

An electronic news service of the PHFA Housing Services Department – July 2011

## PHFA Housing Services Conference 2011

Thanks for making PHFA's 2011 Housing Services Conference the best ever – really! We had almost 500 people gathered over the course of our three day conference. Four outstanding keynoters raised the bar for us on what we can expect from ourselves – from Anne Mahlum's running program for people living in shelters, to Wes Moore's introspective life journey and how it was shaped by his community and their and his own expectations of himself. Through Lizzie Simons and Darby Penny we "met and got to know and understand" some of the residents we serve.

And we were impressed by the magic of the Common Thread Quilts and how they represented the creativity and inspiration of more than 50 housing communities throughout Pennsylvania. Thanks to all who took the time and effort to make these true works of art!



Now, in order for us to match or exceed our efforts for next year, we need your help. If you haven't already, please make sure you complete the online evaluation that was emailed to all conference attendees last week. Your comments and suggestions will be the starting point for the 2012 Housing Services Conference. And you only have until this Friday to complete the survey.

While you're still thinking Housing Services Conference, mark your calendars now for the 2012 version, which will be held in Pittsburgh from **June 25-27**. See you in Pittsburgh next summer!



## PHFA Information and Trainings

### Save the Date: Regional Housing Service Forums

- **Central PA Regional Forum, August 25**, from 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM at East Gate Apts., Carlisle, Cumberland County. Contact Martha McGraw at [mmcgraw@phfa.org](mailto:mmcgraw@phfa.org) for details.

### Jul 8 Deadline Reminder for your Online Conference Evaluation Survey

July 8 is the deadline for sharing your opinions and ideas for the 2011 Housing Services Conference. This is your opportunity to offer suggestions and ideas for improvement for next year's conference. Mark your calendars now for the 2012 Housing Services Conference in Pittsburgh, June 25-27.

### New Best Practice-Dock Village Volunteerism

Check out our latest Best Practice describing a program to engage youth and families in volunteer activities at: [http://www.phfa.org/forms/best\\_practices/youth/hs\\_bp\\_youth\\_dock\\_village.pdf](http://www.phfa.org/forms/best_practices/youth/hs_bp_youth_dock_village.pdf).

### PHFA Homeowner's Emergency Assistance Program – Unavailability of Funds

Under section 409-C of the Housing Finance Agency Law (35 P.S. § 1680.409c), (Act), the Executive Director of the Housing Finance Agency (Agency) has determined that as of July 1, 2011, the Agency will have insufficient money available in the Homeowner's Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program (Fund) to accept new applications for emergency mortgage assistance <http://www.pabulletin.com/secure/data/vol41/41-22/920.html>.

## Other Trainings and Conferences

### July-Aug Summer Memoir Class Online with Lizzie Simon

Start your project now. Appropriate for all skill levels. Six Sundays, July 17-August 21. Cost \$300 for the series. To reserve a place, contact [lizzie-simon@yahoo.com](mailto:lizzie-simon@yahoo.com).

### Jul 16-20 National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a)

The National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) Annual Conference is July 16-20, in Washington, DC. [For details visit here.](#)

### Jul 27-29 Intergenerational Activities Washington DC

The conference will take place in Washington DC on July 27-29. [Click here](#) for information.

### Aug 3-5 Disabilities Conference-Edinboro University

On August 3-5, Edinboro University will hold its 2011 Annual DisAbilities Conference. For more information, go to: [www.edinboro.edu/empowerment](http://www.edinboro.edu/empowerment).

### Sept 15 Webinar on Online Employment Applications and Website Accessibility

Nearly all employers require applicants to submit their job applications online. But many online application processes are inaccessible to people with disabilities. Attend this free webinar on September 15 from 1:30 – 3:00 PM EST to learn how to make your online applications fully accessible. Deadline to register online is September 14. [Visit here for info.](#)

### September 20-21 Building Bridges Conference

The Building Bridges Conference will be at the Holiday Inn Harrisburg/Hershey, September 20-21. This conference is designed for people who are part of the Aging Network and Intellectual Disabilities System and is co-sponsored by the Department of Aging and the Department of Public Welfare. Go to: <http://www.lttrainingpa.org/events/index.cfm?ekeyid=206>.

