

# DOUGLAS COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY

## 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

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### NURTURING HOPE THROUGH HOUSING

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# GREETINGS FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



On behalf of the Douglas County Housing Authority I am presenting you with our 2016 Annual Report which includes information about the programs and organizational structure, as it has in previous years. The material we present includes accomplishments and stories about the people we serve. We hope that we are representing some of the very best in the lives of those people we serve in Douglas County.

Douglas County Housing Authority (DCHA) works with many other partners in our community in planning and the development of the numerous services necessary for our clients to overcome their barriers towards self-sufficiency. "Nurturing Hope Through Housing" focuses on the many programs and families we serve in Douglas County.

DCHA provides a variety of programs to fulfill our mission, including public housing, Section 8 Vouchers, as well as other programs and opportunities for home ownership. The staff is committed to quality service to our clients, while helping them meet their needs for affordable housing.

DCHA also owns an assisted living facility in Valley that provides assisted housing to many of our elderly population in the County. The staff at the Orchard Gardens Assisted Living Facility are dedicated, caring and strive to improve the lives of the elderly residents, providing social activities and healthy living opportunities.

Each year the challenges seem to become more difficult as we work with aging properties, more complex regulations, and reduced funding. I continue to be privileged to work with a dedicated Board of Commissioners that gives of their time and talent without any compensation, and who demonstrate caring and compassion for serving those less fortunate. I am forever grateful for their service and support.

As we look forward to the next year, I want to acknowledge our many community partners, and my dedicated staff that provide an environment which is professional and compassionate. I appreciate each one of you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sheila Miller". The script is fluid and cursive.

Sheila Miller, CEO

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# DCHA MISSION, VISION & VALUES STATEMENT

**Mission** The mission of Douglas County Housing Authority is to be a leading, innovative affordable housing agency assisting the low-income family, elderly, and disabled residents that are striving to achieve self-sufficiency or independent living.

**Vision** The vision of the Douglas County Housing Authority is to provide affordable housing opportunities and options to the subdivisions and small community jurisdictions in the greater Omaha metropolitan area. The provision of affordable housing will be highly responsive to rapidly changing development trends, growth patterns, and consumer preferences. Other macro-environmental economic, social, technological and demographic influences will also be closely monitored, analyzed, and factored into proactively accomplishing the DCHA mission. Board/executive policies, strategic thinking, and business models will provide the DCHA with the evaluation framework necessary to advance its housing vision. Opportunities for partnerships will also be maximized to ensure collaboration, funds leveraging, and competency sharing.

**Values** In addition to the values of self-sufficiency or independent living, residents will be provided with housing choices that are free of housing discrimination. Housing sites and developments will be quality living environments that meet high standards for urban design and energy conservation. Programs and services will be administered with efficiency, effectiveness, and equity.

# BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

The DCHA is governed by a seven-member Board of Commissioners, including one Resident Commissioner, who are appointed by the Douglas County Board of Commissioners to a five-year term. The commission members elect the officers of the commission.



