



## SPOTLIGHT JOLANTA KUBACKA

The Edison Housing Authority would like to shine the spotlight on Director of Housing Jolanta Kubacka, C-PHM. Here at EHA, she oversaw Robert E. Holmes Gardens (REH) as public housing manager for two years and then fulfilled the same role at Julius Engel Gardens (JEG) for 15 years. In 2022 she transitioned to public housing manager, and shortly thereafter director of property management, at Julius Engel Gardens (JEG). We recognized her outstanding performance which earned her a promotion to director of housing. In her new role, Jolanta has been overseeing both Robert E. Holmes Gardens and Julius Engel Gardens, answering residents' questions, filing work orders and recertifications, organizing inspections, reviewing rent adjustments, and assisting with community events including the food pantries at Julius Engel Gardens.

Originally from Poland, Jolanta came to the United States in 1985 and worked at Clara Barton Apartments for 10 years before joining our team here at the Edison Housing Authority. She is a certified public housing manager and in her spare time she enjoys cooking and reading as well as crocheting and knitting items like sweaters and purses; she's currently learning Tunisian crocheting!

Jolanta likes getting to know our residents and being able to help and direct them to programs that fulfill their lives, "I really like talking to people, being there for them, being able to help them with problems and issues. They know that if they have any issues they can come and talk to me. I emphasize an open door policy where residents are welcome to come and ask me any questions because I am more than happy to assist."

She also works closely with Patricia Tamburello who leads the Bridges program. Bridges is offered to EHA residents 62 years and older and is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development/Residents Opportunity for

Self-Sufficiency (HUD-ROSS). This program "bridges" individuals with disabilities to supports and services that are available in the town and county, "Connecting Today to Tomorrow." Jolanta also partners with other organizations to help improve residents' quality of life by working one-on-one with residents to develop plans to address issues in a supportive manner.

Please take note of Jolanta's office schedule below and contact her with any inquiries at her mobile number, 908-217-6695 or at her office number, 908-561-2525 ext. 211, or email her at JKubacka@edisonha.org:

- REH Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- JEG Thursday and Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

From all of us at EHA, we applaud Jolanta Kubacka for her extensive service to our community for nearly two decades!

### Rental Assistance & The Anchor Property Tax Relief Program



We want to ensure our residents have financial stability during this difficult time. In 2022, we assisted residents in applying to the new Affordable New Jersey Communities for Homeowners and Renters (ANCHOR) Property Tax Relief Program for the 2019 tax year and we did so again in 2023 for the 2020 tax year.

New Jersey tenants 64 or younger are eligible to receive up to \$450. New for this year, those 65 or older are eligible to receive up to \$700. Those who applied for the 2019 tax year may not have had to file another application for the 2020 tax year if no information changed. Applications were due December 29, 2023 and individuals can review the status of their application at [www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/anchor](http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/anchor).

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

## STEM PROGRAM & AWARD CEREMONY



Our highly acclaimed Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) program continues to grow and benefit the young minds in our community. The latest cohort of 27 students began on October 12th in collaboration with John Adams Middle School and MLK Elementary School. Children look forward to the eight-week program and even show up on days off. Parents also ask about the program and are thrilled to see their kids participating. Through collaborative activities, imaginative exploration with Legos, and the provision of nutritious meals which were graciously provided by Jay Elliot and Ferraro's Pizzeria, students not only fostered teamwork but also fueled their passion for learning. By engaging in projects that emphasize communication, teamwork, computer science, technology, and problem-solving, students laid the foundation for future academic success. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to the Edison Township Community Development Block Grant for their generous support, enabling us to offer these enriching programs.

To commemorate the accomplishments of our STEM program participants, the Edison Housing Authority held an inspiring award ceremony on December 14, 2023. During this special event, each student received a certificate acknowledging their successful completion of the program, along with a well-deserved medal honoring their remarkable project.

Looking ahead, we are excited to announce that registration for the 2024 STEM programs will begin in March. The program will take place from March 7th to May 23rd in partnership with the Township of Edison CDBG program, John Adams Middle School, and MLK Elementary School. Once again, the generous funding provided by the Edison Township Community Development Block Grant make these programs possible. In May, we will celebrate the accomplishments of our STEM program students through a dedicated award ceremony, to recognize their outstanding achievements.

