

VHDA Unveils New REACH Site at VHDA.Com

The REACH portion of vhda.com was developed to provide useful information to the Authority's stakeholders engaged in identifying and developing housing opportunities in their communities. This new presence on the VHDA website provides an overview of the specialized outreach efforts, training opportunities, and financing available through the REACH Virginia initiative. The site also includes contact information for REACH Team members and links to other useful sites promoting housing and community development. The address is www.vhda.com/reach. *VHDA e-News*.

The REACH Team

Mike Hawkins, AICP	Director of Community Housing
Gail Braham	Community Outreach Program Coordinator
Costa Canavos	Community Housing Officer <i>Local Government Outreach</i>
Bill Fuller, Ph.D.	Senior Community Housing Officer <i>Outreach to Persons with Disabilities</i>
Chris Hilbert	Senior Community Housing Officer <i>Non-Profit Organization Outreach</i>
Monica Jefferson	Community Housing Officer <i>Outreach to the African American Community</i>
Monique Johnson	Community Housing Officer <i>Capacity Building & Resource Facilitation</i>
Toni Ostrowski	Senior Community Housing Officer <i>Outreach to Stakeholders and Partners</i>
Jose Paiz	Community Housing Officer <i>Outreach to the Hispanic Community</i>
Mike Scheurer	Community Housing Officer <i>Northern VA Outreach</i>
Shawn Washington	Community Outreach Program Coordinator
Gerard Jameson	Graduate Student Intern
Deepa Vedavyas	Graduate Student Intern



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Project Faith see page 5



THE REACH REPORT

Resources Enabling Affordable Community Housing in Virginia

December 2006

Gateway at SoNo to Revitalize South Norfolk *Mixed-Use/Mixed Income for Homeownership*

VHDA is partnering with the City of Chesapeake and Harris Judah LLC for an exciting pilot project for a mixed-use/mixed-income development in Chesapeake with for-sale condos in a mixed-use setting. The City of Chesapeake currently owns a vacant site in the City's South Norfolk community and issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a developer to redevelop the site. Harris Judah LLC, a developer based in South Norfolk was selected as the developer for the project. The developer plans to develop the Gateway at SoNo, a six-acre mixed use/mixed income project with 133 residential for-sale condos, loft apartments and approximately 56,000 square feet of for sale retail/office space.

After several meetings involving REACH team members, the project developers and City staff, the developers expressed an interest in VHDA providing the short term construction financing for all three phases estimated at \$31 million. VHDA



decided to finance this project as a pilot project requiring 20% of the residential units to qualify for financing under VHDA's first-time homebuyer program (e.g. sales price and income limits would apply). VHDA is very excited about the opportunity to finance the Gateway at SoNo project to support the City of Chesapeake's efforts to revitalize the South Norfolk area. Construction is scheduled to begin in the spring of 2007. *Costa Canavos*

Interns Play Key Role in REACH Team

VHDA is committed to offering relevant work experience to college students who are passionate about issues related to affordable housing. As part of this commitment, the REACH Team has provided an opportunity for interns to gain valuable experience in the field of housing and community development. The term "intern" has more than a cursory meaning within the team as demonstrated by the interns' research involving an array of projects including post-disaster housing planning, an inventory of local community revitali-

zation areas, and the identification of opportunities for a Wealth Building Tour at Historically Black Colleges and Universities in Virginia.

It cannot be stated enough that the experiences the interns are receiving at VHDA are cultivating the necessary skills to promote affordable housing opportunities and address critical needs in our society. It is an experience that this intern would not trade for anything. *Gerard Jameson*

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Editors Note: Gerard is a University Graduate Student currently serving on the REACH Team.

Accessible Spaces



The Anchorage

Accessible Spaces have opened their second 811 project in the Tidewater Area. In 1999, under the careful guidance of Bob Horan Accessible Spaces opened their first project, The Anchorage. This state-of-the-art building is located near Wards Corner and offers the best in accessible, affordable independent living. Residents have the opportunity to arrange their own supportive services. Special features include twenty-five units – one and two-bedroom apartments – convenient location to grocery stores, shopping, restaurants, churches, banks, medical facilities and public transportation – large accessible bathroom with roll-in shower – individually controlled heating and air conditioning – accessible kitchen – secured building – large coin-operated laundry – community room and lounge areas – fully carpeted. The facility now has a five year waiting list.

