



# NEIGHBORS **HELPING** NEIGHBORS

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
2020-2021

## OUR MISSION



To cultivate sustainable affordable housing communities and partnerships that inspire self-reliance, growth, and optimism.



## OUR VISION

We envision neighborhoods where poverty is alleviated, residents are healthy and safe, and all people have the opportunity to achieve their full potential.



## OUR COMMITMENTS

- Affordable Housing
- Resident Self-Sufficiency
- Quality of Life
- Exceptional Service
- Employee Engagement
- Corporate & Environmental Sustainability



# NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS



## STRONGER TOGETHER AS WE WEATHER THE STORM.

The past year posed unparalleled challenges to the agency and the Austin community as a whole. The year began with the initial shut-down due to COVID-19, pivoting to a work-from-home environment, and ended with a deadly winter storm. For every challenge we faced, one theme remained constant for the year: we can get through any challenge when neighbors help neighbors.

- **HACA helped our neighbors with the City of Austin by launching the RENT Relief program to bring \$26M in rental payment assistance to tenants impacted by COVID-19, preventing thousands of evictions.**
- **AAHC brought affordable housing to all parts of the city by closing six new construction multifamily developments and acquiring five existing multifamily apartment communities.**
- **Staff braved icy weather to go door-to-door and deliver hot meals and bottled water to home-bound residents during the Winter Storm Uri.**







## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

HACA's governing body ensures the agency stays true to the guiding principles of providing safe, sustainable housing to the Austin community.



**Left to right:** Chairman Carl S. Richie Jr., Vice-Chair Charles C. Bailey, Second Vice-Chair & Resident Commissioner Mary Apostolou, Dr. Tyra Duncan Hall and Edwina Carrington



## STAFF

247 employees with one vision: bringing opportunity home for low-income persons in need of housing in Austin



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends:

During the past fiscal year, Central Texas saw unprecedented challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as a historic winter storm. Despite these hardships, the Austin area continues to see extraordinary growth in population and economic development. Through it all, the Housing Authority of the City of Austin (HACA) remains steadfast in finding solutions to expand the base of affordable housing in our community and to provide critical services to move low-income people to greater self-sufficiency.



This has been a meaningful year with many results to show:

- Through the continuing success of HACA's Rental Assistance Demonstration Program (RAD), we have the financing and tools to create a better quality of life for our families. RAD allowed for a complete re-building of Chalmers Courts East, the second of three phases in Chalmers' construction. When completed, 158 units of eighty-year-old public housing will become 394 units of modern mixed-income affordable housing.
- HACA's subsidiary, Austin Affordable Housing Corporation (AAHC) made strategic acquisitions of six new construction projects totaling 1,755 new units of affordable housing, enhancing our mission to bring affordable housing opportunities to all parts of the city.
- HACA's Austin Pathways team quickly pivoted during the pandemic to address the needs and concerns of our residents by launching the Resident & Client Support Center, setting up free COVID-19 testing and vaccination events on property with our Bringing Health Home team. and by delivering hot meals door-to-door during the devastating winter storm in February.



We succeeded during this past year through the spirit of neighbors helping neighbors. The success of our mission, even in challenging times, depends upon the support of our residents, the community, and our valued partners, working together as neighbors. HACA is honored to lead the way toward ensuring that every low-income person in Austin has access to safe and affordable housing.

Thank you for your continued interest in our programs and services. We look forward to partnering with you in the year ahead.

