

The RHA

IN FOCUS

Newsletter 2023

SEPTEMBER



BUILDING COMMUNITY AND CAMARADERIE

Rockford Housing Authority's Unforgettable Spirit Week 2023

In the heart of Rockford, a city known for its vibrant community spirit, the Rockford Housing Authority orchestrated a week as a testament to unity, team-building, and a celebration of the RHA family.

The RHA office buzzed with energy as employees from different departments mingled, united by the common purpose of fostering stronger bonds. Reflecting on the week's events, Laura Snyder, CEO of Rockford Housing Authority states "Empowerment is at the heart of what we do. As we chart the course for RHA's future, my vision is to empower both our employees and the communities we serve, creating a ripple effect of positive change that extends far beyond our walls."

Day 1 - Goal Setting: "1970's – Dress from the Decade"

Transporting everyone on journey down memory lane, Monday dawned with a call to embrace the retro charm of the 1970s. The Rockford Housing Authority (RHA) Spirit Week presented its first theme: 'Back to the 1970s'.

"At RHA, we recognize that a strong sense of community within our organization drives our success. Spirit Week isn't just an event; it's a manifestation of our commitment to fostering unity and camaraderie among our team members. It's a time to celebrate our shared purpose and create memories that fuel our collective journey," declares Laura.

**Rockford Housing
Authority Secures \$10
Million Grant**
Laura Snyder, CEO, Page 13

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 7

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 1-4 | RHA Spirit Week |
| 5 | Recap Black Business Month |
| 6 | National Suicide Prevention Month |
| 7-9 | Mayor's Hunger Campaign & 911 Remembrance |
| 10-12 | Hispanic Heritage Month |
| 12-13 | 815 Shop Local Event |
| 14-15 | RHA Secures \$10 Million Grant |
| 16 | Did you Know? |



Day 2 - Networking Extravaganza: “Favorite Sports Team, show your Support!”

On Tuesday, the Rockford Housing Authority transformed into a vibrant arena of colors, jerseys, and fervent team spirit as the second day of Spirit Week opened under the theme of “Show Your Support: Favorite Sports Team.” RHA team members gathered to proudly display their allegiances and cheer for their beloved sports teams. Amidst the friendly competition, a sense of unity prevailed – a reminder that, just like in sports, a strong team is built on mutual respect, collaboration, and unwavering support for one another.

Day 3 - Uniting Through Play: “Alma Mater, Show off your High School or College Mascot”

From college sweatshirts to high school jerseys, the outfits encapsulated the essence of the schools that had left an indelible mark on each person’s life. It was a vibrant testament to the significance of education in shaping individuals and communities. As Wednesday drew to a close, the “Alma Mater: Represent Your School” theme left an enduring impression. These activities fostered a sense of unity that extended beyond the games, binding coworkers as allies on both professional and personal fronts. Empowered employees are catalysts for transformative change. “Spirit Week aligns perfectly with our operational strategies by empowering our teams to connect their work with a larger purpose. Through the bonds formed during this week, we fortify our ability to innovate, collaborate, and deliver meaningful outcomes,” adds Odessa.

Day 4 - The Essence of Community: "Hat Day, Wear Your Favorite Hat!"

Thursday at the Rockford Housing Authority burst forth with a kaleidoscope of creativity and individuality as team members donned an array of hats for the Spirit Week's "Hat Day: Express Your Unique Style" theme. From sleek fedoras to whimsical beanies, and everything in between, the RHA team members showcased personal style and self-expression.

Beyond the fashion, it was a celebration of the myriad identities that compose the RHA family.

