The Hillside Resource Center Opens its Doors

On April 9, 2013, the Hillside community celebrated the official grand opening of its newest resource center. The grand opening festivities included an official ribbon cutting ceremony, followed by refreshments and an outdoor celebration/health expo for the Hillside community. There are four other partnering resource centers situated within RRHA community units and are open to residents and the surrounding communities. Adrienne E. Goolsby, Chief Executive Officer of RRHA, adds: “The opening of a Hillside Resource Center on the City’s Southside represents another great addition to the life-enhancing and community-based services offered to our community members. With the now five Resource Centers located right in the heart of the community, we are closing the City’s health disparity gap and opening up opportunities for healthy living for thousands of children and families in need.” Amy Popovich, Richmond City Health District’s Resource Center Supervisor, comments: “We hope the Center is a community hub for health and wellness.” Also, “I hope the Center serves as a bridge to connect residents to resources, primary care doctors and other health needs,” she adds.

The Hillside Resource Center offers services such as health screenings, checkups, health education, nutrition, parenting classes, budget management, medical referrals and community resource information. The Center has also hired a Hillside resident who serves as an outreach worker and facilitates educational classes, and connects residents to the various clinical and social resources in the community.

Richmond City Health District Director, Dr. Donald R. Stern, is delighted about the opportunity to work with RRHA to open the Hillside Resource Center. “I’m excited that this gives the Richmond Health District a clinical

Mosby Welcomes 14 New Leaders

Richmond Redevelopment Housing Authority and Adrienne E. Goolsby, Chief Executive Officer, congratulates the 14 Mosby resident community members who graduated from the Mosby Leadership Program in January. Through a partnership with RRHA, VCU ASPIRE living-learning program, and the VCU Center on Health Disparities, the Mosby Leadership program was created to build communities, empower change, and increase the participation of Mosby residents as volunteers within community-based organizations.

Nannette Bailey is the Community Partnership Coordinator for ASPIRE and mentions, “The idea to start a leadership program within Mosby originated from the residents.” Council members noticed residents were not as engaged as they thought- continued on page 3
Message from RRHA’s CEO

Happy Spring!

Welcome to the Spring 2013 edition of The Spirit Newsletter. There is so much good news to share about all of the wonderful things happening in your community.

In Hillside, we recently opened a Resource Center that is bringing free health education and resources to youth and families! The Hillside Resource Center is the fifth Resource Center opened by RRHA and the Richmond City Health District. The other Resource Centers are located in the Fairfield, Whitcomb, Creighton and Mosby communities. In these health hubs, families can receive checkups, health screenings, nutrition and parenting classes, budget management and other community resources. We strongly encourage you and your family to utilize this wonderful resource. The staff there is looking forward to helping you create and reach your healthy living goals!

Also, we encourage you to check out the inspirational mural painting located on the rear of the Hillside Recreational Center. The talented artist painted an image of hope and growth and it is already shining light on the community!

Congratulations to all students in our RRHA communities who worked hard and made the Honor Roll and Scholar Roll! You may have seen a personal congratulatory note from me in the Urban Views Newspaper a few weeks back! Keep up the great work and remember: education, perseverance and good character will take you far!

And don’t forget to register for RRHA’s Annual Bike-A-Thon, taking place on Saturday, May 18. You can find registration forms at your management office. We hope to see you there. It’s going to be lots of fun, family exercising going on – with good food too!

Read all about these great efforts and other uplifting stories inside this edition. And remember to be in good spirit!

Sincerely,
Adrienne E. Goolsby
Chief Executive Officer

RPS Honors Two Former RRHA Residents as 2013 Living Legacies

Gary T. McCollum and Samantha Thompson, two former RRHA residents, are now two of Richmond Public School’s 2013 Living Legacy honorees. The program, created by the Richmond Public Schools Education Foundation, recognizes RPS alumni who are representing leadership and honor and are leading inspirational lives. Each RPS Living Legacy Honoree credits their successes to attending a Richmond Public School.

