

# NEW DIMENSIONS

ELDERLY HOUSING DEVELOPMENT & OPERATIONS CORPORATION



## Nation Marks the 50th Anniversary of War on Poverty Programs that Assist the Elderly

As many EHDHC residents may recall, on January 8, 1964, President Lyndon Johnson stated as part of his first State of Union address, that "this Administration...declares unconditional war on poverty in America." His declaration of War on Poverty ushered in many Great Society programs and policies that have significantly reduced poverty in America over the past 50 years.

A recent Columbia University study showed that without government benefits, the poverty rate would have soared from 19 percent at that time to 31 percent in 2012. According to the White House Council of Economic Advisers, an average of 27 million people were lifted annually out of poverty by social programs between 1968 and 2012.

The elderly have been identified as one of the primary groups that have benefited from these government antipoverty programs. In 1960, about 35 percent of elderly were living in poverty, but that has been dramatically reduced to 9 percent in 2012. In the mid-sixties, the poverty rate for persons over sixty-five years was approximately double compared to adults below sixty-four; and now the elderly have a lower poverty rate than non-elderly.

A major reason for the success of these War on Poverty or Great Society programs on the quality of life for many elderly is that many of these programs, including Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, assisted housing, food stamps, and Older Americans Act, are specifically or primarily assist the elderly.

### Social Security

Of particular importance is Social Security since it provides over half of the income for over half of the elderly; and provides more than 80 percent of the total income for a third of the elderly. As noted by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, without Social Security benefits, 44.4 percent of the elderly would have incomes below the official poverty line; and it lifts 15.3 million elderly Americans, including 9 million women, above the poverty line.

### Medicare/Medicaid

A recent report by Harvard University summarizes the two health insurance programs that were established as key parts of the War

on Poverty. Medicare provides insurance to help pay for health care for elderly Americans. Medicaid pays for health care for poor children, pregnant women and people with disabilities, as well as

poor elderly men and women. The War on Poverty also created community health centers to expand the supply of physicians, nurses, and dentists in rural and inner-city areas where shortages of medical personnel made it difficult for people to get care. The best evidence shows that these programs increased access to health care for America's

elderly and spurred major social, fiscal, and technological changes to our country's entire health system.

### Assisted Housing

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) was created as part of the War on Poverty and established as a Cabinet Department in 1965 by consolidating a number of other older federal agencies to include the Housing Home Finance Agency, Federal Housing Administration, Urban Renewal Agency, Commu-

//  
The best example of how government antipoverty programs can succeed involves the elderly...  
//

Continued on Page 6...

ELDERLY HOUSING  
DEVELOPMENT  
& OPERATIONS  
CORPORATION

MISSION STATEMENT

EHDOC develops and manages safe, secure and affordable housing for senior citizens across the United States. EHDOC advocates for the highest quality of life for the seniors of today and tomorrow.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Morton Bahr President	Joseph J. Hunt Director
Steve Protulis Executive Vice President	Roger Smith Director
Leo W. Gerard Vice President – Operations	Maxine Carter Director
Edward L. Romero Vice President Quality	John Olsen Director
Maria C. Cordone Secretary	Ellen Feingold Director
Erica Schmelzer Treasurer	Mark Weiner Director
Marjorie Colebut-Jackson Director	Thomas P. Villanova Director
Tony Frassetta Director	M. David Vaughn Director
	Cecil Roberts Director

New Dimensions is published by:  
EHDOC  
1580 Sawgrass Corporate Parkway  
Suite 210  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33323  
T: (954) 835-9200 F: (954) 835-0888  
Email: newsletter@ehdoc.org  
Web: www.ehdoc.org



## Inequality of Income — Inequality of Education

By President, Morton Bahr



A national discussion is being held regarding the growing wealth of the top earners in the U.S. compared to the vast majority of Americans. The discussion reached a crescendo a few weeks ago when Pope Francis joined in lamenting this growing phenomenon in the U.S. and other countries around the world.

Last October, the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) issued a major report showing that U.S. adults rank in the lower half of all OECD countries in adult literacy and numerical skills. Further, we have the highest rate of “inequality” in distribution of skills and education across the adult population.

Reach Higher, America, the 2008 report of the National Commission on Adult Literacy (on which I served) indicated that more than 93 million adults, some 60 percent of the workforce, “lack literacy at a level needed in post secondary education or job training that current and future jobs now require.” More than 18 million adults lacked a high school diploma.

The stark reality is that our education programs – for which federal funding is the core – are reaching fewer than two million adults, the tip of the iceberg, simply because they lack the resources to do what our nation needs. Not only does this matter require a larger profile, but our adult education and workforce skills system to meet our current and future jobs needs a national response similar to the Marshall Plan of WWII.

