MESSAGE FROM THE CEO:

Dear Friends,

With Spring upon us, I am pleased to share some of CHA's accomplishments from the first few months of the year.

From the beginning, 2018 has been dynamic and exciting. From January when we greeted the growing group of college students supported by CHA scholarships to the recognition of our award-winning housing developments for the families and the homeless; from our second annual screening of films produced by young CHA residents to groundbreakings and ribbon cuttings, the Authority's commitment to residents and communities alike has been on display and recognized.

There is always more to do. More investment in housing; more people to help support and more communities to contribute to – but as always, with your help and support, we know we can do what needs to be done.

Sincerely,
Eugene E. Jones, Jr.
Chief Executive Officer
Prior to participating in a new film program, Mychala McDonald, a junior at Hyde Park Academy High School and CHA resident, had never made more than a funny video on her phone.

However, thanks to CHA’s partnership with the Documentary Filmmaking Program at DePaul University’s School of Cinematic Arts, McDonald had the opportunity to work with DePaul’s faculty filmmakers and graduate student mentors to craft storylines, learn the technical aspects of filmmaking and ultimately produce a short documentary film.

While some groups chose to tell stories of stigmas surrounding LGBTQ youth or housing insecurity, McDonald’s cohort decided they wanted to focus on issues of violence in Chicago. In their short documentary, “Hope for Change,” each young woman tells her own story of the effects of violence on her life.

McDonald chose to tell the story of her father, who was shot to death while sitting in his parked car in 2015.

“I have seen many movies about crime in Chicago,” McDonald said, “but when real-life people, not actors, can speak their story, it gives more meaning to it.”

And McDonald is right – her story carries a lot of meaning. By sharing the details of her father’s death, her own grief and how it impacts her life every day, McDonald’s unrelenting honesty in the film makes clear that hers is not just another movie about Chicago – it’s a true story, told by a local.

“Learning how to make films can be life-changing,” said Liliane Calfee, who teaches in DePaul’s School of Cinematic Arts and directs the summer documentary program. “These young women are taught the importance of their voice and are given the tools to have them be heard. It’s a powerful combination. It builds confidence. It sparks activism. It provides them with hard skills leading to greater economic opportunities.”

The young filmmakers premiered their documentaries in early May, during a film screening with writer and film advocate, Chaz Ebert at the Chicago Cultural Center. The program is part of Mayor Rahm Emanuel’s One Summer Chicago and made possible through CHA’s non-profit affiliate, Springboard to Success.
Pullman, Roseland Residents Get State’s Most Advanced Sports Facility – CHA Investment Guarantees Access

CHA joined members of the Pullman and Roseland communities to celebrate construction of the Pullman Community Center, the largest athletic facility of its kind in Illinois providing athletic, cultural and academic opportunities for far South Side Chicago youth and residents.

"Facilities like this anchor communities across Chicago, expanding recreational and educational opportunities for our residents," Mayor Rahm Emanuel said. “By investing in Pullman today we are honoring its historic past and making it an even better place to live, work and play.”

When completed this Fall, the $20 million, 135,000 square foot facility at 10355 S. Woodlawn Avenue will offer year-round sports, educational and cultural programming and feature three indoor playing fields and surfaces for basketball, volleyball, soccer, baseball, and football as well as flexible space for community events, exhibitions, classrooms, camps and tournaments. The Center will have capacity to host up to 1,200 teams and as many as estimated 50,000 participants, spectators and visitors annually.

New Community Center Opening on Chicago’s South Side this Fall

CBS 2 | Irika Sargent

Once Endangered, Now Saved, The Carling Hotel Continues to Serve the Needs of Single Men and Women

Once a 155-unit residential hotel in the 1500 block of North LaSalle Street, the Carling Hotel now consists of 80 efficiency-style apartments dedicated as affordable housing. Restoring the Carling Hotel was one of the first tests of the city's SRO Preservation Initiative, which was approved by the Chicago City Council with support from Mayor Rahm Emanuel in 2014. While funding came from the new owner, New Jersey-based Michaels Development Company, the City of Chicago and the Illinois Housing Development Authority, CHA's funding of 39 of the studio apartments for renters from the CHA waiting list made the project complete.

Click here to read more.

Affordable housing advocates have reason to crow over SRO renovation

Mark Brown | Chicago Sun Times
ELEVATOR MODERNIZATION PROGRAM MOVES AHEAD

CHA recently announced that its comprehensive Elevator Modernization Program is progressing after the first properties to undergo a complete overhaul of their elevator systems were identified.

Under the program, all 150 elevators in 86 CHA properties will undergo a complete modernization. It is the largest such undertaking in more than 20 years and involves all of CHA’s mid-rise and high-rise properties where elevators serve thousands of CHA residents, visitors and employees daily.

Click here to read more.