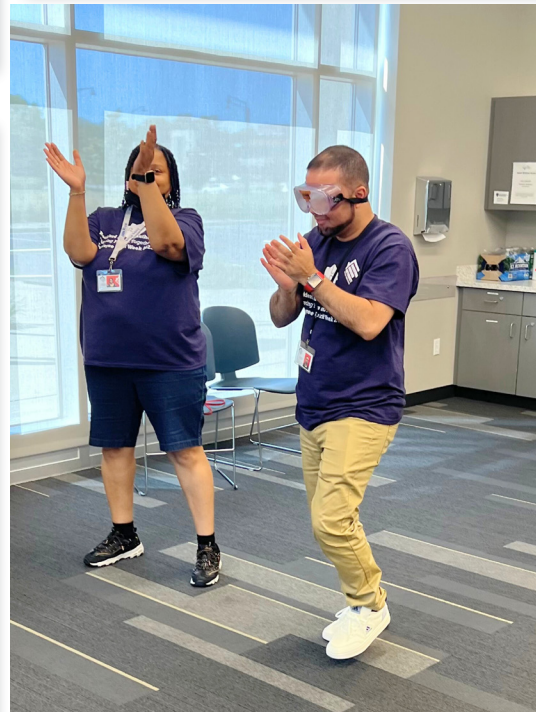
Day 5 - The Grand Finale: "Scavenger Hunt"

"Day five created and fostered an environment where our staff can network, set goals, and engage in team-building activities, these experiences have rippled outward, creating a positive impact on our residents and the broader community," states Laura. September 1st saw the RHA City-Wide Scavenger Hunt unfold, RHA employees scoured the city, encountering clues that led them to unexpected destinations.

"As we look toward the future of RHA, Spirit Week serves as a powerful reminder of our collective strength. It's not just about activities; it's about weaving connections that endure. By participating in Spirit Week, we not only celebrate our organization's identity but also amplify the impact we have on the lives we touch," concludes Laura.

The event had been more than just activities; it had been a reminder of the strength of togetherness, the power of shared goals, and the beauty of a community united in purpose.





Reflecting on the Significance of Recognizing and Celebrating National Black Business Month

Insights from Laura Snyder, CEO

As the month of August of 2023 has drawn to a close, we would like to take a moment to reflect on the profound importance of recognizing and celebrating National Black Business Month. This annual observance holds a special place in our hearts as we reflect on the impact it has had on our community, the businesses we

support, and the broader societal narrative. In this narrative, we are privileged to share insights from Laura Snyder, CEO of the Rockford Housing Authority, as she highlights the significance of dedicating a month to honor and uplift Black-owned businesses.



emphasizes, "This observance prompts us to engage in meaningful discussions about equity, access to resources, and policies that can create a more level playing field for all entrepreneurs, regardless of their background."

Inspiring Future Generations

The celebration of National Black Business Month holds a special significance in inspiring future generations of Black entrepreneurs. When young individuals see successful role models who share their experiences, they are more likely to believe in their own potential. "By showcasing the accomplishments of Black-owned businesses," Laura Snyder affirms, "we plant seeds of inspiration and provide aspiring entrepreneurs with the courage to pursue their dreams. This empowerment has a ripple effect that can shape communities and drive progress."

In the closing moments of National Black Business Month, RHA once again underscores the enduring importance of this observance. As we reflect on the recognition and celebration, we carry forward the lessons and inspiration it imparts. Laura Snyder aptly encapsulates, "National Black Business Month is not just a commemoration; it's a call to action to continue supporting and uplifting Black-owned businesses throughout the year. Through our collective efforts, we can foster a more inclusive, equitable, and prosperous society where the achievements of all entrepreneurs are recognized and celebrated."

With these sentiments in mind, the Rockford Housing Authority remains committed to championing diversity, equity, and inclusivity within the business landscape. National Black Business Month serves as a reminder that progress is a shared journey, and by celebrating and supporting Black-owned businesses, we contribute to a brighter and more promising future for all.



National Suicide Prevention Month

If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org to reach the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

There is an average of 132 suicides each day in this country. It's the tenth leading cause of death in America — second leading for ages 25-34, and third leading for ages 15-24. In order to create awareness and strengthen the fight against suicide, the entire month of September is Suicide Prevention Month. This month is a time to raise awareness of this stigmatized, and often taboo, topic.

