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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Happy Holidays! The holiday season is a time of giving and spending time with loved ones, and here at Edison Housing Authority, we encourage all of our residents to do just that. After another long year, we are still keeping precautions in mind and encourage you to take advantage of free COVID-19 testing and other safety measures ahead of family gatherings.

Here at EHA, we have been hosting fall events for Back to School, Fall Festivities, Halloween Trick-or-Treating, and Thanksgiving turkey distribution, and don't miss our upcoming Holiday Extravaganza later this month! On December 16th, Santa Claus will visit the boys and girls of Julius Engel Gardens and Robert E. Holmes Gardens. Our staff and commissioners enjoy spreading the holiday cheer and celebrating the holidays together with everyone.

In the spirit of giving, if your family or if you know a family that is still experiencing hardships with their rent, please do not hesitate to reach out to our staff, as we have a team that is committed to working closely with you to ensure your applications for the Township of Edison rental assistance program or other related programs are submitted properly. There is also a new property tax benefits program called ANCHOR that has recently been extended to New Jersey tenants, so you'll want to apply before the deadline on January 31st.

In this edition of the newsletter, you will get an opportunity to learn about April Mobley, EHA's Housing Choice Voucher Program and Food Coordinator. April is a cherished member of our team who connects with residents at the food pantries she organizes each month.

Here at the Edison Housing Authority, we are still remaining cautious and aware when it comes to the pandemic. If you ever have any questions, you can always visit our website for more information at www.edisonha.org/eha-coronavirus-updates.

You can also subscribe to our text/call feature to get the latest updates on vaccinations and all EHA events and notices.

I extend my heartfelt wishes to all of our families to have a blessed holiday season. See you in 2023!

Sincerely,



Executive Director

EHA SPOTLIGHT: HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM AND FOOD COORDINATOR, APRIL MOBLEY



April Mobley

The Edison Housing Authority would like to shine the spotlight on the Housing Choice Voucher Program and Food Coordinator April Mobley. In just one year with EHA, April has grown to be a valuable asset to our team.

Throughout April's career, she has played a key role in supporting local communities. Her career in community outreach began after she graduated from New Jersey City University with a bachelor's degree in sociology and a minor in drug and alcohol counseling.

Prior to her current position here at EHA, April served in many positions pertaining to her career. She was a Work First New Jersey case manager and a protective services case manager for adults before becoming the EHA Housing Choice Voucher Program and Food Coordinator. Her past roles have played an important part in many families' lives when they need assistance and resources.

When April began her career at EHA a year ago, she had never run a full food pantry before. Under the guidance of her predecessor, Raquel Landero, April has been able to host multiple successful food pantries, stating, "It was a great experience working under Raquel and learning the ropes of running the food pantry. And here I am today. It gives me the opportunity to interact with the tenants that we serve. So it's like a win-win situation."

As the Housing Choice Voucher Program Coordinator, April helps both families and individuals in the community acquire safe housing. She is dedicated to supporting our neighborhood so that each resident can succeed.

April is an enthusiastic supporter of the programs and events EHA provides for the community, "I think we give people an outlet because some residents don't have anything else," she shared, "I think the community enjoys the functions that we put together for them and they enjoy the interaction with the staff, and I have fun too. I get out there and dance."

It is easy to see the passion April has for our community and team, "Everybody needs help, it's okay to take a deep breath and help somebody else besides yourself." April noted, "Lending a hand will get you farther than keeping your hands in your pockets."

Her dedication to each person and family is the reason she is here with us today and we are excited to watch her grow with us. From our team at the Edison Housing Authority, we'd like to say a big thank you to April for all her hard work and for inspiring others every day!

FALL STEM PROGRAM & AWARD CEREMONY

Our popular STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) program was another success, thanks again to MLK Elementary School. Children participated in this latest session of the six-week program which took place from 3:45 to 5:30 p.m. on Wednesdays for kindergarten to 3rd grade and Thursdays for 4th and 5th grades. Children learned to work as a team, participated in activities together, fostered imagination with Legos, and each student received a meal to help fuel learning. Student projects promote



communication and teamwork while learning about computer science, technology, and problem-solving, which lead to academic success. Funds to support the programs are made possible by Edison Township's Community Development Block Grant Program. On November 16, 2022, Edison Housing Authority celebrated the STEM program students' accomplishments with a ceremony, where each student received a certificate for completion of the program and a medal for their project.



