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On March 15, 2011, Stamford Hospital's Mobile Wellness Center was parked outside Clinton Manor, 22 Clinton Avenue. COC residents were able to avail themselves of mammograms and other health screenings. Below is a photo of Carmen Roldan of Post House with Kimberley Jackson, Resident Service Coordinator based at Fairgate. Ms. Roldan gave a thumbs up after her screening was completed.



Joint Stamford Health System/COC Vita Event May 14, 2011

On Saturday, May 14, 2011 at 10:00 a.m., there will be a joint Stamford Health System/Charter Oak Communities celebration to announce the creation of the new *Vita* health and wellness district on Stamford's West Side, and to formally dedicate the new Fairgate Community Health Center as an anchor of this community-revitalization effort.

The festivities will begin at the entrance of the new Fairgate Community Health Center (part of the Optimus system), located at 138 Stillwater Avenue, Stamford. The event will run from 10:00 a.m to 11:30 a.m. with a ribbon cutting and ceremony at 10:30 a.m.

We hope you can join Governor Malloy or his representative, Congressman Jim Himes, Michael A. Pavia, Mayor, City of Stamford, State Representative Patricia Billie Miller, Ludwig Spinelli, Chief Executive Officer, Optimus Health Care, David L. Smith, Senior Vice President, Strategy and Market Development, Stamford Hospital, Vincent J. Tufo, Executive Director, Charter Oak Communities and Reverend Richard F. Futie, Pastor, Sacred Heart Church.

Charter Oak Communities (COC) and Stamford Health System (SHS) are creating a *Health and Wellness District* on Stamford's West Side. This new district – called *Vita* (Latin for "life") – is intended to provide residents with access to the healthcare system in new and innovative ways while living in revitalized neighborhoods designed to promote healthier lifestyles.

The investment in the *Fairgate Community Health Center* and related programs is designed to provide a safe, more cost-effective clinical alternative to reliance on emergency rooms, and increase access to high-quality, integrated, appropriate and affordable healthcare.

The *Vita* initiative will attract an array

of consumer-based health facilities to the Stillwater Avenue corridor, at the doorstep of the redeveloped Stamford Hospital campus. This will include:

- **Fairgate Community Health Center:** A program of Optimus, a Federally Qualified Health Center;
- **Fairgate Farm:** A planned and professionally coordinated communal farm, following the *urban agriculture* movement (opening summer 2011);
- **Obesity Prevention Program,** in partnership with Stamford's diverse Obesity Prevention Task Force;
- **Other future facilities,** which might include a yoga/Pilates studio, a health food store, juice bar, fitness and physical therapy, as well as private medical/dental or other health care practices.

The *Vita* initiative will be centered along the Stillwater Avenue corridor – from West Avenue to the Mill River, in an area that will see significant physical improvements by both SHS and COC. These improvements will include:

- The redevelopment of Stamford Hospital, incorporating a direct connection to the Stillwater corridor via a new south entrance;
- The completion of the Fairgate mixed-income residential community;
- The redevelopment of the existing Vidal Court housing complex as a combination of assisted- and market-rate rental housing, along with street level retail space;
- The demolition of several blighted properties, and the creation of other mixed-use properties.



COC Employee Profile



In August, 2010, Todd Szczygiel joined COC in the capacity of Housing Inspector. Todd brings over twenty-one years of experience in inspection, licensing and zoning ordinances. He previously worked at the City of New Haven where his duties included enforcement of the housing code, licensing and zoning ordinances as well as inspections of Section 8 housing to ensure safe and suitable dwellings for residents. Todd began his career at the City of New Haven as a Public Space Inspector (sidewalks, rights of way, etc.). He then moved into Zoning and finally became Housing Code Inspector. In this position, he inspected units for problems reported from tenants that remained uncorrected by the landlord and often mediated problems.