We extend our gratitude to all who contribute to the success of our STEM program, including our dedicated partners, supporters, and, most importantly, the talented students who continue to inspire us with their enthusiasm and achievements.



### EXTERMINATOR AVAILABILITY

Attention all Robert E. Holmes Gardens and Julius Engel Gardens families, please remember that exterminations occur every 3rd Wednesday of the month. Corbett Exterminating Inc. will be on site April 17th 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.

### 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.



Robert E. Holmes Gardens  
14 Rev. Samuel Carpenter Blvd.  
Edison, NJ 08820  
TEL 908-561-2525 | FAX 908-561-7517  
[www.edisonha.org](http://www.edisonha.org) | [info@edisonha.org](mailto:info@edisonha.org)



## EDISON HOUSING AUTHORITY NEWSLETTER SPOTLIGHT

NEW DIRECTOR OF HOUSING  
JOLANTA KUBACKA



Message from Executive Director

# SPRING

Finally, Spring has arrived! We hope everyone is doing well and you enjoy the highlights.

As always, the Board of Commissioners, EHA staff, and I take it upon ourselves to improve the lives of our residents and present opportunities for self-sufficiency. We are glad to have assisted our residents with another round of applications to the ANCHOR property tax benefits program for the 2020 tax year. If you have any questions or are a new applicant, please do not hesitate to reach out to our staff if you need help with rental assistance or other financial assistance applications. Our team is committed to working closely with you to ensure your applications are submitted properly.

In this edition of the newsletter, you will become more familiar with Jolanta Kubacka's new role here at EHA as the Director of Housing. Jolanta works closely with residents and is always very supportive tending to their needs.

During these times be mindful of COVID-19. We encourage you to take advantage of free COVID-19 testing and other safety measures. Please let us know if you need a test as we have them here at the main office. If you ever have any questions, you can always visit our website for more information at: [www.edisonha.org/eha-coronavirus-updates](http://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.

We hope to see you at our many upcoming community events this year! Best wishes for 2024 to our residents, their families, and the entire EHA community.

Sincerely,

Deborah Hurley  
Executive Director



Last year we were proud to provide more than 180 backpacks at our annual back to school events at Julius Engel Gardens and at Robert E. Holmes Gardens. Children received backpacks with school supplies, DJ Giselle supplied the music, and we also had complimentary refreshments from Elcha's Food Truck and Rita's Italian Ice. Free haircuts were provided by barber Jamar Clark and by two female barbers from Sparks at RJ's for young men.

We honored our tradition of having Edison community officials working the grills for our residents as well. Officers from the Edison Police Department assisted with the event and spent time with members of the community.

This event was made possible in partnership with the Township of Edison, the Mobile Family Success Center of Middlesex County, the Jewish Renaissance Foundation, Amerigroup, United Way, ScreenNJ Cancer Prevention Education and Detection, and the Edison YMCA. 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.



On October 31, 2023, we held a Fall Festival at Julius Engel Gardens for our senior residents and a Halloween Trick-Or-Treat at Robert E. Holmes Gardens for our young residents to enjoy. EHA team members distributed candy to boys and girls. We know everyone had a sweet time!

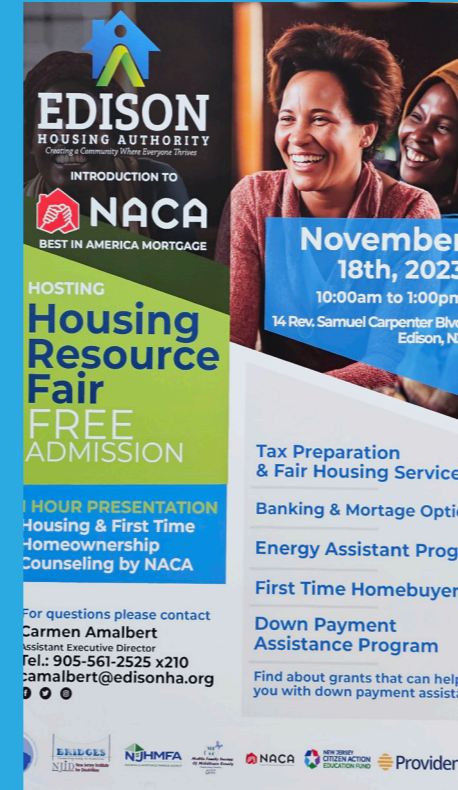


EHA distributed 250 turkeys and chickens to Robert E. Holmes Gardens and Julius Engel Gardens residents on November 16, 2023, to help celebrate the Thanksgiving holiday. Special thanks go to Amerigroup, Jay Elliot from Edison Township, and Sarayu Sameera, one of our very own staff, for donations during the season of thanks. Spending quality time with family and friends while having a delicious meal is something we are fortunate to help our residents with every Thanksgiving.