**Phillip Wayne**  
Chairperson  
Chair of Personnel Committee  
Independent Consultant



**Deanna Wagner**  
Vice-Chairperson  
National NAHRO Commissioner Committee  
Community Volunteer



**Charles Sederstrom, III**  
Treasurer  
Chair of Finance Committee  
Founder, Finance 1, LLC



**Matthew Wickham**  
Secretary  
Chair of Community Housing & Service Corp.  
Regional Controller, HDR, Inc.



**Tom Stratman**  
Commissioner  
Vice President of Acquisitions  
Midwest Housing Equity Group (MHEG)



**Damien Foster**  
Commissioner  
CPA, KRL Accounting & Tax LLC



**Paul Gubi**  
Resident Commissioner  
Inventory Control Employee  
Enterprise Rent-a-Car

## DCHA COMMITTEES

### **Finance Committee:**

Charles V. Sederstrom, III  
Treasurer

Tom Stratman,  
DCHA Board Commissioner  
Midwest Housing Equity Group

David Wetig,  
Wells Fargo Home Mortgage

Rhonda Hodge-Mason,  
DCHA Director of Finance

Aaron Flaugh, CFO  
Seldin Company

Sheila Miller,  
DCHA CEO

### **Board Policy & Personnel Committee:**

Phil Wayne,  
Chairperson

Deanna Wagner,  
DCHA Board Commissioner

Melissa Beber, HR Director  
Woodman of the World Insurance

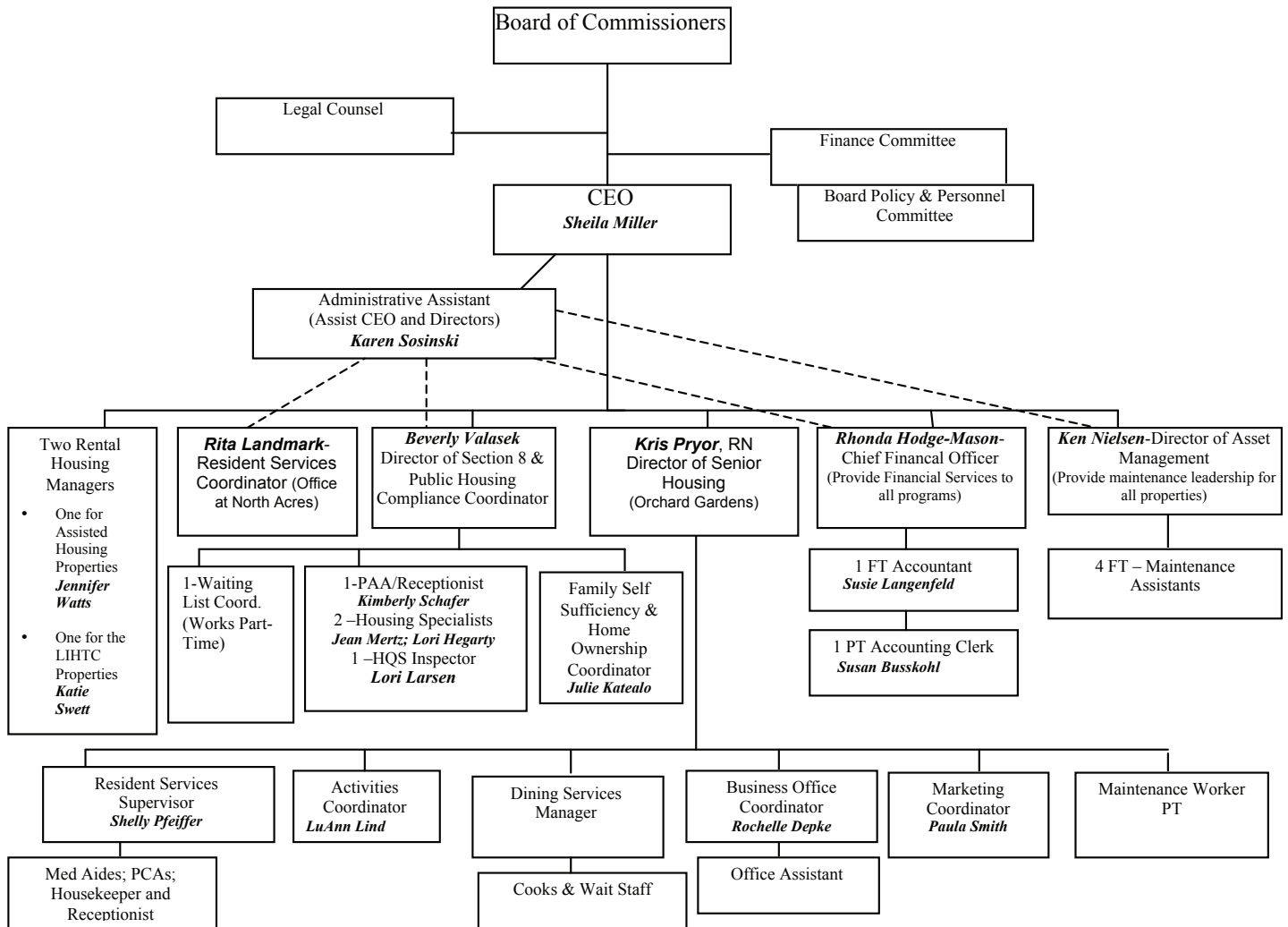
Mary Anderson,  
Director of Development &  
Administration Services  
Holy Name Housing Corporation

Deb Marasco  
Community Outreach Manager  
Immanuel Pathways

Sheila Miller,  
DCHA CEO



# ORGANIZATION CHART



Pictured Above:  
Maintenance Department



Pictured Above:  
Housing Department



Pictured Above:  
Finance Department

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# DCHA PROGRAMS

## **Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program**

The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program enables low-income persons/families to rent from a private landlord with rental assistance administered by DCHA. Clients must find their own housing within DCHA's jurisdiction. Currently, the Section 8 program serves 1180 families. To be eligible for Section 8, clients must be a U.S. citizen or a non-citizen with eligible status, meet income guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and pass a criminal background check. When DCHA is accepting applications, a notice is published in the Omaha World Herald "public notices" section, in the Omaha Star and in the American Classified Weekly. DCHA does not provide emergency housing.

### **• Family Self Sufficiency**

In April of 1995, DCHA began a Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program. The purpose of the FSS program is to promote economic self-sufficiency among families receiving public housing assistance. Participants are connected with appropriate support services and resources in the community. Housing is a stabilizing force that permits families to invest their energy in other efforts -- including employment, education, and job training -- that are necessary to achieve self-sufficiency. An interest-bearing FSS escrow account is established by DCHA for each participating family.

### **• Homeownership**

The Section 8 Homeownership Program allows the use of Section 8 Rental Assistance subsidy toward a mortgage on a home rather than rent. To be eligible for homeownership, Section 8 participants must be employed at least 30 hours/week, must meet income eligibility requirements and must successfully complete a homeownership counseling program.

## **Rental Programs**

DCHA manages a variety of assisted housing programs. These programs enable low-income persons/families to rent an affordable dwelling unit that meets the needs of their family composition.

