

**RENTAL HOUSING**

# Senior housing takes away the worries

After her husband died many years ago, Yvonne Moody had to find a way to pay the rent and put food on the table.

"I had four daughters to raise on my own," Yvonne recalls. "I've done many jobs, you know, to feed my family and pay the bills. I've been a receptionist. I've worked for the elderly, taking care of them. I babysat people's children."

Today, her little girls are all grown up with children of their own – seven in all, and two great-grandchildren.

In 2003, she moved back to Erie, where she had lived for many years, hoping the lower cost of living there would help stretch her budget. Fortunately, she came across Villa Maria Apartments.

Yvonne's apartment offers plenty of space for fun visits with her great-grandchildren Amaura and Gianna.



The grand, old buildings of the former convent and school make Villa Maria Apartments a charming residential setting.

This beautiful and well-maintained complex of family and senior apartments was developed in the late 1990s by Pennrose working with Housing And Neighborhood Development Service, better known as HANDS. PHFA played a vital role in this project. Federal low-income housing tax credits (LIHTCs) awarded by PHFA helped the development team raise construction capital so HANDS can now keep rents lower for its residents.

## Her ideal home

Ask Yvonne why she likes living there, and she'll enumerate all her reasons. At the top of the list, of course, is the affordable rent. Now on a fixed income, her monthly rent of \$555, including gas and electricity, is a blessing. Additionally, the security of the facility puts her at ease, and the beauty of the historical structure and grounds are always appreciated.

Then, too, there are all the helpful services coordinated by the HANDS staff that are readily available to seniors – things like free hearing tests, weekly buses to stores and a supermarket for shopping, live music in the courtyard, assistance with annual rent rebate applications, and fast and friendly building maintenance.

For someone like Yvonne who has lived a full life, Villa Maria takes away many of the worries associated with getting older.

"I love living here...it is beautiful," Yvonne says with a big smile. "I don't plan on moving."

**AFFORDABLE RENTAL UNITS MADE POSSIBLE BY TAX CREDITS AWARDED BY PHFA**