Todd attended Gateway Community College in New Haven for two years where he took courses in General Business. Todd is certified in Modern Real Estate Practices, Real Estate Appraisal and Lead Inspector Training. He also is certified as a Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Quality Standard Specialist and has been a member of the Connecticut Association of Housing Code Enforcement Officials.

At COC, Todd is involved with all internal and external inspections of Public Housing, Tax-Credit and Section 8 units. He is currently preparing for the upcoming HUD Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC) inspections to ensure our units are in compliance.

Todd is very health conscious and has a good sense of humor.



Above: Lisa Reynolds, Controller—see story on right.

Update on COC Projects

A busy spring is underway at Charter Oak Communities with new capital projects in progress, older projects being completed, and even newer projects coming off the drawing board. The warmer weather has brought better working conditions for our contractors. The work at Stamford Manor, the brick and masonry repairs, moves to another phase with the railing installation in the central area of the development. It is anticipated that this work will continue to the end of June. At the same time the contractor will be beginning the walkway repairs to the west end of the building.

The Elevator Replacement at Ripowam Manor is entering its final phase. The interior finishes are being installed and Elevator #2 is being completed for final turnover. This project is anticipated to be complete by the end of May. The Fire Alarm System at Glenbrook Manor is nearing completion ahead of schedule. This work includes a brand new Fire Alarm System, plus new smoke alarms, strobes, and horns.



Westwood



The first phase of Westwood will be completed by mid-June. See photos above & on right showing the progress to date (courtesy of Azad Kareem).



Welcome to Lisa Reynolds

On February 28, 2011, Lisa Reynolds joined COC as Controller. Lisa previously was Controller/Treasurer for the City of Stamford where she managed a staff of 14. There, Lisa wrote and updated the adopted Accounting Policy and Procedure Manual to ensure strong internal controls. Prior to that, Lisa worked as Controller for the Regional Director of

Support Services for the Internal Revenue Service in New York. Lisa received her B.S. in Business Administration from Southern Illinois University and a Masters of Business Administration from the University of New Haven and looks forward to strengthening the internal controls already in place at Charter Oak Communities.



Bed Bugs be Gone

Bed bugs are on the rise. The following suggests ways to prevent bed bugs from entering your home.

Bed bugs are brown, flat and approximately ¼ inch long. They have rounded bodies about the size of an apple seed and are visible to the human eye. Bed bugs come out at night or in darkened areas and are most active when we sleep. While they crawl onto exposed skin and suck up a small amount of blood, most people never feel the actual bite. Bed bugs need a blood meal in order to grow and lay eggs. A female bed bug lays 5-7 eggs per week and the eggs take approximately 10 days to hatch. Bed bugs are fully grown in 2 to 4 months and can live as long as a year. The proper identification of bed bugs by a trained professional is critical as there are many varieties of pests.

Bed bugs are often carried home on objects such as clothing, furniture and luggage. They travel along pipes, electrical wiring and through openings, from room to room or apartment to apartment. Bringing home discarded items may lead to a bed bug infestation. You can also pick up bed bugs at the Laundromat.

Travel precaution tips include the following: wash and dry clothes on hot settings; use hard, smooth luggage and avoid fabric luggage; pack plastic bags to seal purchases and/or items that may become infested; at a destination point, inspect the bed area for bed bug signs on headboards, mattress seams, adjacent furniture and other objects close to the bed and keep luggage off the floors and beds and place them on high luggage racks; do not unpack clothing; always keep luggage closed; place hanging items on a shower rail; keep shoes away from the bed; be-

fore checking out, seal suspicious items in plastic bags; when you arrive home, unpack materials outside the residence and take laundry directly to the washer and drier for immediate cleaning.

Some other possible hiding places for bed bug are cracks in the bed frame and headboard, under chairs, couches, beds, dustcovers, between the cushions of upholstered furniture, underneath area rugs and edges of carpets, between the creases of drapery or curtains, in drawers of night stands and dressers, behind baseboards, around doors and window casing, behind electrical outlet plates, under paintings and posters, cracks in walls, in telephones, radios, clocks, smoke detectors, toys and other electronic devices. It is important to inspect new and used furniture before bringing it into your home.