### Oct 6-Hold the Date Cultural Diversity Conference

A Cultural Diversity Conference "Empowering the Forgotten Ones" Through Systems Change will be held October 5, 8:30 AM-4:30 PM at Temple University, Philadelphia. For info: [click here](#).

## Resources/News – General

### American Red Cross New Ready Rating Program

The American Red Cross is looking to help businesses, organizations and schools improve their emergency preparedness through its new Ready Rating program. The program is designed to help businesses, organizations and schools become better prepared for disasters and other emergencies. <http://readyrating.org/>.

### Build a Bridge to Your New Career

For information and resources from the US Dept of Labor, Employment and Training Administration: <http://www.myskillsmyfuture.org/>.

### Deadline to Apply for Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program Extended

The deadline to apply for the state's Property Tax/Rent Rebate program is being extended from June 30 to December 31. For more detailed information on the eligibility requirements, [please click here](#).

### Due Aug 1 Comments on Proposed Changes to HIPPA Privacy Rule

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is [proposing changes](#) to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule. This proposed rule would give people the right to get a report on who has electronically accessed their protected health information. Comment deadline is August 1, 2011. [Visit here](#).

### Due Aug 15 Intergeneration Foundation's Intergeneration Storytelling Contest 2011

Submissions due August 15. Go to: <http://www.intergenerationday.org/storyboard.html>.

### Healthy Carts Program Seeks Vendors and Sites

The Get Healthy Philly Initiative, the Healthy Cart pilot program will increase access to fresh produce in high-need areas of the city. Locations and vendors are currently being sought for 20 mobile food carts that will sell fruits and vegetables in low-income Philadelphia communities. For more information, go to: [www.foodfitphilly.org/eat-healthy/healthy-carts/](http://www.foodfitphilly.org/eat-healthy/healthy-carts/).

### Homeless Assistance Laws and Regulations

The McKinney-Vento Act, which was signed into law by President Ronald Reagan on July 22, 1987. The Act was the first significant federal legislative response to homelessness. Visit the website of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for more information about [homeless assistance laws and regulations](#).

### My Next Move Website

My Next Move, <http://mynextmove.dol.gov> is intended to assist all jobseekers. The new tool complements the "mySkills myFuture" site at <http://mySkillsmyFuture.org>, which is designed to help those with previous work experience match their existing skills to new occupations.

### Offer from Pennsylvania State Parks for First-time Campers

Select Pennsylvania State Parks are offering first-time campers use of Gander Mountain equipment and two nights of camping for only \$20. You won't be able to keep the gear, but you'll receive discounts on everything you're trying out! Go [here](#) to learn more about the first-time camper program.

### Prepare for Summer Weather Dangers

Summertime can bring treacherous weather conditions. Many of these situations occur with little warning, so do what you can to be prepared. Most preparations call for assembling an [emergency kit](#) and [coming up with a plan](#); but specific conditions call for specific responses: [Earthquakes](#), [Extreme Heat](#), [Hurricanes](#), [Thunderstorms](#), [Lightning](#), [Tornadoes](#). [Esté preparado en caso de un desastre](#).

### Public Health Emergency Site

The new [Public Health Emergency site](#) includes links to federal, state, and local planning resources. It also features a new toolkit for emergency managers who send cell phone text alerts to the public after a disaster. [Learn more about these resources at PHE.gov.](#)

### **Public Hearing Dates for FY 2011-12 Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program**

The Department of Public Welfare (Department) is making available for public review and comment the Fiscal Year (FY) 2011-12 Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) proposed State Plan. Comments on this notice and testimony received at public hearings will be used to formulate the Department's Final State Plan for using Federal funds for FY 2011-12 LIHEAP. The Department has made the proposed State Plan available to the public through the Department's web site at [www.dpw.state.pa.us/foradults/heatingassistanceliheap](http://www.dpw.state.pa.us/foradults/heatingassistanceliheap). The hearing schedule is as follows:

