

EDEN NEWS

WINTER 2009

EMERALD DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC NETWORK, INC.

VOL 5 NUM 1

NEW YEAR EDITION!!!

HEADQUARTER RENOVATIONS

Our Headquarter Renovations are all the buzz around EDEN. From the muddy sidewalks to the pounding construction, all employees and guests have had to maneuver around the construction that has surrounded EDEN. Construction workers are working hard to complete the project with the goal of February 2009. Headquarter Renovations started over a year ago with the renovated front entrance and lobby. However, we were not finished and, thanks to generous donations, were able to continue renovations on our warehouse space. The once empty warehouse space is now filled with pillars and groundwork for the new and improved offices. With the expansion of EDEN's Headquarters, our building will now include offices located in the same vicinity, more meeting rooms, and more conference rooms.



THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING SUPPORTERS THAT MADE OUR HEADQUARTER RENOVATIONS POSSIBLE:



Kathy Kazol receiving a check for Headquarter Renovations from Fifth Third Bank on behalf of the Jacob G. Schmidlapp Trusts, Fifth Third Bank, Trustee.

- The Cleveland Foundation*
- St. Luke's Foundation*
- Cuyahoga County*
- The Eva L. and Joseph M. Bruening Foundation*
- Deaconess Community Foundation*
- The Woodruff Foundation*
- The Margaret Clark Morgan Foundation*
- The Thomas White Foundation*
- The Abington Foundation*
- The William J. and Dorothy K. O'Neill Foundation*
- Fifth Third Bank*
- First Merit Bank*

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EDEN UPDATES

CONSTRUCTION UPDATES...

EDGEWOOD PARK CONSTRUCTION



Construction continues on EDEN's newest Permanent Supportive Housing Project, Edgewood Park. The building, which is located on East 55th near Broadway Street, will be home to 62 chronically homeless individuals. The building is about 35% complete. In the few months of construction, Edgewood Park is making great strides. As shown in the photographs, the building's foundation is in place and work will continue throughout the winter. The building is projected to be completed around September 2009. For more information on Edgewood Park, please visit our website at www.edeninc.org.

PROGRAM UPDATES...

HTF & TANF FUNDS GONE

Effective December 19th, EDEN stopped accepting applications for Housing Trust Funds. Effective December 31st, EDEN stopped accepting applications for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. We will have HTF funds again by February 2009. An announcement will be sent to our partnering agencies when we begin accepting applications again.

PROGRAMS ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

The following programs are accepting applications. Please visit our website at www.edeninc.org or call us at 216-961-9690, ext. 257 to learn about qualifications for each program.

- *Permanent Supportive Housing Projects
- *Housing Assistance Program
- *Wieder-Silver Manor

- *EDEN-Owned/Scattered Sites
- *Section 8 - Gateway
- *Supportive Housing Programs

The Department of Housing and Urban Development & Fair Housing

Housing Discrimination in America is on the Rise

It has been over 46 years since President John F. Kennedy mandated an end to housing discrimination in America. This mandate banned federally funded housing agencies from denying mortgages on the basis of race, color, creed, or national origin (politico.com). Since then, fair housing advocates have been working hard to end unfair discrimination. Housing discrimination laws have expanded to include the following protected classes: race, color, national origin, gender, religion, familial status, and disability. Progress has been made in discrimination cases, but after almost a half a century discrimination is on the rise. HUD and FHAP received a record 10,552 complaints of discrimination for FY 2008. This surpasses the old record of 10,328 previously filed in FY 2006 (HUD.gov) Although housing discrimination is not as bad as it may have been 46 years ago when President Kennedy ordered the mandate, the numbers are still too high. Ten thousand, five hundred fifty-two cases were filed with HUD and FHAP reporting cases of discrimination, but there are still thousands more that go unreported.