**Michael Gerber**  
President and CEO

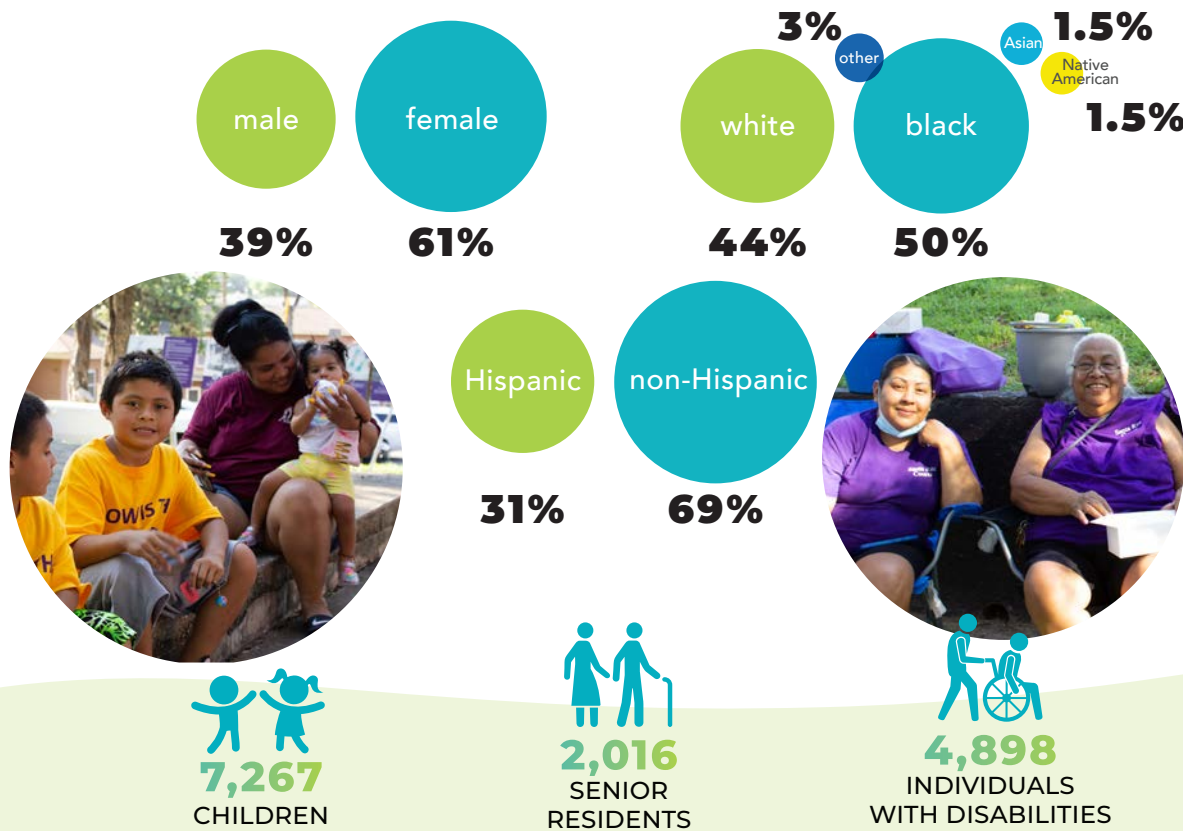




# WHO WE SERVE

Demographics and charts reflect HACA'S Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) and RAD PBRA housing residents.

HACA serves over **20,000** people, including more than **13,500** individuals with housing choice vouchers.



