

NEWS & VIEWS

Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh | SUMMER 2026



PUBLICLY SPEAKING: A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



We're in the midst of another season of growth for the Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh (HACP), its residents, staff, community partners, board, and stakeholders.

If you haven't been to the Hill District lately, I recommend you see first-hand the incredible transformation as we work with our partners to continue revitalizing this historic neighborhood with our Bedford Choice Neighborhoods Initiative redevelopment. Newly constructed affordable public housing complexes are sprouting up along Somers Drive and beyond. We recently celebrated the completion of The Reed, the first phase of the multi-year, multi-million-dollar investment in the Bedford

Dwellings community, the oldest occupied public housing development in the state. Keep an eye out for more on this major investment in the Hill.

In May, we kicked off the start of the Project-Based Voucher Smithfield Lofts development Downtown by Woda Cooper Companies. The HACP and its development arm, Allies & Ross Management and Development Corporation (ARMDC) invested \$1.6 million in gap financing and 16 Project-Based Vouchers in this project.

One HACP success story, Ms. Tyian Battle, and her development company, Half the Battle LLC, celebrated the groundbreaking of Cliffside Overlook in February. Ms. Battle invested in two properties along the street she grew up on — Cliff Street in the Hill District — and is currently working to turn those into two all-affordable duplexes.

Our biggest event of the year supported some real MVPs — our youth — during the pro football draft in April. The HACP's Citywide Tailgate Event went off without a hitch on April 24. Hosted at ACH Clear Pathways (also founded by Ms. Battle), this free 4-hour event brought youth front & center as they competed for a PlayStation 5 Pro during our Madden Football tournament. A Youth Career Forum, giant appreciation card for former Steelers Head Coach Mike Tomlin, tech demonstrations and workforce-related assistance aboard our CyberBuses, many giveaways, and so much more were featured. Our youth are our future, and we are thrilled to support them as they embark on their futures.

We also take great pride in sharing the meaningful work of two of the HACP's own: Coach Myrae Lee is fostering growth in Allegheny Dwellings youth at the Cheryl Gainey Wellness Center, and longtime HACP Scattered Sites Tenant Council Representative Janice Taylor instills a love of math in 4th-grade students at Pittsburgh Public Schools Arlington Pre-K-8.

The success stories continue as we share how local foster children overcame much adversity and became an inspiration for others while participating in HUD's Foster Youth to Independence voucher program.

I am also thankful for the HACP staff who work tirelessly with the same goal in mind — to improve the quality of life for all City of Pittsburgh residents. This includes helping them gain financial freedom and move on to own their own home. We recently improved our Homeownership Program to help even more residents to a brighter future, and have helped nearly 50 HACP & City of Pittsburgh residents realize their homeownership dream since early 2025.

As we fine tune all of these moving pieces, I am confident we are going to continue pushing forward to fulfill our mission of being a place to live and a path to launch for many years to come.

Caster D. Binion
HACP Executive Director

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Pictured, from left: HACP Exec. Dir. Caster D. Binion; NFL Music Supervisor Joshua Sutherland; RCA Sony Records Assoc. Dir. of Marketing Jourdan Washington; ACH Clear Pathways students Jaymir Walls, Ezra Harris, and Ta-Nyiah Benjamin; HACP Production Asst. DeVontay Eberhardt; HACP Chief Community Affairs Officer Michelle Sandidge; and Producer/Host Ty Miller with Championship Chase TV pose for a photo after the HACP Citywide Tailgate in April.

Future MVPs Take Center Stage at HACP Citywide Tailgate Event

The HACP, its nonprofit affiliate, Clean Slate E3, and its community partners are committed to investing in the future of our youth. This common goal was evident during the HACP's Citywide Tailgate Event on April 24.

The event was held at co-host ACH Clear Pathways' headquarters in the Hill District during the pro football draft on the North Shore and Downtown. Five-hundred attendees turned out to show their mutual support of these future MVPs throughout the free, four-hour event.

