

ONE VOICE

Housing Authority of
the City of Austin
P.O. Box 6159
Austin, TX 78762-6159
www.hacanet.org



Our Mission

The Housing Authority of the City of Austin is a public agency whose business is to:

- ensure that safe, quality affordable housing opportunities exist for families of low income
- break the poverty cycle by serving as a catalyst for our residents to become economically self-sufficient
- create meaningful partnerships to maximize available community resources for our residents
- efficiently and effectively meet federal, state and local mandates

HACA will pursue entrepreneurial opportunities to address emerging trends and respond to the challenges of the future.

Important Phone Numbers

HACA Administration	477-4488
24 Hour Resident Hotline	495-1897
Maintenance Work Orders	477-8518
Section 8	477-1314
Fire/Police	911
Non-Emergency Police	311
Poison Center	800-764-7661

ONE VOICE Newsletter

Published by the Housing Authority of the City of Austin
Judy Paciocco, Sr. Director of Operations

Comments, articles and photographs are welcomed for the One Voice newsletter. E-mail submissions to Monique Duvall.
moniqued@hacanet.org

Or by mail to:
HACA, Attn: Media Relations
P.O. Box 6159
Austin, TX 78762

All submissions must have a name and phone number to be considered. Due to space limitations, the editor reserves the right to reject or edit copy as necessary.

Creating and sustaining healthy communities that promote individual responsibility, economic growth, human dignity and hope for the future



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HACA Opens the Door to FAIR HOUSING MONTH

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Asset Management

Michael Cummings
Vice President of
Southwest Housing
Compliance Corp.

You may not think about fair housing everyday but it affects our daily lives. Where you live affects where you work, where you shop and where you go to school. Fair Housing says you have the right to live wherever you can afford.

On April 11, 1968, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1968, which was meant as a follow-up to the Civil Rights Act of 1964. When the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated on April 4, 1968, President Lyndon Johnson utilized this national tragedy to urge for the bill's speedy Congressional approval. Since the 1966 open housing marches, Dr. King's name had been closely associated with the fair housing legislation. The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of dwellings, and in other housing-related transactions, based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, or familial status.

Fair Housing Month brings light to the issue of housing discrimination. Fair Housing regulations have integrated America's communities and expanded the possibilities of where a person can choose to live.

HACA is strongly committed to ensuring all families are afforded an equal opportunity to access affordable

housing and housing assistance. The Admissions Department encourages equal opportunity in several ways. Housing applications, which may be downloaded via the HACA website, are available in English and Spanish, applications are mailed to the elderly and disabled upon request, and interpreters are provided for interviews and other required appointments when requested by the applicant.

HACA's dedicated Planning and Development department modifies apartment homes to fit reasonable modifications requested by residents. Examples of reasonable modifications include widening doorways to make rooms more accessible to persons who use wheelchairs or installing a ramp to provide access to a public or common use area, such as a meeting room.

The U.S. Dept. of HUD strongly enforces fair housing laws to all, especially the elderly and disabled. "Persons with disabilities have a right to have the place they call home altered in a way that will enable them to fully enjoy it," said Kim Kendrick, HUD's Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity. "This guidance is a major step toward enforcing that right today, and for generations to come."

Did you KNOW?



HACA received the Mexican-American Engineers & Scientist Plaque for contributing to their scholarship program. The plaque was received at the February 2008 Board of Commissioner's Meeting.

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CELEBRATING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FAIR HOUSING ACT



Mayfest is only one month away and HACA is already gearing up for another exciting event. This year's theme is "HACA Idol," showcasing the talents of our senior residents. Mayfest is an annual event to celebrate Older Americans Month. We want to let our seniors know we value them and their contributions to society. Mayfest is always an entertaining event, but most importantly educational. It is a time to bring awareness to health issues facing older americans. In addition to entertainment, food and fun, there will be vendors offering free blood pressure checks, eye exams, hearing checks and blood sugar screenings.

16th Annual Senior Mayfest
Parque Zaragoza Recreation Center
Friday, May 9, 2008
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

LAST CALL for Scholarships

If you have not already applied for the many scholarship opportunities please do so now. There are only two scholarship deadlines left in the month of April. Scholarships give hope to individuals who have a desire to further their education, but lack the adequate financial means to accomplish this goal. Visit <http://www.hacanet.org/services/scholarships.php> for details and applications.

Apply Now!
Deadlines below.
Southwest NAHRO - April 4, 2008
Housing Authority Insurance Group- April 18, 2008

Time to get Financially Fit!

Financial Fitness week is April 21-27. The goal is to show Austin-area residents the road map to financial stability. Participating organizations will emphasize the importance of financial literacy and the need for consumers to be proactive about managing finances and building wealth.

HACA has partnered with the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas to provide a financial information workshop for residents. The class will be held at Booker T. Washington Terraces, 905 Bedford St., Austin, Texas 78702. The event will be Thursday, April, 24 at 6:30 pm.

Come enjoy door prizes and refreshments!
See the inserted flyer for more details.

GRANTS AWARDED



President & CEO, James Hargrove, accepts grant from the AT&T Foundation.