## \$15,331

### Annual Income

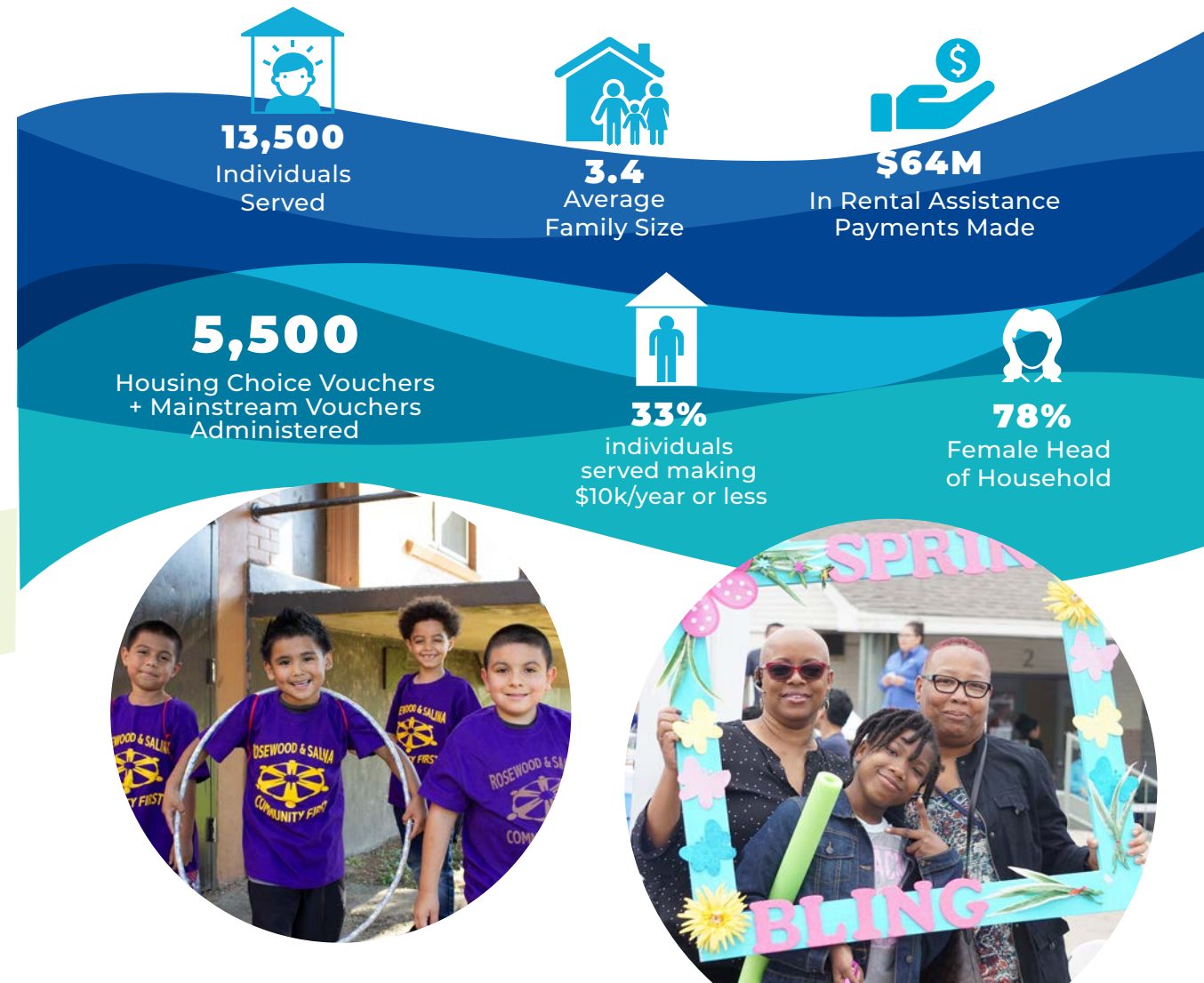
for Families in HACA's Housing Choice Voucher Program Compared to **\$97,600** Avg Median Income in Austin for family of four, 2020



# ASSISTED HOUSING

Sometimes a family just needs a little help to give them a chance at a solid future. With the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program, HACA pays a portion of a family's rent directly to a private landlord and the family pays between 30 – 40% of their monthly income toward rent, so that they may budget and save.

The Assisted Housing department currently serves approximately **5,500** households each month for a total of **13,500** individuals and works with over **1,000** property owners who make their units available to families. The department collaborates with **10** community organizations to coordinate grant applications and case management services.





# COVID-19 RESPONSE



## NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS WEATHER THE STORM

### WORKING SAFELY TO KEEP AUSTIN HOUSED

The COVID-19 pandemic brought the unprecedented challenge of how to safely manage and operate HACA's 18 core properties in the midst of a global pandemic. HACA's Pathways Asset Management (PAMI) staff met that challenge with several important accomplishments along the way:

- **Developed** hybrid work schedules for management staff to work both from home and in property offices.
- **Established** new safety protocols for Maintenance staff including use of PPE, Social Distancing, additional contractors and thresholds for handling emergencies.
- **Embraced** new communication and technology tools such as Google Meet as well as expanded use of existing tools to stay in touch with residents.
- **Coordinated** with Austin Pathways to bring COVID-19 testing and vaccine clinics to properties.