RENTAL ASSISTANCE & THE NEW ANCHOR PROPERTY TAX RELIEF PROGRAM

We want to ensure our residents have financial stability during this challenging time. We encourage families who are having trouble paying their rent to take advantage of the following programs which provide temporary rental assistance and tax relief benefits to households:

1. The Township of Edison Emergency Rental & Mortgage Assistance Grant Program: For more information and to apply, visit www.edisonnj.org.
2. Affordable New Jersey Communities for Homeowners and Renters (ANCHOR) Property Tax Relief Program: The deadline to submit an application is January 31, 2023. For more information and to apply, visit www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/anchor.

If you need help filling out these applications, contact Carmen Amalbert at 908-561-2525 extension 210 or email her at Camalbert@edisonha.org. She will be happy to assist you.

METUCHEN DOWNTOWN ALLIANCE FOOD DISTRIBUTION

This year EHA residents have been afforded a new meal delivery program sponsored by Metuchen Downtown Alliance. Restaurants participate in the program to help residents sample their food and encourage repeat customers. Every Thursday since September 29, 2022, Robert E. Holmes Gardens and Julius Engel Gardens residents have received hot and cold meals from two different restaurants in the community, with more restaurants in store! This program is a welcome addition to the EHA community and residents thoroughly enjoy trying new cuisines.

JOB LEADS

The Edison Housing Authority encourages residents to pursue a wide range of careers and offers resources for jobseekers to find and apply to job openings. If you are interested in the fast-growing energy efficiency sector, PSE&G and its partner organizations will provide you with hands-on training and professional skills as part of its Clean Energy Jobs Program. **To learn more and apply for open employment opportunities, visit www.jobs.cleanenergyjobpartnership.com.**

The Raritan Bay Area YMCA is offering a free 20-week program called Bridges to Employing Youth to pregnant/parenting Middlesex County youth between 16-24 years of age. The program is designed to help young adults develop new skill sets and provides hands-on career exploration. **To learn more and register, contact Fabiola Morales at 732-771-9910 ext. 396 or email FMorales@RBAYMCA.org.**

BACK-TO-SCHOOL EVENT

More than 300 families attended Edison Housing Authority's annual back-to-school event on August 25, 2022, for our residents at Robert E. Holmes Gardens and Julius Engel Gardens. Children received backpacks with school supplies. Jewish Renaissance Foundation provided blood pressure screening and free COVID-19 vaccinations, and free eye screenings and glasses were provided by Optical Academy On-Site Eyecare/On-Site Eyewear. The Edison Health Department provided free at-home COVID testing. EHA and Elcha's Food Truck took turns providing free hamburgers and hot dogs for all families. DJ Giselle supplied the music and we also had complimentary refreshments from Rita's Italian Ice. Our young men were excited to get free haircuts. The young women received free hair products from A Freeman's Place Counseling. We were honored to have Edison community officials working the grills for our residents. Officers from the Edison Police Department assisted with the event and spent time with members of the community.



Our back-to-school event was not only a success, it was even featured on LocalToday.News and CentralJersey.com.



This event was made possible in partnership with the Township of Edison, the Mobile Family Success Center of Middlesex County, JRF, Acelero Head Start, AETNA, Brain Injury Alliance New Jersey, Community Affairs & Resource Center, Coordinated Family Care, Kidz Can Corporation, Horizon Blue Cross/Blue Shield, the Edison YMCA, and the Edison Health Department. Events like these further demonstrate that EHA is a community committed to helping all residents reach their greatest potential. Thank you to all of our many donors for continuing to support our mission and children! From all of us at Edison Housing Authority, thank you for assisting our children as they went back to school this year.

FALL FEST AND HALLOWEEN TRICK-OR-TREATING

On October 31, 2022, EHA held a Fall Fest for our residents to enjoy. We also held a Trick-Or-Treat event for our children to celebrate Halloween safely. Lots of little boys and girls dressed up in a range of costumes. The Edison Township Council Liaison to EHA Joyce Ship-Freeman also handed out candy.