This year saw the opening of the Sanderlings. Located at 2809 Parkside Drive in Chesapeake, Virginia, The Sanderlings offers 20 wheelchair accessible, one and two-bedroom apartments for adults with qualifying disabilities. Close to public transportation, The Sanderlings is just a few minutes away from shopping, restaurants and other neighborhood venues. Building features include a controlled access main entry system, elevator service, community room, on-site laundry facilities, trash chutes on upper floors and off-street parking. The apartments features include lever action door handles – widened doorways – raised electrical outlets and lowered light switches – spacious accessible kitchen with roll-under counters – accessible oven and stove-top – full size refrigerator/freezer – large accessible bathroom with roll-in shower and accessible vanity – carpeted bedroom and living room – and window blinds. The apartments were fully occupied shortly after opening. VHDA contributed to the construction of both facilities. People living at the apartments pay only 1/3 of their adjusted income as rent. Bob Horan, the local catalyst for both developments, is busy working on the next development in the Virginia Beach area.

Bill Fuller

Bob Horan



Architecture Exchange East Conference and Expo

This years Architecture Exchange East Conference and Expo included over 10,000 sq ft of vendor displays and a full day of Universal Design training. Presentations were given by Ray Pentecost III, Dr PH., Vice President, Director of Healthcare Architecture with Clark Nexsen Architecture & Engineering, Dr. Pentecost delivered a presentation on **Design for the Aging and People with Disabilities**. The presentation was not a design cookbook or a discussion of a way of thinking, but an empowerment opportunity providing participants with resources to assess the home for aging and people with disabilities.

A presentation by William E. Fuller, Ph.D.

Senior Community Housing Officer, VHDA, and Member of the Virginia Disability Housing Work Group, addressed the use of Universal Design in the development of built environments and communities. The workshop presented UD as a model through which accessible design could be achieved.

In the final presentation, Gail Braham, Community Outreach Program Coordinator at VHDA, presented a case study of a house built on Extreme Home Makeover by @Capital Homes of Tennessee. The home was built incorporating many principles of Universal Design. The presentation focused on best practices currently used in built environments. *Gail Braham*



December 11, 2006 and December 12, 2006

Virginia Housing Development Authority
601 S. Belvidere Street – Richmond, VA 23220

The Virginia Housing Development Authority and Access Independence is planning a two-day program, **Creative Housing for the 21st Century**, to be held December 11 and December 12 at the Virginia Housing Development Authority in Richmond, Virginia. The event consists of two day-long seminars – one on Fair Housing and Green Building and another on Universal Design.

VHDA is a Registered Provider with The American Institute of Architects (AIA) Continuing Education Systems (CES).

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

December 11, 2006
Universal Design

Our keynote speaker will be **Dick Duncan, Director of Training for the Center for Universal Design at North Carolina State University.**

Ray Pentecost III, DrPH., Vice President, Director of Healthcare Architecture with Clark Nexsen Architecture & Engineering.

You can access an electronic version of the form online at www.accessva.org or vhda.com. While we are only able to offer registration through the mail, you may reserve a space at one or both seminars by email or fax. See the registration form for details.

Should you have questions regarding **Creative Housing for the 21st Century** you may contact Gail Braham at 804-343-5512 or at gail.braham@vhda.com.

December 12, 2006
Fair Housing and Green Building

Karl Bren, President of Green Vision Consulting and Founding Board Member of the James River Green Building Council and Better Housing Coalition.

Charles “Chuk” Bowles, Principal of The Energy Consortium, an energy, environmental and green-building consulting firm.

William E. Fuller, Ph.D., Senior Community Housing Officer, VHDA, and Member of the Virginia Disability Housing Work Group.

VHDA Hosts Forum For Richmond District Council of the Urban Land Institute

VHDA hosted a forum sponsored by the Richmond District Council of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) on October 31, 2006 entitled, **Nonprofit and For-Profit Developers Roundtable: Moving From Collaborative Thinking to Meaningful Action.**

The forum addressed obstacles and opportunities inherent in forging alliances within Richmond's diverse development community. Stakeholders from the development and academic communities along with regional government decision-makers have been invited.

Costa Canavos and Monique S. Johnson, Community Housing Officers with the REACH Team, served as co-chairs of Richmond ULI's Community Outreach Committee and led the coordination of this event.

ULI Senior Resident Fellow for Housing, John McIlwain, facilitated the forum. Mr. McIlwain has a broad array of experience in housing and previously served as the CEO of the Fannie Mae Foundation. A representative from the City of Richmond presented

the **Update on the Mayor's Inter-Agency Task Force on Community Infrastructure.**

The forum included:

- ◆ A fresh look at relevant, national collaborative projects;
- ◆ Dialogue around development issues that are significant to Richmond area for-profit and non-profits and enterprising techniques to enhance the partnership opportunities within the Richmond region;
- ◆ Local government perspective on current obstacles and future opportunities; and
- ◆ Opportunities to strategize solutions.