In order to eliminate bed bugs in the home, the following is necessary: clean the entire apartment; remove all clutter from the living unit; encase and bag all bedding and clothing in the affected areas; wash all sheets, blankets and other clothes and then dry washed items on the hottest setting; wash and treat all headboards and bed frames; clean and remove bed bugs from other items; isolate the clean bed bug-free items until all bed bugs have been eliminated; inspect and treat all surrounding rooms and adjacent living units; conduct follow-up inspections and treatments until the bed bugs have been eliminated; vacuum and discard vacuum waste in sealed plastic trash bags; seal all cracks and crevices with caulk.

Since bed bugs have returned due to greater mobility, residents must be vigilant in reporting any suspected problem to their property management office.

Resident Corner

Alice James is an 8-year resident of Stamford Manor. She came to the United States from India in 1986. Prior to that, she lived in Port Chester, NY.

She loves to paint, especially with watercolors. Alice enjoys knitting and sewing as well. She makes cardigan sweaters and beautiful shawls.

While Alice is now retired, she worked at Carolee Designs LLC, a jewelry design firm in Stamford.

Alice takes care of her mother, Daisy, and is busy with the daily chores of cooking, cleaning and doing laundry. Alice loves to cook and prepares everything from Indian and Italian to English and Spanish cuisine. Her mom often helps with the preparation of meals by cutting vegetables.

In 2010, Alice lost her husband to cancer after being ill for about a year.

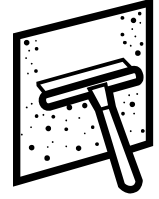
Alice has seven grandchildren and enjoys seeing the ones close to her, especially her grandson who will be three in July. Her oldest son, Victor, lives in Stamford and is a Produce Manager at Grand Union supermarket. Alice is very proud of her daughter, Shirley, who is a Manager at Chase Bank in New Canaan. Her youngest son, Nelson, lives in Chicago and has two daughters and one son.

Alice enjoys the movie nights at Stamford Manor and other get-togethers with residents from other properties. She recently prepared a dish of food to bring to one of these functions and reported that everyone had a wonderful time. Alice is so pleased that Corey Toby from Family Centers is located at her development as he is extremely helpful in providing residents with connections to any services they may need.





Spring Cleaning



Spring has sprung and it's time for seasonal cleaning. Following are some helpful hints:

1. Go through everything in your unit;
2. Donate unused items or throw them away;
3. By cleaning out unnecessary clutter, you will be able to keep your home neat and organized;
4. A good rule to follow - especially for clothes - if you have not used it or put it on twice within the past year, it is time for you to get rid of it!



Thank you!



THANK YOU

COC Sponsors Food Drive

At the March 4th COC Employee Town Hall Meeting, the staff heard firsthand how the various agencies/partners we deal with on a regular basis help our residents through case studies presented by the Resident Service Coordinators based at our developments from Family Centers.

From the working poor to the unemployed, there are many who are struggling to make ends meet. To stretch their limited financial resources, individuals and families come to the *Emergency Food Pantry* at Person-to-Person in Darien, CT. Not having to pay for groceries, the clients are able to use their limited resources to pay for other necessary expenses, such as rent and utilities.

During the month of March, employees, Board and Advisory Board members, residents and Resident Service Coordinators all participated in the COC-sponsored Food Drive to benefit The *Emergency Food Pantry* at Person-to-Person. Many of the following items were collected: instant coffee and tea, Parmalat milk, fruit juice and canned fruit, canned Ravioli, spaghetti and pasta sauce, cookies and crackers, dried beans and lentils, jelly and peanut butter, macaroni and cheese, oatmeal and cereal, pancake mix and syrup and canned tuna. Please see the above photo which showcases some of the food collected.

Thank you one and all for your generous donations. And a special "Thank you" to Joe Leale and Charlie McCadden for delivering the donations to Person-to-Person.