Gary T. McCollum, a former resident of Whitcomb Court and Huguenot High School graduate, says growing up in this community and going to Huguenot gave him access to sports and athletics, which is where he first showcased his talent with his ability to compete and win. It also allowed him to be the first to graduate college in his family. The advice he gives for others is: “Parents, never underestimate how great your kids are,” and for the children, “don’t be afraid to be different.” “I was the kid who got A’s and sat in front of the room…it’s not how you start, but it’s how you finish.” McCollum now serves as Senior Vice President & General Manager at Cox Communications.

Samantha Thompson, raised in RRHA’s Fairfield community, is a Jefferson-Huguenot-Wythe High School graduate and proved to be a top student who overcame quite a few odds growing up. Thompson mentions, “I was told I would be pregnant with a lot of kids because I lived in the projects.” Instead, she was awarded several scholarships and graduated from Hampton University. Today, she works at the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond and mentors through her non-profit, Esteem Teens Rites-of-Passage Mentoring program. A true inspiration, Thompson wants to relay a message that she’s lived by all of her life, “It doesn’t matter where you’re going, it just matters where you’re trying to go.”
The Hillside Resource Center Opens its Doors cont.

We appreciate the community support that has allowed us to continue to expand to open Resource Centers where they are needed. I value the relationship with RRHA, the Hillside Tenant Council, the Hillside Partnership, and all of our supporters, and look forward to working together for healthier Richmond.”

Patrice Shelton, Community Connector for the Hillside Partnership, says the Center’s opening “[is] long overdue, but [I’m] glad that it’s here.” Hillside Court Tenant Council President, Ms. Mildred Hunter, plans on visiting regularly and notes, “I think it’s a brilliant idea… it will favor a lot of people.”

She mentions that oftentimes, residents will come to her for medical advice “…but now, I can refer them where to go. They [can] go right to the Resource Center,” she adds.

Mosby Welcomes 14 New Leaders cont.

they should be. They figured this was because many residents did not hold the skills they needed to be engaged. “It’s like a trend. They (residents) know that we’re the leaders so they bring everything to us instead of speaking out for themselves,” said Ms. Aquanetta Scott, Vice President of the Mosby Tenant Association.

The program semester ran from September 2012- January 2013, and residents attended 10 workshops on public speaking, goal-setting, basic computer skills, conflict navigation and health disparities. “Overall, we want Mosby to be a community of greatness…and this can only come from skilled, knowledgeable leaders,” Ms. Bailey remarked.

Aquanetta Scott, also a program graduate, commented, “the speakers and workshops were excellent…I learned a couple of different ways to do things.” Already a Mosby leader, she noted it was great to see that “there were a couple of people you never even heard from before, but they had a voice in the leadership class.” She adds, that now, “they (residents) are much more willing to do things and are able to express themselves as far as the things they want to see happening.”

The class also initiated a “Get Out the Vote” campaign where they walked the community registering voters and coordinated rides to the polls. From this, residents realized voter restoration was a major issue so they want to continue to educate residents on this process.

Following graduation, two residents became employed through a community hospital and an additional two were hired through ASPIRE as project coordinators.

Other graduates are now returning to the program as mentors.

To attend the leadership program, Mosby residents must complete an application, interview and demonstrate a willingness to be an active participant and leader in the community. Upon program completion, residents receive a certificate and up to a $100 stipend. “We’re hoping that with the skills they gain they are able to continue to apply them in the community,” Ms. Bailey says. In addition, she hopes there will be more participation on the tenant council and residents will be more active in addressing some of the issues that they are facing.

“Keeping Cool In Conflict” workshop
What’s Happening at RRHA!

The Hillside Soldiers Play for their Community

The Hillside Soldiers is made up of Hillside Court youth and teaches players respect for themselves, the community and their neighbors, in addition to promoting overall positivity.

Patrice Shelton, a Hillside Court Partnership Community Connector and major driving force behind the team, wants people to know that “there’s kids that come out of Hillside that can do the things that other kids can do. We want to show that positive aspect of Hillside that’s there that people overlook.”

The Soldiers couldn’t play without the help of volunteers, partners and sponsors who “cheer right beside us,” says Patrice. Catt McWilliams, known as the “mom” of the team, washes the uniforms, helps with snacks, and cheers on the sidelines. “I want to support all the kids, especially for the parents that can’t come out,” she says. Organizations like Embrace have helped Patrice connect with various partnerships.