Currently DCHA manages several Low Income Housing Tax Credit developments. This is a Section 42 program offered through the IRS that gives tax credit benefits to individuals and companies that want to invest in affordable housing. Another program is the U.S. Department of HUD low-rent housing program where HUD provides development funds and an operating subsidy to the housing authority so tenants only pay 30% of their adjusted gross income toward rent. Several rural elderly properties are owned and managed by the DCHA where project-based Section 8 vouchers subsidize the low rent paid by the tenant. Finally, the DCHA owns and manages an affordable assisted living facility.

You can learn more about these programs as you read through this report. For more detailed and updated information please visit our website: [www.douglascountyhousing.com](http://www.douglascountyhousing.com). For questions on any of our services, please email us at: [info@douglascountyhousing.com](mailto:info@douglascountyhousing.com) or call our office at 402.444.6203.

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# Properties Owned & Managed

Properties under various DCHA rental programs are located throughout Douglas County.

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<u>Program/Property</u>	<u>Date Acquired</u>	<u>Number of Units</u>	<u>Location</u>
<b>Assisted Living Facilities</b>		<b>Total of 56 Units</b>	
Orchard Gardens	2004	48 Units (1BR) 8 Units (2BR 2BA)	Valley
<b>Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program</b>		<b>Total of 109 Units</b>	
Platte Valley Apartments	1997	48 Units (1,2&3 BR)	Valley
Woodgate Townhomes	2002	20 Units (2&3 BR)	Omaha
Valley CROWN Homeownership Houses	2007	12 Units (3BR)	Valley
Gretna CROWN Homeownership Houses	2009	15 Units (4BR)	Gretna
River Road Townhomes	2014	14 Units (2BR)	Waterloo
<b>Rural Elderly/Disabled Properties</b>		<b>Total of 60 Units</b>	
Valley Heights	1988	16 Units (1BR)	Valley
Valley View	1978	28 Units (1BR)	Valley
Benn View	1988	16 Units (1BR)	Bennington
<b>HUD Low Rent Program</b>		<b>Total of 78 Units</b>	
North Acres	1983	40 Units (1BR)	NW Omaha
Single Family Houses	1988	17 Units	throughout
Single Family Houses	1992	18 Units	Douglas
Single Family Houses	1995	3 Units (3BR)	County
<b>Section 8 Voucher Program</b>		<b>Total of 1180 Units</b>	
Regular Vouchers		843 Units	throughout
Mainstream Disabled Vouchers		125 Units	Douglas,
Family Unification Vouchers		50 Units	Sarpy &
Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH)		162 Units	Washington Counties

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# DCHA PROGRAMS



**Platte Valley**

## **Low-Income Housing Tax Credit**

### **Platte Valley**

Platte Valley Apartments was the first Low Income Housing Tax Credit project completed by DCHA in 1997. Platte Valley offers 48 one, two and three bedroom apartments in Valley, NE. Many amenities include dishwashers, microwave ovens, disposals, lawn sprinkler system and a playground for the children to enjoy. In 2013 DCHA became the sole owner of Platte Valley Apartments.



**Woodgate Townhomes**

### **Woodgate**

DCHA is the general partner for Woodgate Townhomes, a 20 unit townhome community that opened in 2002. The site features 10 two-bedroom and 10 three-bedroom fully accessible units. Amenities include an oversized attached garage, washer, dryer and dishwasher. Residents are able to take advantage of the neighborhood swimming pool and clubhouse. Applications are accepted from families who have a disabled family member.

### **Valley CROWN**

DCHA is a Co-Managing Member for the Valley CROWN homeownership development. There are 12 homes, all of which are three bedroom units with a one-car attached garage. One of the houses is designed and built for handicapped persons. Amenities include washer and dryer, dishwasher and lawn sprinkler system. Construction was completed in October of 2007 and all the homes were occupied by October 31, 2007.



**Valley CROWN**

### **River Road**

River Road Townhomes is a Low Income Housing Tax Credit project, completed in January 2015 and located in Waterloo Nebraska. River Road has fourteen 2 bedroom townhomes with a garage, all of which are accessible units for disabled and elderly families. Amenities include range, refrigerator, dishwasher, washer and dryer, garbage disposal, microwave, and free wireless internet. Applications are accepted from families who have an elderly/disabled family member.



**River Road**



## **Gretna CROWN**

DCHA is a Co-Managing Member for the Gretna CROWN homeownership development. There are 15 homes, all of which are four bedroom units with a two-car attached garage. One of the houses is designed and built for handicapped persons. Amenities include washer and dryer, dishwasher and lawn sprinkler system. Construction was completed in June of 2009 and all the homes were occupied by November 2009.



**Gretna CROWN**

## **HUD Multi-Family Rental Units**

Valley View Apartments offers 28 one-bedroom units located in Valley, NE. Amenities include a range, refrigerator and window coverings. Benn View I offers 16 one bedroom units in Bennington, NE. The design and

amenities are similar to the Valley View property. A 1,400 square foot community center is located on both properties to provide laundry facilities and a social meeting area, including a full kitchen.



**Valley View**



**Benn View I**



**Valley Heights**



**Benn View II**

## **Rural Elderly/Disabled Properties**

DCHA received approval from HUD to “project-base” its Section 8 vouchers to two elderly/disabled properties, Valley Heights and Benn View II, in order to provide rental assistance to this population.