Resident Opportunities and Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) Grant

Amount Awarded: \$349,987

Funds from the ROSS Grant will be distributed amongst HACA and its community partners: Goodwill Industries, Austin Academy, Communities in Schools, and Boys and Girls Clubs. The funds will further the ability to provide self-sufficiency services to public housing residents. Examples of supportive service programs include academic enrichment and tutoring, childcare services, parenting classes, and financial literacy classes. The programs serve as vehicles to create long term, positive changes, which improve quality of life.

AT&T Wireless Technology Education Grant

Amount Awarded: \$24,942

The AT&T Wireless Technology Education Grant is a highly competitive grant awarded to non-profit or government tax exempt agencies who primarily work with underserved populations. The grant's funds will be used to set up wireless technology networks at Thurmond Heights and Chalmers Court. Residents will have guided open access to increase computer proficiency and literacy, employability, and self-sufficiency.



Grant for Technology Opportunities Program (GTOPs)

Amount Awarded: \$20,000

HACA will pilot a Youth Texploration Program at its Rosewood Courts property in partnership with Austin Free-Net. The program will provide after-school training to late elementary to high-school aged youth in basic through advanced computer usage including multi-media, presentation, photography and Internet applications.

Six-Star Residents Move-In

Congratulations to our new Six-Star Resident Program participants, Cedra Myers and Jacquelyn Lawrence! The two ladies will be moving out of public housing into apartment homes under the Six-Star Program. The Six-Star Program transitions residents to self-sufficiency. Cedra and Jacquelyn are also Family Self-Sufficiency Program participants and will be graduating this year.



Cedra Myers, Six-Star Program Participant

Myers says she has lived in Thurmond Heights for 3 years and wants to transition out of public housing for herself and her 3 year old daughter, Yasmine. She works full-time for Durham School Services in the transportation department and will be going to school part-time at Everest Institute. She plans to become a Medical Administrative Assistant. Myers says, "The program is an opportunity for me to make a change in my life, and start saving to purchase a house."

She believes moving out of public housing will allow someone else to receive assistance. Myers is proud of her progress to become more self-sufficient and she encourages others not to hold back out of fear. She says, "It's a really good program to better yourself. Progress must start somewhere."

For more information, log on to www.hacanet.org under Community Development or call Julie Loredo, Homeownership Coordinator, at 512-477-4488 ext. 2190.



Citywide Advisory Board Notes

Last month's Citywide Advisory Board meeting was held March 11, 2008 at the Central Office.

Sheila Lowe, Community Director, spoke about the Economic Stimulus Payments and passed out flyers. The CWAB was entertained by Debra Or and her associate with a puppet show. Debra would like to partner with HACA to provide puppet shows to children at various HACA properties to introduce them to new books and to make reading fun.

The CWAB voted and passed to expend the Participation Funds on items requested by resident councils. It was also determined that any remaining Participation Funds would be used to create property welcome packets.

The next Citywide Advisory Board meeting will be held April 8th at 9:30 a.m. at HACA's Central Administration Building.

Transportation is provided. Call at least 1 day in advance. North properties call Mary Gonzales at 589-7451. South properties call Angie Cortez at 589-7985



Foundation Communities' Community Tax Centers offers free tax preparation for people with low-

income. HACA has partnered with Community Tax Centers for tax preparers to come on-site to file your tax return! The following properties will have on-site workshops: Northloop, Lakeside, Gaston and Salina. Please look out for flyers on property for details and dates.

Make sure you file your taxes before April 15 to get your 2007 Economic Stimulus Payment from the IRS. If you do not normally file a federal tax return please do so this tax season to receive the stimulus payment. If you have at least \$3,000 in income from any combination of earned income, Social Security retirement or disability benefits, certain veterans' or railroad retirement you qualify to receive the stimulus payment. See insert for additional information or visit www.irs.gov for details.



The Planning and Development team is dedicated to making the Housing Authority of the City of Austin a place residents are proud to call home. The following are improvements that are either currently under way or are scheduled for the near future:

Current Project Status

■ **Parking Lot Improvements**—Northgate—Resurfacing of entire parking and drive area with curb cuts for accessibility, and re-stripping of all spaces. Currently in solicitation, with bid open extended to March 28, 2008.

Upcoming Projects:

■ **Siding Replacements and Painting**—Manchaca Village—Removal of existing siding and replacement with cementitious siding prior to full paint.

■ **Community Center Improvements**—Santa Rita & Thurmond Heights—Renovation of existing spaces to improve services and appeal of these resident oriented facilities.

■ **Water Heater Replacements**—Reviewing best case scenarios for replacement of over 200 water heaters across multiple developments for the most economical and efficient equipment, given new technologies and available rebates.

Energy Conservation Tips

by Energy Manager James Bean

Saving Water In The Bathroom.

1. Do not use the toilet as a wastebasket. Paper waste needs to go to the sanitary landfill not the sewer treatment plant.
2. Place some food coloring in the toilet tank. If the color shows in the bowl without flushing the flapper, then it is leaking. If it is leaking, you should then call in a work order for a leaking flapper.