



# GET INVOLVED

Tom Barrett  
Mayor

Alderman Willie L. Hines, Jr.  
Chair, Board of Commissioners

## The Home Must Be the Cornerstone for High Expectations, High Achievement and High Standards

A Quarterly Newsletter for Residents of the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee

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### A COMMITMENT TO EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

## Education Initiative's "Amazing Results" featured

WISN-TV Channel 12 ran a lengthy story November 8<sup>th</sup> about the success of the five-year-old Education Initiative at Highland Homes and Scattered Sites. Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett spoke with the media, parents, and the students on the achievements of the Education Initiative. With 100% high school graduation rate the past two years and 100% school attendance by all school-age children during the past four years, the program is demonstrating impressive results. Education Specialist Darrell Finch of the Community Services Division coordinates the effort, which includes quarterly educational goal-setting meetings with over 120 families, an after-school homework and reading program, pre-college classes, college tours and more.

View the full TV story here: <http://www.wisn.com/video/21561757/index.html>



Happy New Year!

With the beginning of a new decade upon us, let us look inward to how we can better prepare our children on a path to a commitment to excellence. We must examine the need to cultivate the intellect of our child's mind at an early age. We as parents must not only teach our children the current school curriculum, but promote and encourage the following:

- Quality interactions between parents and their children
- Transmitting a burning desire to achieve a goal
- Consistency of encouragement, praise, affirmation, love
- High expectations
- Promoting self-determination

I would like to take time to thank all the families who reside with the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee for allowing me into your homes to help enhance the educational development of your child. It is a pleasure and a wonderful opportunity for me as I assist you and your children in the pursuit of excelling academically and obtaining a quality education. I would also like to personally thank Tony Peñez, Executive Director of the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee, for embarking on a truly revolutionary approach to how we promote the value of education. Providing residents with safe, decent and affordable housing is only part of the HACM mission. We also are committed to investing in families so that they achieve all of their dreams and aspirations.

The HACM Education Initiative was implemented to provide parents with support, assistance and resources. Again, thanks to parents for being engaged and involved in 2009 in the pursuit of seeking educational excellence for your children. I believe the HACM Education Initiative is greatly needed to demonstrate our commitment to our youth's future. A child who has obtained a quality education will be afforded the opportunity to pursue the American Dream.

Stay Involved!!!



## HACM youth tour the UW-Madison campus

On Saturday, October 10th, HACM's Education Initiative facilitated a tour of UW-Madison for nineteen high school and middle school students from Highland Park Homes, Scattered Sites, Townhomes at Carver Park and Westlawn. The students were accompanied by Education Specialist Darrell Finch and three parents. With the cool winds blowing and the first sign of snow in the air, the group toured

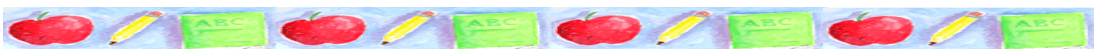
the nine-hundred-acre campus and met with representatives working in the fields of Architecture, Business, Law, Art, Music, Nursing, and Engineering. Campus representatives shared information on college life, scholarships opportunities, ACT/SAT scores, academic support services, and enrollment. After the tour, students enjoyed lunch on campus, talked about their college goals, and reflected on their first college tour. Through the HACM Education Initiative College Bound Program, all twelfth graders are being acclimated and exposed to an academic surrounding that will enhance and assist them in life skills, career planning and college preparation. Currently 60% of the June 2009 high school graduates are enrolled in college.



## Ninth annual spelling bee was un-bee-lievable!

The pressure was tense and youth were highly focused during HACM's Ninth Annual Spelling Bee held October 29th at the Community Services building on Reservoir Street. Family members watched as 6th, 7th and 8<sup>th</sup> grade youth from Westlawn, Northlawn, Highland Homes, Townhomes at Carver, Hillside, and Scattered Sites competed for cash prizes and trophies. The Pieper- Hillside Boys & Girls Club and Silver

Spring Neighborhood Center partnered with HACM to prepare youth for the event. Milwaukee Journal Sentinel columnist Eugene Kane served as the pronouncer, and HACM Housing Operations Manager Beverly Johnson, Assistant City Attorney John Heinen, Orthopedic Surgeon Dr. Jeffery Butler, and WITI-TV 6 Anchor and Reporter Bob Moore served as judges. The top three winners in each age group received cash prizes and trophies. All participants received t-shirts and certificates and were treated to refreshments after the event. Education Specialist Darrell Finch, who served as the moderator, stated "Spelling bees build self-esteem and confidence in our youth and lay a foundation for academic excellence." First place winners in each age group were: Khadimou Fall - Scattered Sites (6th grade); Angel Parker - Westlawn (7th grade); and Cherish Hayes - Hillside (8th grade). Read Eugene Kane's column about the Spelling Bee here: <http://www.jsonline.com/news/milwaukee/68817347.html>