### **Valley Heights**

Valley Heights in Valley offers 16 units with amenities that model those available at Valley View and in Bennington. This community is across the road from Valley View and shares the same community center with Valley View for community life and activities.

### **Benn View II**

Benn View II, another DCHA project located in Bennington, features eight units assisting elderly/disabled housing. Private entrances with patios allow tenants to personalize their individual apartments. Benn View II shares the same community center with Benn View I to encourage social life opportunities.

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# DCHA PROGRAMS

## **Public Housing Low Rent Program**

### **Single Family Rental Homes**

Single Family Rental Homes are part of the HUD low-rent public housing program. DCHA owns and maintains 38 single family homes located primarily in northwest Omaha and the Millard area.



**Single Family Home**

### **North Acres**

North Acres is a 40-unit elderly/disabled development located at 108th and Fort Streets in Omaha. Close to a medical facility

A community center similar to those in Bennington and Valley provides an area for socializing, as well as laundry facilities.

DCHA has invested in on-going capital improvements such as new roofs, doors and windows, new appliances as well as furnaces, air conditioners, water heaters, fixtures and appliances.



**North Acres**



## ASSISTED LIVING

### Orchard Gardens Assisted Living Yearly Updates

Orchard Gardens Assisted Living works diligently to maintain a standard of quality in their facility as well as with their care services for their residents. They are very fortunate to have a lovely community; residents and staff alike that take pride in where they live and work. This summer, they have updated their building posts in the front and back of the building with cedar to give a new fresh contemporary appearance.

Orchard Gardens has other projects going on in the building as well. They are beginning to replace the carpets in the twelve year old building. The carpets are being replaced little by little, one apartment at a time when there is an opportunity. Orchard Gardens Assisted Living hopes that the carpets wear well, the residents love them and that they will look nice for a long time.





## Orchard Gardens Assisted Living Memorials/Donations

Mark Dudley presented a memorial gift to Orchard Gardens Assisted Living in memory of his mother, Dorothy Dudley, who was a resident there for almost two years and she was very active in the Activities Program. He donated a Fender portable PA system and an Audio-Technica cordless micro-phone. They use it daily to announce activities and it is also used for special events. It helps everyone to better hear and have an opportunity to fill their lives with the vitality of a day. Orchard Gardens appreciated the outreach to their community.



Pictured to the left is LuAnn Lind, Activities Coordinator and Mark Dudley with a memorial gift given in honor of his mother, Dorothy Dudley who was a resident at Orchard Gardens Assisted Living.

Pictured below is Dorothy Dudley with son Mark.



**This is the second year that Orchard Gardens Assisted Living has received a generous donation from Louis Pohl to have "Merry Makers" monthly entertainment.**

The residents from Orchard Gardens fill the dining services hall and look forward to the talented musicians that come in to entertain them. Most entertainers sing, some play multiple instruments, some share history and stories that connect to the community. Orchard Gardens has appreciated the generous outreach to their community. Pictured below are a few pictures with the entertainers and residents.





## OTIS SPUNKMEYER COOKIE OVEN DONATED BY MARTIN BROTHERS FOOD SERVICE

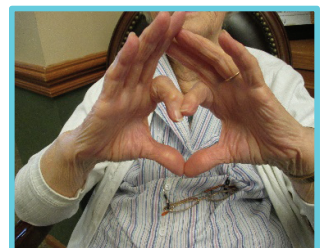
There is nothing better than the smell of home baked cookies and the Orchard Garden's residents and staff love, love, love those cookies too!

## A LABOR OF LOVE ~ 90 HANDMADE PILLOWS GIVEN TO ORCHARD GARDEN'S RESIDENTS

Orchard Garden's Activity Department received 90 beautiful handmade decorative pillows from one of the resident's family member's friend. The pillows were graciously donated to Orchard Gardens Assisted Living; the activities department played Pillow Party Bingo and the prize for a Bingo was a beautiful pillow of the resident's choice. The remainder of the pillows were given out as a surprise for National Assisted Living Week. It was a lot of fun for the residents, they were thrilled with their handmade pillows.



## Intergenerational Activities At Orchard Gardens Assisted Living





## Orchard Gardens Assisted Living Outreach

### OG Adopts a Family for Christmas

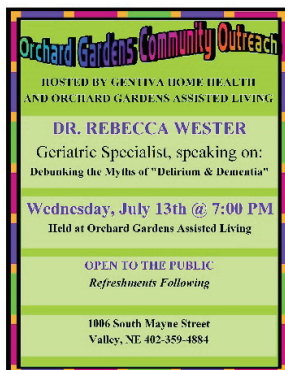
Orchard Gardens Assisted Living adopted a family of seven through the Salvation Army/Star 104.5 Radio Station and Lutheran Family Services for Christmas. Orchard Garden's staff voluntarily donated money to share some "Christmas Joy" for this family.

An employee from each department was chosen to help deliver the gifts. After sharing the "Christmas Joy" with the couple (for the family of seven), the lucky employees were treated to lunch-out compliments of Orchard Gardens. There is nothing greater than doing something for someone knowing you will get nothing in return from them, just the joy of giving... What a blessed day!