**Thanksgiving  
TURKEY GIVEAWAY**

## HOUSING RESOURCE FAIR



In partnership with Neighborhood Assistance Corporation of America, EHA hosted the housing resource fair which helps inform individuals about renting or purchasing property and available grants to assist with down payments. On November 18, 2023, NACA counselor Hervey Emmanuel led an informational housing and first-time homeownership presentation for tenants, first-time home buyers, and existing homeowners in the greater Edison community. This was the most educational housing resource fair EHA has held to date and the outstanding event was very well received. Mr. Emmanuel kept everyone in the room engaged, regardless of each individual's financial status, and nearly all attendees had questions for him. Neighborhood Assistance Corporation of America is a non-profit organization that promotes generational wealth through access to affordable mortgages and financial assistance. Learn more at [www.naca.com](http://www.naca.com).

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 of obtaining 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.

## HOLIDAY EVENT

Once again EHA celebrated the holiday season at Robert E. Holmes Gardens and Julius Engel Gardens. For over five years, EHA has organized an annual toy drive to brighten the holidays for children in need. Santa visited with all children and handed out gifts. Everyone received a bag with a hot meal and snacks, a wrapped gift, and had the opportunity to get a gift of choice from the table. It's always a pleasure to see the children excited to visit and take pictures with Santa. Thanks to Jay Elliot, WS Audiology staff members, the fraternity of Omega Psi Phi, and Hands of Hope for donating toys and supporting the event. We would like to thank them all for their generous donations, their gifts for our children, and making this annual event possible every year.



## BASKETBALL & TENNIS COURTS

### RENOVATION & REINAUGURATION

EHA's Robert E. Holmes Gardens basketball and tennis court renovations began in 2023 and the pavement renovations will begin once warmer weather arrives. The ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held in the spring of April 2024. We are eager to have residents partake in the new courts once completed!



## RENTAL ASSISTANCE DEMONSTRATION (RAD)



EHA remains committed to keeping our residents informed about the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program, a voluntary initiative by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) aimed at preserving public housing. We have continued to organize community meetings specifically for the residents of Robert E. Holmes Gardens, where the RAD program is being implemented. These meetings provide residents with updates on the progress of each residence and offers an opportunity to ask questions and provide valuable recommendations for site improvements. To learn more about the RAD program and view an informational video, please visit our website at [edisonha.org/rad-program](http://edisonha.org/rad-program) or contact our designated RAD phone line at (908) 444-0723.



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. PeopleReady is hiring General Laborer workers starting at \$17 an hour with some positions offering next-day pay. To apply, for positions in Garfield, Kearny, and New Brunswick, visit [www.careeronestop.com](http://www.careeronestop.com).

## EDISON HOUSING BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

**Barry Telesnick**  
Chairman

**Lennox Small, Ed.D.**  
Vice Chairman

**Deborah H. Andrews**  
Commissioner / Treasurer

**Toni Johnson**  
Resident Commissioner

**Sonali Patel**  
Commissioner

**Brent Scott**  
Commissioner

**William Thomas**  
Commissioner

**Deborah M. Hurley, C-PHM**  
Secretary / Executive Director

## BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2024

May, Tuesday, 21, 2024  
Robert E. Holmes Gardens

June, Tuesday, 18, 2024  
Julius Engel Gardens

July, Tuesday, 16, 2024  
Robert E. Holmes Gardens

August 2024  
No Meeting

September, Tuesday, 17, 2024  
Robert E. Holmes Gardens

October, Tuesday, 15, 2024  
Julius Engel Gardens

November, Tuesday, 26, 2024  
Robert E. Holmes Gardens

December, Tuesday 17, 2024  
Julius Engel Gardens