



# NEWS FROM THE CHA



## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO :

I am honored to be leading the CHA and getting to know the CHA team and you, our partners and stakeholders who support the important work we do on behalf of our families.

As we share our latest news with you we continue to work through the COVID-19 pandemic, adjusting our workplace to meet the needs of our residents and participants. We have proven that we can operate efficiently while still providing services.

We are re-tooling our offices in anticipation of our return to the workplace in Phase 4 and we have created a Returning to the Workplace committee comprised of CHA team members working creatively and collaboratively to plan for CHA's gradual return to the workplace. These plans are based on CHA team input, expert guidance and industry best practices.



Much has happened at CHA and across the country since our last newsletter. I want to pause to reflect on the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, the unrest that followed and how CHA's mission is helping to make change. During news coverage of these events, I saw a picture of a young Black boy holding a sign that said: "Am I next?"

To him and you I want to say: "No. You are not next. You are first *and* now for the change the world needs." In the work we do at CHA, we have a deeper understanding of the challenges facing our residents and participants. We see the racism and inequality that pervades their lives and comes in the form of a house of cards of inequities. Education systems. Access to health care. Employment. If one card is out of place, it comes tumbling down. When the economy sneezes, our families get pneumonia.

But I am hopeful because CHA's work is the salve on the hurt and pain that our families experience. CHA's mission is the antidote to the virus of bias and discrimination.

Every day we are creating opportunities for our families by providing stable housing as a foundation for a better quality of life. Please take a moment to watch my **video message** to the CHA team.

As you will see in the news below, our residents, participants and children are first and now. Together, we have the opportunity to make change in this world.

Be Safe. Be Well.

Tracey Scott  
Chief Executive Officer



## WORKING THROUGH COVID

CHA, like other public housing agencies across the country, has been greatly challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic. Finding ways to address these challenges and the costs associated with responding to the crisis has been a priority for CHA. A recent article in Urban Institute's Urban Wire blog takes a look at how housing authorities are allocating resources to continue serving residents during the crisis. CEO Tracey Scott told Urban Institute that "prior to CARES Act funding, CHA reprioritized existing resources. But every additional dollar allows us to broaden our thinking to the meet the needs of our residents during this crisis."

[\*\*Read the blog post here\*\*](#)



## CONGRATULATIONS TO NEW HOMEOWNER TYRA JACKSON WILLIAMS! WE JOINED HER VIRTUALLY TO CELEBRATE NATIONAL HOMEOWNERSHIP MONTH

June marked National Homeownership Month and CHA celebrated homebuyers like Tyra Jackson Williams, who is one of more than 650 residents who have purchased a house through CHA's Choose to Own (CTO) program since the program began in 2002. So far this year, 22 CTO participants have become first-time homebuyers. In 2019, there were a total of 42 new homebuyers who purchased homes.

After getting married and watching her family grow, Jackson Williams went back to school and accomplished two goals: becoming a Registered Nurse at Schwab Rehabilitation, and, becoming a homeowner, which she did in March, thanks to the Choose to Own program.

[\*\*Read more about her success story.\*\*](#)



## #BACKTOSCHOOL WITH HELP FROM CHA, SPRINGBOARD TO SUCCESS

CHA's annual back to school event looked a little different this year but was nonetheless as important as ever. On July 29, a group of CHA team members were joined by CEO Tracey Scott to stuff 1,000 backpacks with school supplies for CHA school children. The backpacks were provided by CHA's non-profit partner, Springboard to Success (S2S). Funds for the backpacks and supplies were raised at the S2S virtual fundraiser on July 16, where more than \$100,000 was raised to support efforts like this. It is an example of the good work that comes from S2S.

"Even as plans for the new school year are still in flux, it's important that our school children have the supplies they need to help them be prepared for that first day of school, whether they are in the classroom or learning remotely," Scott said. Watch this [video](#) for more on this event.



## 10TH ANNUAL TAKE FLIGHT COLLEGE SEND-OFF GOES TO CURBSIDE PICK-UP FOR DORM SUPPLIES

Anicia Miller has a life motto. She first thought of it when she was 10 years old, spending part of her childhood on Harvard Avenue. It served as motivation throughout her high school years. It's even engraved in her class ring. Now, it's reality.

"I can officially say that I went from Harvard (Avenue) to Harvard (University)," said Miller, a graduate of St. Ignatius College Prep who will start at the Ivy League School this month. She will major in biomedical engineering.