### Orchard Gardens Strives to be a Source of Outreach

Orchard Gardens, together with Gentiva Home Health Care (now Kindred at Home), hosted Dr. Rebecca Wester to speak on "Debunking the Myths of Delirium and Dementia". Dr. Wester is a highly respected board certified physician in geriatric, hospice and palliative medicine. She has served as an associate professor and practicing physician with Nebraska Med Center since 2007 and is passionate about quality of life. Her presentation was informative to all who attended.



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# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Mary Ann Borgeson Housing & Services Advocacy Award

During the Douglas County Housing Authority's Board/staff retreat held Friday, August 29, 2015, Ms. Linda Twomey was presented with the Mary Ann Borgeson Housing and Services Advocacy Award.

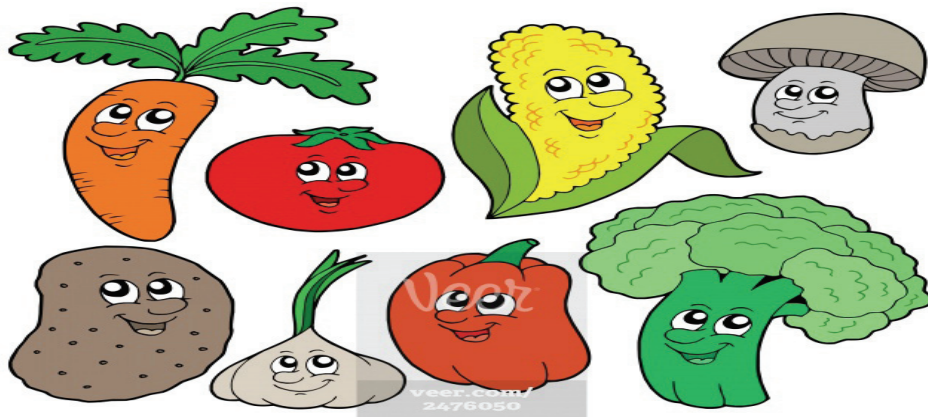
Douglas County Commission Chairperson Mary Ann Borgeson presented the award to Ms. Twomey and thanked her for her tireless efforts to house homeless veterans in the Greater Omaha-Council Bluffs area. Ms. Twomey joined the VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health in 2003 and currently serves as the Program Director for the programs for the health care system, overseeing the Homeless Vocational Rehabilitation and Mental Health Intensive Case Management Psychosocial Rehabilitation Recovery programs. This includes oversight of the local and statewide homeless initiatives.

Also recognized for outstanding employee awards were Douglas County Housing Authority staff members, Susan Busskohl, Beverly Valasek and Barb Swanson.



(Left to Right: Sheila Miller, CEO Douglas County Housing Authority; Commissioner Mary Ann Borgeson; Award recipient Linda Twomey; Philip Wayne, Chairman, Douglas County Housing Authority Board)





## PLATTE VALLEY APARTMENTS-COMMUNITY GARDEN



In 2015 we applied for and received a grant through The Big Garden. “The Big Garden's mission is to cultivate food security by developing community gardens, creating opportunities to serve, and providing education on issues related to hunger. All the Big Garden sites are located on land owned by community agencies; partnering with sites to assist with initial start-up costs, ongoing program support, garden and nutrition classes for children, and by brokering collaborative relationships in the community.”

We now have bountiful community garden for all residents at the Platte Valley Apartments. This is all due to the generous grant we received from The Big Garden and to all of the hard work from our residents. One resident in particular, Patricia Johnson, took on the responsibility to help this garden thrive. She has watered, weeded and taught the community so many useful things regarding the garden. She is a true asset to our property. We have been truly blessed with this opportunity to provide free fresh produce for the Platte Valley Apartment residents.





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# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Hope for a Bright Future



Five years ago I started in the FSS program. At that time I was only in school to get my Medication Aide license. Five years ago I didn't think I would be where I am today. After getting my medication aide license, I realized that it wasn't enough. I wanted to do more. I began school to be a Medical Assistant. I looked deeper into what the FSS program had to offer and how I could benefit from it. At this point I was in school raising two children only making \$8.50 an hour. With the FSS program you have to become self sufficient, keep a steady job, build your credit, participate in training classes, and set goals for yourself. It's hard to become self sufficient when you are living paycheck to paycheck. The goals I had set for myself were easy to achieve, all I had to do was put my mind to it and believe in myself. I continued school which was one of my goals because I had to do better and I wanted career options, not job choices. A couple of years later I completed school and found a better paying job. I was still

living paycheck to paycheck because of the debt that I created for myself. After being on my job for about six months I began paying off some of my debt and getting things off of my credit report. It wasn't much but it was a start in the right direction. I participated in training classes that helped me budget a lot better now that I had a better income. Trust me, taking the many different classes helped a lot. By the end of my five years of the FSS program I was able to pay off the rest of my debt! So within five years (seems like a long time) I was able to complete every goal I had set for myself. That alone makes me proud of myself. The FSS program has helped and pushed me in so many ways. I don't think that I would have accomplished what I did had I not been in the program. Even after using some of the funds from my escrow to pay off the rest of my debts I am still able to put away a nice amount to save so that I can buy my dream home (I'm still excited). Sometimes you have to make yourself uncomfortable in order to get to where you need to be. Sometimes you have to push yourself in order to get things done. You have to make your own decisions. No one should feel comfortable being in the same position for a long period of time.