February 2021 was one for the record books in Central Texas for its single-digit temperatures, significant snow, icy roads, power outages, and lack of clean water. As the weather became cruel and unstable, our HACA family met the challenge with each other's caring support.

Right away, resident leaders, property management and maintenance staff worked on the front lines of addressing the urgent needs caused by this storm. Neighbors began checking in on the safety of neighbors. Then, as we realized the aftermath of the storm, staff and residents jumped into action, delivering thousands of meals donated by incredible restaurants across Austin. Thousands of gallons of water were also distributed at properties experiencing issues with water.

Wherever a need arose, we managed to find a way to meet or exceed that challenge! The third week of February was exhausting and difficult, but hopefully, it was equally inspiring to remind us of our strong HACA family, and how together, we can get through any challenge.







## HELPING FAMILIES SET THEIR SIGHTS ON HOME

### Virtual Tours

When a family is approved for housing at HACA, they need to move in as soon as possible. Client safety and well-being depend on HACA property management providing good customer service even in the face of the pandemic. Using camera phones and online editing software, HACA created over thirty virtual tour videos for 14 different properties for online distribution. These videos allowed clients to view a walk-thru of their potential future home from the safety of their phones or computers. The result was more choices for residents, and getting them moved into their new home sooner.

"I think it is a great resource, especially during the challenges of the pandemic."

— Jazmin Padron  
Property Manager of  
Thurmond Heights, a  
144 unit HACA property  
in north Austin.


"The residents are very happy to see the videos before they make their final decision on where to live."



### HACA PROPERTY TOURS GO VIRTUAL FOR RESIDENT AND STAFF SAFETY



WELCOME to THURMOND HEIGHTS





VIEW A SAMPLE VIRTUAL TOUR VIDEO HERE:  
[HTTP://BIT.LY/HACA-TOUR](http://bit.ly/haca-tour)  
OR SCAN QR CODE WITH YOUR PHONE



## RENT RELIEF PROGRAM

Keeping people housed is a core mission of HACA, so when thousands of Austinites were at risk of losing their rental housing to eviction due to COVID-19, HACA immediately took action by partnering with the City to launch the Relief of Emergency Needs for Tenants (RENT) Program.

**RENT helps to pay up to 12-15 months of rent for eligible residents, and to date has provided over \$26M in rental assistance payments to tenants across Austin.**

HACA was essential to the success of the RENT program by hosting frequent meetings with the public, landlords, and other community partners. HACA also provided staffing to help applicants fill out applications with safe, in-person assistance during the pandemic.

# RENT assistance

for Austin tenants affected by COVID-19



Wow! This is such an incredible relief, I'm in tears.

**THANK YOU SO MUCH.**

-BRINTEY L.

More info at [AustinTexas.gov/RENT](https://austintexas.gov/rent)



## RAD PROJECT UPDATES: NOW IS THE TIME FOR ROSEWOOD COURTS

The RAD Program also made it possible for re-imagining the future of Rosewood Courts, with the goal of transforming the 80 year old property into a new vision of the future that also honors Rosewood's history.

Rosewood Courts was established in 1939 as part of the New Deal, which was lobbied for by then-Congressman Lyndon Baines Johnson. Built during an era of segregation, Rosewood Courts was the first public housing property in the U.S. designated for African American families, and sits on Austin's original Emancipation Park site.

The barracks-style complex was built with cinder block walls, no central air conditioning, and constructed during a time without wheelchair accessibility.



Since 2012, HACA has worked closely with our residents, our Rosewood neighbors, and our community partners to create this new vision for affordable housing in Austin.

