

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



October 2008

A publication of the
Housing Authority of the City of Austin

Volume 18 Number 10

EMERGING ENTERPRISES

Business Development Resource Center

Housing Authority Board of Commissioners

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Vice President of Housing & Community Development-District II

Ron Kowal
Vice President of Housing Development/Asset Management

Michael Cummings
Vice President of Southwest Housing Compliance Corp.

Do you want to own your own business? If so, do you have the tools you need such as a computer, office space, or even a phone? Emerging Enterprises is the place for budding new businesses to take root. The Housing Authority of the City of Austin and the Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, with the assistance of the City, have teamed up to form a business incubator to support up and coming small businesses. After completing the business courses businesses can use the office space up to six months for free!

The target markets for Emerging Enterprises are small business owners of all ethnicities and the Housing Authority residents, however the center is available to anyone in the Greater Austin Area.



HACA and the Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce partner to create Emerging Enterprises.

The incubator is a business resource center, a one-stop shop to give small business owners everything he or she will need to grow their business. Entrepreneurs will take advantage of a large conference room, private office space, computers, software technology, as well as business essentials such as a phone and fax machine. Additionally, participants will gain price-

less technology training and take seminars in effective business management. The timeframe for the training will be 15 weeks, providing 60 hours for technology training and 30 hours for business management. At the end of the training session, participants will be able to write a business plan and apply for a business loan.

The incubator supplies a road map to efficiently run a successful business in the real world. You may say, "I know how to run a business but no one knows about my company." Problem solved, Emerging

Enterprises will also help you develop a marketing plan that you will be able to execute with results. The facility will also house an office for the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) to provide advice and private consultation with the participants.

If you wish to apply to be a participant in Emerging Enterprises, please do so right away. Space is limited for sessions cycling three times per year. The incubator intake process is simple, just fill out an application, and next complete your assessment with program the administrators. In a few months you will be on your way to a sustainable growing business.

Did you KNOW?

Register to Vote by Oct. 6th! pg 3

You must be registered to vote by October 6th in order to vote in the upcoming election.

INSIDE

Pg 2
08-09 Rent Policies Posted

Pg 3
Tax Rebate Deadline

Pg 2
FSS Banquet October 9

Pg 3
NIGHT OUT 25th Anniversary
POLICE-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

For more information about Emerging Enterprises or to apply, please contact Program Administrator, Nidia Ramirez at 512-476-7502 ext.104 or email nramirez@gahcc.com

*"Success Under the Spotlight"
The 11th Annual
Family Self-Sufficiency Banquet
Thursday, October 9, 2008*

Each year the Housing Authority honors graduates and participants of the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program at an elegant banquet. FSS program members have worked for five years with their FSS Specialist to come to this important point in their lives. The members have had to identify and commit to a five-year plan documenting their personal and professional goals. The goals and accomplishments of each FSS member is announced and recognition is given to their future aspirations such as homeownership, education, or career. Residents who are moving out of public housing or away from government assistance will be recognized for their achievements.

Not only are graduates celebrated for reaching new heights of

success, most graduates will also receive a payout from their accumulating escrow account. Cherie Thomas is being awarded an excess of \$39,000, the largest payout in the history of the program. When asked what she will invest the money in, she says, "I've already given \$2,000 to Give Kids the World, a charity for children with illnesses." The Give Kids the World and Make a Wish Foundation sent Thomas and her child who has Sickle Cell Anemia to Disney World. Fortunately, she is now able to make another child and family's wish come true. Additionally, Thomas purchased land to build a home and also a new car. The rest of the payment was invested into certificates of deposits for her children and a money market account.

FamilySelf-Sufficiency Coordinator, Gaynaye Jenkins, says it is uplifting to see program participants become independent. She is proud to see members use the program and housing assistance as a stepping stone not a permanent solution.



2007 Graduate, Stephanie Pates, middle

2007 FSS Graduates at the Banquet.

HACA Programs available to help you become self-sufficient:

- **Down Payment Assistance/ Homeownership Program:** HACA loans \$10,000 towards the down payment of your new home. You pay nothing on the loan and it is forgiven after 5 years of good standing.
- **Scholarship Program:** Apply for a scholarship in February to continue your education and advance your career.
- **Six-Star Resident Program-** Move into one of three apartment complexes and pay below the market rental rate for three years.

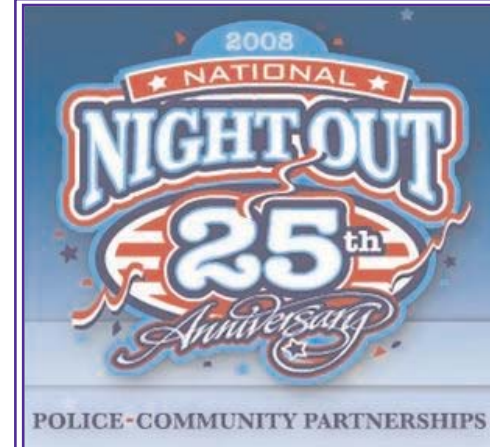
Important: Flat Rent Rates and Ceiling Rent Policies Posted for Comment

Each year HACA reviews and updates the flat rent rates offered to its public housing residents. On September 5, 2008, HACA posted the proposed flat rent schedule for its public housing properties for 2008-2009. HUD requires that Housing Authorities offer public housing families a choice between paying income-based rent and a market-based flat rent only once annually. **To determine the flat rent rates,** HACA performs a study to compare rents charged for unsubsidized units similar in age, size and location to each HACA property.