Tieara

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# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## A VASH SUCCESS STORY



DCHA received our first 25 VASH vouchers in 2011 and 5 years later we have 162 of these vouchers. More importantly, we continue to have the funding to support them, which to me is a tremendous success.

When I think about describing my Veterans that I have encountered over these 5 years, I wonder which one I should choose and what criteria for success should I take into consideration. Should I write about the family that I first met in 2013? This veteran could hardly look me in the eye and didn't like to talk. His significant other was the one that communicated. Three years later he has a fantastic job and is continually getting pay increases because of his hard work. His

family is paying almost full rent and is thinking about buying their own home. When I meet with this family, guess which one does most of the talking now? I am proud to see the growth and confidence.

Do I talk about the veteran that, through his hard work and commitment to the program has been sober for a significant time and getting ready to go to school? What about the father that is now able to have his son spend the night because he is able to provide food and shelter for him? Maybe it should be the Veteran that purchased her first home through our homeownership program. How can I leave out the Veteran that has struggled a little more, made some poor choices but reached out for help and is back on the right path towards self sufficiency.

I finally realized that each and every one of our veterans is their own success story with ever changing chapters. The common thread between them is that they are no longer homeless!

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# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Soup with our Veterans

In February, the DCHA staff had a repeat, and got together with the Veterans at Victory Apartments to provide a soup luncheon in appreciation for our Veterans service.

Many different types of soup were made and served by the DCHA housing staff, along with dinner rolls and cookies to over 50 veterans, some of their family members, as well as several DCHA Board members and staff. The left over soup and cookies were put in containers and sent home with the veterans so they could enjoy the leftovers. Thank you

The veterans and DCHA staff agreed that this was such fun that it needs to be an annual event, thus this year's soup luncheon was declared to be the "Second Annual Soup Luncheon for Veterans".





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# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Homeless Review Team Vouchers



Douglas County Housing Authority made the decision in 2015 to set aside 20 Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers for the homeless in the Omaha Area. We were able to do this because of the community partners that we have in the Diversified Housing Task Force and Metro Area Continuum of Care. All referrals for our homeless clients come from them and they do an amazing job in qualifying clients for this program.

We leased up our first client in May of 2015 and have since housed a total of 16 people. We currently have 15 clients using vouchers with three more clients looking for places to live. We anticipate that all 20 vouchers will be used by October of 2016.

When we started issuing vouchers all of the agencies had legitimate concerns that we might have a lot of turnover in the clients and that the clients might have difficulty securing a place to live. Our experience has been just the opposite. Fifteen of our sixteen original clients are still housed. It is so wonderful to see the progress of our clients on year later.

### **One of our Homeless Review Team (HRT) clients wrote what her HRT Voucher has meant to her.**

I am writing to express my sincerest gratitude for the HRT Voucher and to let you know how it has improved my life. This opportunity has provided me the ability to make significant changes that will impact my future.

What has occurred in my past included years of my life without a home. I'm 34 years old and the last several years I've endured unstable living conditions with roommates and landlords. This instability, in addition to a mental illness, led to some traumatic events and homelessness. I had to start over and focus on improving my life. Thankfully, with community resources like this one, Community Alliance and the Siena Francis House, I am headed in the right direction. I'll forever be grateful for this opportunity. Throughout the years, I've met other individuals that would benefit from the program and the much-needed support it provided, and I hope you continue improving the lives of others the way you have mine.



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# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Resident Service Coordination



In the sixth year of grant funding, the Resident Service Coordination program continues to provide a valuable linkage for elderly/disabled public housing tenants to the different agencies and organizations to better meet their personal care, financial, and medical needs. Resident Service Coordinator is available to the tenants to assess, refer/establish and monitor service needs. The bridge this provides to individual tenants can fill the gaps of services that they may not have knowledge of or access to. Service Coordination is confidential and voluntary and available onsite of the elderly/

disabled complexes within Douglas County Housing Authority. The past year records indicate that 97% of the residents have utilized services. The interactions and service referrals are tailored to each individual's needs. Statistically programs such as the Service Coordinator program make significant improvements in reducing financial hardship, hospitalization rates, and unnecessary transfers to institutional settings.

In efforts to increase the skill set of all Douglas County Housing Authority staff, more focus has been in bringing in additional trainings. Often times, housing staff are the front lines or initial contact of many customers coming in with unmet housing, financial, social, emotional and medical needs. Throughout the last year additional trainings have been brought to the staff in the specialty of domestic violence, compassion fatigue, fair housing, civil rights, and adult protective services. Additional trainings are planned for inclusivity training, mental health, aging services, and workplace safety throughout the next year.

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# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Homeownership – From Dream to Reality

When I look back over my life and the past few months, I realize how fortunate I am to have gone through my life experiences including the Section 8 Home Ownership Program.

I was in prison, of which I am not proud of, however, I just took it as my path of life and made the most out of the experience. I tried to learn a life lesson and gain wisdom, which I neglected for so many years in my past, however, I have no regrets.