As President of EHDOC and a supporter of affordable housing for all Americans, I am amazed as to how much the situation in adult education mirrors that of the needs that exist for tens of thousands, perhaps millions, of Americans requiring a decent place to live. And, the two issues are intertwined. As the need for proper training is not being met by the federal government, more and more adults, many of whom today are in high school, will gravitate from being unemployed to working in low-skill, low-wage jobs. And, when they reach “retirement” age, they will

Continued on Page 7...



Don't forget the EHDOC Senior Relief Fund.

Visit our website at [www.ehdoc.org](http://www.ehdoc.org) to donate today!

What we do for ourselves dies with us. What we do for others and the world remains and is immortal. — Herbert Pike (1809-1919)

## Concern with the Widening Gap of Income Inequality and its Impact on the Elderly

By Executive Director, Steve Protulis



As noted in the article on the War on Poverty in this edition of *New Dimension*, our nation has much to be proud of for

its achievement to reduce poverty among the elderly and other low-income persons through the various programs enacted as part of the War on Poverty and Great Society programs.

However, the success and benefits of these programs may be in jeopardy and the reduction in poverty threatened with being reversed. In recent years Congress has dramatically cut and even taken efforts to eliminate funding for many of these critically needed programs, including the Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly program. Partially rationalized on the need to reduce the national debt, the Budget Control Act of 2011 and subsequent across-the-board sequestration cuts have resulted in draconian cuts to many of these programs that have driven many Americans back into poverty.

Compounding these anti-poverty cuts in recent years has been the recession, unemployment, income and wage stagnation and cuts resulting in increased number of persons in poverty. Nearly 50 million Americans were poor

in 2012, with 16 million living on incomes less than half of the poverty level. The official U.S. poverty threshold for one person is \$11,720 (\$11,011 for age 65 plus) or \$14,937 for a two-person household (\$13,892 for age 65 plus). The elderly have essentially been buffered from poverty through programs such as Social Security and Medicare; however without them over half of the elderly would be in poverty.

But not all Americans have had their income reduced or risk going into poverty during the recession or our slow economy. In fact, many wealthy Americans have made significant income gains during these "financially difficult times" that many middle and low-income persons are experiencing. Between 2009 and 2012, the income of the top 1 percent rose 31 percent compared to less than 1 percent for all other Americans. The top 1 percent of American households (the super-rich or the one-percenters) has an average income over a million.

Since the recession officially ended in June, 2009, the top 1 percent have benefited from rising corporation profits and stock prices – and also benefiting from the reduced tax rate on capital gains being cut from 28 percent to 15 percent by the Bush 2003 tax cuts (compared to the top ordinary income rate of 35 percent). The

richest 1 percent of Americans earned more than 19 percent of our country's total household income in 2012 – the biggest share since 1928 (the year before the Great Depression).

As recently reported by the *New York Times*, "the economic gap between the wealthiest and rest of Americans is wider than at any point since the 1920s with a family in the top 1 percent having a net worth 288 times as high as the typical family." The dramatic increase over the past few years in the widening of the gap, or income inequality, certainly underscores that the rich are getting richer while the poor are getting poorer.

Fortunately, there has been an increase in attention by some public officials to the growing income inequality, including President Obama and even Pope Francis (his recent written document [apostolic exhortation] attacked unfettered capitalism as "a new tyranny" and beseeched global leaders to fight poverty and growing inequality, and urged rich people to share their wealth).

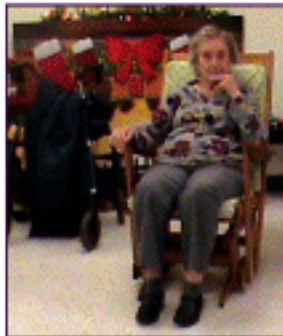
In early December, President Obama gave a speech on income inequality and the lack of economic upward mobility experienced by many middle class and poor Americans. He described the decades-long trend with increased concentration of

*Continued on Page 7...*



## Rock-A-Thon

Chateau Cushnoc and John Marvin Tower,  
Augusta, ME



Residents and staff of Chateau Cushnoc and John Marvin Tower came together and set up the community room at Chateau Cushnoc to have a Rock-A-Thon. Residents were given pledge sheets and they came to rock in rocking chairs to music. There also was an area where they gave donations

to play roulette and black jack for fun. Then an area with refreshments and "Mock" tails were provided.

Staff provided the roulette wheel, black jack area, refreshments and drinks. Two residents donated rocking chairs. The event raised \$267 for the Senior Relief Fund.

For rocking the longest at the Rock-A-Thon, Audrey Ainsley, featured above, won a Pizza Hut gift card.