## Fire prevention poster contest

Thirty-three youth from Highland Homes, Hillside, Westlawn, Scattered Sites Homes, Townhomes at Carver and Parklawn participated in the HACM 2009 Fire Prevention Poster Contest during Fire Prevention Week, October 4th -10th. The event was sponsored by the Housing Authority Insurance Group (HAIG) to promote fire safety. Participants made posters displaying the themes of fire prevention and safety around fire. The top three winners in each age group received cash prizes and all participants received a certificate of participation from the HAIG. Special

thanks to the contest's judges: Assistant Chief of Public Safety Angel Rodriguez, Safety & Special Projects Coordinator Mark Clark, and Townhomes at Carver Park Manager Sarita Griffin, and to recruiting partners Pieper-Hillside Boys & Girls Club, Parklawn YMCA and Silver Spring Neighborhood Center. Education Specialist Darrell Finch organized the contest with the assistance of HACM Case Manager Nannette Ray. First place winners were: Stephen and Andrew Merrills- Parklawn (ages 6-9); Lelear Williams - Highland Homes (ages 10-14); and James Wise-Highland Homes (ages 15-18).



## Education Initiative's "Power Readers" Attend Play

On Saturday, December 5th, the "Power Readers," a group of students from the Highland Homes and Scattered Sites Homes Book of the Month Club, attended the First Stage Children's Theater production of Barbara Robinson's "*The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*." The comedy centers on a group of young misfits who hilariously take over the lead roles in their town's Christmas play and end up teaching their neighbors lessons about the meaning of Christmas. Great acting, creative choreography, and sing-along Christmas carols with the

audience made for a pleasurable and impressionable evening for the students. It was the first time some of the youth had attended a play. The Power Readers meet once a week to have refreshments and discuss the merits of the books they read. They also attend cultural activities together to help improve social interaction. Education Specialist Darrell Finch states, "In an effort to promote the value of reading in a fun and enjoyable way, students are encouraged as a group to pick a book to read for a month and then attend the movie or production of the book."

### BURNING DESIRE

In my interventions with your children as the Education Specialist, I encourage independent thinking. My approach has been to alter negative behavior and channel it into positive, life-long reinforcements, thereby promoting a "Burning Desire" to achieve their dreams. A burning desire sets attitude and standards that lays a foundation to achieve goals. It also gives structure such as being in school every day and developing good habits and study skills that are needed to obtain a quality education. My intervention has consisted of asking them, "Who are you" and "What do you want to accomplish in life". We then implement these components: **Burning Desire + Goal + Plan + Realistic Objectives + Action = Success**. Achieving the goal is important, but our emphasis is placed on the preparation of reaching the goal. Students always tell me of their hope or wish to attend college. I enforce that hopes and wishes are a state of being that is only propelled when you apply action to the plan. A "Burning Desire" infuses a high level of expectation for our children and obliterates negative illusions.

Darrell Finch

## THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF MILWAUKEE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

You or your child can receive up to \$2,000 from HACM towards an accredited university or college, including a vocational/technical college.



### Requirements

- Acceptance to a college or university
- Good academic standing with a grade point average of 2.0 or better
- Demonstrate financial need
- Enrolled in a degree program
- In compliance with the terms and conditions of lease agreement

### MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the HACM Education Initiative is to provide parents with support, resources, and assistance to enhance the educational development of their children so that they obtain a quality education and graduate from high school. This will be accomplished by acclimating, exposing, enriching, and immersing children in an environment that is conducive to learning.

Contact me with your suggestions, ideas, questions, or if you would like to highlight your child's educational accomplishments in this newsletter.



*Your Children Are Our Priority*

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## HACM Mentoring/Tutoring Program Enroll Now

The Afterschool Mentoring/Tutoring Program will be offered to students at the Highland Gardens Neighborhood Network Computer Lab. The goal is to present students with support, guidance, practical assistance with reading, basic computer skills, and homework.

Highland Garden  
Monday through Friday-3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.



Welcome to COMPASS Guide  
<http://epic.cuir.uwm.edu/compass/>

Welcome to KnowHOW2GO WISCONSIN  
<http://knowhow2gowisconsin.org/>

The hub for college planning in Milwaukee! It can point you in the right direction for career, college and financial aid information and tools. These are great web sites for your children who are going to college. Compass Guide will be taught to each middle school and high school student in the after school mentor/tutor program.

### PARENTS, SUMMER IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER!

HERE IS AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO SIGN-UP AND ENROLL YOUR CHILDREN IN THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE COLLEGE FOR KIDS/TEENS PROGRAM AND OTHER PRE-COLLEGE PROGRAMS

#### Invitation for All Wisconsin Students and Parents

**When: Saturday, March 13, 2010**

**Time: 9:00 AM – 12:00 Noon**

**Where: Alumni Memorial Union**

**Marquette University, 1442 West Wisconsin Ave  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor: In Marquette Place**

Representatives from Wisconsin Precollege Programs will be available to offer you information on the various fun and educational pre-college opportunities this summer. If you need transportation call, Darrell Finch Education Specialist - Housing Authority at 225-9498 (office) or 335-1254 (cellular) [dfinch@hacm.org](mailto:dfinch@hacm.org)

#### If you are planning to sign up for a program on this day,

- Your parent or legal guardian must be present,
- Bring your most recent school report card
- Bring proof that you qualify for free or reduced lunch

DPI Precollege Scholarships for students in grades 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> are available