People and organizations use this month to shift public perception, spread hope and share vital information to people affected by suicide. RHA's goal in this month and in this article is to shed light on the topic of mental help, and make sure the community knows of all the resources that are available to them.

Originally established in 1979 as a support group by family members of individuals diagnosed with mental illness, the National Alliance on Mental Illness is a United States-based organization that serves as a resource on this highly taboo topic. NAMI helps those affected by suicide, assists with sourcing effective treatment services, and raises awareness for educating others on its prevention. NAMI chooses a highlighted campaign; this year the highlight is "Together for Mental Health" campaign. The campaign encourages people to "bring their voices together to advocate for better mental health care." After years of advocacy and preparation, 988 is now available nationwide as the new number to contact for mental health, substance use and suicide crises — a simple, easy-to-remember way for people to get help. This new number will allow people to quickly connect with support during a crisis, 24/7, no matter where they live. Mental health and suicidal thoughts can affect any individual, any age, any race, and any gender.

One local mental health facility is right in the heart of downtown Rockford. Oak Street Health supports and treats all kinds of mental illness and behavioral health.

"Behavioral health is a term that refers to the relationship between a person's behavior and their overall mental and emotional well-being. Behavioral health includes a wide range of conditions, including mental health conditions like depression and anxiety, as well as substance abuse disorders and other behavioral problems. Behavioral health professionals, such as therapists and counselors, work with individuals to help them understand and manage their thoughts, emotions, and behaviors in order to improve their overall well-being and quality of life. The specific duties of a Behavioral Health Specialist vary depending on the needs of their patients and the policies of the healthcare facility where they work. At Oak Street Health, our Behavioral Health Specialists in Rockford, IL develop preventive care plans to help you achieve your physical and mental health goals. Get the care you deserve. Schedule an in-person, phone, or video visit with a trusted behavioral health professional today."

Visit their website here: <https://www.oakstreethealth.com/locations/rockford-il/service/behavioral-health>



"Empathy in Action"



Through the lens of the Rockford Housing Authority, the story of hunger is not one of defeat but of resilience, of solidarity and unwavering determination.



A heartfelt realization permeates the city of Rockford, where compassion and care shine even in the face of adversity. Mayor Tom McNamara echoes the sentiment, recognizing the community's unwavering spirit and its commitment to uplifting those in need. As Rockford continues its dedicated efforts to combat hunger, a renewed fundraiser seeks to harness the city's goodwill, with a goal of raising \$45,000 to amplify awareness and provide vital sustenance.

A Community with Heart

Amid the challenges faced by the city of Rockford, a silver lining emerges—an indomitable sense of community. Mayor Tom McNamara's words underscore the compassion that flows through the veins of Rockford's residents. "In the midst of adversity, our city is illuminated by the warmth of our remarkable residents," McNamara remarks. "Their compassion knows no bounds, and their willingness to extend a helping hand to those in need is truly inspiring."

Mayor McNamara sheds light on the incredible progress made over the years. "We've witnessed significant contributions over the past couple of years. The generosity of our community has translated into substantial funds, which have played a vital role in addressing hunger. Now, more than ever, we need to come together once again to support those struggling to secure the nourishment they deserve."

A Noble Pursuit: Bridging the Nutrition Gap, The Mayor's Hunger Campaign

At the heart of the fundraising effort lies a noble cause—to bridge the nutrition gap for those facing food insecurity within the community. With the overarching goal of raising \$45,000, this initiative aims to shed light on the stark reality faced by individuals who grapple with the challenge of accessing nutritious meals. The Greater Rockford Pantry Coalition, comprising nine local pantries, serves as a beacon of hope for countless individuals and families in need.

Mayor McNamara emphasizes the significance of this endeavor, stating, "The objective of our fundraiser extends beyond monetary figures. It's about rallying our community, igniting conversations, and making a real difference in the lives of those who deserve more than just sustenance—they deserve dignity."