## Blankets for the Homeless

Teamsters Residence, Maumee, OH

Karen Knight, Service Coordinator, and tenants came together after our Christmas dinner to make blankets for the homeless in the Toledo area. The property manager provided the fabric for the blankets. We made two big blankets.

Mandi Mueller, Karen Knight, and 4 tenants, Madelon Grant, Susan Hagerman, Virginia Wilson, and Aubrey Rhodes all helped to tie the blankets. They will be perfect to help keep someone very warm this winter. They have been donated to the Cherry Street Mission.



## Holiday Cards to Soldiers



I.W. Abel Place Pittsburgh, PA

At the recommendation of Sheila Rampolla Service Coordinator at Hugh Carcella apartments, residents of I.W. Abel Place decided that they too wanted to send Holiday Cards to soldiers serving overseas.

Holly Bills asked a local partner VITAS Hospice, if they could donate stamps for the cause and asked residents to donate cards. Two boxes of cards and 30 stamps were donated.

On the regularly scheduled day for an on-going Community Action Program project with VITAS, a special table was set up for residents to sign cards. Some signed their name and others wrote long letters of gratitude.

30 holiday cards were sent to Holiday MAIL for Heroes an organization in Capital Heights Maryland that forwards card to soldiers serving overseas in holiday gift boxes.

Toni Taylor, a new resident of I.W. Abel Place was one of the first in line to show up to sign a card. She got emotional saying, "such a simple act means so much." She is seen above with Amanda Olsen Outreach Specialist for VITAS Hospice.

## Adopt a Family

Our Lady's Manor Alexandria, LA

The Resident Council wanted to do something more this year for Christmas so we contacted Shepherd Center to see what we needed to do to participate in their program. I was told we would receive a list of various families in need of assistance for Christmas and we could choose which one we were better suited to help. Upon reading their information we decided to adopt two families as we felt a connection to them.

There was a single mother with 3 children ages 3, 5 and 6 and a grandmother with two grandchildren ages 4 and 9. Each family had medical issues as well as income problems.

The Resident Council requested a \$10 donation (which went towards both families) from every resident living in the Manor. They felt if each resident gave \$10 they would have over \$1000 to give each family the best Christmas they've ever had!

Well, we received a little over \$700 in cash and many of the residents bought or made items for each of the families as well. We were able to give each child the toys they asked for, clothing items, and a Christmas dinner with all the trimmings. We held a Christmas party on Friday, December 15th and Mr. & Mrs. Santa attended. Both families came and had a wonderful time. The



Left photo: Santa with the Landen family children!



Right photo: This is the Howard family children and cousin with Santa!



Left photo: Mr. & Mrs. Santa Claus! Mrs. Santa is Doris Simpson the Resident Council President and Santa is Clyde Gramman, Chaplain for Hospice Compassus.



Right photo: Santa's Helpers, Michelle Elliott, Service Coordinator and Christina Brumley, Property Manager.

kids got to sit on Santa's knee and tell him what they wanted for Christmas as well as some of the adults. The best part of the evening was seeing the excitement on the children's faces looking at Santa and all the presents with their names on them. Everyone stated this was the best Christmas they had ever had and hoped we will do it again next year.

## Food Drive

Chateau Des Amis, Ville Platte, LA

On December 11, 2013 residents collected canned foods and dry goods to help individuals and families in need to the City of Ville Platte Food Net Drive. Chateau Des Amis residents provided 24 boxes of food and dry goods. Residents are very proud to be able to help the needy in the City of Ville Platte.



Chateau Des Amis Residents with boxes of food



## EHDOC "IT" Department Tips

---

### Debit vs Credit

When you are at a restaurant, gas station or retail store, make sure to choose the credit option if you are using your Debit card.

If your information is obtained by a rogue employee or a system that is hacked, credit will save you. If you use your debit card and money is withdrawn, it can take months for the money to return. In the meantime your bank account is drained!

If your credit card number is stolen you can report it and the credit card company will waive payment during the investigation. Much better than a bank account fully withdrawn.

If you do use your debit card at checkout and you have the option to choose, choose credit. Protect yourself.



...Continued from Front Page

Nation Marks the 50th Anniversary of War on Poverty Programs that Assist the Elderly

nity Facilities Agency and Public Housing. HUD provides affordable housing programs that assist the elderly and others through a number of programs that have evolved over the years, including Section 202 senior housing, rent subsidies, and public housing, as well as funds to State and Local governments to develop affordable housing. According to a recent HUD publication on "Aging in Place," overall, 37 percent of HUD-assisted households are headed by a person over the age of 62. Of particular importance is the Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly program that has funded over 8,000 properties with approximately 263,000 apartments.

#### Food Stamps

In 2012, food stamps were credited for keeping 4 million low-income persons out of poverty. Like many War on Programs, recent Congressional actions have significantly cut this program; and debate continues to make additional cuts.