HUD Charges Landlords with Discrimination Forcing a Couple to Move

HUD charged two landlords in Tallassee, Alabama with violating the Fair Housing Act for allegedly pressuring their white tenants to move after seeing them socialize with an African American couple in their front yard. In February 2008, Melissa Jones, her fiancé, and their child moved into a single-family home owned by Julie and Wilber Williams. While black neighbors were talking to Jones and her fiancé in their front yard, the Williams' saw them. Mrs. Williams later called Ms. Jones to inform her that "those people needed to leave" and that she did not want "those people on my property." Mrs. Williams repeatedly called Ms. Jones about the incident, threatening eviction and requesting that the couple move if they wished to continue having African American visitors. Ms. Jones and her family moved out in September 2008. *Information provided by HUD.gov.*

HUD Issues Guidance on the Fair Housing Act and Sexual Harassment

The Department of Housing and Urban Development issued a guidance stating that someone may issue a claim of sexual harassment regardless of whether housing was actually lost. Property Managers and Owners have a duty to stop or prevent sexual harassment from occurring even if committed by outside contractors or agents. For example, if a Property Manager or Owner hires a maintenance worker and they demonstrate harassment that is unwelcome, the Property Manager or Owner may be held vicariously liable for maintenance workers' actions. *Information provided by HUD.gov.*

To report Housing Discrimination, you can contact the Housing Research & Advocacy Center at 216-361-9240 or visit their website at www.thehousingcenter.org.

If you inquire about housing and you hear the following, you may be a victim of housing discrimination based on disability.

- *We can't waive our "no pets" policy, even for your service dog...
- *I'm sorry, we only rent to working people...
- *Your income has to be four times the rent...
- *We can't allow you to widen any doorways to accommodate your wheelchair...
- *You will have to wait for the first available parking place, and we can't guarantee you the space outside your unit...

HUD NEWS

President Barak Obama Announces Choice for HUD Secretary

“The choice of New York Housing Commissioner Shaun Donovan as Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development is in the best interest of communities, families and the nation’s economy as we face unprecedented housing challenges and mounting financial pressures”, according to the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) (Wall Street Journal-Digital Network). President Elect Barak Obama announced Shaun Donovan as the new Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development in early December. Many agencies around the country are pleased with the decision and are hopeful with Shaun Donovan as Secretary.

Bush Administration Announces \$650 Million for Low-Income Elderly and Persons with Disabilities

According to an announcement made on the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Bush administration stated that more than \$650 million will be given to help low-income elderly and people with disabilities. “These grants will help thousands of our nation’s very low-income elderly and persons with disabilities find decent housing that they can afford,” said HUD Secretary Steve Preston. “Neither group should ever have to worry about being able to find a safe place to live.”

Information provided by HUD.gov.

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Ohio Department of Development Grant

EDEN received a grant from the Ohio Department of Development to provide emergency rent and utilities payments to prevent eviction or utility disconnections; security deposits; direct housing; and Permanent Supportive Housing. This grant received was the largest in the state of Ohio. It really means a lot to EDEN to receive this grant because of the many persons that will be helped by these funds. In FY ‘08, 531 families were helped by the Housing Trust Fund. An announcement will be made when applications will be accepted for this program.

Information provided by development.ohio.gov.

TENANT SPOTLIGHT



Carey Moore was nominated by Jean Cook, Shelter Plus Care Eligibility Specialist, as the Tenant Spotlight for our Winter Newsletter. Carey Moore is known around EDEN as a very friendly person. Carey is seldom seen without a smile on his face. When asked to give three words that described him, he stated that he was kind, nice, and a good listener and speaker. He has a great gift of communicating with people and making their day just a little brighter. In Carey's free time he enjoys reading books, especially science fiction books. He also likes to learn as much as he can about history. His favorite music genre would have to be jazz.

Carey was not always as fortunate as he is now. He stated that he didn't always have free time to enjoy great jazz music or read about science fiction or history. For many years, Carey's main objective was to survive on the streets of Cleveland. He was on the streets for over a decade and this was mainly due to his addiction to drugs. Drugs were everywhere in Carey's life and he said it only seemed natural to do drugs. There came to a point when Carey had hit bottom and he was tired of hurting others. He was facing prison if he did not enter a rehabilitation program and the choice of prison or a rehabilitation program was easy. The only problem was that he had been to rehabilitation programs before and was unsuccessful. Carey was tired of living on the streets and he decided that he would change his life. He just wanted to be free. Y-Haven gave him the opportunity to make the changes that he needed to make and they helped him sign up for an EDEN program.