The newly imagined Rosewood Courts will provide more deeply affordable housing for residents with essential modern amenities. At the same time, we will also take care to honor the past and history of this property by preserving and restoring eight original buildings. The new community will feel open, safe and beautiful with a new community green space, expanded parking, and an exciting opportunity of affordable homeownership for first-time home buyers.



## RAD PROGRESS UPDATES CHALMERS

The Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program is a tool provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that allows public housing agencies like HACA to make upgrades and quality of life improvements to housing properties.

### Chalmers Courts East Opens

Chalmers Courts continues its complete transformation from what used to be 158 units of 80 year old public housing, into 394 units of affordable housing in a new modern apartment community that residents will be proud of. Chalmers East opened to HACA residents in 2021, completing the second of three phases of construction. Chalmers West, the third and final phase of the project, will be transformed in 2022.



Residents currently living in Chalmers West are given priority to move across the street to the brand new apartments at Chalmers East. For one longtime Chalmers resident, Gloria, her move into a modern home was a dramatic change in her everyday life.



**"I've never had central heating, central air conditioning in my whole life,"** said Gloria excitedly on the day she moved into her new home at Chalmers East. **"I had to ask my daughter how to program the thermostat. I grew up in public housing, and I've never used one."**

In addition to central heating and air, Chalmers East units are equipped with ceiling fans, modern appliances like microwaves and dishwashers, washer/dryer connections,







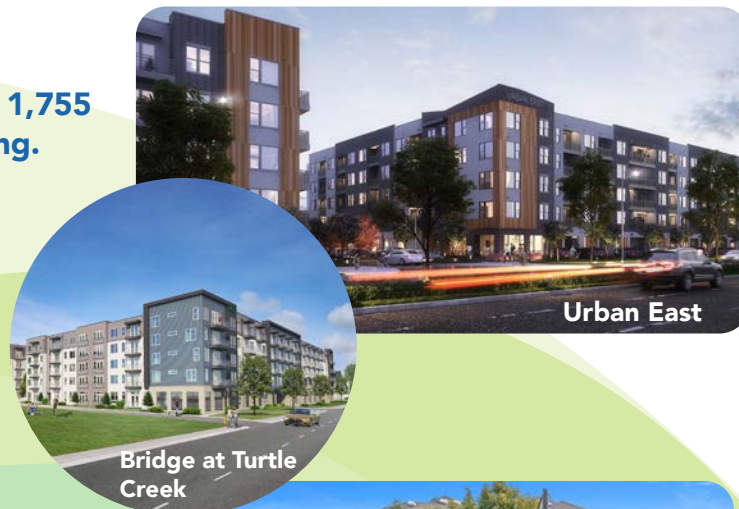
## AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR ALL PEOPLE, IN ALL PARTS OF TOWN

HACA and its subsidiary, the Austin Affordable Housing Corporation (AAHC), have formed innovative partnerships to acquire and develop affordable housing properties across Austin.

During the past year, HACA's subsidiary Austin Affordable Housing Corporation (AAHC) continued to find and create new affordable housing opportunities in all parts of town. AAHC has helped acquire properties in north Austin near high tech employment and in south Austin near high performing schools.

### In 2020 - 2021, AAHC broke ground on six new construction projects totaling 1,755 new units of affordable housing.

- Moonlight Gardens (264 units)
- Vega Multifamily (330 units)
- Urban East (381 units)
- Highland Village (299 units)
- Heritage Oaks at Owen Tech (174 units)
- Bridge at Turtle Creek (307 units)

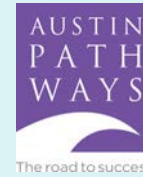


### AAHC Also Acquired five existing properties, adding 1,197 units of affordable housing:

- Arbors at Tallwood (120 units)
- Montecito Apartments (268 units)
- The Broadstone Apartments (376 units)
- Melrose Trail Apartments (183 units)
- The James at South First (250 units).



The addition of these new AAHC properties means more choices are now available for more people with income challenges, in a wider variety of neighborhoods. Plus, each AAHC property accepts Housing Choice Vouchers, truly expanding housing options for HACA's HCV families.



