



Springfield Housing Authority Tenant News

“Quality Housing for a Strong Community”

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Executive Director Denise Jordan: Reflections on first year at helm of SHA

After a full year on the job as head of the Springfield Housing Authority, Executive Director Denise Jordan has made a strong push for quality of life issues – visiting developments to learn in person what residents and staff need, while keeping an eye out for safety issues in buildings and on grounds. At the same time, she has been both accessible and transparent.

Jordan has met with residents at SHA developments across the city, and attends Resident Services programs and events whenever possible. “Our agency is all about our residents, and I keep that in the forefront of my mind and in my day-to-day work,” she said.

Jordan began working at SHA in October of 2019,

after 10 years as Chief of Staff to Springfield Mayor Domenic Sarno. Prior to that, she worked as a



civil rights officer at the Executive Office of Health & Human Services, and in a variety of posts with the Department of Mental Retardation.

The Housing Authority, she said, comes with its unique opportunities and challenges.

“My biggest issues have been

quality of life issues, elevators, public safety information, parking and lease enforcement,” said Jordan, who made it a point early on to make regular visits to our developments and meet with both residents and staff. “Going out and meeting the residents by attending Resident Council meetings and resident service sponsored programs, I’ve learned a lot from the residents by being out and about the developments,” Jordan noted.

In many cases, she steers residents who have issues to their property managers, who can zero in on the appropriate responses and make them happen.

“The biggest challenge is getting people to realize that I don’t work at City Hall,” she (Continued on Page 2)

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Holiday spirit and giving



The holiday season is upon us, and three SHA family developments received some needed donations recently to ease up on the financial stresses that happen to many of us. Thanks to generous donors, several families at Duggan Park and Robinson Gardens Apartments were treated to the makings of complete holiday dinners – turkey or ham, potatoes, carrots, squash, yams, pasta, cranberry



The Crew at Duggan

sauce, rice, gravy and more. At Duggan Park, the gifts came courtesy of The Crew, a group of retired professional Springfield men whose united mission is to give back to the community, in particular to those less fortunate.

The Crew has already given to Duggan several times, including dinners last year for Christmas.

At Robinson Gardens, longtime benefactor and local businessman Santino Tomassini, who has been buying school sup-

plies, holiday meals and other needed items for Robinson Gardens residents for the past five years, in a giving program organized by SHA’s family-based early literacy program, Talk/Read/Succeed!



Robinson

Gardens and Mr. Tomassini for their ongoing generosity to SHA

families as well as across the city.

“Our thanks to The Crew for their continued support of our Duggan residents

and for the work they do throughout the community, as well as to Santino Tomassini, who has done so much for our families at Robinson Gardens,” Jordan said. “For all that they do in the city, we are grateful here at the SHA.”

Focus on attendance at Sullivan Apartments

When it comes to school and learning, attendance is everything.

That was the heart of a recent program at Sullivan Apartments, a stone's throw from the Edward Boland Elementary School where children walk up the hill daily for classroom learning.

Parents at Sullivan listened in rapt attention as Melissa Burrage, coordinator at the Springfield School Department's Parent and Community Engagement Department (PACE), spelled out the consequences for children of missing too much school: They are much more likely to fall behind in all areas, including reading, and even later to drop out of school.

"Many parents don't see the connection between missing school at a younger age, and academic performance as they get older," Burrage said. "Going to school every day is very likely to mean success right away, and through life."

Some great tips from Burrage:

- The impact of poor attendance starts

in kindergarten, with children who miss one day every few weeks showing signs of falling behind.

- Absences often affect the whole classroom, as teachers help children catch up while others lose out on the teaching time.



Attendance session at Sullivan Apartments

- Poor attendance is linked to poor reading proficiency by the end of grade three, when children are ex-

pected to beginning 'reading to learn' as opposed to 'learning to read'.

- Children who aren't reading well by the end of third grade are more likely to drop out of school later.
- By grade six, chronic absence becomes a leading indicator that a student will eventually drop out of high school.
- By grade nine, attendance is a better indicator of graduation rates than test scores.
- Good attendance is also connected to college and career success.
- One study by Attendance Works, a group that helps advance student success by promoting school attendance, showed that just 17 percent of children who were chronically absent in kindergarten and first grade were reading proficiently by third grade, compared with 64 percent of proficient readers among those who had good attendance.