#### Older Americans Act

Older Americans Act (OAA) was enacted in 1965 as part of the Great Society in response to concern for community social services for older persons. The Act has evolved over the years and now provides funding for a wide range of nutrition and supportive services through a national network of State agencies and over 600 Area Agencies on Aging (AAA).

As cited in a recent New York Times article, Progress in the War on Poverty, "The best example of how government antipoverty programs can succeed involves the elderly." EHDOC residents, their families, and others seeking to preserve and adequately fund these various federal anti-poverty programs, including affordable senior housing, Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, need to be sure that their elected officials at all levels of government are aware of the critical need and multiple benefits of these essential programs.

## Hurrah for Seniors and Staff!

In the past, EHDOC staff and residents have been very quick to help during devastating events like Hurricane Katrina, Hurricane Rita, Super Storm Sandy and the earthquake in Haiti.

This year, we again recognize our Staff and Residents for their great fund raising efforts on behalf of the victims of Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines.

...Continued from Page 2

### Inequality of Income — Inequality of Education

desperately require a decent shelter where they can spend the rest of their years in dignity.

Our politicians at the local, state and federal levels need to wake up to these realities facing our nation, but it is like a dog chasing its tail. As more and more of our wealth is concentrated among those at the very top and as more and more companies fail in fulfilling their community obligations, not the least by sheltering their money in offshore accounts, the collective wealth of all the rest of us will not suffice to deal with these urgent problems.

Every civic-minded citizen, all of our unions and our progressive corporations must work toward a society where every child (and adult) can have access to all the education required to work in a decent job that pays a living wage, and retire with dignity. And, we must always keep in mind that there can be no dignity without a decent place to live.

...Continued from Page 3

### Concern with the Widening Gap of Income Inequality and its Impact on the Elderly

wealth by a few and the lack of upward economic mobility as a “dangerous and growing inequality” that has jeopardized the middle-class and the American Dream; and identified it as “the defining challenge of our times.” He noted that half of Americans at some point in their lives will experience poverty.

After reviewing some of the history, issues, misperceptions, accomplishments, and challenges with income inequality and economic mobility, President Obama committed this year and the rest of his presidency to focus on this issue. He indicated that “a relentlessly growing deficit of opportunity is a bigger threat to our future than our rapidly shrinking fiscal deficit.”

While indicating that more specifics would be included in his State of Union address scheduled for January 28th he identified a

few key principles as guides in legislative and administrative efforts, including a growth agenda with jobs, trade, infrastructure and education, corporate taxes and regulations, strengthen collective bargaining, revamp retirement and shore up Social Security, protect against another housing collapse, and strengthen our safety net for a new age.

President Obama recognized in his speech the “seemingly inability to get anything done in Washington these days.” However, he indicated the importance of serious debate over this issue and how to best resolve income inequality and to promote opportunities for upward mobility.

It is vital, therefore, that our Congressional members be aware of the adverse impact of income inequality on our older residents and staff, as well as their families,

...and identified it as “the defining challenge of our times.”

and communities. In the next few weeks, Congress will be making some key funding decisions on the current and future federal budget for affordable housing, health care, supportive services, adjustments with Social Security, and other programs that have assisted the elderly. The issue of income inequality could also emerge as an important issue during the Congressional election this year. It is important that voters understand the position of their candidates on income inequality issues; and to support and vote accordingly.

## Silver Sneakers

Robert Sharp Towers II Service Coordinator, Patricia Walker coordinated with Silver Sneakers Instructor, Tanya James to host a demonstration of the Silver Sneaker exercise program.

On December 13th the residents joined in with Ms. James as she showed them new exercising techniques.

Ms. James provided the residents with small rubber exercise balls.

Residents completed one hour of activities that helped them to improve their strength, flexibility, balance and endurance.



Robert Sharp Towers residents during the Silver Sneakers exercise class

## Visit from Puerto Rico Congressman

Torre Jesus Sanchez Erazo, Bayamon, Puerto Rico

Torre Jesus invited Puerto Rico Congressman, Pedro Pierluissi to share with our residents the effects of the sequestration and the future on Section 202 funds, especially to the seniors in Puerto Rico.

The staff and residents were given the opportunity to **hear from Mr. Pierluissi about the fiscal situation in Washington and the effects to them on the island.**

**We are the first Community in Puerto Rico who has had a Congressman as a speaker. We showed him our community and what an EHDOD Community in Puerto Rico is all about as far as the job that we do every day.**

Our tenants were very grateful and proud for this opportunity.



CM giving the welcome to Mr. Pierluissi to our Community



CM introducing Mr. Pierluissi to our tenants