



GET INVOLVED

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Chair, Board of Commissioners

The Home Must Be the Cornerstone for High Expectations, High Achievement and High Standards

A Quarterly Newsletter for Residents of the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee

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Issue No. 6

A COMMITMENT TO EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE



Darrell Finch-Education Specialist

The HOPE VI Education Initiative was implemented in 2004 at Highland Homes. We are now starting to see the fruits of our labor. I am elated to announce the goals and the vision of the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee Education Initiative are being fulfilled as demonstrated by our rate of success.

Congratulations, parents and students: in 2007, 75 % of participating high school seniors graduated. In 2008, 100 % of participating high school seniors graduated. I am delighted to announce in 2009, 100% of participating high school seniors again graduated. More importantly, 100% of school age children are enrolled in school.

My message to parents has remained constant, "You are unquestionably the most important factor in promoting and reinforcing to your children the importance of obtaining a quality education and graduating from high school." While many factors contribute to academic achievement, studies show that when a parent is actively involved in a child's education, students have higher grades and test scores. They also have better attendance, are more motivated and have better self-esteem. Children are less likely to be involved in disruptive activities when they understand their parent's views on discipline, socialization, and academic expectations.

Parental involvement also promotes a proactive approach that builds a foundation of using good judgment, and respecting others in the community. A youth who is seeking a quality education is less likely to be involved in criminal activity, and will be an asset and not a liability in the community. Youth who are responsible take charge of their lives. They make plans and set goals for nurturing their talents and skills. They find ways of overcoming adversity and obstacles. They make decisions, taking into account obligations to family and society.

Let us collectively agree upon the premise that, "The home must be the cornerstone for *High Expectation, High Achievement and High Standards.*" Parental involvement is a motivating factor and when parents are engaged and involved in every aspect of their child's educational development, they excel academically.

Teachers inspire confidence and give encouragement and understanding to your children that smooth the process of learning. As parents, we must provide our children with emotional and social preparation for school learning at an early age. How do we help control our children's destiny?

We must control our own destiny by making sure that our children are in school everyday, on time, obtaining a quality education, graduating from high school, and seeking post-secondary education. We must make sure our children are respectful and come to school prepared to learn. We must control our destiny by making sure that our children can read, write, communicate, and do math proficiently. We must control our own destiny by making sure that our children are computer-literate and skilled and proficient with modern technology. We must control our own destiny by making sure that our children have a library card so that they are connected to their history and that we read with them daily. We must have a place in the home that is conducive to learning. We must develop a relationship with their teachers.

Parents, we only need to ask ourselves one question: "Are we preparing our children for twenty-first century technology and globalization?" In other words, are we preparing our children to compete with students from Africa, Asia, Japan, and Europe? What we do today will have an enormous impression on our children's educational development. We can achieve this goal by enrolling children at an early age into programs that will enrich, inspire, acclimate, and expose them to an environment that is conducive to learning. The HACM Education Initiative provides these programs for you and your children to assist you in reaching this goal.

I submit that it is our duty to prepare our children for leadership, commitment, and dedication in order for them to participate and be successful in the twenty-first century global economy. Seeking excellence and setting standards must be ingrained in our youth at an early age to set a foundation of dedication and discipline.

Again, congratulations, students and parents! It is a pleasure and a wonderful experience for me as we work together in our pursuit of a "Commitment to Educational Excellence."

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Dr. Florence Johnson of UWM



Ms. Trease Cotton Homes



HACM students receiving awards



HACM 2009 Students Recognition Awards

A total of 152 students and 32 adults, who returned to school to obtain their high school diploma and college degrees, were recognized at the Housing Authority's Student Recognition Awards on June 23, 2009, at the Community Services Building. We also recognized 4 adults who graduated from college in May of 2009. The youth from HOPE VI Highland Homes and Scattered Sites Homes were recognized for their good attendance and grades. The parents were congratulated for their efforts in assisting their children. We are elated to announce that in 2009 we had a 100% graduation rate of all participating 12th graders.

This year's keynote speaker was Dr. Florence Johnson, Professor in the Department of Educational Policy and Community Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Dr. Johnson provided a very thought-provoking speech on the importance of setting goals and obtaining a quality education. Education Specialist Darrell Finch presented the first Finch Family Scholarship of \$250 to Highland Homes resident Trease Cotton. Since the implementation of the Education Initiative five years ago, all five of her children graduated from high school and all are presently enrolled in college. Ms. Cotton's family truly represents the vision of the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee's Education Initiative.