Thanks to our sponsors — the Jourdan Kelli Fund of the Pittsburgh Foundation, Weatherspoon & Williams LLC, Championship Chase TV — and partners Machine Age Studios, STEM Coding Lab, Beyond Blessed Catering, Ebenezer Baptist Church, the CheatCode Gaming trailer, Mastro Gourmet Quality Ice, 412 Ice Cream, sorors of Zeta Phi Beta LLZ Chapter, and our Youth Career Forum panelists Joshua Sutherland, NFL music supervisor, Jourdan Washington, RCA/Sony Records associate director of marketing, and Ezra “Ezzy” Harris and Jaymir “Jammer” Walls, St. Benedict the Moor student-athletes and ACH Clear Pathways students for making this event a success.

Guests had the opportunity to sign a giant appreciation card for former Steelers Head Coach Mike Tomlin designed by ACH Clear Pathways art student 16-year-old Ta-Nyiah Benjamin, learn hands-on STEM technology and workforce development skills aboard our two CyberBus mobile units, battle each other in friendly video game play aboard the CheatCode Gaming trailer, learn about our Clean Slate E3 scholarship and out-of-school-time programs, and enjoy free food from Beyond Blessed Catering and 412 Ice Cream.

Five lucky guests went home with donated PlayStation 5 video game systems.

Congratulations to the winners of our Youth Madden Football Tournament — first-place winner Nyzer McDonald and second-place winner Caleb Hauser. Nyzer won a PlayStation 5 Pro, and Caleb won a PlayStation 5.

Three other lucky raffle winners took home the remaining donated PlayStation 5 systems — Ra'Dale Taylor, Ezzy Harris, and HACP Tenant Council representative Ms. Sandra Almond.

“I am so very thankful to receive something like this in a raffle,” Ms. Almond said during the April HACP Resident Advisory Board meeting. “I’m going to give it to my grandchildren, and they and my great-grandchildren are going to have so much fun!”

The Pittsburgh Steelers and Philadelphia Eagles also donated raffle items, including a signed football by Eagles wide receiver A.J. Brown.

Ty Miller of Championship Chase TV emceed our Youth Career Forum that further shined the spotlight on these future legends.

Jourdan Washington of RCA/Sony Records advised the youth in attendance to not be afraid to share their ideas.

She said as the associate director of marketing, she works closely with the management, creative, and digital teams, among others, and serves as a quarterback for the artists.

She also stressed the importance of networking with whoever you meet.

“Make sure you have conversations with people,” she said.

She and Joshua Sutherland of the NFL both grew up in music-centric homes, and are both accomplished pianists.

As an NFL music supervisor, Mr. Sutherland has to keep track of current artists and music trends, as well as seasoned hits for older NFL fans.

He added when music is played for NFL games, they only have about 7-10 seconds to get your attention.

“We want to make sure we reach fans where they are,” he added. “We want to keep in mind where the game is being played, who is playing, and what music is trending right now.”

He said he wished he knew earlier on in his career that it was OK to make mistakes.

“I may not have put myself into situations where I would get something wrong. You can’t get everything right all the time. I didn’t put myself in situations where I would grow. By putting myself into situations where I didn’t know everything it helped me to gain more trust because people knew I wanted to grow.”

He wants the next generation to know that they can walk the path that he walks, and can have this platform. When Mr. Sutherland started in his career, there were no people of color in his field. He said he was thankful he could rely on his family and community to encourage him when he was down.

“You saw someone that looked like you hold this seat. I want you to know that you can hold this seat and so much more!” he said.

Ezzy Harris and Jammer Walls are both student-athletes who are aiming for the stars.

Ezzy plans to play baseball and basketball at Seton LaSalle High School, and aspires to study business management. He already runs his own summer snack shop at ACH during summer camp sessions, and has designed his own clothing line with a friend called Radiant Stars.

Jammer will play football at Central Catholic High School. He is aspiring to become a professional athlete.

They both say they want to be role models for fellow youth because they don’t want them to go down the wrong path in life.

“Our youth are our future,” HACP Executive Director Caster D. Binion said. “The HACP, Clean Slate, and ACH Clear Pathways have always strived to brighten the paths of our local youth, and we couldn’t think of a better time to watch them dazzle as the city shines its spotlight on the many talented young athletes hoping to be drafted into the pro football league.”

For more coverage from our Citywide Tailgate Event, please visit: <https://hacp.org/news>.

“Our youth are our future...and we couldn’t think of a better time to watch them dazzle as the city shines its spotlight on the many talented young athletes hoping to be drafted into the pro football league.”