## AUSTIN PATHWAYS

The Austin Pathways staff provide residents with direct access to self-improvement through education incentives, digital inclusion, job training, life skills, and health and wellness programs.

### COVID-19 Resident Services

Austin Pathways staff and partners had to pivot their focus and energies when the COVID-19 pandemic began in March of 2020. Austin Pathways identified and filled gaps in resident services in the critical needs of life saving services, emergency recovery, and enhancing access to essential services. To do this, Austin Pathways created four areas of focus: launching the HACA Resident & Client Support Center; the HACA At-Home Learning Program; home food delivery for seniors impacted by COVID-19; and Winter Storm response and recovery.



### HACA RESIDENT & CLIENT SUPPORT CENTER



### The HACA Resident & Client Support Center Launches

To quickly accommodate the needs of residents during the pandemic, Austin Pathways staff launched a new HACA Resident & Client Support Center. The Support Center provided information, coordination and support via phone, email, and text to more than 6,000 client requests in the first three months. All staff received just-in-time training (knowledge base, soft skills, remote work) and the necessary technology.

“ I know you called to check on me, honey, but  
I'm calling now to check on you.  
How are you all holding up? ”

“ I feel like I'm talking to family. ”

- Mary, HACA Resident







# AUSTIN PATHWAYS

The Austin Pathways staff provide residents with direct access to self-improvement through education incentives, digital inclusion, job training, life skills, and health and wellness programs.

## Food Delivery to Quarantined Seniors

Austin Pathway and partners provided **thousands of food boxes** to quarantined seniors, support to **121 HACA families** with a diagnosed family member, conducted **969 COVID-19 tests**, and more than **858 onsite vaccinations**.



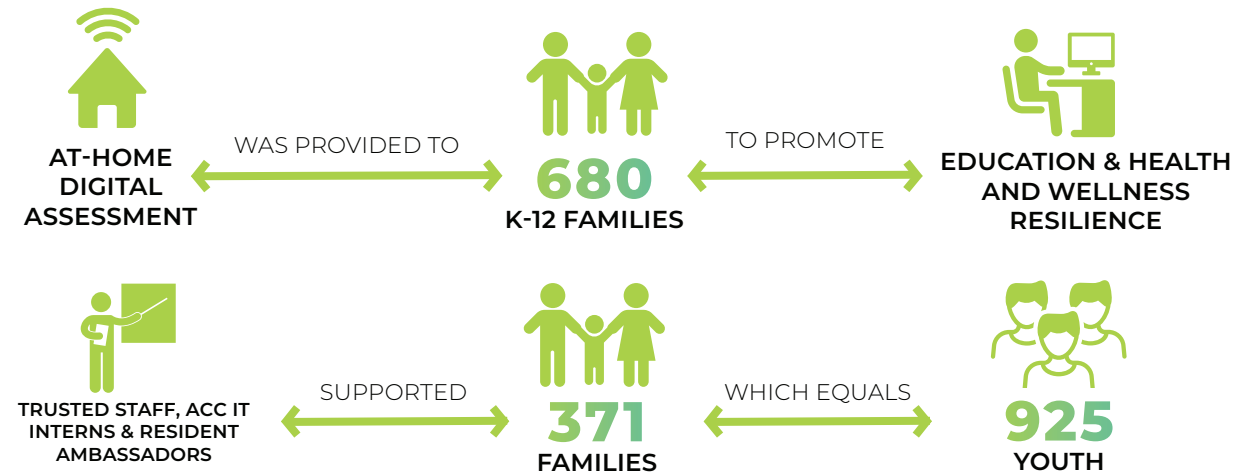
## Winter Storm Response and Recovery

In February 2021, Austin experienced a deadly winter storm unlike anything seen during HACA's history. In response to Winter Storm Uri, the Austin Pathways team and HACA staff from other areas immediately began welfare checks and making phone calls to residents. Staff also secured partnerships with Good Work Austin and World Central Kitchen to provide more than 18,000 meals and 50 pallets of water to vulnerable public housing senior and family properties. Staff went door-to-door in the snowy conditions to deliver hot meals to residents across all of HACA properties.