Joining Hands: Empowering the Community

The Greater Rockford Pantry Coalition serves as a collective force, channeling resources, and determination toward easing the burden of food insecurity. The coalition's efforts reach deep into the community, fostering a network of support that uplifts those who need it most. By joining hands, community members, local businesses, and city officials bolster the initiative's impact. Laura Snyder, CEO of the Rockford Housing Authority, underscores the value of unity. "When individuals, businesses, and organizations come together, we harness a formidable force for change," she remarks. "Our community's strength lies in its unity. By standing together, we amplify our ability to make a positive impact."

Continues to page 8

Uniting Voices for a Common Goal

In the narrative of Rockford Housing Authority's continued mission against hunger, the story isn't just about deprivation—it's about resilience, unity, and transformation. The numbers may be stark, but they're a testament to the tenacity of the human spirit. As the community rallies around this cause, the Executive Director of Transform Rockford, Wally Haas' words reverberate louder: "We must advocate, educate, and provide resources to lift up those that come to us for assistance." With an unswerving commitment, RHA and its partners endeavor to tackle hunger as a pressing concern that demands attention, empathy, and collaborative solutions. Ms. Snyder's perspective resonates as the compass guiding RHA's efforts: "Every story of triumph over hunger is a victory for our entire community. By uniting our voices and resources, we can create a future where food insecurity becomes a thing of the past."



A Glimpse into the Numbers, Winnebago County, Illinois

In a community comprising 295,266 residents, the haunting truth surfaces. A staggering 105,385 individuals, often silenced by circumstance, find themselves navigating the labyrinth of low income. Among them, 21,278 courageous souls bear the added weight of limited food access—a disheartening 20.2% of the low-income population.

These numbers, painstakingly curated by the US Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service, serve as the backbone of an ongoing narrative. They bring to light the challenges faced by those who live at the intersection of economic instability and food scarcity. Ms. Snyder shared her perspective on this issue: "These statistics are not just numbers on a page; they represent the very lives and aspirations of our community members. Understanding their stories is crucial in our pursuit of meaningful change."

Mayor McNamara's Vision for a Better Future

In Mayor McNamara's vision, the fundraiser becomes a catalyst for transformation. "Our goal is not merely financial; it's about awakening the collective consciousness of our city. It's about standing together in support of one another, particularly those who face barriers to securing a basic human need—nutritious food." The Mayor's Hunger Campaign committee plays a pivotal role in this fight, forging connections among diverse stakeholders. This collaborative initiative unites local government, impassioned nonprofits, community organizations, and individuals driven by a shared purpose. Collectively, they stand as a formidable force against the shadows of food insecurity. Mayor McNamara envisions Rockford as a beacon of compassion and empowerment. "We aspire to create a community where every individual has access to wholesome meals, where no one has to make the heartbreaking choice between hunger and dignity. By addressing food insecurity, we're forging a path toward a brighter future for all."

Laura Snyder's voice echoes as a guiding force for RHA's endeavors: "Each triumph over food insecurity is a triumph for our entire community. By pooling our resources and raising our voices, we can envision a future where hunger is a thing of the past."

As the battle against food insecurity rages on, the Rockford Housing Authority stands as a beacon of hope, driving change, one meal, one step, and one heart at a time.

A Call to Action: Donate Today

As Rockford sets its sights on the \$45,000 goal, the call to action resonates far and wide. Ms. Snyder emphasizes the collective power of individuals to drive change. "Every dollar, every contribution, every act of kindness matters. Together, we have the capacity to make a tangible difference in the lives of our neighbors. This fundraiser is not just a campaign; it's a testament to our city's heart."

Mayor McNamara echoes the sentiment, urging individuals to take part in this crucial endeavor. "Today, I call upon every resident, every business, and every compassionate soul to join us in our mission. By donating, by raising awareness, by extending empathy, we can rewrite the narrative of hunger in our community."