In January 2014, I received a visit while in prison from the Veteran's Administration Representative. The reason for the visit was to help veteran's discharge from prison to a civilized society. Upon my discharge in March 2014, I visited the Veteran's Resources Center at Victory Apartments and met with a social worker. She made arrangements for me to live at Lutheran Home within two weeks of my discharge. I then spoke to Tom, manager at Victory Apartments and got on the waiting list. I reached the top of the waiting list and I met with Jean Mertz (VASH Housing Specialist at DCHA) to complete paperwork to move in April 2015. Victory Apartments are a very clean, well-managed place and a very helpful place for veterans.

At that time I never dreamed or hoped of having my own home again. I thought Victory Apartments would be my last place to live on earth, however, while I was living there, I went to the community room and noticed some brochures about the Section 8 Home Ownership Program. I briefly glanced over them thinking I would never qualify for the program. Being the driven person that I am, I spoke to Tom, the manager at Victory, and he encouraged me to get more information about the program. That is when I met with Julie Katealo (Home Ownership Coordinator at DCHA). With the help of Julie at DCHA and Autumn at US Bank I was able to successfully achieve the goal of home ownership.

Although it was an upward battle getting the house that I chose, I can say now that I'm in my home and it was worth the wait. It has been a long journey but I have learned and grown through all of my life experiences and I can say that I am a better person today.

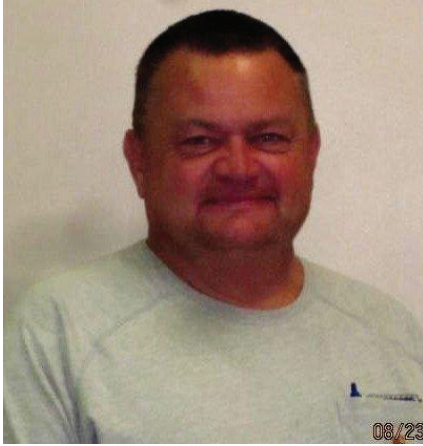
Thank you Douglas County Housing Authority for have your programs and giving me a second chance at life.

Bong Chae

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# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Maintenance



Every year is a busy year for the maintenance department at DCHA, because quality housing is important. I would first like to introduce our excellent maintenance staff. At our main office we have Steve Riha who has been with us for 10 months now, Dallas Watts has been with us for a year and a half now, and myself, Ken Nielsen for over 21 years. At our Platte Valley Apartments in Valley we have Pat Elliott who has been caring for those apartments for over 5 years now. We also have Bob Schultz who has been a great asset at our, assisted living complex, Orchard Gardens in Valley Ne. for over 9 years. The staff that we have assembled here at DCHA is a staff that I appreciate because of their hard work and dedication for our

common goal we all look to achieve, safe and decent housing.

Over the past year we have had over 35 units that our staff has gone in and prepped the unit for our next qualified tenant. This does not include the units that get turned around at Platte Valley Apartments. We are always looking to modernize the units when time and funds are available. The maintenance goal for all our units is to maintain and to keep the properties safe and secure. The maintenance department never has a dull moment.

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# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Resident Spotlight

Brad was hopeful, excited, yet very worried and concerned. He had was facing an exciting new job opportunity. He had been out of the work force for several years following mental health issues, eventually qualifying for Social Security disability. He faced the usual worry with any new job: will I like the employer, can I perform the work duties, what are their expectations? But on top of that, he faced other specific concerns and worries in his life: how much is this new job going to “cost me”? Will I lose my apartment? Will I be able to pay my rent and new job related expenses? What if I lose the job? Is the loss of benefits worth the gain of employment? He consulted with Social Security to take advantage of several work incentive programs attached to his disability income, but what was going to happen to his housing? Because of the EID (Earned Income Disallowance) program, Brad will have one less worry upon starting work. The program is available to certain public housing residents with the purpose to help people just like Brad. Allowing tenants who have been out of work to go back to work without having their rent increase right away. It is designed to target tenants with disabilities in certain subsidized permanent housing units and any Public Housing tenant, with or without disabilities.

There are so many positive contributions to an individual through employment. It adds to income while reducing dependency on public assistance. More importantly, it provides a sense of purpose and well-being. Advantages to employment show through the improvement to communities and promoting stronger families all while reducing unwanted relocations, poverty and homelessness. The EID program serves to encourage self-sufficiency by rewarding residents who go back to work to increase their earnings.

So how does the program work? When a resident such as Brad who has been out of work, go back to work it can allow not to have their rent increase right away. Based on EID guideline, when calculating a “qualified” tenant’s rent, 100% on increased income attributable to new earnings is excluded for 12 months. After that time period, 50% of increased income attributable to new earnings is excluded for another 12 months. Douglas County Housing Authority and HUD recognize that employment is an important component to reduce poverty and homelessness. Tenants that want more information or assistance to determine if they qualify for this program can contact their property manager or Section 8 Specialist.