# EDUCATION CONNECTIONS DURING THE PANDEMIC

The HACA At-Home Learning Program played a crucial role in keeping students and families connected during the school year. Goals accomplished during the this time include:



During the school year, many students living at HACA properties had to quickly pivot to learning from home. This made home internet access a crucial component for residents to stay connected to their schools, teachers and classmates. HACA partners AISD and CapMetro provided wifi buses at seven HACA properties to ensure that even homes without internet stayed connected to their classrooms. Resident Ambassadors helped families build at-home learning capacity.



# YOUTH EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS (YES) AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

## YES Achievements:

- **350 Youth** participating in Communities in Schools received **case management, after-school tutoring, family wrap-around services, and social emotional support.**
- **106 Youth** participated in the **Boys and Girls Club** through on-site clubs at Chalmers Courts, Booker T. Washington, and Meadowbrook.
- **426 Youth** received a YES incentive for achieving **A/B Honor Roll and/or Perfect Attendance.**
- **34 residents** earned Austin Pathways HACA Resident Scholarships, totaling **\$60,500 in tuition assistance.**

## i-DADS Achievements:

- i-DADS successfully transitioned to a remote format to **serve 61 fathers** and father figures **with 24/7 i- DADS groups and mentoring.**

## Workforce Development Achievements:

**Census 2020:** this program was an important component in our Resident Ambassador Model. We provided the Census team with workforce development training and referrals to other professional opportunities.

- The volunteer Census team consisted of 17 resident team members who completed 2 required training classes and/or trained with 8 community organizations.
- 4 Census Leads have become certified para-educators with a concentration in special education through a partnership with Austin Community College.
- 2 Census Leads are now full-time Community Health Workers with HACA's Bringing Health Home team.



## FSS HIGHLIGHTS

The Family Self-Sufficiency Program is a voluntary 5-year commitment made by HACA families to reach their economic goals. Through service coordination and the invaluable support of our community partners, FSS families are connected to education, workforce development, and financial management programs. Residents who participate in the program can gain an escrow savings fund used to support education, homeownership, or debt repayment.

- For 26 years, the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program has provided residents with education, workforce development, and financial life skills.
- Over 300 residents have graduated from the FSS Program during the past 26 years.
- 27 HACA residents graduated from the FSS Program in 2020.
- This year's graduates earned a record \$338,434 in escrow savings.



THRIVING *Beyond* THE CHALLENGES

2020 FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY GRADUATION CEREMONY

“I am so happy I was able to be a part of the FSS program, it's been such a blessing. I am also grateful and so happy that I have attended this year's FSS Graduation. This experience was life changing in such a positive way!”

- Shanette Rose, 2020 FSS resident graduate





HACA founded Southwest Housing Compliance Corporation (SHCC) in 2000 to serve as HUD's Performance Based Contract Administrator in Texas.

SHCC added Arkansas to its portfolio in 2004 and collectively serves over 123,000 residents in meeting HUD's goal of providing decent, safe and sanitary housing.

In this highly specialized work, SHCC has built a reputation for excellence, efficiency and integrity in providing compliance service, customer service, and technical assistance to the project based Section 8 multifamily housing industry.

In 2020, SHCC administered over \$455 million in subsidies in its two-state portfolio. Revenue generated from SHCC operations supports HACA resident services including dropout prevention, scholarships, after-school programming, workforce development and health and wellness programs.



Blueprint Housing Solutions is a national affordable housing consulting services company.

Established in 2014, Blueprint's mission is assisting clients in delivering exceptional affordable housing and community development solutions.

Blueprint provides customized consulting services, trainings and products with a proven track record of managing and implementing complex housing program requirements.

The organization has provided services to over 180 clients in more than 40 states across the country.

