



Leading People Through Lightness and Darkness

A Reflection of the Journey all of us Took Together

I believe a leadership role is one of the most rewarding roles an individual can take. You get to know people on another level rather than just on the surface. The priority of my team leadership is to engage the right people, at the correct times, to the right degree in their daily work. For me, that engagement starts when I recast the role of the RHA employees rather than just rolling up my sleeves and executing a top-down strategy. Along with my Leadership Team, we engage employees who contribute their imagination, work, and life experience, drawing on the 'right minds at the right time.

Public Housing Agency's traditional management has historically prioritized projects and assigned people to them. However, leaders are only sometimes the source of the idea. I am of the school of thought that says that the people closest to the concept are best equipped to make the call. They are deep in the trenches, see the issues, and see the potential of the highest best good, but only if their personal commitment is to its success! Therefore, our continued efforts are varied yet always strategic.

As I look back since I have taken on the role of CEO, a period of political and economic change, it is remarkable how much we have accomplished. We recognize the value of social well-being and its relationship with physical and psychological well-being. To this end, we work diligently to assist the understanding and empowering of individuals to manage budgets and how best to put their money to work to realize their financial independence and goals. Helping residents gain knowledge about their financial performance is our continued dedication to supporting their growth and success. We strive to use our resources to improve the quality of life for residents while providing affordable housing and opportunities for personal growth. Our staff has crafted or identified creative and innovative ways to continue tracking how our residents interact with

us, the human services they need, and the opportunities they have succeeded in and accomplished.

Leading people through the darkest days can be one of the most challenging tasks but also the most rewarding. During the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a new way of living every day, from lockdowns and social distancing to masks and working remotely. These external forces that threw obstacles in my path challenged me as not only a leader of people but a leader in my agency.



We met and assisted hundreds of residents in need, and when we could not meet our residents face to face, there was anxiety about what we could do to help.

Overcoming that uncertainty, my team took charge, listened, and complied with RHA policy, State mandates, and federal guidelines. From working remotely full-time to hybrid work and online meetings, we addressed our resident's issues and concerns.

Once the vaccines became available to the public, the light was at the end of the tunnel. We got back to the office and started doing what we love again; meeting with our residents face-to-face and addressing their needs and concerns. We offered online resources to have our residents let us know if they needed assistance while some of our elderly residents waited on vaccine appointments; we installed kiosks for temperature readings at all facility lobbies and created a dedicated page on our website providing up-to-date information and resources regarding everything COVID-19 related.

As we reflect on our collective journey, I am grateful for our team's dedication, resilience, and creativity. Together, we have overcome challenges, embraced change, and positively impacted the lives of the individuals and families we serve. Our commitment to continuous improvement and unwavering support for our residents will drive us forward.

My Leadership Team was mandated to think both globally applicable and locally leverageable. As a result, one of the many advantages of having diverse talent within our agency is that each person brings a rich array of experiences, ideas, and perspectives to address problems. Amidst the darkness, we found light. I firmly believe in cultivating an inclusive workplace that leverages each individual's unique talents to achieve our organization's vision and mission.

As we move into 2023, let us remain steadfast in our commitment to our mission and vision. Let us continue to prioritize the well-being of our residents, empowering them to achieve their goals and aspirations. Together, we have made a difference in their lives, providing housing, a sense of belonging, support, and opportunity.

I am excited about the future we are building together. The five-year plan we have crafted as a HUD-designated Move to Work agency will propel us further on our path of transformation and

innovation. Let us embrace this opportunity to leverage our collective wisdom, expertise, and passion to make an even more significant impact on our community.

In conclusion, I want to express my deep appreciation for your unwavering dedication and hard work. It is through your efforts that we have achieved so much. Our journey has been marked by resilience, compassion, and a shared sense of purpose. I am confident that together, we will continue to write a remarkable success story for RHA and the people we serve.

Thank you for being part of this incredible journey. Let us move forward with enthusiasm, determination, and a profound belief in our ability to create positive change.

With heartfelt appreciation,

Laura