THANKSGIVING TURKEY GIVEAWAY

Robert E. Holmes Gardens and Julius Engel Gardens residents received turkeys and chickens on November 17, 2022, to help celebrate the Thanksgiving holiday. We know just how important it is to be able to spend quality time and share a meal with your family and we are fortunate to help our residents celebrate this season of thanks.

RAD (RENTAL ASSISTANCE DEMONSTRATION)

EHA has continued to hold community meetings for residents of Robert E. Holmes Gardens and Julius Engel Gardens regarding The Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program, a voluntary program of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). RAD seeks to preserve public housing by providing Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) with access to more stable funding to make needed improvements to properties. Learn more about RAD and view the informational video on our website at www.edisonha.org/rad-program.



Community meetings allow residents to ask questions and learn about the latest developments taking place with the RAD project. This gives residents the opportunity to make recommendations that EHA takes into account for site improvements. For example, the new floor plans will include a washer and dryer inside each apartment. Families have been very engaged, asking questions about the remodeling of the apartments. See the updated remodeling at Robert E. Holmes Gardens above.

SIGN UP FOR THE NEXT EXTERMINATOR VISIT



Attention all Robert E. Holmes Gardens families, please remember that exterminations occur every 3rd Wednesday of the month. Corbett Exterminating Inc. will be on site December 14th and January 18th between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Please call Carmen Amalbert at 908-561-2525 to place your name on the list for the exterminator. All residents must wear a mask when the technician enters the unit or vacate the unit for service.

HOUSING RESOURCE FAIR

On November 19, 2022, the greater Edison community participated in an expo for tenants, first-time home buyers, and existing homeowners. EHA hosted this event in partnership with the Township of Edison Mayor Sam Joshi to help inform individuals about renting or purchasing property, available grants to assist with down payments, and the current real estate market. The event also provided additional educational tools. Attendees were able to apply for rental assistance, speak with a homeownership HUD-certified mortgage counselor, and obtain credit counseling and guidelines on the process to obtain a loan from mortgage officers. Thank you to all of our sponsors for another successful event this year: Community Affairs & Resource Center, NJID's Bridges Program, NJHMFA, Mobile Family Success Center of Middlesex County, New Jersey Citizen Action Education Fund, Provident Bank, Neighborhood Assistance Corporation of America, and Community Grants, Planning & Housing.



UPCOMING EVENTS

DECEMBER 1ST, 8TH, 15TH, 22ND, & 29TH

Metuchen Downtown Alliance Food Distribution at Robert E. Holmes Gardens and Julius Engel Gardens - Every Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in the community rooms.

DECEMBER 16TH

Holiday Celebrations at Robert E. Holmes Gardens and Julius Engel Gardens from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. with fun holiday activities for all of our residents!

DECEMBER 15TH, JANUARY 19TH, & FEBRUARY 16TH

Food Pantry at Robert E. Holmes Gardens and Julius Engel Gardens - Every third Thursday of the month from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The Community Affairs and Resource Center and volunteers from the Jewish Renaissance Foundation are also available to residents at each food pantry event. If you have any questions, contact April Mobley at 908-561-8489.

JANUARY 17TH

Robert E. Holmes Gardens Tenant Association's next meeting will be held at 5:15 p.m. - Every other month on the third Tuesday of the month in the community room. If you wish to contact the Tenant Association, please email REHTenantsAssociation@gmail.com



Amazon supporting EHA with trays of frozen food to distribute to our families at the Thanksgiving food pantry.



TENANT NOTICE: EHA TEXT-CALL FEATURE

If you wish to:

- Learn about upcoming EHA events
- Receive notices about the food pantry operation and COVID-19 testing
- Have your apartment exterminated for ants, bed bugs, and other pests

Make sure your number is on our **Text-Call** feature. You will be able to receive important information from the Edison Housing Authority that helps to provide a positive quality of life within your community. Call Executive Assistant Carmen Amalbert at 908-561-2525 and have your name and mobile number placed on our list. Please know that your information is not provided to the public or used for any purposes unrelated to EHA activity.

BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2022

DATE	LOCATION
December 20, 2022	Julius Engel Gardens

CONTACT US EDISON HOUSING AUTHORITY

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