HACM students on campus at UWM



Braxton Dodd shows off her design made in the Architectural Model class



HACM students learning chess strategies and chess rules

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee College for Teens/Kids

As part of the HACM Education Initiative, students from Highland Homes and Scattered Site Homes attended enrichment classes for one week in early July on the UW-Milwaukee campus. HACM provided free transportation and free daily lunches to all of the students. They completed twenty hours of classes, including "Chess Champs," which taught students how to understand chess rules and strategies, and "Architectural Model Building," which explored techniques used for building architectural models. Each year, College for Teens/ Kids helps to acclimate youth to academic surroundings and inspire them to achieve a quality education. Upon completion, the attendees received UWM certificates of completion, chess boards and a healthy nutritious lunch provided by the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee's "With Every Heartbeat is Life" program.



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Don't Bug Me...I'm Reading!

Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee 2009 Summer Reading Challenge

The first annual HACM Summer Reading Challenge took place this summer at Highland Gardens with twenty-seven students from Scattered Sites Homes and Highland Homes participating in the reading challenge. Together, the students logged in 100 hours and 48 minutes of reading this summer. The Summer Reading Challenge was implemented to strengthen reading proficiency and to help encourage children to improve their reading throughout the summer in a fun and rewarding way. At the conclusion of the reading challenge, all participants were rewarded with book bags filled with school supplies, T-shirts, McDonald's five dollar gift certificates, and a summer reading experience they will never forget.



Jasmine Braksdale from UW-Milwaukee works with Jasmira Rivas with her homework.



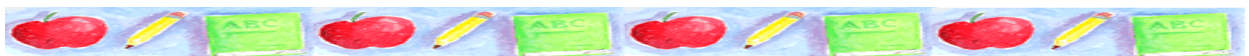
Mr. Ricky Bennett, a Highland Homes father, mentors a group of students on self-esteem and making the right choices.



Kristina McHenry of Mercer Corporation mentors the Washington children in career planning.

HACM Mentoring Program

The Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee's new Mentoring Program will introduce youths to mentors who will channel negative aggression into positive reinforcements. These mentors will have a commitment to broadening horizons and motivating youth to think of themselves as future leaders who could make a difference in their world. Characteristics such as responsibility, commitment, self-esteem, and dedication must be manifested in our youth at an early age to build a successful life. Sixteen youth from Scattered Sites Homes and Highland Homes are currently enrolled in the Mentoring Program. The goal is to bring college students, professionals, and parents in to work with students one-on-one to develop, true meaningful relationships. Also, mentors will take students on outings that will broaden their horizons and expose them to sporting events, fine dining, theater, and life-learning experiences.



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Jasmira Rivas of Highland Homes was enrolled in the Mentoring program and employed in the HACM Summer Youth Program. Jasmira worked with Manager Sarita Griffin of Townhomes at Carver Park.



Darryl Powers of Highland Homes had a busy summer. He was enrolled in the Education Initiative Mentoring Program, the UWM Pre-College Program, College for Teens, and he was employed in the HACM Summer Youth Program at the Highland Gardens Neighborhood Networks Computer Lab.



Sylvia Washington (left) of Scattered Sites Homes and her sisters Faye Washington (middle) and Moesha Washington all were enrolled in the Mentoring Program and attended the UWM College for Teens Program. Sylvia also was employed in the HACM Summer Youth Program at Merrill Park in the maintenance department.



Sylvester Washington (right) of Scattered Site Homes received the Most Improved Student Award at the Student Recognition Awards. Sylvester also was enrolled in the Mentoring Program and employed in the HACM Summer Youth Program at Holton Terrace in the maintenance department.

HACM Students Getting Involved!

BEE-LIEVE IN YOURSELF



The Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee NINTH ANNUAL SPELLING BEE CONTEST

Invites all 6th, 7th and 8th graders to the Thursday, October 29, 2009
6:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Community Service Building
650 W. Reservoir Ave., First Floor
Please call Darrell Finch at 225-9498 by September 29, 2009,
to participate in the Spelling Bee.

1st place \$100.00, 2nd place \$50.00, 3rd place \$25.00 (for each age group)



COLLEGE TOUR UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

As part of the HACM Education Initiative, we will be attending a college tour of the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

What: HACM Education College Tour

When: On Saturday, October 10, 2009 from 8:45 a.m. to 4:30p.m. Bus departs from Highland Gardens (1818 W. Juneau Ave)

Transportation and lunch are provided by HACM

Who: Middle school students and High school students

Please call Darrell Finch at 225-9498 for more details.