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# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Pillow Project for Nebraska Families Collaborative



Every year the women in my family spend some time together in the month of October. Last year we decided to do a community project in honor of our mother. We decided to make pillows that had pockets that could be stuffed with books and flashlights. I had seen the video Removed when I attended an event at Nebraska Families Collaborative (NFC). That video really impacted me. You get to see, through the eyes of the child, what it feels like to be removed from your home and put into foster care. We thought these pillows should go to children going into foster care. I contacted someone I knew at NFC and they

said they would love to have the pillows.

Several months later I was contacted by Cheri Mastny, at NFC. She asked how the pillows came about and was there a way to get more? I contacted my family and they brought more pillows that had been completed. Cheri had mentioned that they stuffed the pillows with coloring books, crayons, snacks and all kinds of things. The children were thrilled with the pillows.

The staff and Board of Directors at the Douglas County Housing Authority donated items and money so we had things to put into the pillows. Many people went out and shopped for these children and many gave money. Julie, an employee at DCHA reached out to Hy-Vee on 108th and Fort, Wal-Mart on N 99th and Shopko on 90th and Fort and they all gave donations to be able to make more pillows or buy things to put in the pillows. We were able to give the smaller children a pillow, book and flashlight and other things like socks, snacks, coloring books, crayons, hair bows, cars, stuffed animals and much more. We didn't want to forget our older kids so we had personal care items like makeup, nail polish, deodorant, shampoo, tooth brushes, combs etc.

Through this project we were able to touch the lives of children who need to have love and kindness shown to them as they go through a difficult time. The kindness and generosity of everyone involved in this project was amazing.



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# DCHA STATISTICS

## Resident Demographics

Gathered Summer 2016

### ***Participant Profile***

- 2,459 household participants
- 18% are elderly
- 32% are female heads of household
- 992 children served (age 0-17)
- 82% of participants have a high school education
- 26% of participants have a degree in higher education

### ***Ethnic Origin of Participants***

- 55% White
- 41% African American
- 2% Other
- 4% of the total are Hispanic

### ***Income Profile of Participants***

- 27% of participants are employed full-time
- 23% are employed part-time
- \$16,905 is the average income per wage family
- 28% have wages as income
- 33% have Social Security & SSI as income
- 11% have welfare as income

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## Economic Impact of Public Housing

As of March 2016

Every year the DCHA injects money into the local economy by spending both federal dollars and rental income for various supplies, equipment, maintenance contracts and services necessary to operate the programs. Also, clients who participate in various self sufficiency or homeownership programs build up an escrow and ultimately use that money to fund higher education and to become homeowners. All of this money spurs economic growth in the local community.

- ❑ HUD Capital Fund Dollars of \$29,011 to local business' for operations
- ❑ Capital Improvement of \$265,826 to local contractors and businesses for equipment and renovation of multiple properties
- ❑ HAP payments of \$6,829,724 to many local landlords and property owners
- ❑ Utility payments of \$104,151 to various local utility companies
- ❑ FSS Program paid out \$24,634.49 to participants for higher education, personal purchases and down payments for purchasing a home

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# FINANCIAL REPORT

## Combined Balance Sheet Unaudited 3/31/16

### Assets

Cash & cash equivalents	\$1,403,028
Deposits with HUD	\$4,030
Long-term Mortgage Receivable	\$35,738
Notes Receivable	\$916,745
Tenant Receivable	\$21,795
Accounts Receivable - Related Party	\$0
Accounts Receivable - All Other	\$117,361
Investments	\$981,108
Due from Intercompany Funds	\$0
Prepaid Expenses	\$114,213
Deferred bond costs	\$0
Fixed Assets (less depreciation)	\$7,223,238
Other Assets	\$337,790
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$11,155,046</b>

### Liabilities & Reserves

Accounts Payable	\$157,711
Accrued Liabilities	\$40,539
Accrued Int. Pay	\$123,522
Tenant Security Deposits	\$74,391
Interprogram due to	\$0
Deferred Revenue	\$5,256
Current Bonds & Notes Payable	\$290,000
Non Current Liabilities	\$7,122,468
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$7,813,890</b>

Equity/Restricted & Unrestricted Assets \$3,341,155

**Total Liabilities & Surplus** **\$11,155,046**

## Combined Statement of Revenues & Expenses

### Income

Dwelling Income	\$2,362,440
Medicare Fees	\$680,904
Interest Income	\$44,515
Other Income	\$338,162
Gain on Sale of Assets	\$(10,319)
Federal Grants	\$7,842,331
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$11,278,671</b>

### Expense

Administrative	\$2,348,715
Tenant Services	\$54,416
Utilities	\$216,347
Maintenance & Operation	\$459,362
General Expenses-Operating	\$184,886
Housing Assistance Payments	\$6,941,298
Depreciation	\$415,966
Bond & Notes Interest & Casualty loss	\$287,736
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$10,908,726</b>
<b>Net Income (Loss)</b>	<b>\$(369,945)</b>

## Statement of Public Housing CFP Grant

The total amount included in the financial information used for modernization and rehabilitation of public housing units is **\$18,184**.

This includes major work such as retaining walls, and decks; new appliances; plumbing, water heater and furnace repairs; exterior repairs (roofing, siding); central office and community center repairs and modernization; and office furnishings and computer equipment.

This report includes all housing type programs as well as the non-profit affiliate Community Housing and Service Corporation (CHSC).