In addition, HACA is proposing the **implementation of ceiling rents**, which will assist families who cannot switch back to flat rent between annual reexaminations and would otherwise be paying an income-based tenant rent that is higher than the flat rent. In other words, with ceiling rents in place, a family will not have to pay rent that is ever higher than the established flat rent for the family's particular unit.

Although the ceiling rent amount appears to be higher than the flat rent amount for the same unit, families are eligible to receive a utility allowance under ceiling rent. Families paying flat rent are not eligible to receive a utility allowance. Therefore, the actual tenant rent paid by the family under ceiling rent is the same as if they had chosen to pay the flat rent for the unit.

The flat rent and ceiling rent rate postings can be found at each HACA community bulletin board as well as at HACA's administrative office located at 1124 South IH 35. We encourage you to review the proposed flat rent and ceiling schedules and submit written comments to HACA before the October 6th deadline. The HACA Board of Commissioners will vote on the adoption of the proposed revisions regarding the flat rent policy and the proposed implementation of a ceiling rent policy on Thursday, October 16, 2008, at the Thurmond Heights Apartments located at 8426 Goldfinch Court at 12:00 p.m.



America's Night Out Against Crime.

OCTOBER 7, 2008

The TEXAS National Night Out is scheduled for Tuesday, October 7th. The National Night Out campaign involves citizens, law enforcement agencies, civic groups, businesses, neighborhood organizations and local officials.

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT is designed to:

- Heighten crime and drug prevention awareness;
- Generate support for, and participation in, local anticrime programs;
- Strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships; and
- Send a message to criminals letting them know that neighborhoods are organized and fighting back.

Come and enjoy a night with your neighbors to wipe out crime! Look out for flyers and information about the NNO event on your property in the upcoming weeks!

Important 2008 Voter Election Dates

Tuesday, November 4, 2008 - Election Date

**** Last Day to Register to Vote- October 6 ****

First Day of Early Voting- October 20
Last Day to Apply for Ballot by Mail- October 28
(must be received, not merely postmarked)

Last Day of Early Voting- October 31

The deadline for filing for the Economic Stimulus Payment (Tax Rebate) is October 15th.

To better ensure a timely payment, consider these tips:

- * File only one tax return
- * Review Your Tax Liability
- * Use Your Most Current Address

For more information contact the local IRS office in Austin at 825 E. Rundberg Ln. Austin, TX 78753 or call (512) 499-5127 or visit online at www.irs.gov.



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

- **Patio Slab Replacement—Manchaca Village**—Redesign, demolition and re-pouring of existing slab at the front of the management facility to stop rooftop access and building damage by vandals. **Complete.**
- **Interior Unit Renovations—BTW**—Interior renovations to first two multi-family buildings of BTW, including kitchen and bath remodeling, flooring repairs and cabinet replacements. Phase II currently in design.
- **Parking Lot Improvements—Northgate**—Resurfacing of entire parking and drive area with curb cuts for accessibility and re-stripping of all spaces.
- **Exterior Site Grading, Erosion Controls and Retaining Walls—BTW**—Large scale project to remove excess soils, regrade site areas for proper drainage, repair sidewalk areas, and replace retaining walls on the site. Plan-sets expected in approximately 1-2 weeks, prior to solicitation.
- **Walkway Repairs—Gaston**—Address of existing 2nd and 3rd floor exterior walkways to repair surface cracks and handrails attachments. Currently in design.

Citywide Advisory Board Notes

Last month's Citywide Advisory Board meeting was held September 9, 2008 at the Central Office.

The CWAB discussed details about the upcoming Appreciation Luncheon for past and present members of the area Resident Councils. This invitation only event will honor officers and active members. It is tentatively scheduled for October 14 from 11:30 to 1 p.m. directly after the CWAB meeting in the Central Office Cafeteria.

CWAB voted to allow Bouldin Oaks the use of participation funds to supply materials for National Night Out on the property.

Vice President of Housing and Community Development District I, Sylvia Blanco, explained the Flat Rent Rates and proposed Ceiling Rent Policy which are both posted for comment at all the properties.

The next Citywide Advisory Board meeting will be held October 14, 2008 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

Energy Conservation Tips

by Energy Manager James Bean

Water Conservation Tips For The Bathroom

***Do not use the toilet as a wastebasket.**

***Use dye strips or food coloring in the toilet tank. If the color shows in the bowl the flapper is leaking.**

***Do not let the faucet run while shaving or brushing your teeth.**