Taisha Rodriguez — from resident to staff

Taisha Rodriguez has landed a job she loves – and right where she lives.

Rodriguez and her four children have lived at Sullivan Apartments the past nine years, settling in happily and staying involved with Resident Services programs, especially SHA's family-based early literacy program, Talk/Read/Succeed!

She has also been working since fall as a clerk in District D, whose offices are close enough to her home that she walks to and from work each weekday morning.

Rodriguez said she loves the work, loves helping people, and loves the fact that her home and employment have such a strong connection.

District D includes many housing developments for elderly and handicapped residents, such as Johnny Appleseed, Central, Harrington and Saab Court. Rodriguez has worked several years as a certified nursing assistant and feels she has a special calling for working with seniors.

"I am good with older people – I love it and I feel that I can help them," she explained, adding that her skills in Spanish have also helped her a lot with residents.

"Many of our residents do not speak English. I can talk to them and make them feel

more comfortable," she said.

Rodriguez is working part-time at SHA and hopes to be full-time at some point. Until then, she will keep another part-time job she has. She is also working with the Neighborhood Assistance Corporation of America (NACA) to buy a home in Springfield, her hometown.

"I always want to do better in my life," she said. "I want to move forward as much as I can."

She was recommended to the position by T/R/S! Program Coordinator Zenaida Burgos, who noted that Rodriguez is a frequent participant in programs, and she is sure to practice what she learns at home with her children.

"She is a great role model for her children," Burgos said. "I also knew that she would be a great employee. Hopefully, this will help other residents to know that they, too, can join the SHA staff."

Rodriguez' eldest child, daughter Lizaundra Rodriguez, is now a freshman at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. She won this spring a Farris Mitchell Scholarship, given by the SHA each year to two city high school seniors who live in public housing or SHA-administered Section 8 vouchers.

Denise Jordan, cont'd from Page 1

said. "Otherwise, the big challenge is getting our residents to be more involved with our programming and the events that we have."

For the long term, Jordan has her sights on developing more programs and services for residents that will help them to succeed and become more independent. "I'd love to see more connections with services that can help in their daily lives."

And how does she like it here? In her own words:

"I love working at the Housing Authority. We have a great team of individuals on our staff who work very hard to meet the needs of our residents. And it's so great to have residents who are actively participating in what we offer and what the community offers, to reach for their own goals and dreams."



Public Safety: Winter safety rules

2020 SHA PARKING PERMITS

Only current SHA Residents are eligible for a parking permit sticker. SHA Residents must own or lease the vehicle they wish to register. Residents must provide a current registration and valid driver's license at the time of registration. Vehicle insurance is a Massachusetts State Law and must be maintained at all times. Parking stickers are specific to the resident's address and is an authorization to park in the specified resident's development ONLY.

Please visit your Property Managers Office for more information and to obtain your 2020 Parking Permit.

2020 SHA PARKING PERMITS MUST BE AFFIXED TO RESIDENT VEHICLES NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 31, 2019.

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2020, ANY SHA RESIDENT VEHICLE WITH A 2019 PARKING PERMIT WILL BE SUBJECT TO TOW AT THE OWNER'S EXPENSE.

PARKING LOT SNOW REMOVAL

Please follow your Property Manager's District Snow Removal Plan and be cooperative during the snow removal so that the maintenance staff can remove the snow more effectively.

Any vehicle not removed by the "designated snow removal time" will be subject to tow at the vehicle owner's expense.

WINTER SAFETY TIPS

Follow these tips to keep your home safe and warm: Keep an emergency kit in your home that includes flashlights, extra batteries, a first-aid kit, extra medicine, and baby items, if necessary.

If you lose power, your kit should also include food and water for three days for each family member, warm clothing if you have to evacuate, and toys and games for children.

Car care tips to prepare you for winter driving: Check your tires and replace with all-weather or snow tires, if necessary; Keep your gas tank full to prevent ice from getting in the tank and fuel lines; Make an emergency kit to keep in your car: Include water, snacks, first-aid kit, blankets, flashlight, extra batteries, portable cell phone charger, and emergency flares.

Remaining indoors during the winter is appealing. But you and your family may want to venture outdoors to enjoy winter activities. When you do, take these steps to prevent serious injuries and illnesses: Wear layers of light and warm clothing, a wind-resistant coat, waterproof shoes, and a hat, gloves, and scarf; Work slowly when engaged in outdoor tasks, such as shoveling or removing snow from your car; Take a friend and carry a charged cell phone when participating in outdoor activities.



