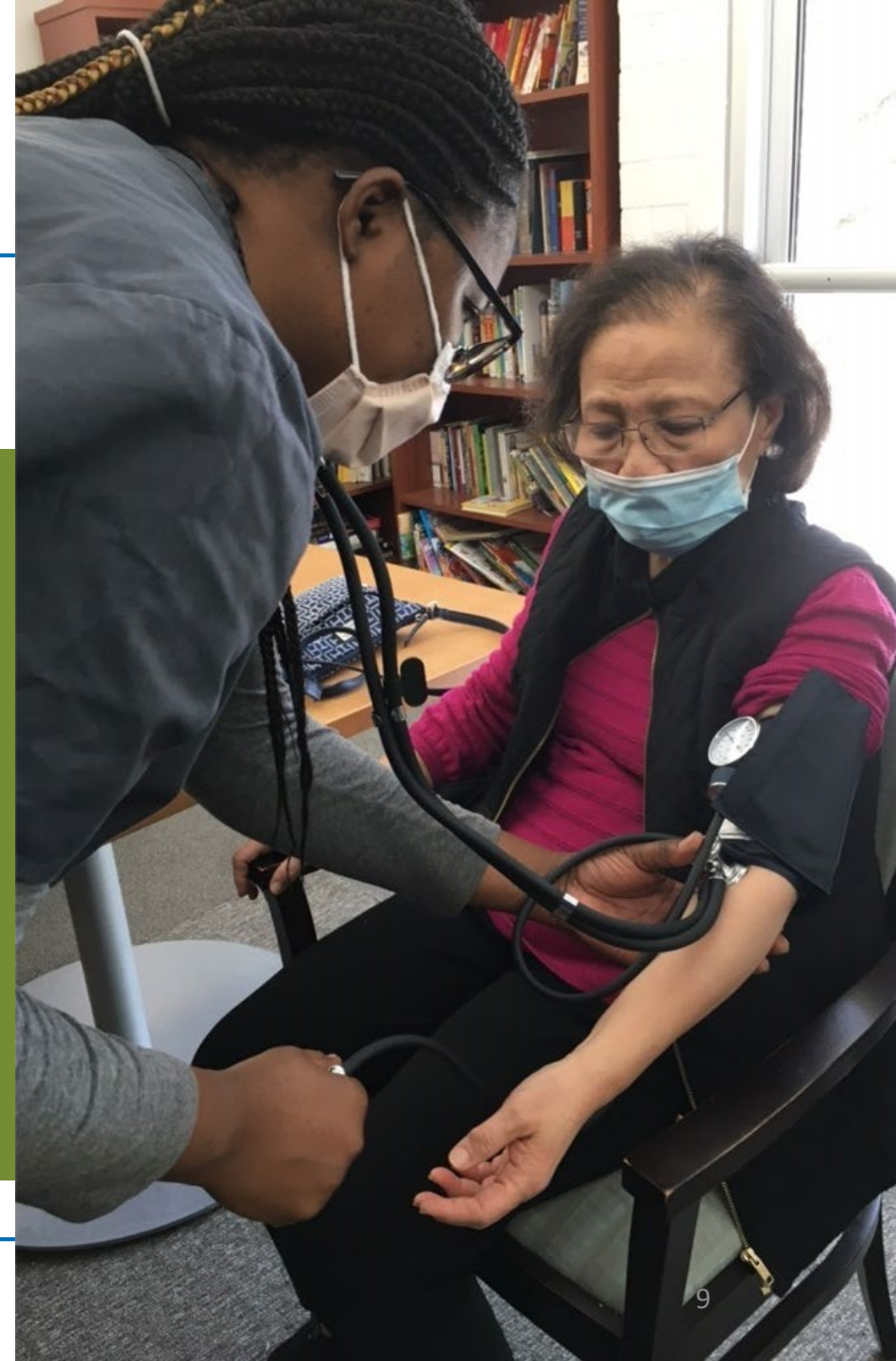


# RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

## Service Coordination and Programming (cont.)

### Resident Well Being

- **Activities for Seniors:**
  - **Jan. 29 & 31:** University of Maryland Student Nurses provided health screenings for residents of Willow Manor at Fair Hill Farm and Residences on The Lane



# RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

## Service Coordination and Programming (cont.)

- **Relocation and Re-Certification Assistance:**
  - Assisted customers on an ongoing basis with relocations and other needs for RAD and renovation projects at Residences on the Lane, Stewartown Homes, Shady Grove Apartments, Willow Manor Apartments, Bauer Park, Town Center Olney, Sandy Spring, Willow Manor and Georgian Court
- **Rental Assistance:**
  - Twenty (20) residents received assistance from the Services to End & Prevent Homelessness, 34 residents completed intakes, 20 were approved for assistance and 14 cases are pending

# RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

## Service Coordination and Programming (cont.)

- **Food Assistance:**
  - Provided food and other resources to hundreds of residents in conjunction with Manna Food Center, Emmanuel Brinklow Seventh Day Adventist Church, Capital Area Food Bank's Senior Brown Bag, Nourish Bethesda and My Groceries To Go programs
  - Facilitated the Senior Nutrition Program, which provides meals and nutrition education for seniors in a congregate setting



# RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

## HOC Academy

### Youth Education/Enrichment: Elementary Initiative

- **Youth Enrichment Series (YES) After School Clubs:** Hosted a range of activities by Mad Science, Carpe Diem Arts, Cultural Arts, and Life Skills Club

### Middle/High School Initiative

- HOCA enrolled a new STEAM Forward member in summer courses and will sponsor them with a STEAM Forward scholarship



# RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

## HOC Academy (cont.)

### Adult Education and Workforce Development:

- Small Business Strategy Course (SBSC) alumni continue to report great progress and new business ventures
- Thirteen (13) alumni began the legalization process for their business
- Referred 55 customers to participate in the Montgomery College TechMap Foundation's two-day boot camp
- Sponsoring Cohort #2 of the Microsoft 365 Training Series course that began **Feb. 1**

# RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

## Financial Literacy

Financial Literacy Coach continued counseling customers about money

- Provided one-on-one coaching to 21 HOC customers and seven individuals from the Housing Path Wait List
- Facilitated six financial literacy workshops



# RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

## Supportive Services

- Program served **347 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 (RSP), which provides a shallow rental subsidy (up to \$600 monthly) to county residents, including a large number of seniors on fixed incomes

# RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

## Fatherhood Initiative

### Cohort 28 Graduation

- Most attended the Jan. 26 virtual event
- Alumnus of program Cohort 24 as guest speaker

### Fatherhood TIES

- Participated in the Elements for Success in Fatherhood Programs study kickoff Jan. 18

### Mid-Point Check-In

- Jan. 10 casual event for fathers to compare experiences and discuss their progress





# HOUSING RESOURCES UPDATE:

## Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program

- Currently, **96 families** with issued vouchers are searching for suitable units to rent; and **183 contracts** are pending execution
- During January, the Division received seven requests for a voucher extension beyond the initial 90-day period



# HOUSING RESOURCES UPDATE:

## RENTCafé Used to Support Online Annual Recertifications

- Overall, **372 of 600 customers** submitted recertification paperwork electronically
- **Fifty-two (52) customers** were recommended for program termination effective Jan. 1, 2024
- Resident Services Counselors assisted **26 families** with recertification requirement and overturned the termination. Termination proceedings will continue for **26 families** for the following reasons:
  - 22 – Failed to respond to counselor outreach
  - 1 – Deceased
  - 1 – Skip/Vacated without notice
  - 2 – Voluntary withdrawals

# HOUSING RESOURCES UPDATE:

## Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHVs)

- HOC has an allocation of 118 Emergency Housing Vouchers
- Currently **104 families** have successfully leased homes
- **Five (5) families** with issued vouchers are searching for suitable units to rent
- Staff currently has no certification packets for review to determine program eligibility



# HOUSING RESOURCES UPDATE:

## Family Self Sufficiency (FSS)

- Continued recruitment increased program size to **368 participants**
- **Three (3) families** graduated from the program
- Staff conducted a vision board workshop with FSS participants to help identify activities of interest
- Staff working to set up February free tax return preparation workshop



# MAINTENANCE UPDATE:

- Maintenance Division is rolling out a new bi-annual Preventive Maintenance and Unit Inspection program focused on scattered sites and HOC-managed properties
- Goal is to improve the performance and increase the lifespan and safety of equipment at each property
- Also intended to increase resident satisfaction and retention



# MORTGAGE FINANCE UPDATE:

- Single Family Mortgage Program (MPP) continues to have a positive impact on first-time homebuyers
- Words of thanks:
  - “He is a young person and buying his first home really meant a lot to him! He is extremely grateful to all of you! Thank you for making it happen!!” – Prime Lending Mortgage
  - “Just wanted you all to know how much this new homeowner appreciated your partnership in her successful closing on her new home.” – Embrace Home Loans
- Assisting borrowers still recovering from the pandemic and others facing possible foreclosure

# REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT UPDATE:

January produced three significant RED accomplishments:

- Application for the Site Plan Amendment for Building B at Westside Shady Grove was accepted on **Jan. 24**
- Georgian Court Apartments complex achieved full construction completion
- Shady Grove Apartments reached substantial completion, only minor service work left, already fully leased back up to stabilization



# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

THE END