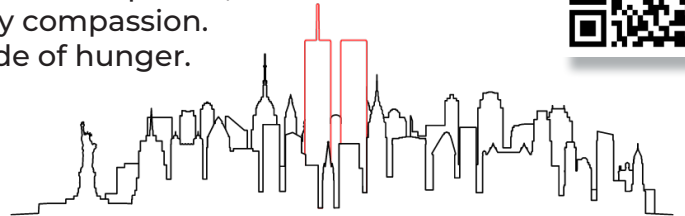
In Rockford, the stage is set for a collective journey—a journey driven by empathy, fueled by unity, and guided by a vision of a community where no one goes to bed hungry. As the city rallies behind the cause, Mayor McNamara's words ring true: "Let's prove once again that Rockford's heart is its greatest asset. Let's stand together and make a difference—today."

To contribute to the fundraiser and support the Greater Rockford Pantry Coalition's vital work, please consider donating today at <https://www.greaterrockfordpantrycoalition.com/donate>

The Mayor's Hunger Campaign committee, a collaborative force in this struggle, bridges gaps that isolation often perpetuates. The committee brings together local government, dedicated nonprofits, community organizations, and individuals driven by compassion. Together, they craft a resilient front against the tide of hunger.



911 Remembrance



The tragic event of 9/11 happened 22 years ago. What happened on that day shaped and changed The United States forever. The 9/11 Memorial & Museum will be having events and tributes for the victims and their families. "During this day, we will share the history and lessons learned with a new generation, teach them about the ongoing repercussions of the 9/11 attacks, and inspire the world with memories of our fortitude, strength, and resilience."

Each year on the exact anniversary of 9/11, the families will gather at the Memorial Plaza in New York City to read aloud the names of the 2,983 men, women, and children whose lives were taken on that tragic day.

History

According to the 9/11 Memorial and Museum, "9/11" is shorthand for four coordinated terrorist attacks carried out by al-Qaeda, an Islamist extremist group, that occurred on the morning of September 11, 2001. Nineteen terrorists from al-Qaeda hijacked four commercial airplanes, deliberately crashing two planes into the upper floors of the North and South Towers of the World Trade Center complex and a third plane into the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia. The Twin Towers ultimately collapsed because of the damage sustained from the impacts and the resulting fires. After learning about the other attacks, passengers on the fourth hijacked plane, Flight 93, fought back, and the plane was crashed into an empty field in western Pennsylvania about 20 minutes by air from Washington, D.C. The attacks killed 2,977 people from 93 nations: 2,753 people were killed in New York; 184 people were killed at the Pentagon and 40 people were killed on Flight 93.

Take the chance to learn about this day by reading an article, donating to the museum, or asking questions. We will never forget this day as a nation. <https://www.911memorial.org/>



Celebrating the Spirit of Hispanic Heritage Month

A Message from Rockford
Housing Authority



As the crisp air of autumn approaches, the Rockford Housing Authority is excited to share with you the heartwarming journey we continue to embark on. It's a journey that highlights the richness of culture, the strength of unity, and the power of small cultural and ethnic businesses within our community. "National Hispanic Heritage Month is a time to celebrate the beautiful tapestry of cultures that make our community strong. It's about embracing diversity and recognizing the contributions that have shaped our collective identity," states Laura Snyder, CEO. The Rockford Housing Authority is coming together to celebrate the rich tapestry of Latino

culture while shining a spotlight on the invaluable contributions of all small businesses in our community and region.

Embracing the Tapestry of Culture

From September 15 to October 15, we proudly join the nation in observing National Hispanic Heritage Month. This is a time to celebrate and honor the histories, cultures, and invaluable contributions of our fellow American citizens who trace their ancestry to Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, Central and South America. It's a celebration that's woven into the fabric of our community's diversity.

