

There's a place and an opportunity for every person.

THE HOPE VI

The Revitalization of the Blackwell Community

NEWSLETTER

A Publication of the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority

Single-family homes construction underway



Demonstrating its continued commitment to the revitalization of the Blackwell Community, Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) has announced the start of construction for 308 single-family homes of the HOPE VI Revitalization Program. This construction represents another

significant step toward the completion of the multifaceted \$26.9 million HOPE VI Revitalization Program.

RRHA and the City of Richmond were awarded a HOPE VI grant of \$26.9 million from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to revitalize Richmond's Blackwell community in 1998. HOPE VI, which stands for Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere, is HUD's largest urban revitalization program created to provide housing opportunities for public housing residents and improve the quality of their lives; change the physical shape of public housing so that it reflects the surrounding community instead of being seen as isolated housing; develop positive incentives for resident self-sufficiency and comprehensive services that empower residents; lessen the concentration of poverty by promoting



mixed-income communities; and create partnerships with other agencies, local governments, non-profit organizations, and private business to leverage support and resources.

In Blackwell, HOPE VI included the construction of *Townes at River South*, 161 townhouse and garden style apartments, the construction of an elementary school, a recreation/community center, a refurbished park and the construction of 308 single-family homes.

HOPE VI also meant a comprehensive menu of programs for former Blackwell's public housing residents to achieve self-sufficiency through the creation of the Self-Sufficiency Training Program (SSTP). SSTP provided educational and job training and employment, day care, supportive services and transportation assistance amongst its many services.

"The HOPE VI grant was the perfect catalyst to provide unequalled housing and family services to our former public housing families in Blackwell and others, while revitalizing this neighborhood. Not only will these homes benefit this community but also the City of Richmond as we bring new homebuyers to Blackwell, promote economic growth and encourage new commercial

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development,” stated RRHA Executive Director Sheila Hill-Christian.

Neighborhood construction

Construction has already begun in Fulton with 32 energy efficient homes being built in the 900 block of Admiral Gravely Boulevard by Health-E Community Enterprises LLC. Officially titled Fulton Village, the



homes will be approximately 1,500 to 2,000 square feet with prices starting at \$160,000. Amenities for these environmentally friendly homes will include three to four bedrooms; two and one-half bathrooms; wall-to-wall carpeting and vinyl flooring; rear loading single car garages; energy star rated windows; and much more.

“We are very pleased with the progress being made towards the current HOPE VI project,” said HOPE VI Project Manager L. Dexter Goode. “We are confident that community members and the general public at large will be happy with the end results.”

Plans are also being made for early spring 2006 to construct 16 homes in the Swansboro community. RRHA development partner, Southside Community Development and Housing Corporation (SCDHC), will construct eight new single-family homes in the unit block of 54 West Pilkington Street ranging from 1,500 to 1,800 square foot and will rehab

eight other homes (seven on Decatur Street and one on Bainbridge Street) with pricing ranging from the mid \$140’s to the mid \$180’s. The new homes will have amenities such as three or four bedrooms; two and one-half bathrooms; wall-to-wall carpeting and vinyl flooring. Rehab homes will have some similar basic amenities and other options based on previous architecture of the homes.

If you are interested in purchasing a home in Fulton Village, contact Janine Richards of Regal Realty at 355-6919 ext. 303. For purchase information on Swansboro, contact Dianna Herndon at SCDHC at 231-4449, ext. 103.

Blackwell construction

The largest amount of construction will take place in the Blackwell community with the construction of 188 single-family houses. Construction will take place in four phases: Phase I - 37 homes, Phase II - 45 homes, Phase III - 55 homes and Phase IV - 51 homes.

The first phase is targeted to begin construction in the 1100 block of Decatur Street in late spring 2006 by SCDHC. Ranging in size from 1,450 to 2,040 square feet, the homes



will have three or four bedrooms and many amenities such as decks, front porches with decorative rails and columns, wall-to-wall carpeting and vinyl flooring. Homes will be sold at market rate at the initial sales price of approximately \$150,000 to \$190,000.

Other tentative dates for future

Attention Former Blackwell Public Housing Families!!! Information for You!

★ *Community Empowerment Classes* — conducted once a month to enhance personal skills and provide guidance for lifelong strategies

★ *Virginia Individual Development Accountant (VIDA)* where residents can obtain matching funds for their savings goals

★ *Online job searching and employment opportunities*

★ *Referral credit counseling and credit repair services*

★ *Homeownership classes* are offered through the builders to learn about becoming a home owner including the process of buying, the responsibilities of owning a home and budgeting

construction in Blackwell are 45 homes constructed by Better Housing Coalition in Summer 2006, 55 homes in Fall 2006 and 51 homes in Spring 2007. The development partners for the final two phases have not been selected at this time.