- **July 12, 10:00 AM-1:00 PM-Philadelphia Workforce Development Corporation, One Penn Center at Suburban Station, 1617 JFK Boulevard, Philadelphia**
- **July 14, 9:00 AM-12:00 PM, Allegheny County Courthouse, Gold Room, 4th Floor, 436 Grant Street, Pittsburgh**
- **July 19, 9:30 AM-1:00PM, Health and Welfare Building, Room 907, 9th Floor, Commonwealth and Forster Streets, Harrisburg**

### **Save Money at the Pump**

Use FuelEconomy.gov to find a range of ways to save money on gas: Find the cheapest gas prices, [Drive more efficiently](#), [Keep your car in good shape](#), [Plan and combine trips](#). If you're on the go, you can access many of these fuel-saving tips through [FuelEconomy.gov's mobile site](#). [Sepa cómo ahorrar gasolina.](#)

### **Toolkit Released on Advancing Healthy Aging in Your Community**

The Natural Occurring Retirement Communities (NORC) Blueprint Program of the United Hospital Fund of New York City has released a new toolkit to help community-based organizations collect important information about their clients to identify key health risks in the community. The toolkit, titled Health Indicators- Advancing Healthy Aging in your Community, includes a survey, database, report formats and training materials. To learn more about this resource, click [here](#).

### **USA.gov Free App for iPad, iPhone or iPod Touch**

USA.gov now offers a FREE app for your iPad, iPhone, or iPod Touch. Use the app to search federal, state, and local government, and to contact your government by phone or e-mail. [Download USA.gov's FREE app.](#)

### **USAJOBS Website**

With the [USAJOBS app](#), you can search for jobs, save job searches, receive notifications on your application status, share job openings via email and social networks, activate your resume and much more. Find this app, and many other Government apps and mobile sites, in the [USA.gov Mobile Apps Gallery](#).

## **Resources/News - Senior Sites**

### **12 Great Reasons to Become a Senior Volunteer**

Here are a few reasons why each and every American senior should consider becoming a retired volunteer! <http://www.seniorcorps.org/>.

### **CMS Wants Consumers with Extra Help to Know They Can Switch to a 0-Premium Plan**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recently sent its annual notice to individuals enrolled in the prescription drug Low-Income Subsidy (LIS) program, also known as Extra Help, reminding them that they can switch to a lower-cost plan in their area at any time. LIS is a federal program that helps eligible individuals with limited income and resources pay for drug costs under the Medicare prescription drug benefit. [Visit here.](#)

### **National Center on Senior Transportation-Essential Link-Access to Transportation**

Easter Seals through [Easter Seals Project ACTION](#), and in the last seven years, with the [National](#)

[Center on Senior Transportation](#) (NCST) have promoted accessible transportation for seniors and now offer the NCST Booklet “Everyone Rides: Transportation Access for Culturally and Ethnically Diverse Elders” can be downloaded in PDF: [click here](#). The Essential Link Blog can be accessed [by visiting here](#).

### **Keep Track of Your Medications**

A brochure from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality includes a wallet card to help you keep track of your medicines and have that information with you in an emergency. [Click here](#).

### **Medicare Prescription Drug Program**

You may be able to get help to pay for the monthly premiums, annual deductibles and co-payments related to the [Medicare Prescription Drug Program](#). You must be enrolled in a plan to get this extra help.

### **Minor Home Repairs & Modifications for Philadelphia Seniors**

Low-income Philadelphia homeowners, age 60 and older, may apply for free repairs and modifications through PCA’s Senior Housing Assistance Repair Program (SHARP). SHARP provides minor repairs to improve the safety and security of seniors’ homes and modifications. For more information or to apply for SHARP, call the PCA Helpline at 215.765.9040.