Once he became a client of EDEN, Carey was thrilled to have a place of his own. Carey stated, "For two years, every night when I went to bed I had a smile on my face." Carey's experience of being homeless has taught him to appreciate what he has. He stated that he is just happy to be alive each day. Carey hopes that he can one day begin to work or go to school. He even has a dream of owning his own home one day. In the mean time, Carey simply enjoys talking to people and making them smile.

EDEN EMPLOYEES: WORKING HARD TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR: JENNIFER PFLEIDERER



JENNIFER PFLEIDERER

EDEN sends our appreciation and congratulations for Jen's service to EDEN and our clients. Her work has contributed significantly to our success over the past year. Jen's commitment to EDEN, her fellow staff, and the disabled, as well as her enthusiasm and pleasant manner are an inspiration to all of us who work alongside her. Her cooperative and positive spirit and her knowledge of her job make her the perfect choice for Employee of the Year.

NOVEMBER EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH: BRANDON WHITTAKER



BRANDON WHITTAKER

Brandon is the perfect example of an employee stepping up to help the agency meet a challenge. When Emerald Commons was without a Maintenance Technician, the situation was compounded by the fact that EDEN was in reduced workforce status. Brandon, who had plenty on his plate with his custodian position, rose to the occasion.

STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

NOVEMBER:

Mike McKay: 8 years * Bill Puz: 3 years * Kim DiCillo: 2 years

DECEMBER:

Barbara Dorsey: 12 years * Al Germ: 2 years * Bob Green: 2 years * David Wilson: 2 years *
Anthony Hood: 2 years * Alison Davis: 1 year

JANUARY:

Terry Grdina: 15 years * Brian McCoy: 14 years * Letric Newton: 8 years * John Walsh: 8 years *
Linda Erb: 5 years * Kasana Craddock: 2 years * Michael Moguel: 1 year

HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

We celebrated our annual Holiday Party on December 12, 2008. The event was filled with holiday spirit, games, and presents. The main lunch course was provided by EDEN with side dishes brought by several employees. The games at the event included word scrambles, A-Z Christmas words, and several trivia games. Gifts were exchanged later in the day for employees that chose to participate in the gift exchange. In addition, the Board Members pulled names for a chance to win an iPod Shuffle. A very special award went to Jen Pfleiderer, Lead S + C Eligibility Specialist, for the 2008 Employee of the Year.



Landlord-Tenant Information: F.A.Q.

Q: When can a landlord be held responsible for injuries that take place on the premises?

A: Ohio Supreme Court ruled that so long as the landlord had been put on notice of conditions within the apartment, then the landlord owed a duty to the tenant to keep the apartment in a fit and habitable condition. Since the landlord failed to do this after being warned by the tenant about the defective stairs, the landlord was held liable. The important thing for tenants to remember is to notify the landlord in writing as soon as you discover items at your apartment that are unsafe. It is best to keep copies of any correspondence that you send to the landlord. That way, if ever you are injured by such items, your landlord (or more likely his insurance company) will have to cover your medical expenses.

Q: Does the landlord have a duty to remove ice and snow from the apartment grounds?

A: It depends. If the landlord has promised in the rental agreement to do so, then yes the landlord can be sued if he fails to live up to his promises. Otherwise, the general rule in Ohio, with certain exceptions, is that a landowner or occupier has no duty to a business invitee to remove natural accumulations of ice and snow.

Information provided by ohiolandlordtenant.com

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EDEN News is a seasonal newsletter published by EDEN. Melinda Coffey, Housing Resource Specialist, designs the newsletter and writes or edits all articles. If you have questions or comments regarding this newsletter, please email her at mcoffey@edeninc.org.

EDEN is a contract agency of the Cuyahoga County Community Mental Health Board, the County Department of Health and Human Services/ Office of Homeless Services and the County Department of Development. EDEN is a 501 (c)(3) agency.