

GET PREPARED FOR HURRICANE SEASON

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HANO RECEIVES ADDITIONAL HUD- VASH ALLOCATION TO PROVIDE 56 HOUSING VOUCHERS FOR VETERANS



First Lady Michelle Obama speaks during the Mayor's Challenge to End Homelessness press conference

This summer, the Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO) received an award of \$447,747 for fiscal year 2015 by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program to fund housing vouchers for veterans in Orleans Parish. HANO will utilize the additional funding to provide 56 housing vouchers to homeless veterans in partnership with the

Southeast Louisiana Veterans Health Care System.

“HANO will continue to prioritize the provision of housing assistance for some of the most vulnerable and well respected citizens of our great city who have sacrificed so much for the safety of our nation,” HANO Executive Director Gregg Fortner said. “We acknowledge our continued partnership with HUD and thank the Department for their commitment to provide much needed funding to continue such programs.”

The HUD-VASH program is designed to assist veterans in locating permanent housing through HUD's rental assistance program and connects them with services at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers in the community. The eligible veterans will be identified by the VA, and referred to HANO to determine their final income eligibility and to assist in locating suitable housing.

This award follows an announcement by Mayor Mitchell J. Landrieu and First Lady Michelle Obama celebrating the progress achieved nationally to end homelessness among veterans by the end of 2015,

and recognized New Orleans as the first major city to achieve the goal. Mayor Landrieu recognized the success of the major coalition led by The City, in conjunction with HANO, HUD, the Southeast Louisiana Veterans Health Care System, UNITY of Greater New Orleans, the Louisiana Office of Community Development, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), and the New Orleans Interagency Council on Homelessness (NOICH) to make available up to 200 vouchers through an ongoing system of identifying available supportive housing and an expedited leasing process.

In 2011, HANO distributed 100 VASH vouchers to veterans identified by Southeast Louisiana Veterans Health Care System aiding the national call to offer clinical assistance to the men and women who served our country. Between 2012 and 2014, HANO's allocation increased to a total of 265 VASH vouchers available for distribution. The additional 56 vouchers will increase the cumulative allocation to 321, effective June 1, 2015, upon receipt of funding from HUD.

For more information on the HUD-VASH program, visit www.HUD.gov or www.HANO.org.

WELCOME BACK HOME

Former HCVP resident becomes a homeowner once again



New Homeowner Gail Julian

Gail Julian, a former HCVP resident, is fulfilling her dream of becoming a homeowner for the second time through the Housing Authority's Homeownership Program.

After losing her Gentilly home when Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans, Ms. Julian utilized the Section 8 program for rental assistance for more than five years. Julian, a former business owner and disabled resident, has always dreamed of owning her own home once again. "I am very grateful for the Section 8 program, but I was a homeowner for almost all of my life," said Julian. "I did not want to rely on the HCV program forever."

Ms. Julian learned about the Homeownership Program

through the HANO website, and utilized her voucher to purchase her new home. After enrolling in the program in August 2014, Ms. Julian was referred to homebuyer preparation classes, including financial fitness and homebuyers education.

"The greatest part of the homeownership program was the Financial Fitness class because it helped me with budgeting my finances," Ms. Julian said. "After Hurricane Katrina, I lost my business, and I had to learn how to budget my money accordingly."

After months of preparing the necessary paperwork and financial planning, Ms. Julian has completed the purchase of her Algiers home and is now officially moved in. "I am just so excited to have a new home. I really missed having a backyard, and now I have a backyard that I can truly enjoy. I can get the mail out of my own mailbox, instead of walking to it every day," Ms. Julian said. "I have my own space again, and now I can just walk around as I please with no rules or regulations."

Ms. Julian is truly thankful for the assistance provided by the Homeownership program. "I just thank HANO for helping me become a homeowner again. God gave me back everything I lost during the storm, and HANO was a big part of that," Ms. Julian said.

IN MEMORIAM: HANOPD OFFICER JAMES BENNETT LAID TO REST



HANO PD Officer James Bennett

On Friday, May 29th, HANO joined city officials, community leaders, law enforcement personnel, family and friends to honor the life of Officer James Bennett, Jr. Officer Bennett passed away in the line of duty while serving the community as a member of the HANO Police Department (HANO PD).

"HANO mourns the loss of a valued employee," said Executive Director Gregg Fortner. "Officer Bennett was known to the public as a police officer, but to the HANO family, he was a quiet, fun loving and decent human being with a passion for serving the community. This is a tremendous loss to the HANO and Bennett families, and we will work side by side with the New Orleans Police Department to assist in the investigation of this tragedy."



Funeral services for Officer Bennett

Officer Bennett joined the HANO PD in May 2013 after 13 years of service with the Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office. He was primarily a patrolman assigned to The Estates community, and loved interacting with residents and the city's youth. He also worked briefly as a Police Officer with the Albuquerque International Support, and as a Deputy Court Security Officer for the Orleans Parish Sheriff's Office in 1997 and 1998. Shortly thereafter, Bennett served as a Field Agent in the Intensive Probation Unit with the Orleans Parish Criminal District Court from 1998 to 2000, and earned several certifications in various law enforcement capacities.

Officer Bennett is survived by his son, Justin Bennett.

HCVP Policy and Procedure Reminders

HANO IMPLEMENTS HCVP COMPLIANCE TEAM



In an effort to preserve the integrity of the Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) administered by HANO and the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), HANO has implemented the HCVP Compliance Team to combat fraud, waste and abuse within the program. The team began vigorously investigating suspected fraud cases last spring, with a focus on unreported increases in household income, failure to disclose significant assets or expenses (house, car, etc.), unauthorized household members residing in the assisted unit without being placed on the rental lease, and the failure to provide true and complete personal information at the time of application and annual recertification of eligibility.