There are three criteria to be a Soldier: to be dedicated, show respect, and do well in school. Though they are still waiting on their first win, Patrice notes, “they’re winners regardless because they keep going back out.”

Local Artist Paints Hillside with Messages of Hope

James L. Thornhill, artistically known as Sir James Thornhill, is a muralist, teacher, figurative painter, and the artist responsible for the mural painted alongside the back wall of the Hillside Recreation Center. Thornhill’s mural had to catch residents’ attention, motivate and promote positivity so he painted a tree with inspirational words that would entice kids to read the message and think.

Thornhill believes that “visualization is important. If you walk out the door and see nothing, then you think nothing. If you see colors, then you think color.” The tree’s vines are to represent growth; the roots symbolize the strong ties and strength within the Hillside neighborhood. “The roots also symbolize development within Hillside Court,” as “one time, this was a ‘together’ court,” Thornhill adds. Thornhill, a Jackson Ward native, recalls when residents once wore badges of honor, proud to represent their communities. Last, the mural’s sunrise represents the dawning of a new time, or Hillside’s “renaissance.”

Thornhill was honored to paint this mural in Hillside through his work with Art on Wheels, who provided summer programming at Hillside Court, and mentions, “It did something to me…Everyday there was a question about it.” Thornhill says he was touched that “the community took pride and possession of this being ‘our project.’”
The “Piazza Project” Comes to Life at 700 South Lombardy

VCU ASpiRE students partnered with 700 South Lombardy residents to develop oral history projects, in which they interviewed residents about their lives. In return, the students gained a new understanding in regards to the types of projects residents wanted to see in the building or around the property that could foster a greater sense of community and interactivity.

The ASpiRE students then compiled all of the information that they obtained from the residents and worked with the Advisory Council and Management to implement the designated project. The final project now serves as a source of pride and long term enjoyment for the residents of 700 South Lombardy now and for years to come.

The ASpiRE program and VCU hold an overall mission to work with local communities to create a climate of inclusion that is committed to addressing community needs and to educate its students to be thoughtful, effective and knowledgeable community sustainers.

There were 10 students and 18 residents who participated in the Oral History component of the project. Based on the information that was received, students designed 10 project proposals that were presented to the residents at large. In March, all residents were invited to hear the proposals and then vote on the service project that they wanted to see implemented at Lombardy.

“The Piazza Place” was the winning service project that received the most votes. This outdoor task involved the students purchasing new furniture and accessories and even doing some planting and mulching to make the back courtyard of Lombardy truly come alive. On April 25th, “The Piazza Place” project officially came to life and a number of residents ventured out to the courtyard to witness the finished product. Following the revealing, residents were invited to attend a grand celebration event.

Stonewall Resident’s Art on Display

1920 Stonewall Place Resident Advisory Council Sponsors its 1st Annual Art Contest

The 1920 Stonewall Place Resident Advisory Council recently sponsored its first Annual Art Contest. Residents had the opportunity to select from the following categories: drawings, collages, puzzles, painting, quilting, needlepoint, floral arrangements, and jewelry making. The contest attracted several residents, as there were over 40 submissions. Mrs. Gloria Shelton Jones, Advisory Council President for Stonewall Place, assisted with organizing the contest and commented, “I enjoyed getting together with the residents. All of the artwork was completed by the residents in the Activity Room [at Stonewall]. Everyone had fun working together.” “Our Coordinator, Patricia White, has planned activities for the residents for every month from April to December. A few of the activities include a play, fashion show, silent auction and carnival,” Mrs. Shelton Jones adds.

RRHA staff held a judging session for the artwork, which took place in April 2013, and the contest winners were then selected. A luncheon was held later in the month where the winners of the grand affair were announced and celebrated. The residents’ art work is currently on display for everyone to view and enjoy.
As directed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) has completed its proposed 2013-2014 Annual Agency Plan. The proposed Annual Agency Plan (for fiscal year beginning October 2013) includes details about the housing authority’s current policies, operation, programs, and services.