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HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF MILWAUKEE 2009 FIRE PREVENTION CONTEST

Sign Up Now

Poster Contest

This event is being sponsored by the Housing Authority Insurance Group (HAIG) to promote fire safety within the community. The Fire Prevention Poster Contest goal is to promote the importance of families developing and implementing a home fire escape plan. "Stay Fire Smart, Don't Get Burned" is the theme of Fire Prevention Week, October 4-10, 2009.

Youth from the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee are encouraged to participate in the Fire Prevention 2009 Poster Contest. Participants must create a poster displaying fire prevention and safety around fire.

There are three age categories: 6-9, 10-14 and 15-18. A first, second, and third place winner will be selected from each age group. The first place winner will receive a check in the amount of \$50, second place winners receive \$30, and the third place winner will receive \$20.

It's not enough to have a home escape fire plan. To escape safely, you must make sure that everyone in the home has practiced the plan. For the month of October 2009, the Housing Authority advocates that when it comes to escape plans, practice is the key. Whether in the kitchen, living room, or a child's bedroom, fire hazards exist in every home. Often the leading causes of home fires - cooking, heating, electrical and smoking materials - can be prevented. With this in mind, the HAIG wants to make children aware of these potential hazards and teach them ways to prevent fires.

HACM Mentoring/Tutoring Program Enroll Now!

The Afterschool Mentoring/Tutoring Program will be offered to students at the Highland Gardens Neighborhood Networks Computer Lab. The goal is to present students with support, guidance, and practical assistance with reading, basic computer skills, and homework.

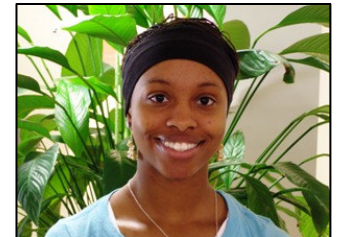
Starting Monday, September 14, 2009

Monday through Thursday-3:00 p.m-4:45 p.m.

HACM COLLEGE BOUND INITIATIVE



Braxton Dodd



Kayla Moore

Braxton Dodd of Highland Homes received a football scholarship to attend Fond du Lac Tribal Community College in Minnesota. Kayla Moore of Scattered Sites accepted a scholarship to attend Tennessee State, and she will be majoring in Biotech Medicine. Both of these students were enrolled in the College-Bound Initiative and have applied for the HACM Scholarship, which will assist them in their educational development.

The goal of the College-Bound Initiative is to provide all high school students with support, resources and assistance when they are seeking post-secondary education. This goal will be met by assisting high school students develop a post-graduation plan. It will also help students identify the necessary resources to reach their goal and will provide first-hand assistance with enrollment, financial aid, college tours and scholarships at local, state, out of state colleges, universities, vocational schools, technical schools and junior colleges.

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THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF MILWAUKEE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

You or your child can receive up to \$2,000 from HACM towards an accredited university or college, including a vocational/technical college.



Requirements

- Acceptance to a college or university
- Good academic standing with a grade point average of 2.0 or better
- Demonstrate financial need
- Enrolled in a degree program
- In compliance with the terms and conditions of lease agreement

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the HACM Education Initiative is to provide parents with support, resources, and assistance to enhance the educational development of their children so that they obtain a quality education and graduate from high school. This will be accomplished by acclimating, exposing, and enriching their child in an environment that is conducive to learning.

Contact me with your suggestions, ideas, questions, or if you would like to highlight your child's educational accomplishments in this newsletter.



Your Children Are Our Priority

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Five Steps to Help You Excel Academically in School and Graduate



Students

1. The importance of attendance and being on time everyday can't be overstated. In order to improve performance and receive an adequate education, this should be your number one goal. Be a leader and not a follower in every aspect of your life.
2. Enroll in a homework help program. Again, your attendance and being on time is very important. The homework help program will provide you with individual support and assistance to meet academic challenges you might encounter.
3. Develop good study habits at home. Set a regular time for homework in a quiet spot in your home that is conducive to learning. Remove any object that hinders your ability to concentrate. Emphasis should be placed on reading as much as possible, at least twenty minutes a day. Return assignments completed and on time.
4. Develop strong character and good judgment. Implement in your daily life responsibility, commitment, self-respect, and self-discipline. Resolve conflicts peacefully. These characteristics will ensure you are not disciplined, reprimanded, suspended, or expelled from school. Avoid changing schools during the school year if at all possible.
5. Set short- and long-term goals for the future and your career. Develop a plan as early as the ninth grade for the career you want to seek. When planning your career, think of something you like doing and would do for free. Plan on pursuing a post-secondary education instead of seeking employment after graduating from high school.

