

Neighborhood Housing Services of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Inc.

NHSBS News

**Celebrating 23 Years of Excellence
In Bedford-Stuyvesant and Beyond**

Winter 2016



Awards Reception 2015 A New Era, Developing into the Future The Evening's Honorees

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Tia Powell-Harris



U.S. Congressman Hakeem Jeffries



Christopher Illum



81st Precinct Explorers Group

On Friday, December 4th, the Board of Directors and Staff of Neighborhood Housing Services of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Inc. (NHSBS) welcomed guests for another year at Weeksville Heritage Center for the 2015 Awards Reception, 'A New Era, Developing into the Future'. Honoree and Keynote Speaker, United States Congressman-Eighth Congressional District, Hakeem Jeffries delivered an inspiring speech to guests and congratulated honorees and NHSBS for their contributions to the community. Kings County District Attorney, Kenneth Thompson spoke to guests about the unlawful changes across Brooklyn, including deed fraud, bad landlord behavior and the infestation of guns in the community. Honorees were presented with proclamations from the office of New York State Senator Velmanette Montgomery's office and NHSBS was presented with a Citation from the office of the Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adam's office. Architect Dennis George unveiled the renderings for the expansion of the NHSBS facility at 1012 Gates Avenue, adding five stories of affordable apartments to the two-story structure. Honorees for the evening included Keynote Speaker, U.S. Congressman Hakeem Jeffries, Eighth Cong. District who accepted the Award of Appreciation- Weeksville Heritage Center, Tia Powell-Harris, President and Executive Director accepted the Neighborhood Recognition Award- Habitat for Humanity NYC, Christopher Illum, Vice President, Homeownership accepted the Community Partnership Award and the 81st Precinct Explorer's Group, accepted the Catherine Arline Citizen's Participation Award. The evening was a great success.



L to R: James C. Durrah, Board member; Reginald D. Shell, Board member; Paul G. Hawthorne ESQ., Vice President; Sundra Franklin, Board member; Council Member Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.; Kings County District Attorney, Kenneth P. Thompson; Tory Netto, Board member; Jeffrey Charles-Pierre, Board President; Crystal Bobb-Semple, Mistress of Ceremonies; U.S. Congressman Hakeem Jeffries; Richard Trouth, Executive Director; Cheryl Wright, Board Secretary; Shaniqua Carter, Board Treasurer; and Jayesh Gajjar, Board committee member.



Affordable Housing Expansion Project



Brooklyn has become the second least affordable borough in New York, after Manhattan. The reason for this is a mixed bag; stagnant wages, investor interest, and an influx of more affluent residents. As noted by NHSBS' President Jeffrey Charles-Pierre, NHSBS is working diligently toward being a part of the Mayor's Housing New York Initiative, which is a 10-year plan to address housing affordability across communities in New York. The initiative will protect existing affordable housing, discourage displacement, create more affordable housing and plans to collaborate with communities to ensure they stay strong, vibrant and diverse.

The NHSBS facility located at 1012 Gates Avenue currently has two commercial units, approximately 3,700 square feet on the first floor and approximately 2,200 square feet on the second floor. The plans for expansion would add five stories to the existing structure, with a first floor commercial space and six floors of affordable rental units, consisting of five one-bedroom and six two-bedroom apartments.

Client Testimonial



NHSBS is committed to providing industry-leading education and counseling to Brooklyn residents looking to purchase and maintain property and get financially fit. Here, we share comments from a client who recently closed on a home after working with NHSBS.

"Yesterday [November 19, 2015], we made one of the biggest steps in our lives by turning the key to our very first home. My family and I know this was only possible because of the hard work and dedication of so many people. We have heard the horror stories of how hard this process could have been and the time it could have really taken to get us where we are today being first time homeowners.

It goes without saying you guys have all been the best team ever assembled for one goal in mind (Help Us Find A Home). It has been a pleasure working with so many hard working individual people. You may never know the joy you have just given me and my family and for that we will be eternally thankful. We will end this year on a high note and look forward to our future in our new home and we have you all to thank for this momentous occasion.

Wishing you all nothing but joy in the upcoming holiday season!

Sincerely,

John, Candice & Marcus Hickson"





Financial Empowerment via Education and Counseling

NHSBS will be expanding its Financial Literacy program in 2016. We currently provide education to youth between the ages of 11 and 17. The program expansion will allow us to assist all residents in need of financial services, with special interest in distressed homeowners pursuing loan modification assistance.

The Adult Financial Literacy Education Program will teach the core principles of money management, banking, credit repair, saving, and investment. The course covers national industry standards, best practices, and real life examples to help reshape your ideas about- and relationships with- money. Our certified financial counselor will also provide personalized guidance based on their profile, helping them on their journey toward financial security and equip them with the knowledge and tools to meet their specific goals. A sound follow-up process will be in place to track the success of our clients as they follow a structured budget tailored to their needs. In addition to the education and counseling, NHSBS will also be offering free VITA income tax preparation through GrowBrooklyn.