Reglas de seguridad de invierno

2020 SHA PERMISOS DE ESTACIONAMIENTO

Solo los residentes actuales de SHA son elegibles para una etiqueta de permiso de estacionamiento. Los residentes de SHA deben ser dueño o arrendar el vehículo que desean registrar. Los residentes deben proporcionar un registro actual y una licencia de conducir válida al momento del registro. El seguro de vehículos es una ley del estado de Massachusetts y debe mantenerse en todo momento. Las etiquetas de estacionamiento son específicas de la dirección del residente y SOLAMENTE es una autorización para estacionarse en el desarrollo del residente especificado.

Visite su oficina de administradores de propiedades para obtener más información y obtener su permiso de estacionamiento 2020.

LOS PERMISOS DE ESTACIONAMIENTO SHA 2020 DEBEN COLOCARSE EN VEHÍCULOS RESIDENTES NO MÁS TARDE QUE EL 31 DE DICIEMBRE DEL 2019.

EFFECTIVO EL 1 DE ENERO DEL 2020, CUALQUIER VEHÍCULO RESIDENTE DE SHA CON PERMISO DE ESTACIONAMIENTO 2019 ESTARÁ SUJETO A REMOLQUE POR GASTOS DEL PROPIETARIO.

REMOCION DE NIEVE DEL ESTACIONAMIENTO

Siga el plan de remoción de nieve del distrito de su administrador de propiedades y coopere durante la remoción de nieve para que el personal de mantenimiento pueda remover la nieve de manera más efectiva.

Cualquier vehículo que no haya sido retirado antes del "tiempo designado de remoción de nieve" estará sujeto a ser remolcado por cuenta del propietario del vehículo.

CONSEJOS DE SEGURIDAD DE INVIERNO

Siga estos consejos para mantener su hogar seguro y cálido: mantenga un kit de emergencia en su hogar que incluya linternas, baterías adicionales, un botiquín de primeros auxilios, medicamentos adicionales y artículos para bebés, si es necesario. Si pierde energía, su kit también debe incluir alimentos y agua para tres días para cada miembro de la familia, ropa de abrigo si tiene que evacuar y juguetes y juegos para niños.

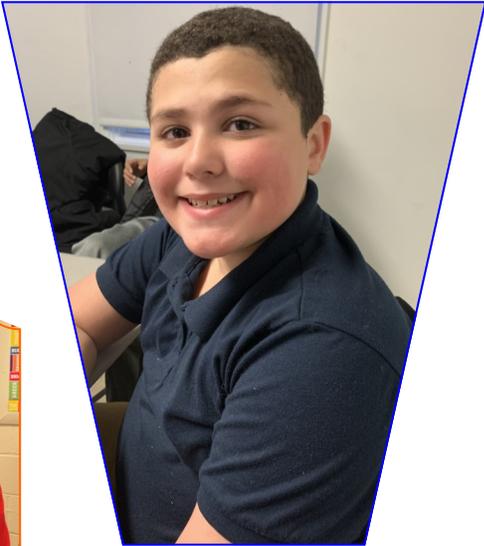
Consejos para el cuidado del automóvil para prepararse para conducir en invierno: revise sus llantas y reemplácelos las llantas para todo clima o nieve, si es necesario; mantenga su tanque de gasolina lleno para evitar que entre hielo en el tanque y en las líneas de combustible; haga un kit de emergencia para guardar en su automóvil: incluya agua, refrigerios, botiquín de primeros auxilios, mantas, linterna, baterías adicionales, cargador de teléfono celular portátil y bengalas de emergencia. Quedarse en su hogar durante el invierno es atractivo. Pero usted y su familia pueden aventurarse al aire libre para disfrutar de las actividades de invierno. Cuando lo haga, siga estos pasos para prevenir lesiones y enfermedades graves: use capas de ropa de poco peso y abrigada, un abrigo resistente al viento, zapatos a prueba de agua y un sombrero, guantes y bufanda; trabaje lentamente cuando realice tareas al aire libre, como palear o quitar nieve de su automóvil; lleve a un amigo y lleve un teléfono celular cargado cuando participe en actividades al aire libre.

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Our Residents



"One kind word can warm three winter months" Japanese proverb

