

# Resident Report

*New ideas. Better communities.*



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Resident Report is a regularly published newsletter for and about Athens Housing Authority residents

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## WINTER WEATHER



Last year's winter weather was unusual with multiple ice and snow storms that closed schools and work for many. At the AHA, we try our very best to remain open in order to respond to customers' needs, while at the same time, ensuring our employees safety.

If the Clarke County schools close for severe weather, the AHA will have a delayed one-hour opening. This helps our staff with assessing the roads so that they can travel to work safely. An ice storm may create a situation similar to last year in which the AHA had several days of delayed openings and early closures because of road conditions. Information about delayed openings and closings will be posted on the AHA Facebook page and web site. In addition, our answering service will also be aware of the information.

During snow or ice storms, we will still have our on-call mechanics respond to emergency maintenance issues. However, based on road conditions, they will prioritize calls and may bundle calls together in

order to reduce the amount of driving time. Periodically, the mechanic may be able to assist residents by giving directions over the telephone for small repairs.

Your safety is especially important to us, so please do not use the range to heat your home as this creates a dangerous situation for your family. Those with health needs may wish to develop a plan with family members or friends so that health concerns can be addressed.

The guidelines for winter weather are be safe, be warm, and be prepared.

### *Plan Ahead*

The Maintenance staff has some suggestions for items to have in your home when the weather turns cold and snow and ice are predicted. Having these items available helps you in case there is a delay reaching you for a maintenance issue. The following items can help you be prepared and address some minor maintenance issues:

- A charged up telephone
- Flashlight and batteries
- Extra blankets
- Plunger for plumbing issues
- Shovel
- Rock salt or ice melt to apply on porches during or after snowfall

# Neighborhood Corner

## A Day at UGA



Denney Tower residents were invited by the New Social Media Institute to view projects created by students on the topic of independent living. Along with UGA students, residents commented on ideas such as medicine delivery systems; computer chips inside shoes to help control balance; and, systems to help failing memories. Some of the projects have potential to actually be mass produced in the future. Residents enjoyed their chance to attend UGA for a day.

## Amazing Art



Athens Academy student Rara Williams applied for and received a grant from the ANN Power Vital Voices, to teach art at the Broadacres Community Center to youth in third through fifth grade. The grant provides funding for art kits for partici-

pants. Rara hopes that the art program will help inspire participants to use their imaginations to create visual art. The program will run through the end of the school year and Rara hopes to hold an art show in July. For more information, call Dr. Geraldine Clarke in the Resident Support Department at 706-425-5404.

## Scholarships

Winter break is an excellent time to begin writing essays for college scholarships for the Fall 2015 school year. A number of Housing Associations sponsor scholarships for public housing students. The Public Housing Authority Directors Association (PHADA) is accepting 2015 scholarship applications now. Information about the scholarships and applications are available at [www.phada.org](http://www.phada.org). Completed applications, along with all required documents, must be submitted to the AHA by Fri., Jan. 16, 2015, for submittal to PHADA.

2015 Scholarship Opportunity Packets containing applications for the Georgia Association of Housing and Redevelopment Authorities (GAHRA), the Inter-Community Council and the Board of Commissioners awards will be available for interested AHA college-bound residents to pick up at the reception desk by mid-January. Please direct questions about the applications to Carol Kirchman in the Executive Director's office at 706-425-5401 or email at [scholarships@athenshousing.org](mailto:scholarships@athenshousing.org).

## Introducing



Lora Thompson, the Resident Support Department's clerk. Lora keeps things

organized by taking care of mailings to residents, planning events, and finding resources for residents. She also fills in at the receptionist desk.

Born in Auburn, Alabama, she was raised in Athens and graduated from Cedar Shoals High. She served in the U.S. Army for four years and worked at Walter Reed Army Institute of Research as a Medical Laboratory Specialist.

She has lived in metro Washington, D.C. and Chicago and worked in the systems integration and software development industry. She returned to Athens in 2000 and served as the Executive Assistant for the Deputy Superintendent for the Clarke County School District. Since early 2014, Lora has been self-employed as an administrative consultant and developed Light Ministries, a Bible teaching ministry.

She has one son and two granddaughters with another one on the way.

We welcome Lora to AHA.

*Cheers to a New Year and another chance for us to get it right.*

*-Oprah Winfrey*



# Referrals for Help

The Resident Support Department periodically can provide AHA residents with a financial referral for assistance with rent payments only. Financial assistance referrals will not be given to residents for the following reasons:

- Who owe rent for the previous and current month's rent.
- Who need help paying excess utilities, maintenance, or other charges.
- Whose money was lost or stolen.
- Who had the money but paid other bills.
- Who voluntarily quit a job or was terminated for failure to follow employers' rules.
- Who have zero income.
- Who usually have family /friends pay their rent but they could not pay it this time
- Who fail to report a change in income to AHA's Occupancy Office within the required ten days

## To qualify for a referral you must:

- Have a decrease in your regular monthly income which can be verified through check stubs, official letters on agency letterhead, separation notice, etc. (No hand written notes).
- Have displaced income in which you used available money for an unexpected emergency, such as a car repair, purchase of auto parts, new prescription, etc. Written verification and/or receipts (no handwritten notes) must be provided.
- Have some personal funds money to put toward your rent.
- Bring a copy of your rent statement or a print out from the rent office with a breakdown of what you owe.

## To ask for a referral:

- Call Dr. Geraldine Clarke at (706) 425-5404 before the first of the month and leave your name, address, contact number and the reason you need a referral. You will be contacted in order to review your situation and schedule an appointment if needed.

- You must arrive on time for your scheduled appointment. If you are more than 10 minutes late without calling (706) 425-5404, the appointment will be cancelled.
- If Dr. Clarke's message states she is out of the office, contact your property manager with verification of your decrease or displaced income and the information will be forwarded to Dr. Clarke.

## Denney Tower Christmas Party



Music, dancing, food, prizes, and fun took place at the Denney Tower Christmas party. Many thanks to Hill Chapel Baptist Church for helping with serving dinner and keeping the party going.

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## *Help Portrait*



UGA photojournalism students held Help Portrait at the Rocksprings Community Center in early December. Students take portraits of families and provide them with a printed photo and a CD of pictures. Help Portrait is part of an international program to photograph community members.

## *Football Parking*



Resident Support recently honored residents who assist with football parking on AHA property during home football games. Funds earned go to aid Inter-Community Council programs. Dr. Geraldine Clarke and Jerry Sanders, Jr. are pictured above. About eight residents assist with this annual project.