A Legacy of Inclusion

Reflecting, Laura conveys, "As we commemorate this month, we're not just celebrating the past; we're building bridges to the future. By supporting local small businesses, we're fostering an environment where entrepreneurship thrives, and their dreams become reality." Let's journey back to 1968 when the seeds of recognition were planted. Under the visionary leadership of President Lyndon Johnson, Hispanic Heritage Week was established. It was a step forward in acknowledging the vibrant Hispanic community's contributions to our society. Fast forward to 1988, and President Ronald Reagan expanded this observance into a month-long celebration, covering September 15 to October 15. On August 17, 1988, it was etched into law as Public Law 100-402.

Dates to Help you Define the Significance of September 15

September 15 holds a profound significance. On this day, we honor the independence anniversaries of countries that form the mosaic of Hispanic heritage – Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Their struggles and triumphs resonate with our own aspirations for a united and diverse community.

But the story doesn't stop there. On September 16 and September 18, Mexico and Chile proudly celebrate their own battles for independence. Their journeys of resilience and determination are a testament to the strength within the Hispanic culture.

Fostering Unity and Entrepreneurship

During this month of celebration, we extend an invitation to all members of our community to come together. Through various events held throughout the Rock River Valley region, from art exhibitions to culinary and ethnic showcases, we're embracing and recognizing the diversity that enriches our lives. This year, as you may have already seen, we are shining a spotlight on our local small businesses – the engines of entrepreneurship that keep our community vibrant.



Your Participation Matters

From pop-up markets featuring Latino artisans to food festivals showcasing traditional dishes, we're thrilled to provide support and encouragement for these businesses to shine. One of the most exciting aspects of this month's celebration is the emphasis on supporting these businesses. We firmly believe that small businesses are the backbone of our economy, and this year's events will be an opportunity to highlight the incredible entrepreneurial spirit within our community.

We encourage all members of the Rockford community to join us. Whether you're a long-time resident or new to the area, these events provide a wonderful opportunity to connect with neighbors, learn about different cultures, and support local businesses. Your presence and engagement can make a real difference in creating a strong, united community.

The Rockford Spirit: Embracing Diversity, Building Unity

At RHA, we believe that the spirit of unity and diversity thrives within our community. As we commemorate National Hispanic Heritage Month, let's remember that by embracing our differences, we strengthen the bonds that hold us together. Our collective heritage is a tapestry of stories, and each thread is a testament to the resilience and spirit that defines us.

Celebrate, Learn, and Unite

Keep an eye on local social media platforms, community centers, and local announcements for more information about the exciting events planned for National Hispanic Heritage Month. "Our Rockford community is a canvas of stories, and National Hispanic Heritage Month allows us to paint with the vibrant colors of culture and unity. Let's come together, learn from each other, and strengthen the bonds that make us who we are," concludes Laura. Together, let's embrace the beauty of diversity and celebrate the entrepreneurial spirit that enriches our community. Thank you for being an integral part of our Rockford family. We look forward to celebrating with you!

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

The Rockford Regional Hispanic Chamber of Commerce is a membership-based organization of local business leaders and individuals who work together to provide leadership that promotes and defends responsible, equitable economic development, job opportunities, government, educational excellence, and long-term sustainability for local Hispanic and minority residents.

Link: <https://www.rhspaniccc.org/home>



The Illinois Latino Small Business Partnership, funded by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and powered by the Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce provides assistance to small businesses to continue to recover from the pandemic and prepare for growth.

Link: <https://ihccbbusiness.net/illinois-latino-small-business-partnership/>



YWCA La Voz Latina offers a wide variety of services and programs for communities in Boone, Jo Daviess, McHenry, Ogle, Stephenson and Winnebago counties in Illinois. Programs are not limited to the Latino/Hispanic population.

Link: <https://www.ywcanwil.org/la-voz-latina/>



3rd Annual 815 Shop Local Event

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 30TH 12-5PM
DON CARTER LANES PARKING LOT

3rd Annual 815 Shop Local Event

Free Entrance ✦ Local Vendors
Food Trucks ✦ Beer Tent ✦ Live Music

PROCEEDS WILL BE DONATED TO THE
HEALING DREAMS FOUNDATION

HOSTED BY:

CASSIDY MCMAHON
CUSTOM VINYL

SHANTAE RODRIGUEZ
Broadmoor
Agency
Inc.