— HACP Executive Director Caster D. Binion





Former HACP resident and local entrepreneur Tyian Battle, middle, breaks ground on her affordable housing development, Cliffside Overlook, in the Hill District. She is joined by community partners, including HACP Exec. Dir. Caster D. Binion, City Councilman R. Daniel Lavelle (6th District), and Pittsburgh Mayor Corey O'Connor.

Former HACP Resident, Local Entrepreneur Commemorates the Start of **Cliffside Overlook** Development in the Hill District

Tyian Battle's vision to create affordable housing on the very street she grew up on in the Hill District came to fruition in February 2026 as she and local stakeholders broke ground on the Cliff Street development.

Cliffside Overlook will consist of two duplexes and four 3-bedroom affordable housing units.

Mayor Corey O'Connor noted Cliffside is not just about the number of units; it's about bringing families back to the Hill District.

Ms. Battle has tirelessly served her community by advocating for underserved youth and founding ACH Clear Pathways. She

will now be a beacon for families in need of affordable housing with her real estate development company, Half the Battle LLC.

The HACP has invested four Project-Based Voucher subsidies for Cliffside Overlook and is overjoyed to continue supporting Ms. Battle in her efforts to serve the Hill.

We were proud to join fellow stakeholders: The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh, the City of Pittsburgh, Massaro Construction Group, FNB Corp., Bridgeway Capital, Neighborhood Allies, & the Pittsburgh Land Bank.

Read the full Press Release here: <http://bit.ly/4apn4S0>.



Tyian Battle of Half the Battle LLC, back, listens to HACP Chief Community Affairs Officer Michelle Sandidge speak during the groundbreaking ceremony for her affordable housing development, Cliffside Overlook.

HACP Unveils Improved Homeownership Program to Further Help Families Achieve Self-Sufficiency

The HACP has been working tirelessly with its community partners to revamp its Homeownership Program in an effort to “expand homeownership opportunities for low-income families, support first-time income buyers purchasing in the City of Pittsburgh, and help families build assets and economic self-sufficiency toward long-term generational wealth.”

Since Serra Heck, HACP’s homeownership & repositioning manager, took over the initiative in early 2025, she and our partners have helped nearly 50 residents close on their new homes.

The HACP Board of Commissioners recently voted to accept the program’s new guidelines, outlined in the 2026 MTW Annual Plan (<https://hacp.org/app/uploads/2025/12/FY-2026-MTW-Annual-Plan-Approved-12.18.25.pdf>), which was accepted by HUD on Dec. 18, 2025. Complete program details can be found on pages 110-134.

Applicants must be current LIPH residents, HCV participants, on the LIPH/HCV waitlist with an eligibility letter, or otherwise eligible (with a homeownership eligibility letter, depending on waitlist status).

Other requirements:

- First-time homebuyer status (no ownership interest in the last 3 years, with limited exceptions)
- Household income generally between 50% and 80% Area Median Income at mortgage pre-approval
- Required employment history (with disability/62+ exceptions)
- No recent mortgage default
- No Public Housing Authority debts owed

“If homeownership is something you’re thinking about, the best first step is to complete a quick onboarding process,” Heck explained. “Complete HUD-approved homeownership counseling to build your plan and earn your certificate, then submit the Homeownership Questionnaire on the HACP website: (<https://hacp.org/housing/home-ownership/>) so our team can assess your starting point and guide your next steps.”

The HACP is hosting a number of free Homeownership 101 workshops over the next several months to give participants a comprehensive overview of the steps needed to be successful with the program.

All participants must register to attend by visiting: <https://bit.ly/3ZerWUM>.

Be sure to check our social media channels: [X.com/HACP1](https://www.x.com/HACP1) or [facebook.com/HACPgh](https://www.facebook.com/HACPgh), or our engagement website: <https://engage.hacp.org/> for the schedule.



Ms. Jackson (left) and Mr. Donte share their excitement as they close on their new homes. They are among the nearly 50 new homeowners who completed the improved HACP Homeownership Program since early 2025.

Key steps involved

Key steps to beginning your journey to homeownership include HUD-approved homeownership counseling and a certificate, obtaining a first-mortgage pre-approval letter and closing cost estimate, completing the Homeownership Questionnaire on the HACP website, selecting an eligible property, inspections, and closing within established timelines,” Heck added.

