

The RHA IN FOCUS

Newsletter 2021

AUGUST



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE RECENT LDI & FSS GRADUATES!

The Lifeforce Development Institute, class of the summer semester graduated and received five certificates on July 29th, 2021 along with the FSS Program participants graduating as well! RHA is so proud of the LDI and FSS graduates that took the step for a brighter future. The LDI students all completed the 12-week course and came out of the program with more knowledge, motivation, and the confidence to step into a new job/home. The Rockford Housing Authority and The Lifeforce Development Institute congratulate the following students:

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LDI GRADUATES:

Debra Simpkins, Ana Medina, Carol Lyons, and Nina Allen

FSS GRADUATES:

Shameka Hawkins, Tabaika Robinson, and Lakeisha Hill



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LDI is a 12-week course to prep for the workforce. The LDI Curriculum addresses the foundational skill gap in the workforce with a 12-week, hands-on learning program covering Job/Career Readiness Skills meeting the community's workforce goals. Together these job readiness & life skills are the difference between you getting an adequate job or your ideal job. Our community employers are looking for folks like you who can become their leaders. This leadership depends on many of these key foundational skills. Over 12 weeks, you will learn such things as positive attitude, adaptability, personal ethics, self-esteem, taking direction and accepting feedback. You will also learn how to overcome obstacles, problem-solving, emotional intelligence, punctuality and attendance. Through the LifeForce Development Institute, we have seen that the knowledge gained helps you secure the right job and, eventually, a full-time position that was not attainable prior to the LifeForce Development Institute's initiative. To learn more about LDI view the Launch My Future website here: <https://launchmyfuture.com/>



CAROL LYONS, LDI



ANA MEDINA, LDI



DEBRA SIMPKINS, LDI



NINA ALLEN, LDI



SHAMEKA HAWKINS, FSS



BACK TO SCHOOL STARTING SEPTEMBER, 2ND

Rockford Public School District is starting school, in person on September 2nd, 2021! With COVID-19 still effecting the way we live day to day, there are some guidelines in place for coming back to school.

Although RPS205 is not requiring the COVID-19 Vaccines for the upcoming school year, they are encouraging all students and staff to get vaccinated if they are able to. RPS205 is following the county's COVID-19 guidelines as far as mask wearing and social distancing, stating "According to the Winnebago County Health Department, the benefits of in-person teaching and learning outweigh the risks of COVID-19 when key health and safety measures are in place. We will continue to follow guidance from the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, Illinois State Board of Education, Illinois Department of Public Health and the WCHD."

Citing rising COVID-19 numbers and the Delta variant, Governor Pritzker announced on Aug.4th, that Illinois schools, all students, teachers and staff wear a mask indoors regardless of vaccination status. The mask mandate extends to indoor sports for athletes. "I had hoped that a state mask requirement in schools wouldn't be necessary, but it is," Gov. Pritzker said.

Registration days will be held on August 17th and 18th with the first day of school commencing on September 2nd. For more information on Rockford Public Schools, please visit their website here: <https://www.rps205.com/>



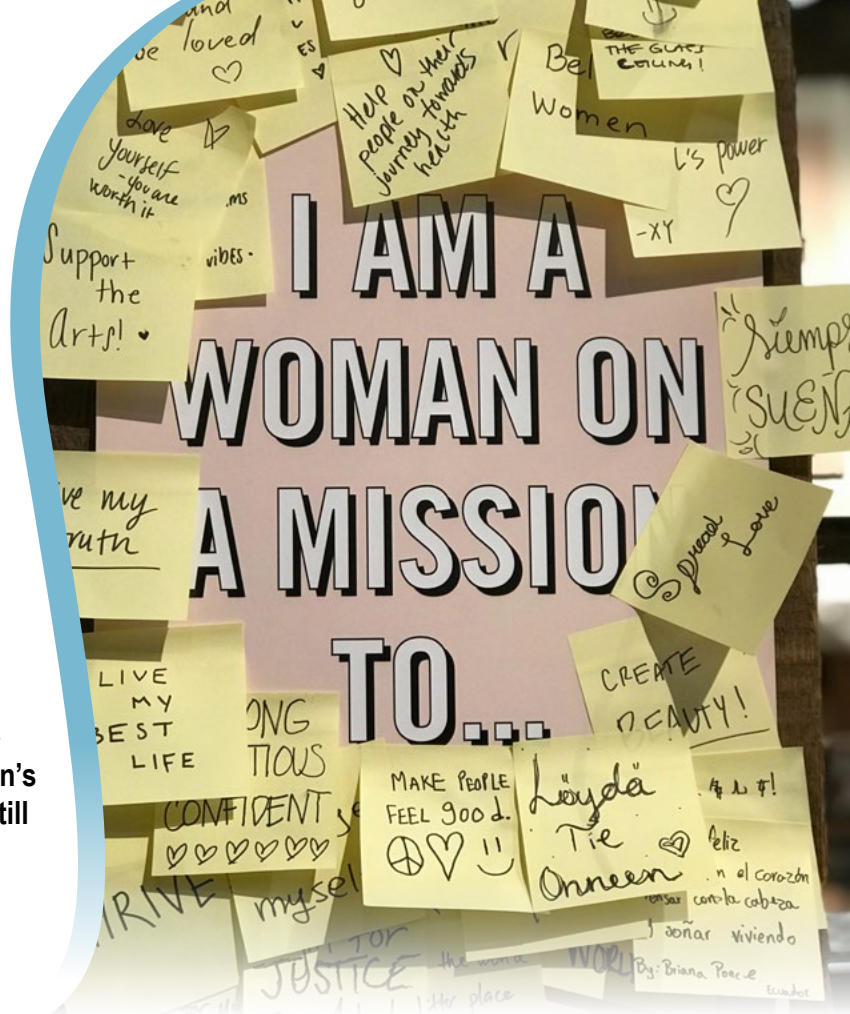
WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY

August 26th is Women's Equality Day! Congress designated August 26 as "Women's Equality Day" in 1973. The date was selected to commemorate the 1920 certification of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, granting women the right to vote. In the early 19th century, American women, who generally couldn't inherit property and made half of a man's wages in any available jobs, began organizing to demand political rights and representation. In the U.S., the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was first introduced in 1878, but it failed to gain traction. It wasn't until women in the World War I effort made their contributions painfully obvious that women's suffrage finally gained enough support. Women aren't done fighting for equal rights. Today, the wage gap between men and women still impacts women's economic power, and gender-based discrimination is still common in the workplace.

Women's Equality Day is all about uplifting and empowering women, and marveling at how far women have progressed, defying all odds and oppression. RHA knows the value of having women on our team. CEO, Laura Snyder is the first woman to hold this title since the inception of the housing authority and our Chairman of the Board, is Karen Hoffman.

This Women's Equality Day, learn more about the history of Women's equality, acknowledge the women role models in your life, and learn more about what inequality's they went through and how they overcame it. RHA wishes you an insightful and empowering Women's Equality Day.

The Women's Suffrage Parade, District of Columbia, on March 3, 1913.



NATIONAL NON-PROFIT DAY

August 17th is National Non-Profit Day. As members of the Non-Profit sector we wanted to recognize this day! This is a day set aside to recognize the immense effort nonprofits and charities put into making an impact in their communities and across the globe.

Non-Profits play as a huge resource for communities. Following the recent U.S. recession in 2012, the nonprofit sector provided 5.4% of the nation's entire GDP (gross domestic product), or \$887.3 billion. Non-profits continuously employing nurses, web developers, lawyers, computer engineers, and more (sources: John Hopkins and Tactical Philanthropy Advisors reports).

HISTORY OF NON-PROFIT DAY

Sherita J. Herring, a speaker, best-selling author and business strategist, founded National Nonprofit Day to educate and empower others to make a difference, while acknowledging those that are in the trenches, impacting lives every day. "The Tariff Act of 1894 signed into law on August 17, imposed the first federal income tax on corporations, which included exemptions for nonprofit corporations and charitable institutions. With a few modifications, nonprofit exemptions remain a solid part of the law and have served significant benefits, both for communities and the economy." Stated NationalDayCalendar.com.

HOW TO CELEBRATE NON-PROFIT DAY

Take some time to learn more about Non-profits in your area. Understanding that the funding for these organizations often satisfies more than the mission statement will help us see the benefits of supporting nonprofit organizations. Visit philanthropyalliancefoundation.org to find out more and use #NationalNonprofitDay to share on social media.

RHA would like to thank the community this Non-profit Day, without your support and help we wouldn't and couldn't be the agency we are proud of today. The many non-profit organizations we collaborate with, assist us in providing much needed support services to our residents. Serving a diverse demographic, RHA addresses the needs of children, families, the elderly and the disabled. And our community non-profit partners are by our side with additional resources and services. Happy Non-Profit Day!



COVID-19 UPDATE, JULY 28TH 2021

THE CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL

The CDC recommends that everyone, including fully vaccinated individuals, wear a mask in public indoor setting in areas with substantial and high transmission. CDC is also recommending universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status.

ILLINOIS FULLY ALIGNS WITH NEW CDC MASKING RECOMMENDATIONS

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) announced today it is fully adopting updated Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) masking recommendations to protect against COVID-19 and the Delta variant. CDC recommends that everyone, including fully vaccinated individuals, wear a mask in public indoor setting in areas with substantial and high transmission. CDC is also recommending universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status.

WINNEBAGO COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Winnebago County Health Department continues to recommend that all individuals consider the risks of COVID-19 and take preventive measures to reduce the spread. This includes vaccination, masking, social distancing and hand washing. Take extra precautions when in settings in which there may be individuals who are unvaccinated or whose vaccination status is unknown e.g. schools, public buildings, stores, entertainment venues.