For purchase information on Phase I of Blackwell construction, contact Dianna Herndon at SCDHC at 231-4449, ext 103.

Through the HOPE VI Program qualified homebuyers will be provided with mortgage subsidies such as down payment assistance and funds for second mortgage financing. Additional opportunities for non-conventional sources of funding may also be available to the homebuyer.

For more information, contact L. Dexter Goode, HOPE VI Project Manager, at 780-4108 or ldgoode@rrha.state.va.us or Gwen Howard, Resident Services Advisor, at 780-4171 or ghoward@rrha.state.va.us. ☀

Introducing...

Our construction partners in revitalizing Blackwell

Southside Community Development and Housing Corporation



Established
in 1989,
Southside
Community
Development

and Housing Corporation (SCDHC) is a non-profit community development corporation based in the Old South District of Richmond. Its mission is to improve the quality of life for those families and individuals who have been disenfranchised and subject to inadequate living conditions with safe, clean and affordable housing.

SCDHC strives to raise economic, educational and social levels of the area residents; expand opportunities available to these groups through adequate low-cost housing; provide them with the necessary skills to survive independently as effective members of society; and, share wisdom and knowledge so they can start their own entrepreneurial ventures. SCDHC will build 53 homes for the HOPE VI Program.

Better Housing Coalition



Better Housing Coalition (BHC) was established in 1988 by local civic leaders to provide creative, collaborative long-term solutions to increase affordable housing resources and revitalize communities in the Richmond, Virginia metropolitan area. The Coalition, a private, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, has formed

enduring partnerships with the business community, other community-based organizations, public agencies and grassroots neighborhood leadership concerned with neighborhood revitalization.

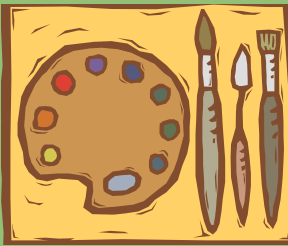
As part of its overall mission, BHC develops properties that are strategically targeted to increase the supply of affordable housing while serving as a catalyst for additional revitalization efforts. BHC will build 45 homes in the area.

Health-E-Community Enterprises of Virginia, Inc.



Health-E-Community Enterprises of Virginia, Inc. was formed to bring energy efficient homes to the general public in the affordable home sector. By linking energy conservation, resource efficiency and healthy house technology, the "Health-E" home demonstrates that it is possible to use the cost savings that accrue from innovative new construction technology and design and reduced energy usage to offset the added cost of construction.

Health-E-Community works to supply homes that ensure a healthy environment for its occupants thereby promoting health for future generations; provide indoor air quality enhanced tenfold, with heating and cooling energy consumption reduced by 30% as compared to a standard model energy code home; enhance levels of comfort and low total energy consumption during its lifetime; and are durable thereby reducing future waste and depletion of natural resources. Health-E-Community Enterprises of Virginia, Inc. is building 32 homes for the HOPE VI Program in Fulton. 🌞



Youth explore a place called **2005 Summer**



This summer, former Blackwell public housing youth participated in the 2005 Blackwell Summer Arts Program. Going into its seventh year, the program partners with the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) School of Art Educa-

tion in a four week summer arts program so that participants can learn about art and the ongoing revitalization of the Blackwell community. Led by VCU art students and faculty, community artists and professionals, youth engage in art projects and creative thinking and study the importance of home and community while intertwining different themes such as designing plans for a community park; creating an outdoor art wall; producing fabricated mosaic tiles featuring sport imagery; and planting community gardens.



The 2005 program studied the theme of Sharing a Place Called Home where participants reflected and compared their hopes and dreams for the place they call home.

Also, for the first time, youth attended workshops on the campus of VCU allowing them to experience a collegiate atmosphere in hopes of one day pursuing the same.



Summer Arts Program Coordinator and VCU staff member Anna Golden said, "The program gave me the opportunity to meet, learn and work with some very creative, intelligent and funny children. I treasure the time I spent with them and enjoyed watching their talents emerge through the artwork they made. There were

home at the *Arts Program*



Anna Golden, (left) VCU Instructor and Program Coordinator and Jacqueline Jackson, (right) City Council Vice President congratulate Nicole Smith



several budding photographers, computer programmers, fashion designers, cartoonists and architects and I hope that they keep up their artistic pursuits in the future."