A copy of the proposed Annual Agency Plan and supporting documents will be available Monday, April 15, 2013 through Monday, May 27, 2013, for public examination at the Authority’s Administrative offices located at 901 & 918 Chamberlayne Parkway, Richmond, Virginia and all Public Housing Management Offices between the hours of 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Also, review copies can be obtained from our website at www.rrha.com.

All interested agencies, groups, or persons wishing to comment on the proposed plan may submit written comments to the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, Attention: Agency Plan Development Team, 901 Chamberlayne Parkway, Richmond, Virginia 23220, by Monday, May 27, 2013.

A public meeting to receive comments on the proposed plan will be held on Wednesday, June 5, 2013, at 5:30 p.m. at the Calhoun Family Investment Center, 436 Calhoun Street, Richmond, Virginia 23220.
GRIP Fights Youth Violence in Richmond

The goal of the Gang Reduction and Intervention Program, or GRIP, is to coordinate programs that fight youth violence in the City of Richmond. By working with federal, state, and local governments, as well as a number of other organizations, GRIP provides youth and their families with healthy alternatives to gang involvement.

GRIP funding has helped to create and improve over fifty programs in primary and secondary prevention, intervention, suppression, and re-entry into the community after jail or prison. GRIP programs cope with the many factors that cause juvenile delinquency and gang-related activity. By targeting high-crime and high-risk areas with “one-stop” resource centers and “wrap-around” services, they can offer GED programs, prenatal and infancy health services, after-school activities, summer camps, and truancy and dropout prevention programs.

Over the past two years, GRIP and RRHA partnered to reduce youth violence in targeted neighborhoods in Richmond’s North Side and East End. Together, they have supported a host of educational and social opportunities. One example, the Richmond City Health District assisted with a partnership between RRHA and the MCV School of Medicine Service Opportunities Program. As a result, 14 students were placed as mentors and volunteers, provided tutoring, and coordinated cultural enrichment opportunities for the youth, while engaging families through workshops, health fairs, and other programs. The Office of the Attorney General looks forward to continuing to work with all of its partners to serve communities across the City through GRIP.

Now, GRIP is funding a part-time position for a resident in the Fulton community to provide outreach and program coordination, oversee the daily operations of the program, identify and fill resource gaps, and to help address risk factors in the community. To find out more information on GRIP, please visit: www.oag.state.va.us or call 804-692-0484.

The East End Library is currently closed for renovation to improve computer access, lighting and overall facility appearance. Please visit the temporary 3001 Nine Mile Road location for your library needs.

The library will offer the following services:
- Computers & Internet access
- Limited selection of new materials

Hours of Operation:
Monday-Saturday, 9 am-5 pm

For questions or additional information, please call 804-646-4474.
The City of Richmond Primary Election is Tuesday June 11, 2013

The purpose of the Primary Election is to nominate candidates for the following offices that will be on the ballot in November:

**Democratic Party**

- Governor
- Lieutenant Governor
- Attorney General
- House of Delegates Districts 69, 70, 71 and 74

- Commonwealth’s Attorney
- Sheriff
- Treasurer

**Republican Party**

- House of Delegates District 68

Voter Registration Deadline for Primary Election is May 20, 2013

Register to Vote Today!

Go to www.sbe.virginia.gov or call 646-5950

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The Resource Centers

Richmond City Health District

Stop by a Resource Center in your community for the following services:

- Family Planning Services
- STI & HIV Screening
- Blood Pressure Checks
- Relationship & Parenting Groups
- Health information & education
- Community referrals

**Fairfield Community**

2311 N. 25th Street
Clinic: Thurs 9am - 5pm
804-786-4099

**Mosby Community**

1536 Coalter Street
Clinic: Tues 1-5pm & Wed 9am - 5pm
804-786-0204

**Creighton Community**

2150 Creighton Rd.
Clinic: Mon 9am - 5pm
804-371-0433

**Whitcomb Community**

2106 Deforrest Street
Clinic: Tues 9am - 5pm
804-786-0555

**Hillside Community**

1615 Glenfield Ave.
Clinic: Thurs 9am - 5pm
804-230-7740

Walk-ins Welcome OR Call for Appointment