The program partners with a network of local and statewide organizations to maximize impact and ensure access to specialized support. These partners include: the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) of Pittsburgh, the Pennsylvania Homeowner Assistance Fund (PA HAF), Neighborhood Legal Services, ACTION-Housing, Just Mediation Pittsburgh, and other HUD-certified housing counseling agencies.

“Under the leadership of our Executive Director, Caster Binion, HACP’s Homeownership Program has helped more than 200 families turn the dream of homeownership into reality,” Anthony Ceoffe, HACP senior director of asset management, said. “This milestone reflects not only the dedication of our Asset Management team, but the strength of our partnerships and our shared commitment to expanding opportunity.”

For more information, visit: <https://hacp.org/housing/home-ownership>.

You may also email: home.ownership@hacp.org.

To read the full Press Release, please visit: <https://bit.ly/ImprovedHACPHomeownershipProgram>.

HACP Facility Services Department Begins Quality Control Inspections on Previous Maintenance Work Orders

A new Quality Control inspection process will help the HACP's Facility Services Department increase its efficiency and keep track of maintenance work order repairs.

Dan Brown, HACP senior compliance manager, has started a database of completed maintenance repairs over the last year. He will complete 200 inspections per month plus 30% of all NSPIRE-related inspection tasks (NSPIRE is HUD's newest inspection standard for all Low-Income Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher units).

In 2025, the HACP Facility Services Department closed more than 34,000 work orders.

Michelle Ralston, HACP senior director of Facility Services, said the Quality Control protocol randomly selects the completed work orders to ensure compliance and high standards of workmanship.

Critical safety and upkeep items include:

- Monthly exterior lighting surveys to increase community security
- Bi-annual visits focusing on high-impact items, such as furnace filters, refrigerator gaskets, and thermostat batteries

Established by HACP Executive Director Caster D. Binion, the program aims to identify problem areas early, which will increase efficiency and allow for better budget planning, Director Ralston said. Mr. Binion instituted the program to ensure the department is managing and verifying its work order completion and quality of work, creating a more efficient and sustainable repair model.

Director Ralston stressed the program's main goals are to increase system efficiency while delivering exceptional customer service to our residents. One major objective is to reduce the HACP's heating/HVAC work orders by one-third.

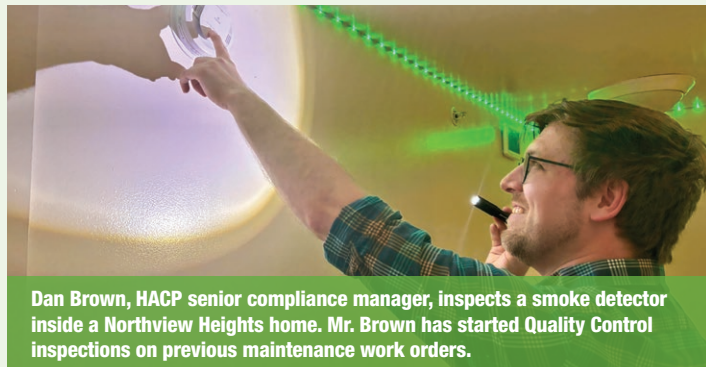
"Ultimately, our mission is about more than maintaining systems; it's about sustaining homes," she added.

Dan Brown began working for the HACP in December 2025, and has since been building the Quality Control databases. He began the Quality Control inspections on April 20.

"I really believe in the mission of the Housing Authority, and I like being hands-on," he said of his role with the HACP. "I like that I never know what I'm going to see; no day is quite the same here."

He is also certified to perform Quality Control inspections for the HACP Housing Choice Voucher NSPIRE team, if needed.

Mr. Brown said the Facility Services Department is working toward the same goal — assuring the staff is providing safe, habitable dwellings for residents.



Dan Brown, HACP senior compliance manager, inspects a smoke detector inside a Northview Heights home. Mr. Brown has started Quality Control inspections on previous maintenance work orders.

What should residents expect with the inspections?

Mr. Brown said if a residence is selected for a random Quality Control inspection, residents will receive a 72-hour notice that will either be posted to their door (high rise residents) or mailed, thanks to the HACP's mailroom staff.