Creative approaches to combine the talents of the nonprofit and for-profit sectors can potentially encourage investment and revitalization. The participation and commitment of stakeholders collaborating to maximize innovation in real estate development policy and implementation will greatly benefit the region. *Monique Johnson*

REACH Active in Northern Virginia

The VHDA presence in Northern Virginia continues to grow. VHDA is bringing value to a number of boards, commissions, task forces, and developments throughout the Northern Virginia area. This includes a presence on the Fairfax County Preservation Committee, The Fairfax County Hi-Rise Task Force, HomeAid of Northern Virginia, AHOME, and the Arlington County Co-op Study Group. VHDA was a recent presenter to the City of Alexandria City Council on affordable housing issues. VHDA also has a number of transactions that are pending in The City of Alexandria, Fairfax County, Loudoun County and Arlington County. In addition, a number of organizations and events have received VHDA financial assistance. This includes the Alliance for Housing Solutions, Arlington Partnership For Affordable Housing, AHC Inc., AHOME, Northern Virginia Housing Alliance, HomeAid of Northern Virginia, and New Hope Housing to name a few.

The Loudoun County Housing Advisory Committee appointed by the Board of Supervisors has been hard at work developing affordable housing policy and program recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. VHDA has been represented and participated at these meetings. This work will culminate at a REACH Team presentation on VHDA community development technical assistance and financing programs in November 2006.

REACH Team members were also the featured speakers at the November 2006 meeting of the Housing Association of Non-Profit Developers of the Washington Metropolitan Area.

The REACH Team looks forward to continuing to expand its activities in Northern Virginia throughout the coming months. *Mike Scheurer*

VHDA TO PROVIDE MATCHING SUPPORT OF ALMOST \$1 MM FOR FEDERAL GRANT TO EXPAND HOMEOWNERSHIP

In an effort to promote homeownership opportunities for low-income Virginia households through an Individual Development Account (IDA) approach, the Virginia Community Action Partnership (VACAP) submitted an application for an Assets for Independence (AFI) grant to the Office of Community Services of the federal Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). HHS approved the grant request for \$997,500 in funding over five years. VHDA is providing the necessary match of non-federal resources in the amount of almost \$200,000 annually over the five-year period. In addition other AFI partner organizations under the VIDA Plus initiative include:

- Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development
- Virginia Department of Social Services
- Institute for Policy Outreach at Virginia Tech

The Office of the Governor issued a Press release in which Governor Kaine states: "This is great news for lower-income Virginians who are willing to commit to work toward the American Dream of homeownership." "We know that homeownership brings stability to a community, and the children of homeowners tend to do better in

school and are more successful later in life. This federal grant is the largest in the nation in this funding round, and I appreciate VHDA's eagerness to step-up to make additional resources available."

VIDA PLUS (Virginia Individual Development Accounts in Partnership to Leverage Underutilized Services) is an enhancement of the existing VIDA (Virginia Individual Development Account) program. VIDA PLUS will focus exclusively on low-income first-time homebuyers saving for a home utilizing an individual development account, with a goal of serving at least 425 savers over the five-year life of the grant.

The primary goal of VIDA-PLUS is to increase the number of low-income savers who achieve homeownership throughout Virginia. Individual Development Accounts support asset building as a way to empower families and individuals to achieve economic independence. This program will develop a more intensive outreach to low income, minority and Hispanic families in urban and rural areas. *Jose Paiz*

VHDA Hosts HUD Grant Writing And More Workshop

Approximately 60 individuals from various organizations were at VHDA on September 28-29 to attend HUD's "Grant Writing and More" Workshop hosted by VHDA and DHCD. Anne Davis, Director of Faith Based Initiatives for HUD instructed the group on how to write successful grant applications including basics such as where to find funding announcements, developing organizations and board capacity, marketing, leveraging funds, and performance measurement. Mike Hawkins, Director of Community Housing for VHDA, and Michelle Jones, Director of Community Capacity Building for DHCD, led a session entitled "Financing and More", which provided an introduction to the products and services offered by each agency. *Shawn Washington*



REACH Supports Top Virginia Building Association



REACH team members, Costa Canavos, Mike Scheurer and Toni Ostrowski attended the 2006 Parade of Homes Kick-Off event sponsored by the **Top of Virginia Building Association, Inc. (TVBA)**, a non-profit trade association, which serves the city of Winchester and the counties of Frederick, Clarke and Warren. The **Parade of Homes** tour provides members with an opportunity to highlight their talents and products while raising public awareness of the local building industry. VHDA sponsored the affordable housing portion of the tour. *Toni Ostrowski*