Fraud within the program prevents the proper use of benefits paid to income-eligible families as regulated by HUD. It also hampers the integrity of the program and the agency. HANO is currently taking steps to combat program abuse by aggressively enforcing quality control

measures contained in the agency's HCVP Administrative Plan. The team members review information submitted by the voucher program participants that is inconsistent with independently verified information from other sources and investigate specific allegations, complaints and tips received through the HANO Hotline.

If abuse of federal benefits is uncovered, the administration will determine corrective measures based on the evidence collected, the dollar amount of improper benefits paid, and the amount of money owed to the agency. HANO may require repayment by the family and/or landlord, determine whether participation in the HCV program will continue or if termination is warranted. Criminal violations related to the HCV program will be referred to the appropriate local, state or federal authorities for further review and/or prosecution.

To report HCV Program fraud, contact the HANO hotline at (504) 670-3395.

HANO AND HUD HOST FREE FAIR HOUSING TRAININGS

In March, HANO and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)'s New Orleans Field Office met with housing providers from all areas of the city to discuss fair housing and equal opportunity laws. The meeting was the first in a series of workshop trainings to educate local housing providers on a number of topics, such as reasonable accommodation/modification, familial status, Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), and Retaliation, Harassment, and Intimidation.

HUD's Enforcement Branch Chief Jan Kearney-King kicked off the workshop series with the discussion of the rules and regulations of the Fair Housing Act in relation to a protected class of individuals, specifically disabled tenants in need of reasonable accommodation/modification and the prohibition of housing discrimination against families with children. During these sessions, attendees had the opportunity to engage in dialogue with housing experts about their rights and responsibilities, and also any challenges they have experienced while participating in the tenant-based and project-based voucher programs.

In May, HANO and HUD hosted its second meeting with



A HUD representative speaks with housing providers during free fair housing training in the Helen W. Lang Memorial Board Room

the discussion on the housing protections of the Violence Against Women Act of 2005, and how it applies to tenants who are victims of domestic violence or stalking. This meeting concluded with a presentation on the prohibitions of the federal Fair Housing Act in relation to housing discrimination, and harassment and interference for rentals, sales, financing and insurance related to certain protected classes.

HANO and HUD hosted its most recent fair housing training on Thursday, July 30th at 10 a.m. in the Helen W. Lang Memorial Board Room. Please check the agency website at www.hano.org/landlords for announcements on future workshops and seminars.



HURRICANE EVACUATION TIPS
 Preparing For An Emergency
 Hano Disaster Line: 1-877-426-6674 / www.hano.org

DURING:

You must evacuate if:

Mayor declares a mandatory evacuation.

Pack a small emergency bag

Include all necessary medications and prescriptions, identification, important papers, a few changes of clothing, and cash.

CAEP pick-up locations:

Dial 311, (504) 658-2299, or visit www.nola.gov/ready/evacuspots for information.

For Your Information:

New Orleans Info Station: WWL (870 AM) and WLMG (101.9 FM)
 Baton Rouge Info Station: WJBO (1150 AM) and WFMT (102.5 FM)
 Follow the blue evacuation route signs and head in the direction opposite of the storm track.

AFTER:

For post storm assistance, contact the American Red Cross:
 1-866-GET-INFO or www.redcross.org/la/new-orleans



be smart. be safe. be prepared.

CONTACTS

Main Office
 (504) 670-3300
 4100 Touro St.
 New Orleans, LA 70122

Office Hours:
 8:30 AM - 5:30 PM M-F

HANO PD Hotline
 (504) 670-3372

UPCOMING HOLIDAY CLOSURES

September 7, 2015 - Labor Day
 November 11, 2015 - Veteran's Day
 November 26, 2015 - Thanksgiving Day
 December 25, 2015 - Christmas Day



HANO Housing Choice Voucher Program
 4100 Touro Street
 New Orleans, LA 70122

If you have a reasonable accommodation request relative to any HANO facility, please contact the Client Services Department at (504) 670-3300 at least seven (7) days prior to your visit.



CRIME PREVENTION CORNER: When You're Safe, We're Safe



HANO PD patrols The Estates community

By Leessa Augustine, HANO PD Officer

The community policing efforts of the HANO Police Department (HANO PD) strives to combat crime within its communities through prevention, intervention, and law enforcement. With HANO PD's Crime Awareness and Education programs, HANO PD utilizes community outreach activities - such as the First Tee Golf Program, neighborhood forums, movie nights, mentoring programs, youth and

elderly activities - to address the needs of the communities and its citizens.

However, policing is much more than law enforcement. Community policing is a value system which permeates a police department. The primary organizational goal is working cooperatively with families, individual citizens, public and private organizations to identify and resolve issues which potentially affect the livability of specific neighborhoods and the city as a whole. Community-based police departments recognize that the police cannot effectively deal with such issues alone, and must partner with others who share a mutual responsibility for resolving problems.

Officers freely accept a significant

role in issues that might be derisively referred to as "social work" in traditional police departments. Officers understand that resolving a problem with unruly people drinking at a backyard barbecue, working to reduce truancy at local schools, or marshalling resources to improve lighting around vacant properties may all be forms of valid and valuable police work, which affect the livelihood of the community. Rather than treating these activities as diversions from "real" police work, HANO officers understand that this is the very essence of their duty.

To report suspected fraud or program abuse, contact the HANO hotline at (504) 670-3395. To report any criminal activity in your community, contact the HANO PD at (504) 670-3372.