### **National Association of Area Agencies on Aging**

The National Association of Area Agencies on Aging’s primary mission is to build the capacity of its members to help older persons and persons with disabilities live with dignity and choices in their homes and communities for as long as possible. <http://www.n4a.org/>.

### **National Institute on Aging Publications**

You can search, order print copies, and read all of NIA publications and other materials online. Questions? Call 1.800.222.2225. <http://www.nia.nih.gov/>

### **National Senior Citizens Law Center**

The National Senior Citizens Law Center is a non-profit organization whose principal mission is to protect the rights of low-income older adults. Go to: <http://www.nsclc.org/>.

### **New Website from CARIE-CaregiverGPS-The Elder’s Advocate**

CARIE has launched CaregiverGPS – The Elder’s Advocate, a web-based resource to help caregivers make decisions about elder care. [Click here for information](#).

### **The National Alzheimer’s Project**

The National Alzheimer’s Project Act (NAPA) was signed into law five months ago to create a national strategy to overcome the escalating Alzheimer’s crisis. Individuals living with the disease, caregivers, researchers, and health care providers are asked to comment on the greatest challenge, frustration or concern about Alzheimer’s that the NAPA should address. For more information about NAPA or to share your story, go to: [www.alz.org/napa](http://www.alz.org/napa).

## **Resources/News - Family Sites**

### **Coordinated School Health**

Coordinated school health (CSH) is recommended by CDC as an approach for improving students’ health and learning in our nation’s schools. School health programs can help reduce health risk behaviors among young people and have a positive effect on academic performance. An expanded [CSH website](#) shares information, outlines and goals for schools to follow.

### **Developing Reading Interests in your Children**

It is never too early to develop your child’s early sight word skills. Children begin learning information receptively from their environments much earlier than their ability to demonstrate it through their words and actions. <http://learningdisabilities.about.com/od/infancyandearlychildhood/tp/earlysightword.htm?nl=1>.

### **FY11 Median Family Incomes are Released**

FY11 Median Family Incomes are released. HUD's data for metro and non-metro areas is available at <http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/il/il11/index.html>.

### **How to Start a Reading Routine**

[How to Start a Reading Routine](#), making it a habit is half the battle.

### **Information on Federal Student Aid Programs**

Find information about student federal aid programs to help you pay for your education after high school. For more information read [Questions & Answers for Unemployed Americans Interested in Education and Training Opportunities](#). For more information visit [here](#).

### **School on Wheels**

School on Wheels, Inc. is a non-profit, 501(c) (3) organization founded in 1993 by Agnes Stevens, a retired teacher. The heart of the School on Wheels' programs is the volunteer tutors who come from all backgrounds and professions, with a shared goal - to reach out to a child, to teach, to mentor, and assist in their educational life. <http://www.schoolonwheels.org/pages/828/>.

### **Surfnetskids Games**

[Typing Games: Fun!](#) with 40 typing games so far. <http://www.typinggamesfun.com/>.

### **Text4baby Free Service**

[Text4baby](#) is a free service from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that provides pregnant women and new parents with pregnancy and baby care tips. Sign up by texting BABY to 511411 (or BEBE in Spanish) and you'll receive free SMS text messages weekly.

### **The Kids' Homekeeping Handbook**

This printable book will help your whole family stay on top of chores and tasks. [Click here](#).

## **Resources/News - People with Disabilities**

### **10 Tips for Family Caregivers**

This guide offers guidance and a planning process for family caregivers on how to care for a person with developmental disabilities. The guide has information about financial, legal issues and "10 Tips for Family Caregivers." [Visit here](#).

### **2011 Edition of Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors**

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has released the 2011 edition of *Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors*. This publication has information about health care, pensions, education and training, home loans, life insurance, transition assistance and how to appeal a decision on a claim for benefits. To access: [visit here](#).

### **Library of Congress NLS Free Library Program of Braille and Audio Materials**

The Library of Congress' NLS runs a free library program of Braille and audio materials circulated to eligible borrowers in the United States by postage-free mail. The library also has a special music collection for people who are blind. [Visit here for details](#).