Inspection batches are organized by community, with high rises done first and Northview Heights done last due to its size.

Mr. Brown said he will report some issues outside of the specific work order completions, such as smoke detectors, fire alarms, or anything urgent to residents' health and safety. Other maintenance items will be reported through the proper channels, with his assistance on site if needed.

Facility Services Accomplishments

The HACP Facility Services Department comprises nearly 90 employees across seven trades, managing more than \$44 million in contracts annually.

The staff works around the clock to ensure any HACP resident maintenance needs are being addressed.

HACP's Facility Services Department is a national leader in quality with its 92% NSPIRE inspection score rating, exceeding HUD's standards and the national average of 84%.

The department currently only has 1,333 open work orders among the HACP's 2,400 units.

Some 2026 department goals are to achieve an average of 30 days or less to close any work order and readying vacant units in 15 days for high rises and 30 days for family and scattered sites communities.

Facility Services is also committed to being present, accessible, and transparent. Work order numbers are issued immediately for residents to check the real-time status of their repairs.

If you have a maintenance concern, please call the HACP's 24/7 Maintenance Hotline at: 412-456-5226.

Arlington K-8 Honors Longtime HACP Tenant Council Representative With Black History Month Difference Maker Award

Ms. Janice Taylor is a difference maker — a dedicated volunteer and community leader who strives to enrich and impact the lives of others, who motivates and inspires them to progress and embrace change.

The longtime Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh (HACP) Scattered Sites South Tenant Council representative has impacted the lives of students at Pittsburgh Public Schools Arlington Pre-K-8 for the last 17 years. She volunteers three days a week through the Wesley Family Services Foster Grandparent Program (<https://wfspa.org/service/foster-grandparent-program>) as a classroom grandparent and helps the students improve their math skills.

She and another classroom grandma, Grandma Solomon, were honored during a February 2026 ceremony.

“Today, as we celebrate Black History Month, we are honored to recognize two very special members of our school community — our classroom grandmas,” a speech from Mrs. Keller’s 4th-grade class reads. “Grandma Solomon and Ms. Taylor share their time, love, and wisdom with our students. They support our classrooms, encourage our children, and help make our school a place where students feel cared for and valued.”

Students also shared their gratitude to Ms. Taylor and Grandma Solomon.

“Ms. Taylor, thank you for helping us with math whenever we need it and showing us different ways to solve a problem. We love having you in Ms. Keller’s classroom! You are super nice and a math genius,” writes Camauri.

Ms. Taylor said she had the time and thought it would be fun to help students reach their potential.

“Seeing the kids learn and understand math is the best part,” she added. “Math is important. These are skills that they will need for the rest of their lives, and their phones and tablets aren’t always going to work. They need to learn these skills without electronics.”

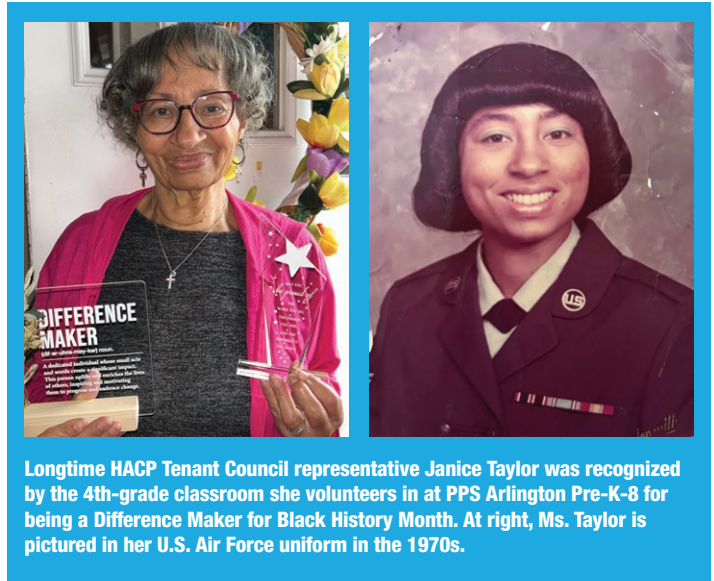
She said she was humbled to be honored with the award.