If you are interested in our Financial Literacy Program, please contact Gerard Miller:

(718) 732-8022

gerard_miller@nhsnyc.org



Welcoming NHSBS's New Board Committee Members



Jayesh Gajjar

Jayesh Gajjar is no stranger to Neighborhood Housing Services. Jay is former employee of NHS of NYC serving in the capacities of Senior Construction Manager from 1993 to 1994 and Director of Construction Services from 1995 to 1997. Jay is now the President and owner of Horizon Construction, Inc. established in 1997. Horizon Construction is responsible for the NHSBS office located at 1012 Gates Avenue on the first floor. Jay has invested a lot of time and commitment to the success of NHSBS and is delighted to serve on the board of directors to assist in moving the organization to the next level. Jay comes to NHSBS with a Bachelor's degree in Architecture from the Institute of Environmental and Design in Vadora, India and a Master of Science degree in Urban Design from Pratt Institute.

Horizon Construction, Inc. is a firm specializing in Design Building, Moderate and Gut Rehabilitation with a particular emphasis on affordable housing. Since 1999, Horizon Construction has utilized creative, cost-effective, and environmentally friendly solutions to successfully completed almost 300 dwelling units and commercial projects. The Board of Directors welcomes Jay to the NHSBS family.



Nikki Merkerson

Nikki Merkerson is the North East Community Reinvestment Community Partnership Officer, for Chase Mortgage Banking line of business, where she is responsible for building long term and profitable relationships in support of the Mortgage Banking business line, in both the public and private sectors which include for profit and non-profit organizations. As an advocate of the company's vision to assist low- and moderate-income individuals with greater economic opportunity and to support homeownership preparedness, Nikki has impacted and enhanced the Chase brand and image by driving the activities to fulfill their corporate responsibility in communities served. Nikki comes to NHSBS with a degree in Business Management and Finance from St. John's University.

Formerly, Nikki served as the Business Development Manager for the Multicultural and Affordable Lending Team at Chase. In her role, Nikki provided home ownership opportunities through the facilitation of educational seminars including Money Management, Understanding Credit and Affordable Mortgage products and programs. She also served for more than 10 years as a Loan Officer for various financial institutions. Nikki has also served as a volunteer homeownership expert at NHSBS's First-time Homebuyer Workshops. The Board of Directors welcomes Nikki to the NHSBS family.



Seasons Greeting

Happy New Year from Neighborhood Housing Services of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Inc.

The New Year is an occasion for reflection, contemplation and planning. We look back at our actions and experiences throughout the year, note the changes in who we are and our sense of purpose, and project ourselves onto the future in hope of a better tomorrow. We embrace our position as a key resource in Brooklyn, and are redoubling our efforts to stay relevant in a rapidly-changing market. We look forward to continued success as we stay true to our mission of being led by local residents and guided by local needs, as we continue to provide vital resources across communities. The NHSBS family would like to wish you and yours a very Happy and Healthy New Year, with wishes for prosperity in all of your endeavors.



SAVE THE DATE

2016 COMMUNITY RESOURCE FAIR

Saturday, August
6th
10AM-3PM

*More information
to follow*

Our Mission

Neighborhood Housing Services revitalizes underserved neighborhoods by creating and preserving affordable housing and providing opportunities for homeownership education, financial assistance and community leadership. Working in partnership with government and business, we are led by local residents and guided by local needs.



Workshop and Seminar Calendar

January

- First-Time Home Buyer's Education Class: Saturday, January 16th, 8:30am-4pm
- 4-week Financial Literacy Education Course: Tuesdays, starts January 26th, 6pm-8pm
 - Walk-In Homebuyer's Counseling: Wednesdays, 10am-2pm
 - VITA Tax Prep: Tuesdays January 26th-April 12th, 10am-2pm
 - Foreclosure Walk-In Clinic: Thursdays, 10am-2pm

February

- First-Time Home Buyer's Education Class: Saturday, February 20th, 8:30am-4pm
- Walk-In Homebuyer's Counseling: Wednesdays, 10am-2pm
- VITA Tax Prep: Tuesdays through April 12th, 10am-2pm
- Foreclosure Walk-In Clinic: Thursdays, 10am-2pm

March

- Home Buyer's Orientation: Wednesday, March 2nd, 6pm-8pm
- 3-week Home Maintenance Training Class: starts Saturday, March 12th, 9am-3pm
- First-Time Home Buyer's Education Class: Saturday, March 19th, 8:30am-4pm
 - Walk-In Homebuyer's Counseling: Wednesdays, 10am-2pm
 - VITA Tax Prep: Tuesdays through April 12th, 10am-2pm
 - Foreclosure Walk-In Clinic: Thursdays, 10am-2pm
- Tenant Services Workshop: date TBD, *Please contact office for more information no later than February 15th*

RSVP required, seating is limited

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