GIVEN THE CHANCE, YOUTH EXCEL AT CODING - EARNING PRAISE AND PRIZES

Last December, CHA partnered with Chicago City of Learning to support Mayor Emanuel’s Month of Code Challenge, which encouraged youth and families across the city to engage in online and on-site coding challenges all month long.

With roughly 80 hours of code logged by CHA youth throughout Chicago, it’s clear that the challenge was a success. A few months later, about 50 CHA students attended the Month of Code celebration event at the Charles Hayes Center, where they received gift cards and CHA book bags for participating in the challenge.

Two students from Lawndale Gardens, Antuane Almon and Sherrie Emmons, and one student from Major Adams/Henry Horner Homes, Mekhi Butler-Garrett, received Apple Tablets for completing a significant number of challenges.

In addition to providing online challenges, Chicago City of Learning also hosts a database of affordable and accessible summer programs available to youth and families across Chicago.

Click here to explore their database.
CHA CELEBRATES OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

May is Older Americans Month, and with many celebrations happening across different senior buildings, CHA seniors sure know how to celebrate! Click here to watch the Seniors on the Move video.

CHA’S SOAR PROGRAM PROVIDES OPPORTUNITY FOR SUCCESS

Project S.O.A.R (Students + Outcomes + Achievements = Results), an Education Navigator, offers CHA residents (ages 15-20) one-on-one coaching to support post-high school plans, or to assist in continued post-secondary enrollment.

Not only does Project S.O.A.R help residents complete applications, identify schools, save money, and persist to graduation, but the program’s services are entirely FREE and participation is voluntary!

Know someone who would benefit from this program? Share the news about Project S.O.A.R. If you have any questions about the program, please call Cassie Brooks, Education Specialist at 312.786.3222 or email education@thecha.org.

Complete the PROJECT SOAR Consent Form here.
Reach out to your Education Navigator here.

Click here to learn more.
The Chicago Housing Authority was honored as the Construction Industry Service Corp. (CISCO) 2018 “Public Body of the Year” for entering into the agency’s first-ever Project Labor Agreement (PLA).

The PLA aims to give CHA residents the opportunity to join Chicago area unions and take advantage of the high-paying jobs, while helping them build capacity and experience as they work.

Click here to read more.

With roughly 150 guests and more than $190,000 raised to support CHA college prep programs, CHA’s third annual fundraiser for its non-profit affiliate, Springboard to Success (S2S), was itself a success.

Established in July of 2014, S2S funds programs and initiatives that support CHA communities with a focus on those that assist younger residents on a pathway to academic success, economic stability and independence.

To make a donation, individuals can text “S2S” to 243725.
Jaegen Ellison remembers the conversation well.

“She was thinking about going back to school,” Jaegen, 25, said of his mother, Louella, 67. “So I talked about Harold Washington College, since I was there at the time. I knew the benefits of what the school was offering. And I encouraged her to act on it.”

So, after 45 years away from school, she did. And today there is not one – but two – Ellison graduates with associate degrees from Harold Washington, thanks to financial help from Chicago Housing Authority.

Jaegen, now pursuing his bachelor’s in acting at UIC, received his in 2015. Louella, soon to be pursuing her bachelor’s in education at the DePaul School of Learning, got hers in 2017.

Both were recognized Tuesday at CHA’s Board of Commissioners meeting for their perseverance and dedication in pursuing and achieving their goals.

They’re just one example of how CHA residents have succeeded in the classroom recently:
• CHA has awarded over 980 scholarships since 2013, a total investment exceeding $1 million.
• CHA residents received 2,417 college degrees in 2016 and ’17.
• In 2017, CHA’s Partners in Education program that supports residents attending City Colleges with tuition, books and fees, saw 89 students earn Associates degrees – the most ever.
• And over the past five years, more than 80 percent of students receiving a CHA Scholarship remained enrolled or have graduated.

“When CHA said I could go back to school, I knew that I had to take advantage. It was a real blessing for me that I didn’t have to worry about finances,” said Louella, who lives on a Housing Choice Voucher. “I used to be a teacher’s aide, but after I graduated from high school, I got married and didn’t pursue my college career. I always have liked teaching and being in the educational field. I really felt good meeting with people. After 45 years, I knew it was something I could do. I’m a people person. I fit right in with the students.”

She even fit in with her son.

“It was special because, I’m going down the escalator and he’s going up the escalator, and we’d do a little wave and smile,” Louella said. “It would be nice to see him coming and going.”

Jaegen said: “I’d be going down the escalator and she’d be coming up and we’d say: ‘how are you doing?’ Or sometimes she’d send me a text that she’s getting ready to head out. It was a great experience. She’d even mess with me, saying she was going to follow me to UIC.”