“It was wonderful because it made me realize that they appreciate someone coming in and helping them learn,” she said.

Originally from Philadelphia, Ms. Taylor joined the U.S. Air Force in service to her country. There, she worked in inventory management from 1971-1979.

She met her former husband, a Marine from Pittsburgh, on the Air Force base. They moved to Pittsburgh, and had three children — Lamont, Keshell, and Brandi.

Later in life, Ms. Taylor studied social studies at CCAC Northside and graduated with a bachelor’s degree from Carlow College (now University) in 2000. She worked at the former Lord & Taylor Downtown before deciding to become involved in the Wesley Family Services Foster Grandparent Program.



Longtime HACP Tenant Council representative Janice Taylor was recognized by the 4th-grade classroom she volunteers in at PPS Arlington Pre-K-8 for being a Difference Maker for Black History Month. At right, Ms. Taylor is pictured in her U.S. Air Force uniform in the 1970s.

“I wanted to join the Tenant Council because, just like at the school, I wanted to represent my area, try to accomplish things, and make our neighborhood better.”

— Ms. Janice Taylor

She has been an HACP resident and Tenant Council representative for at least 20 years.

“I wanted to join the Tenant Council because, just like at the school, I wanted to represent my area, try to accomplish things, and make our neighborhood better,” she said.

“Ms. Janice Taylor has been a driving force on our Resident Advisory Board,” Michelle Sandidge, HACP Chief Community Affairs Officer, said. “She keeps us accountable and is a positive support for HACP creativity and change. Her embrace of residents and staff with a willingness to help solve problems represents the essence of what TC reps should do. We are certainly better because of her.”

In her spare time, Ms. Taylor is active in her church, spends time with her family (including her six grandchildren), and belongs to a book club.

“My faith in the Lord is what has helped keep me going and enabled me to do all of these things,” she added.

If any HACP resident is interested in serving on their respective community’s Tenant Council, they can contact HACP Community Program Liaison Josh Pusateri at: 412-456-5000, Ext. 3328.



Coach Myrae Lee talks with a group of children inside the Cheryl Gainey Wellness Center at Allegheny Dwellings. Coach Lee helps the students with reading and writing, homework, and other projects.

HACP's Coach Myrae Lee is Striving to Set Allegheny Dwellings Youth Up for Success

Coach Myrae Lee was born to teach others, and is now fulfilling her dream by mentoring the youth of the Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh's (HACP) Allegheny Dwellings community.

She was raised in the HACP community by her mom, Mary, who taught her the importance of discipline, responsibility, and focus from an early age.

With a lot of hard work, overcoming perseverance, and influence from her many role models, Coach Lee is now working with the children at the Cheryl Gainey Wellness Center at Allegheny Dwellings where she teaches them reading and writing skills, provides homework support, and helps them in other areas as needed.

"I spent most of my time focused on school and participated in the after-school program, BJWL, at Allegheny Dwellings," Coach Lee said. "The program provided me with structure and a positive environment. It helped me to shape my mindset and determination to succeed."

She has even helped many of her peers over the years.

While attending Pittsburgh Public Schools King Pre-K-8, she served as a teacher's helper and worked with fellow students in the classroom.

She also volunteered and worked at daycares and after-school programs, participated in a mentoring program in middle school, and later became a mentor at Taylor Allderdice High School. She even worked for the BJWL after-school program at Allegheny Dwellings, running her own reading program for youth in 2017.

Coach Lee earned a bachelor's degree in early learning with a minor in psychology from Carlow University in 2023.

She said she believes working with HACP youth is important because they deserve access to support, mentorship, and other opportunities to help them to reach their full potential.

"I can relate because I was one of those youths here at Allegheny Dwellings. I am now giving back to my community and supporting youth in all areas, which means a lot to me," she said.

Coach Lee said she is proud to guide our youth on the right path, and hopes to have a lasting impact on their lives, noting they are

“I can relate because I was one of those youths here at Allegheny Dwellings. I am now giving back to my community and supporting youth in all areas, which means a lot to me.”

— Coach Myrae Lee

“growing up in a fast-changing world where they need guidance, encouragement, and positive role models to help get them through.”