Collaboration Highlighted at Virginia Statewide Neighborhood Conference

Latest example of Innovative VHDA Outreach

The City of Danville hosted the Virginia Statewide Neighborhood Conference in September. VHDA was a sponsor of this annual event which brings together several hundred neighborhood and community leaders to discuss opportunities to promote strong neighborhoods. REACH Director, Mike Hawkins, participated on a panel which discussed the importance of collaboration in designing great communities and how VHDA financing supports such collaboration. This collaboration is illustrated by VHDA's support of homeownership opportunities particularly in the context of neighborhood revitalization as well as the

innovative use of VHDA financing to support mixed-use/mixed-income neighborhoods. REACH participation in the conference is just the latest example of VHDA's outreach to a broad array of organizations engaged in building and strengthening communities. Other recent events include REACH Team member presentations at the Virginia Planning Association annual conference, Virginia Rural Planning Caucus annual conference, the Shenandoah Valley Partnership - Smart Growth Forum, and the Virginia Main Street annual conference. *Mike Hawkins*

REACH Team Partners with Virginia Cities to Revitalize Communities

On October 3rd, several members of the REACH Team visited the City of Bristol to explore potential partnerships and initiatives that promote an array of housing opportunities. Meeting with representatives from the Bristol RHA, City of Bristol, local nonprofit organizations and businesses, the REACH Team discussed loan programs and services that VHDA may provide in support of their community revitalization efforts. The REACH Team has conducted similar outreach presentations in the Cities of Danville and Winchester. These presentations illustrate the use of VHDA resources to leverage other financing to support local housing and community development visions. *Toni Ostrowski*



Project Faith Does it Again

FULLER HONORED AT DEDICATION OF ANGELWOOD

Dr. Bill Fuller was honored on November 4th, with the naming of the Fuller Building, one of six structures on the campus of Angelwood. The 24-unit fully accessible apartment complex in King George County developed by Project FAITH, a non-denominational faith-based housing development corporation. Project Faith began its work in 1999 when the group built an accessible single family home for Johnny Johnson a resident of King George.

Angelwood was the first multi-unit development for Project Faith. Dr. Fuller began working with the group upon its organization while he was Executive Director of HOME, Inc. and continued the relationship by becoming the Development Officer representing VHDA. The project received low-income housing tax credits (LIHTC) in 2004 and gap financing from VHDA, the Department of Housing and Community Development, Federal Home Loan Bank and various other sources. The tax credits were syndicated by the Virginia Community Development Corporation, which worked very

closely with Project FAITH throughout the development process.

The Office of Community Capacity Building, of the Department of Housing and Community Development also worked closely with the organization.

In presenting the framed picture of the brick name plate prominently mounted in the front yard of the Fuller Building, Project FAITH's Executive Director, Fronce Wardlaw, recounted Fuller's support and guidance throughout the nearly three year project. Five other supporters were similarly honored for their contribution to the project. In his remarks at the dedication ceremonies Jim Chandler, Director of the LIHTC program for VHDA said, "This is one of the best projects I have ever seen." Coming from someone who has overseen the development of over 50,000 units of affordable housing, the statement was a profound declaration of the accomplishments of everyone involved. The contractor on the job site was Community Housing Partners. *Bill Fuller*

VHDA Kicks Off 'Wealth Starts at Home' College Tour

An education initiative for students at historically black colleges and universities sponsored by the Virginia Housing Development Authority.

In an effort to tear down barriers and increase homeownership opportunities, the Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA), the state's housing finance agency, is kicking off a partnership with Virginia's historically black colleges and universities to educate young African Americans about homeownership and its role in building wealth.

"Not only is homeownership the principal ingredient of the American dream, for most African Americans homeownership is their first step towards accumulating wealth," said Monica Jefferson, Outreach to the African American Community for VHDA. "Our 'Wealth Starts at Home' college tour is the center of a new outreach and education program we hope will encourage college students to look beyond just making money to creating a personal action plan for building lifetime wealth that will enable them to have the life they want.

"The good news," Jefferson continued, "is that more-

Yet only 49 percent of African Americans own a home, compared to 75 percent of whites."

Decades of research proves owning a home is one of the best ways to increase personal wealth. That's because homeownership delivers tangible benefits like tax deductions, appreciation and the financial options that come with the equity built through monthly mortgage payments. In addition to homeownership, other keys to wealth accumulation are financial literacy, understanding the basics of money management, and investing.

Through free campus lecture series and one-on-one counseling with finance and housing professionals from VHDA, the 'Wealth Starts at Home' college tour will provide students at Hampton University, Norfolk State University, St. Paul's College, Virginia State University and Virginia Union University a wealth of information to promote future success. *Monica Jefferson*