### **Redefining the Rules Governing Service Animals Covered by the ADA**

Service animals play an integral role in the lives of many individuals with disabilities, providing assistance in a wide variety of ways so that they can have the freedom to go about their daily activities. When the Department of Justice (DOJ) originally issued its Title III regulation in the early 1990s, the Department did not define the parameters of... [click here for new definitions](#).

### **Report-"Priced Out in 2010-The Housing Crises for People with Disabilities"**

The report, *Priced Out in 2010 - The Housing Crisis for People with Disabilities*, shows that in 2010,

the basic cost of shelter, represented by the average rent for a modest one bedroom apartment, was more than the entire income of an individual receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI). [Access here.](#)

### **Resource for Returning Veterans and their Families**

Veterans often continue to experience readjustment problems, even years after they leave the military. Professional staff members provide support groups to help veterans deal with stress, anger and other problems that complicate their daily lives. Because family life is often affected by the veteran's behavior, our support groups can provide an opportunity for family members to understand and support the adjustment process. [For info click here.](#)

### **Social Security Disability Benefits for Family Members**

When you start receiving Social Security disability benefits certain [members of your family](#) may also qualify for benefits on your record. Benefits may be paid to a spouse, divorced spouse, your children and a child with a disability. For info: [click here.](#)

### **The EyeNote™**

The EyeNote™ application (app) was developed by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) for the blind or visually impaired to use as a tool to increase accessibility to Federal Reserve Notes (U.S. paper currency). The app currently runs on the following devices: iPhone 3Gs, iPhone4, 4<sup>th</sup> Generation iPod Touch, iPad2. The app is available as a free download on the [Apple App Store](#). For more information go to <http://www.eyenote.gov/>.

### **US Dept of Veterans Affairs (VA) Accepting Applications for New Family Caregiver Prgm**

On May, the VA began accepting applications from seriously injured post 9-11 Veterans and their family caregivers for its new [Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers](#). Veterans may download a copy of the Family Caregiver Program application (VA CG 10-10) at [www.caregiver.va.gov](http://www.caregiver.va.gov). Veterans can designate one primary family caregiver and up to two secondary family caregivers if desired. Caregiver Support Coordinators are available at every VA medical center to help with the application process, or Veterans may call 1.877.222.8387 for assistance. <http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=2088>.

## **Funding Opportunities**

### **Due Jul 15 Affordable Care Act Grants to Create Healthier US Communities**

The US Department of Health and Human Services recently announced the availability of >\$100 million for up to 75 Community Transformation Grants. These grants are aimed at helping communities implement projects proven to reduce chronic diseases. By promoting healthy lifestyles and communities, especially among population groups experiencing the greatest burden of chronic disease, these grants will help improve health, reduce health disparities, and lower health care costs. The deadline is July 15. [Click here.](#)

### **Due Jul 15 Motorola's Mobility Foundation's Empowerment Grants**

The Motorola Mobility Foundation's Empowerment Grants program, provides nonprofit organizations with 501©3 status, an opportunity to empower their communities through technology. Grants provide for programs in the areas of education, health and wellness, and community. [Click here for details.](#)

### **Due Aug 8 Choice Neighborhoods Initiative Planning Grants Offered**

PHAs, local governments, nonprofits, and for-profits partnering with public entities can apply by August 8 for funds to create comprehensive plans to transform distressed communities. Visit <http://www.hud.gov/offices/adm/grants/fundsavail.cfm> or <http://www.grants.gov>. Contact HUD staff, [ChoiceNeighborhoods@hud.gov](mailto:ChoiceNeighborhoods@hud.gov), 202.401.8812.

*Subscriber: If you wish to unsubscribe from Quick Connections please email [cbaker@phfa.org](mailto:cbaker@phfa.org). To assure that you continue receiving this e-newsletter in your inbox, add [cbaker@phfa.org](mailto:cbaker@phfa.org) to your email address book.*