Coach Lee said her role models include her mom, sisters, Samantha and Shavon, her late aunt, Elaine, 6th-grade mentor, Ms. Rochelle Leeper, and her teachers and professors that all aimed to mold her into the successful young, brave, strong Black woman she is today.

Ms. Cheryl Gainey also served as a positive influence on her. The late Allegheny Dwellings Tenant Council President and HACP commissioner advocated for the youth in her community, including Coach Lee.

“She watched me grow up,” she said of Ms. Gainey. “I was always helping her. Working here at the center that’s named for her is like I’ve come full-circle, and I am still helping her; it’s like she’s still here.”

Some of the children who regularly attend the wellness center shared how much they love Coach Lee, and said she helps them with exercising, homework, reading stories, and more.

They also said she’s a good teacher who is helpful and nice.

“She’s family to just about everybody,” Coach Leroy Dillard, who manages the wellness center programs with Coach Thomas Chatman of Long-Term Fitness, said. “She knows all of the families, all of the kids. It’s hard to find people like that. Here in Pittsburgh, she’s an all-star. No matter what activities we host here, she’s right there in the mix. She’s a good person. Finding someone like her is a blessing.”

Coach Chatman echoed his sentiments.

“What I love is her heart for the community and her heart for the children,” he said. “She’s passionate about the programs here for them, and can serve as a role model for the kids. She’s overcome some of the barriers that these kids have. She’s a huge asset to our team.”

Coach Lee is excited for the future of the wellness center, and for showing the kids that strong, Black women can succeed.

“The best advice I have is to never give up,” she added. “Keep going no matter what, and learn from your mistakes. Your struggles make you stronger.”



Coach Myrae Lee, who grew up in Allegheny Dwellings with Ms. Cheryl Gainey (pictured at the back, left) as one of her role models, is now helping her community’s youth prepare for their futures at the Cheryl Gainey Wellness Center.

The Cheryl Gainey Wellness Center, open to all Allegheny Dwellings residents, promotes both physical and mental wellness, causes that Ms. Gainey staunchly supported. Long-Term Fitness provides a welcoming space where residents and their families can connect, share experiences, and build supportive relationships.

The Community Wellness & Cultural Resilience Initiative at the Cheryl Gainey Wellness Center is a multi-tiered wellness and behavioral health strategy designed to support HACP’s Allegheny Dwellings community with a focus on cultural relevance, trauma-informed care, and holistic wellbeing.

For more information on the Cheryl Gainey Wellness Center, contact Coach Chatman at: 412-871-7701.

“What I love is her heart for the community and her heart for the children,” he said. “She’s passionate about the programs here for them, and can serve as a role model for the kids. She’s overcome some of the barriers that these kids have. She’s a huge asset to our team.”

— Coach Thomas Chatman

Current & Former HACP Voucher Holders Share How the HUD FYI, FUP Initiatives Helped Give Them a New Lease on Life During Local Roundtable



The HUD Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) and Family Unification Program (FUP) initiatives makes Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) assistance available to Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) in partnership with Public Child Welfare Agencies (PCWAs).

Under FYI, PHAs provide housing assistance on behalf of:

Youth at least 18 years and not more than 24 years of age (have not reached their 25th birthday) who left foster care, or will leave foster care within 180 days, in accordance with a transition plan described in Section 475(5)(H) of the Social Security Act, and are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless at age 16 or older.

Housing assistance may be given for 36 months, with a possible 24-month extension if a voucher-holder meets certain requirements.

Public Child Welfare Agencies must also provide program participants with adequate supportive services to assist FYI and FUP voucher holders with attaining self-sufficiency.

Two Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh (HACP) residents met with HUD representatives and HACP leadership at a roundtable discussion in April 2026 at the Allegheny County Housing Authority to discuss how the program has helped them.

Their bios are below:

Dr. Michael J. Warren

Dr. Michael J. Warren was an HACP resident from 2015 to 2017.

He was a foster child who became homeless at age 21 while attending Duquesne University. Dr. Warren said he learned about the HUD FYI Program through HACP partner organization, ACTION-Housing, and its MyPlace Youth Program that serves young adults ages 18-24 who are experiencing homelessness.

Dr. Warren said the program allowed him to live in an affordable apartment building near Duquesne University, adding the program also benefited him by giving him the opportunity to take self-sufficiency courses, such as financial planning and cooking, to help further his successful journey to independence.