Miller was one of 150 college-bound CHA residents who participated in the 10th annual "Take Flight College Send-Off" which this year was a curbside event where students received dorm supplies.

[Read more about the event here](#)

# PRESERVING AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR SENIORS THROUGH SUPPORT FOR LEVY HOUSE



A combination of Project Based Vouchers (PBV) and a loan of up to \$3 million to the Preservation of Affordable Housing (POAH) approved by the CHA Board in May will support the preservation and provide for long-term affordability of 56 apartments for low-income residents at Levy House, 1221 W. Sherwin Ave., an apartment building for seniors in Rogers Park.

“It is more important than ever to ensure housing stability for low-income Chicagoans and we will continue to expand our investments to serve communities across the city,” said CHA CEO Tracey Scott. “Preserving affordable housing is an important part of CHA’s mission.”

[Read more here](#)



## CHA KICKS OFF SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Each year, CHA offers paid summer opportunities that extend beyond earned wages for our youngest residents, ages 13 to 24. CHA’s Youth Opportunities team leads the effort to provide up to 1,750 of our youngest residents, ages 13 - 24, with early exposure to career and education pathways, helping to stem summer learning loss and develop the building blocks they need to land a job or launch a career.

This year, CHA is offering opportunities across nine unique programs for youth and emerging adults as part of the City of Chicago’s **One Summer Chicago** summer jobs program. CHA raised the minimum hourly wage of its subsidized temporary youth employment programs by 40%, thereby allowing participants, ages 16 – 24, to earn \$14/hour for up to 120 hours this summer.

Of note this year is the 10th year anniversary of the Chicago Police Department (CPD) Neighborhood Youth Corps, a partnership between CPD and CHA that is designed to help young people explore future education and career options through field trips, community service projects, and workshops facilitated by professionals and community leaders. The program demonstrates how positive police and youth engagement can strengthen relationships and build trust between young people and law enforcement.

Other programs include Chicago Park District Counselor-in-Training, Learn and Earn, Movie and TV Scripts 101, Next Level Photography, Safe Summer Peace Ambassador, Smart Art and Community Engagement, and the Summer Youth Employment Program.

[You can check out some photos from these programs here](#)



# BACK TO THEIR FUTURE



## SPRINGBOARD TO SUCCESS HOSTS VIRTUAL FUNDRAISER: *BACK TO THEIR FUTURE: LET'S RALLY FOR CHA YOUTH!*

Like so much else this year, the annual Springboard to Success (S2S) fundraiser pivoted to a virtual platform, raising more than \$100,000 during a fun online event that featured video messages from **Mayor Lori Lightfoot and First Lady Amy Eshleman** **CHA CEO Tracey Scott** and Nia DaCosta, the director of the upcoming “Candyman” reboot.

Lead sponsors included BMO Harris, Globetrotter’s Engineering Corp., and Nan McKay & Associates.

The mission of CHA’s non-profit arm Springboard to Success is to support programs and partners that propel CHA residents on their pathways to academic success, economic stability, and independence.

“Regardless of where a student will learn this year, they will still need school supplies, and we thank our S2S donors for helping us provide the essentials they will need for the first day of school,” said Kristen Hamer, CHA’s Director of Corporate and External Partnerships.

Now more than ever it’s critical to support CHA college-bound and current college students who need critical resources to continue their education and journey, and to support our summer programs. Supporting S2S makes it possible to provide technology resources for college students who require computers and computer upgrades to handle an on-line learning environment, dorm room necessities for CHA college students and school supplies for CHA youth. For more information or to donate visit [www.S2Schi.org/donate](http://www.S2Schi.org/donate)



## MASK DISTRIBUTION

CHA staff continue to demonstrate a strong team spirit during the pandemic. On June 16, CHA CEO Tracey Scott and about a dozen CHA team members showed up to the Charles Hayes Family Investment Center ready to pack cloth masks for the more than 10,000 seniors who live in CHA’s senior buildings. The masks were packaged and distributed to all 55 CHA senior buildings. The effort was another example of the strong spirit of cooperation that exists at CHA. Thanks to the CHA team’s dedication, these masks were delivered to CHA residents quickly, providing them with an essential piece of protective equipment that helps to prevent the spread of germs related to COVID-19.



Teams from Resident Services and the Charles Hayes Family Investment Center participated in the effort. “We have to make sure seniors have proper protective gear to stay safe,” said Venis Frazier, Director of Senior Services. “I’m happy CHA is able to provide cloth masks that they can use, wash, and use again.” The masks are the second set provided to seniors. Previously, residents were given disposable surgical masks.



