



# Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing

## Spring 2015 Newsletter

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### Financial Education Pays Off



In fall 2014, Ms. Morales became one of the first five APAH residents to graduate from Money Smarts Pay, a three-month financial education course held in partnership with the Virginia Cooperative

Extension. The class focuses on budgeting, savings and preparing for unexpected expenses.

“Money Smarts Pay gave me the tools I needed to manage my money wisely,” reflected Ms. Morales. “It opened my eyes to where my money was going.”

*“I feel that I am able to save. I am saving for a down payment on a home. As I see savings grow, I feel more confident and secure. I am also teaching my kids about financial literacy.”*

Since completing the program, she has shared her own experience and encouraged residents to build financial skills at subsequent Money Smarts Pay orientations and graduation ceremonies.

Ms. Morales, a mother of four, lives at Arlington Mill with her husband and children. She grew up in Fredericksburg and has lived in Arlington for six years. She is a first generation college student working towards her Bachelor’s degree in human services at Old Dominion University, while also working at the financial aid office at NOVA Community College where she has been employed for 10 years.

### Columbia Hills Apartments to Bring 229 Affordable Homes

In February, the Arlington County Board unanimously approved the use permit and \$19M Affordable Housing Investment Fund (AHIF) loan request for APAH’s Columbia Hills Apartments. This approval is the largest AHIF request to-date, and supports the **new construction of APAH’s 229-unit, 100% affordable property.**



**Nearly 130 supporters attended the hearing, including neighbors, residents, partners and affordable housing advocates.** Many shared testimonies about why they value affordable housing in their own communities, and over 100 individuals wrote letters and emails in favor of the project. This outpouring of public support reflects that Arlingtonians care about the dire need for more affordable housing and are responding to the 13,500 affordable units lost since 2000.

APAH applied for Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) and state bond financing in March. **If approved, construction will begin in spring 2016 and be completed in 2018.**

Columbia Hills will be built on the grounds of APAH’s Columbia Grove Apartments and will not displace any residents. Of the 229 units, 138 will have two or three bedrooms, increasing the number of family-size affordable units available in the County. Ten units will be designated for Permanent Supportive Housing and 13 will be fully accessible. The property will include fencing and landscaping, and will bring attractive new building and streetscape, new economic investment and modern site improvements. Columbia Hills will meet Form Base Code requirements for open space, car and bicycle parking, accessibility and energy efficiency.

*(Image credit: KGD Architecture)*

### Residents and Neighbors Create a Safer Community

In February, Columbia Grove Apartments residents welcomed neighbors to a potluck dinner to celebrate Arlington County approval of a traffic light to be installed at a nearby busy intersection.



#### Advocating for Safety

Many residents and neighbors had grown concerned with pedestrian safety at the busy nearby intersection of Columbia Pike and South Frederick Street. They worked together with the Columbia Forest Civic Association, Carlyle House condominium residents and nonprofit Virginians Organized for Interfaith Community Engagement (VOICE) and presented a petition with over 100 signatures to the County Board in December. The traffic light will be installed in 2016.

#### Celebrating Success

The potluck, held at the Columbia Grove community room, honored the hard work and collaboration of everyone involved. Attendees shared homemade food and personal stories. People of different backgrounds, including those with language barriers who relied on translators to talk to one another, were able to realize their common ground and shared interests. Residents and community members plan to work together on future projects.



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# The Springs Groundbreaking Celebration

March 11, 2015



Nearly 120 friends of APAH joined us to celebrate the start of construction on The Springs Apartments on March 11th. The event honored project partners and County leadership for their commitment to affordable housing, and brought together neighbors and community members to welcome the property to the Ballston area.

The innovative project is built on the former site of APAH's 27-unit Carlyn Springs Apartments. "By redeveloping our own land and leveraging new density from the County, APAH provided a

\$6M savings to the project," highlighted APAH President/CEO Nina Janopaul. Bank of America Merrill Lynch is providing \$22M in Low Income Housing Tax Credit financing, announced a \$550,000 forgivable loan that APAH is using to further reduce the rents, so that 47 of the 104 apartments will be affordable to very low income households.

The new, five-story elevator building will feature underground parking, a community room for onsite resident services, and business and fitness centers. Eighty-five units will be two and three-bedroom to meet the needs of families and 10% will be barrier free. APAH offices will move to The Springs when construction is complete in mid-2016. *(Image credit: KGD Architecture)*



The Springs project partners and County leadership join APAH at the future site of The Springs.

## Resident Perspective



Ms. Inge Schweiger shared her personal story as an APAH resident at The Springs Groundbreaking Celebration. She spoke eloquently of her 30 years in Arlington.

Ms. Schweiger is very fond of the Ballston community that is home to The Springs. She has lived in this area for 21 years, including at APAH's Carlyn Springs Apartments, and has developed close friendships with her neighbors. At the groundbreaking event, she emphasized her appreciation of APAH's resident relocation program to ensure that no Carlyn Springs residents were displaced and that they all will have the opportunity to return.

Ms. Schweiger also spoke about the difference that access to affordable housing has made in her own life. Due to the economic downturn, she became unemployed.

Although she has struggled financially, she did not have to leave Arlington thanks to the availability of affordable housing.

Ms. Schweiger actively serves her community and her church. She is a volunteer chaplain at INOVA, where she uses her credentials as a licensed spiritual counselor to support patients with health challenges. She is a valuable community leader and APAH looks forward to building community with her for a long time to come!

## By the Numbers: Resident Services in 2014

**221 programs**

Were held onsite at APAH properties.

**422 residents**

Participated in one or more programs on topics such as workplace skills, healthy living and community engagement.

**688 residents**

Received individual supportive services, such as eviction prevention and food assistance support.

Want to get involved?

Email [volunteer@apah.org](mailto:volunteer@apah.org) to learn about volunteer opportunities with APAH's resident services program for groups and individuals.