ROCKFORD HOUSING AUTHORITY

As new information is still developing around COVID-19 and variants, we ask that all staff and residents please continue to wear a mask whether you are vaccinated or not. To protect the health and continued welfare of the Rockford Housing Authority's employees, residents, and guests, RHA will continue COVID-19 protocols for social distancing and mask mandates on all RHA Properties. Many of our residents are elderly and still at risk. COVID-19 best practices will be applied in common areas such as reception areas, community rooms, conference rooms, restrooms, and line/queuing until further notice.

While removing occupancy limits and other rules represents a step forward in the COVID-19 pandemic, state officials have continued to caution all residents that it is possible for the State to move back to previous phases. We will keep the community updated as we hear more from the CDC, State, and County.

WHY YOU SHOULD WEAR A MASK EVEN IF YOU'RE VACCINATED

As the country is still dealing with COVID-19 and the new variants, Dr. Anthony Fauci believes that "things will get worse." He also stated that lockdowns are less likely to return as they were last year. "If you look at the acceleration of the number of cases, the seven-day average has gone up substantially. You know what we



really need to do, we say it over and over again and it's the truth -- we have 100 million people in this country who are eligible to be vaccinated who are not getting vaccinated. We are seeing an outbreak of the unvaccinated," he added.

Vaccinated and unvaccinated people need to mask up again, according to the CDC. On July 27th, the CDC released that they recommend everyone start wearing masks in indoor public spaces, regardless of having a vaccine. It's no doubt that wearing a mask helps stop the spread, and that means that vaccinated people should still be thinking about this. If vaccinated people can get infected with COVID-19, that means they can also spread it; this is why the CDC is recommending wearing masks again.

The country as a whole should understand that vaccines don't always prevent infection, they only help fight certain symptoms, yes you can still get COVID-19, and yes you can still spread it even if you have been vaccinated whereas if you are not vaccinated, your body has to work harder to fight it off. By the CDC's own definitions "substantial" community transmission is 50 to 99 cases of infection per 100,000 people per week, and "high" is 100 or more.

The new mask recommendations are being set because conditions change. We have seen change like no other in the past year and a half, and they are bound to change again. The key take away right now is to continue to wear a mask, even if you are vaccinated and if you have not gotten a vaccine, please do. Here are some places in the surrounding area where you can get started:

WALGREENS
CVS

WINNEBAGO HEALTH DEPARTMENT
BOONE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Use this link to find more vaccine locations here: <https://www.vaccines.gov/>

RHA DIRECTORS SPOTLIGHT JULY 2021!

Ms. Rosalind Gulley has been with the Rockford Housing Authority for more than seven years. During her time here, Roz has served in several classifications working in the LIPH and HCV departments. Over two years ago, she was selected to serve as the Lead Occupancy Specialist with our HCV department. She provides training and acts as the primary point of contact for day-to-day operations to assist her peers and better serve the clients who participate in the various HCV programs. According to Mrs. Stephanie Penix, "She has a vast knowledge of her job and trains and works well with staff."

Roz routinely accepts assignments, some extremely challenging, without complaint. Her continued professionalism and integrity have made a considerable impact on the agency and those we serve. As stated by Mrs. Michaela Harris, "Her knowledge and expertise make her the 'go-to' for questions and training. Each time I have witnessed her interacting with a client or employee, she does so with the utmost professionalism".

Roz's dedication and initiative have demonstrated outstanding character. Her motivation and willingness to assist her colleagues are all traits that make her deserving of the Director's Spotlight Award for July 2021. We are proud to have Roz as a team member, and we look forward to her future at RHA.





Rockford Housing Authority
223 S Winnebago Street
Rockford, IL 61102

THE ROCKFORD HOUSING AUTHORITY HUD STRONG FAMILIES INITIATIVE PRESENTED: RHA COMMUNITY RESOURCE & JOB FAIR.

The Rockford Housing Authority held an event on July 31st from 11:00 AM-3:00 PM at BLACKHAWK COURTS, 338 15TH Avenue Rockford, IL 61104! The RHA Community Resource and Job Fair was an opportunity to inform RHA residents and the community of the many services and jobs available to them!

The Rockford Housing Authority is so grateful that we could put this event on for the people in our community that may not have had the opportunity to speak with the community partners in attendance. We would like to thank everyone who came out to the event, our community partner agencies, and the RHA staff for making this day possible.

Here are some of the activities and events that took place on the day of the event and what community partners who joined us!

Activities and events:

- Bouncy houses
- Free food
- Giveaways
- Music
- Vax Bus/ Health Department COVID-19 vaccines
- Discovery Center Kits for children ages 2-5

Our Community Partner agencies and Job Fair Opportunities at the event: Crusader Community Clinic

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|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Renewal Turning Point | • Rosecrance |
| • Geostar | • Habitat for Humanity |
| • Legal Shield Business Solutions | • Prairie State Legal |
| • MRA Janitorial | • 100 Strong |
| • Boys & Girls Club | • The Workforce Connection |
| | • Milestone Inc |

RHA was so pleased by the turn out and hope the people that joined us for some food, fun, and life changing opportunities had a great day!