## \$22 MILLION INVESTMENT IN TEACHER'S VILLAGE CHICAGO EXPANDS HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

On July 22, the CHA Board of Commissioners approved an investment of 27 Project Based Vouchers (PBVs) to create additional affordable housing opportunities for families at Teacher's Village Chicago, the adaptive re-use of a former elementary school located in the Humboldt Park community. The investment represents approximately \$22 million over the 30-year term and provides a new housing resource for low-income families to obtain stable affordable housing in strong, vibrant communities.

"Teacher's Village Chicago will bring much needed housing affordability to the area, and residents and neighbors will have access to a thriving neighborhood with amenities," said Cary Steinbuck, CHA's Deputy Chief of the Property Rental Assistance Program and Acquisitions. This is the first Chicago development for RBH Group LLC, a national housing developer. The project is designed as a "community campus space" where teachers, students and community life-long learners come together to further their life education.

**[Read more about the project here.](#)**



## NEW PROPERTY MANAGEMENT FIRMS SELECTED FOLLOWING AN IMPROVED PROCUREMENT PROCESS

In May, the CHA Board approved contracts for private property management (PPM) services at CHA properties following an improved procurement process based in part on recommendations after a review of CHA's 2015 PPM contracting process. The contract awards followed a competitive bidding process after CHA issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for PPM services in late 2019. The awards approved are for a three-year base term from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2023 with two one-year options for a total contract amount not to exceed \$19,280,568 CHA is expected to realize a projected annual savings of \$790,000 with these contracts.

**[Read more here.](#)**

## CHA BECOMES FIRST HOUSING AUTHORITY TO EARN BIT BUILDING CERTIFICATION

In June, CHA became the first public housing authority ever to achieve BIT Building Certification. Southface Institute, a leader in sustainable advocacy, announced that CHA's Dearborn Homes development has achieved this by reaching the milestone of including the 16 BIT Practices for resource efficiency and sustainability for building operations and maintenance.

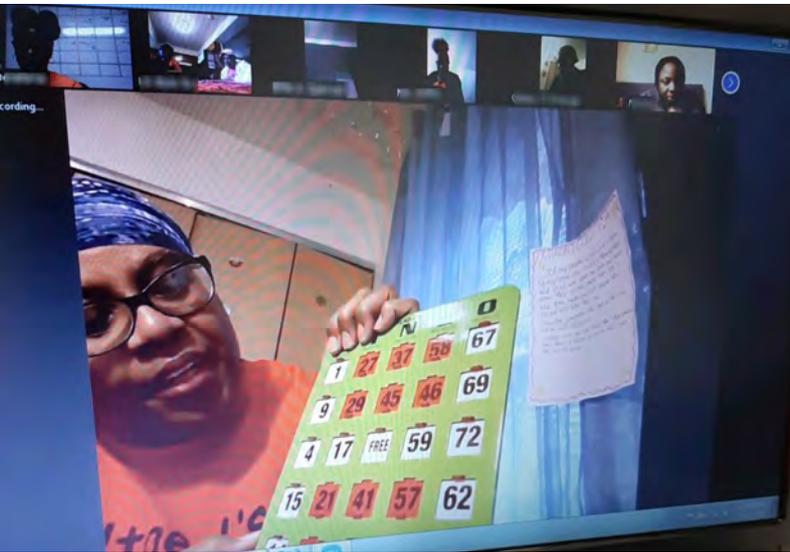
[Read more here](#)



## SENIOR BINGO

Seniors at Altgeld Gardens didn't let COVID-19 and the Stay at Home order keep them from their weekly bingo games, thanks to the creative thinking of Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) service provider, Metropolitan Family Services.

In response to CDPH guidelines to protect residents from the further spread of COVID-19, CHA closed fitness centers and community rooms preventing residents from engaging in their weekly bingo games. However, with digital platforms and social media allowing people to connect virtually, Carrie Pullie, program director with Metropolitan Family Services, thought these platforms would work to connect residents for virtual bingo. A quick count of past bingo players with Smart phones found nine out of 21 players. So, she delivered them playing boards and log-in instructions for Zoom.



## CNDA INDEPENDENCE LIBRARY AWARD

The Independence Library and Apartments, developed through a partnership between Chicago Housing Authority and Chicago Public Library, won the first place Richard R. Driehaus Foundation Award for Architectural Excellence in Community Design at the 26th annual Chicago Neighborhood Development Awards (CNDA) presented by LISC Chicago.

[Find out more here](#)