Jaegen became passionate about acting in fifth grade when he performed in “To Kill a Mockingbird.” Now, with six roles and five leads under his belt, he is on track graduate from UIC in June 2019. From there, he hopes to land the audition that will send him on his way. If not, it’ll be back to school to pursue his master’s degree. He’s just as passionate about working with kids and giving back.

“The plan is to stay on my path and go with the flow,” he said.

It pleases Louella to see that her son is pursuing his dream.

“CHA had a lot to do with not having to worry about the finance part,” she said. “They did have a lot to do with encouraging me and my son to continue our education.”
Three different housing developments supported by CHA won awards at the 24th annual Chicago Neighborhood Development Awards (CNDA) in April, highlighting the different ways in which CHA partners to create housing opportunity.

• For transforming an industrial brownfield to Casa Queretaro (Casa Q), a community asset, DesignBridge Architects won first place in The Richard H. Driehaus foundation Award for Architectural Excellence in Community Design. With one-third of Casa Q’s 45 mixed-income rental apartments reserved for CHA residents, the LEED Platinum Certified development also preserves affordable housing for veterans and victims of domestic violence.

• Ansonia Properties, LLC received the Polk Bros. Foundation Affordable Rental Housing Preservation Award at CNDA for their renovation of the Lake Village East apartments. Ansonia Properties worked with CHA in order to preserve the affordability of Lake Village East for long-term low-income renters by enhancing place-based vouchers.

• For their transformation of a building in disrepair to one with 239 new affordable, one- and two-bedroom apartments, Rosenwald Courts Developer, LLC received the Outstanding For-Profit Neighborhood Real Estate Project Award for their work on Rosenwald Courts. The property now features a two-acre professionally landscaped interior courtyard and more than 40,000 square feet of space for new offices.

Click here to read more.
In May, the CHA Board approved investment in four developments that will bring a total of 338 units of new or renovated affordable housing to North Side communities: North Park Village Apartments in the North Park community, Tierra Linda Apartments and Humboldt Park residences in the Logan Square, Humboldt Park and West Town communities and Oso Apartments in the Albany Park community.

In the first development, CHA will provide 20-year Housing Payment Assistance (HAP) contracts for 81 units of senior housing at North Park Village Apartments. Developed by Elderly Housing Development and Operations Corp., North Park Village Apartments is a 180-unit building located in the North Park community on the city’s Far Northwest Side. The developer will fully renovate an existing building to provide modern, affordable apartments with amenities for seniors.

In the second development, CHA will provide 30-year HAP contracts for three additional units for a total of 14 CHA supported units at Tierra Linda Apartments and eight additional units for a total of 28 units at Humboldt Park Residences in the Logan Square, Humboldt Park and West Town communities.

Tierra Linda Apartments is a new construction scattered site family housing development with a total of 45 units located across the three communities. The developer, Latin United Housing Association (LUCHA), will deliver a total of 12 buildings with one, two and three-bedroom family units. The buildings are currently under construction and are expected to be completed by the end of 2018. Applicants for these apartments will come from the CHA waiting list.

Also to be developed by LUCHA, Humboldt Park Residences is a 65-unit Single Room Occupancy (SRO) property in Humboldt Park that will be renovated as part of the City of Chicago’s SRO Preservation Initiative. The building will undergo substantial exterior and interior renovations to provide updated apartments for low and very low-income individuals. Amenities include an outdoor green space with flower and vegetable gardens. Four of the units will be fully ADA-accessible and two units will be equipped for the hearing and visually impaired.

Residents at Humboldt Park Residences will have access to LUCHA’s case management and Financial Capabilities program, which works to connect clients to community resources, coordinate services and access to financial literacy training.

The CHA Board of Commissioners had previously approved HAP contracts for other units at both of these developments.

The board also authorized the use of up to $10 million in CHA MTW funds for Oso Apartments to be developed as part of CHA’s Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program. Developed by EREG Development, Oso Apartments, in the Albany Park community, is a five-story new construction building that will bring 48 one and two-bedroom family apartments, of which 32 will be for applicants from the CHA waiting list.

The remainder of the affordable units will be rented to individuals earning up to 80 percent of Area Median Income.

In March, the CHA Board of Commissioners approved transactions that will contribute to redevelopment projects on the North and South sides of Chicago, demonstrating a continued commitment in providing the City of Chicago with affordable housing opportunities.

“I made a promise when I arrived to aggressively pursue redevelopment activities and to provide the city of Chicago with more affordable housing opportunities, and we have kept that promise,” said CHA CEO Eugene E. Jones, Jr.

The Board authorized:

• A redevelopment loan not to exceed $7.5 million for the construction of a new mixed-income community that will accommodate former residents of the Washington Park CHA property.

• The investment of 17 Project Based Voucher (PBV) subsidies that will represent 10 percent of the units at the new Lawrence and Ravenswood Apartments, which will be a 167-unit, four-story family housing development with about 10,000 square-feet of retail space on the first floor of the west building.