When he got his first house with ACTION-Housing, Dr. Warren said it not only gave him a space to call his own, it gave him a chance to finally shed the baggage he carried – both literally and figuratively.

He fostered a love of music while attending Pittsburgh CAPA and studied under Henry L. Biggs. He has since released several albums and singles, performed nationally and internationally, and serves as the director of worship at Short North Church in Columbus, Ohio.

“I always slept with my bags packed. When I got my house, I went into the living room with furniture, and I remember opening my suitcase knowing no one was going to kick me out. I was literally removing the baggage from my past while unpacking, including mourning the passing of my mother. You don’t see these things when you’re subsidizing someone’s rent, but they are 100% part of residents’ stories.”

— Dr. Michael J. Warren

Dr. Warren serves as principal of Columbus Preparatory School for Boys. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Music Education (2017), a Master of Science in Educational Administration (2018), and an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership (2022). He is currently pursuing a dual Master of Divinity and Master of Arts in Social Justice at the Methodist Theological School in Ohio.

Dr. Warren has made it his life’s mission to ensure youth — particularly disadvantaged youth — have access to quality and equitable education. He even launched a similar housing program through the United Way of Delaware County Ohio to benefit youth experiencing homelessness.

He serves as a youth mentor, keeps in touch with his former caseworker, and frequently returns to Pittsburgh to share his story with foster children.

“I am always looking to help them,” he added, crediting the voucher program for playing a major role in lighting the way to his successful and inspirational career. “Voucher programs are more than just a place to stay. If you’re not teaching self-sufficiency, you’re not doing your job. This is my life’s work; this is what brings meaning, why I am here, and why I accomplished so much.”

Charlotte Otters

Charlotte Otters, 22, has been an HACP resident since March 2025.

She grew up in Monroeville in an unstable home, surviving family trauma, but eventually being placed in foster care.

Ms. Otters later moved to a group home in Wilkinsburg. There, she was connected with Familylinks where former Senior Program Manager for Youth and Family Services Lisa Trunick informed her of the HUD FYI Program when she was facing homelessness.

“The vouchers were being distributed to 50 kids facing homelessness across the state, allowing them to move to the head of the line for housing,” Ms. Otters said. “At the time, my engagement specialist, who I was close with, was killed. They saw how much it affected me, and I think that’s why I was considered for the program.”

“I really don’t know where I would be without the program,” she added. “I would most likely be homeless. Now I have a nice apartment in a nice neighborhood, a space where I can work on myself, heal, and work on what I’m passionate about. A place where I can work on my sketches, painting, and my music. It took a very long and hard time to get this far, but things will be OK.”

She currently has a part-time job, and plans to attend Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC) to become a certified peer support specialist. Her mission is to help others and aspires to work with patients at UPMC Western Psychiatric Hospital.

“I’m grateful for the program and happy that it exists,” she added. “I don’t know what I would do without it.”

For more information on the program, please visit: www.hud.gov/hud-partners/public-indian-housing-fyi.



HACP Public Safety Upgrades Access Control Systems at High Rise Communities

The HACP Public Safety Department is pleased to announce the implementation of an upgraded Access Control Program across our high rise communities.

This initiative is part of our ongoing commitment to enhancing security and the overall living experience for our residents.

The new system replaces traditional physical keys with advanced electronic credentials—such as key fobs, access cards, or mobile smartphone access—to manage entry into buildings, elevators, and common areas.

For more information on the HACP Public Safety Department, please visit: <https://hacp.org/programs-services/public-safety>.

Important numbers:

- Emergencies: 9-1-1
- Non-Emergencies: 3-1-1
- Anonymous Bully Hotline: 412-471-2275
- HACP Public Safety Department: 412-456-5000, Ext. 2801



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Executive Director

Caster D. Binion

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The HACP's 2026 Community Health Awareness Days

- July 17, 2026, 12-4 P.M.
Northview Heights
- July 23, 2026, 1-4 P.M.
Arlington Heights
- July 31, 2026, 1-4 P.M.
Allegheny Dwellings
- Aug. 7, 2026, 1-4 P.M.
Bedford Dwellings
- Aug. 21, 2026, 1-4 P.M.
Homewood North