Revenue generated from Blueprint operations supports HACA resident services including dropout prevention, scholarships, after-school programming, workforce development and health and wellness programs.



## IN MEMORIAM: MARY GONZALES-LIMAS (1946 - 2020)

In early 2020, HACA lost one of its most dedicated, unique, and vibrant employees with the passing of Mary Gonzales-Limas. Mary worked at HACA for over 45 years, and became a strong advocate for our residents, helping to organize and manage countless events to support and celebrate them.

Mary was a friend, teammate, confidante, cheerleader, and surrogate mom for so many in the HACA Family. Her smile and enthusiasm lit up the room, and despite real hardship in her life, she lived with joy, courage, and humility. From Mayfests to turkey drives to resident meetings, Mary worked tirelessly to make things better for our residents and their families.

This year's annual report is dedicated to the lasting memory and legacy of Mary Gonzales-Limas. Gone too soon, but never forgotten.





# FINANCIAL REPORT

HACA Finance Department's scope includes all the activity --- revenue and expenses, receivables and payables -- that flow through HACA's financial systems for full tenant and property accounting or administration of all programs, as well as reporting, treasury/banking and leading or supporting audits for this activity.

ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents - Unrestricted		\$32.20
Cash and Cash Equivalents - Restricted		\$61.30
Investments - Unrestricted		\$0.40
Receivables, Net		\$8.00
Prepaid Expenses and Other Assets		\$0.70
Total Current Assets		\$102.60
Noncurrent Assets		
Land		\$98.60
Buildings, Equipment & Infrastructure (Note 2)		\$180.40
Construction in Progress		\$0.30
Less: Accumulated Depreciation		-\$118.60
Total Capital Assets, Net		\$160.70
Notes and Mortgages Receivable - noncurrent		\$50.10
Investments in Joint Ventures		\$33.00
Total Noncurrent Assets		\$83.10
Total Assets		\$346.30
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable		\$1.00
Accrued Liabilities		\$0.80
Tenant Security Deposits		\$0.60
Unearned Revenues		\$1.80
Current Portion of Long-term Debt		\$2.20
Current Portion of Long-term Debt - Operating		\$0.00
Other Current Liabilities		\$1.00
Accrued Liabilities - Other		\$1.50
Total Current Liabilities		\$8.90
Noncurrent Liabilities		
Long-term Debt, Net of Current - Capital		\$91.70
Long-term Debt, Net of Current - Operating		
Non-current Liabilities - Other		\$93.10
Accrued Compensated Absences - Non Current		\$2.70
Total Non-Current Liabilities		\$187.50
Total Liabilities		\$196.40

Dollar amount shown are in millions



# FINANCIAL REPORT

TOTAL EQUITY / NET ASSETS		
Net Investment in Capital Assets		\$66.90
Restricted Net Position		\$59.60
Unrestricted Net Position		\$23.50
Total Equity - Net Assets / Position		\$149.90
Total Liabilities and Equity - Net Assets / Position		\$346.30
REVENUES		
Net Tenant Revenue		\$12.20
Government Operating and Capital Grants		\$549.70
Other Revenue		\$25.50
Total Revenue		\$587.40
EXPENSES		
Administrative		\$23.80
Tenant		\$4.20
Utilities		\$2.60
Maintenance		\$5.40
Protective Services - Other Contract Costs		\$0.60
Total Insurance Premiums		\$1.00
Total Other General Expenses		\$3.40
Interest Expense and Amortization Cost		\$3.50
Housing Assistance Payments		\$516.70
Depreciation Expense		\$6.50
Total Expenses		\$567.60
Excess of Revenue Over Expense		\$19.80
CHANGE IN EQUITY / NET ASSETS		
Total Equity - Net Assets / Position - Beginning		\$130.10
Total Equity - Net Assets / Position - Ending		\$149.90

Dollar amount shown are in millions





1124 S. IH-35 ♦ Austin, TX 78704  
(512) 477-4488  
[www.hacanet.org](http://www.hacanet.org)

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