To celebrate the hard work of participants, a closing ceremony was held at the Sacred Heart Center. Youth presented their artwork ranging

from needlework, collages, painting, photography and more to their families and the community.

Thank you to this year's partners the Art Education Department of VCU, the Blackwell Community Civic Association, Citgo, Jackson Ward Deli and the Markel Corporation for their continued support and involvement with the Blackwell Summer Arts Program. 🌟

Blackwell revitalization one step further with completion of 'The Townes'



The Townes at River South, the first housing constructed under the HOPE VI Revitalization Program in Blackwell, has been completed. 161 new mixed-income rental housing units were built with two-, three- and four-bedrooms; air conditioning; decorative landscaping; and amenities such as dishwashers, washer-dryer hook-ups, garbage disposals and wall-to-wall carpeting. To date all units have been rented with occupants varying



from former Blackwell public housing residents to families new to the area.

Congratulations to the new tenants of Townes at River South. We know you are proud of your new homes in this revitalized community.

Thank you to the Blackwell Community Civic Association, residents and the surrounding neighborhood for your partnership in this effort.

For more information on renting a unit at Townes at River South, contact Edgewood Management at 232-1800. ☀

SUCCESS STORIES... ♦♦♦



CHERIE ALLEN, her successful journey continues

“I have lived in my home for over seven years and I am thankful for the opportunity RRHA gave me, they had a great program,” said Cherie Allen, former Blackwell public housing resident. “I started out in public housing but I never let that stop me and have been moving forward ever since.”

Cherie Allen, the mother of three, has made several strides since her first interview with Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) in October 2000. After moving into her home, she earned her GED, started taking classes at J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College studying Substance Abuse Counseling and began working at Virginia Commonwealth University Medical College of Virginia (VCU/MCV) as a Patient Representative. In May 2006, she will graduate and already has plans to go back to J. Sargeant Reynolds to earn her Associates Degree in Human Services.

Allen also works at Rubicon as an Associate Operations Technician, where she gains hands-on experience and job training at the substance abuse facility.

“Rubicon Inc., a comprehensive chemical dependency treatment program, is the reason I want to pursue my Associates Degree,” said Allen. “I really enjoy the field and one day I hope to become an outreach substance abuse counselor.”

Most importantly, she took advantage of the RRHA programs and services available to all residents

including purchasing her home through the RRHA Lease/Purchase Homeownership program, GED completion assistance and even her HOPE VI Self-Sufficiency Training Program counseling leading to her enrollment in J. Sargeant Reynolds classes. RRHA congratulates Allen for continuously meeting her goals and striving for more.

Her next goal...a new home!

“A home is a wise investment that you can pass on to your children or those important people in your life,” said Allen. “I love my home and will never sell it but I could always see myself moving into a bigger and better place in the future. I highly advise others to buy a home and definitely take advantage of the programs RRHA has to offer.” 🌟

**The HOPE VI Newsletter
is published by the Richmond
Redevelopment and
Housing Authority's
Communications Office**

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HOPE VI:

Relocation

Through RRHA's relocation program, Blackwell's public housing families relocated to the following housing choices.

To other public housing	127
To lease/purchase homeownership housing ..	4
To other homeownership housing	8
To Housing Choice Voucher Program	111
Other	104

Self-Sufficiency Training Program (SSTP)

Self-sufficiency training programs and services are available to former Blackwell public housing residents 18 years of age and older, to assist with reaching employment-, school-, and training-related goals.

Total number of families enrolled:	198
Enrolled in educational training	70
(Remedial, GED, College)	
Job/vocational training	115
Residents in Homeownership	14
Total SSTP employed since enrollment	128

— Information current as of December 2005



HOPE VI Project Manager Dexter Goode

HOPE VI Project Manager L. Dexter Goode has been employed with Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority since July 21,

2005. In his role as project manager, Goode performs community planning and project management in support of the HOPE VI Revitalization Program. This entails organizing, developing and ensuring compliance with budget while implementing and overseeing program activities to meet the requirement of RRHA's mission and goals.

Goode also likes to take a hands-on approach, as he works to keep the community involved with the progress of the HOPE VI project and self-sufficiency component in order to develop and encourage their progress and future opportunities. Routinely, he makes site visits to ensure construction and that progress is on schedule and within guidelines.

Previously, Goode worked as Project Manager for the Virginia Department of Corrections and Assistant Resident Engineer for the Virginia Department of Transportation. He received a Bachelors of Science Degree in Architectural Engineering from North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Goode can be contacted at ldgoode@rrha.state.va.us or 780-4108. ☎



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