This year the 3rd Annual 815 Shop Local Event is happening on September 30th at Don Carter Lanes!

Stop by and browse your favorite local businesses, while enjoying the best local food and drinks. Shooters Bar & Grill will be providing drinks at their beer tent this year for those 21+. Not to mention live music from the area's very own Chris Lewis and DJ JayWalkin!

The event will be raffling off locally donated gift baskets to raise as much money as they can for the Healing Dreams Foundation! Last year the event raised over \$1,600 for the Super Hero Center for Autism... this year they would like to put forth a goal of \$2,000 to donate to the Healing Dreams Foundation!

Shantae Rodriguez, an independent insurance broker with Broadmoor Insurance Agency and, Cassidy McMahon with Cassidy McMahon Custom Vinyl are putting together the 3rd Annual 815 Shop Local Event, a market where local businesses/artists can come together annually to show support for one another while raising awareness for autism and children with disabilities within our community.

We plan to have food trucks, live music, and an alcohol tent provided by Shooters Bar and Grill. Proceeds from vendor fees, raffle baskets, and event merchandise sales will be donated to The Healing Dreams Foundation Inc.

“We previously fundraised for The Superhero Center for Autism in Loves Park, IL the last two years. In 2021 we raised \$1,200 with 25 vendors and in 2022 we surpassed that by raising just over \$1,600 for the center while having 50 vendors and almost 400 patrons in attendance. Jamey Funk with Don Carter Lanes / Shooters Bar and Grill suggested The Healing Dreams Foundation would be a great fit for this year as we are looking to expand and reach more organizations that help our community.

My five-year-old daughter is nonverbal and autistic so this cause is extremely close to my heart. This is a great way to raise awareness for resources and services that we have available within our community that families might not know about.”

Some vendors that may attend the event include:

Color Street Independent Stylist

Mad Threading

Funky Junk Art

H.L. Fragrance +

Queen of Swords Divination

Angel Bliss

Auroras Soaps..Natural Hand Made

Kay & Jane's Treasures

FNCR.Z

LilPixieCreations

D'sugars

Rae Designs

Desgins by Amelia

Jessdreamscreations

Marcos Vapor

Crochet Floré

Double Dog Designs by Pam

Honey & Hive Clays

Cozy Tufts

Expressions 360

Crazy Crafters

Beauty Fun with Dionna

Carries Crafting Co

Ping's PANIK

Toya's Healing Candles

Bowtique

Cali Sas Homemade Chamoy

Janet Louise Boutique

CrispyMade

Honey's Lemonade

Card Nineteen Suncatchers

Liv's Lemonade

Sweet Swirl Cotton Candy

Berkowski & Co.

Cassidy Custom Vinyl (Host/Vendor)

Shantae Rodriguez – Broadmoor Agency (Host/Vendor)

Hazy Haven

As we wrap up Black Owned Business Month, it's important to remember about all of the wonderful local shops and services that in the greater Rockford Community. This article and event is a reminder of just that!

Check out the RHA Facebook page to see how we have been celebrating small, black owned businesses this month!

ROCKFORD HOUSING AUTHORITY SECURES \$10 MILLION GRANT TO BOOST RESIDENTIAL HEALTH AND SAFETY



Rockford Housing Authority Secures \$10 Million Grant to Boost Residential Health and Safety

By Laura Snyder, CEO of Rockford Housing Authority

I am thrilled to share some incredible news with our Rockford community—The Rockford Housing Authority (RHA) has been awarded a monumental \$10 million grant dedicated to enhancing residential health and safety. This grant is a game-changer for our community and marks a significant step forward in our ongoing commitment to providing cleaner, safer living environments for our resident families, while also driving local economic growth and employment opportunities.

HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge emphasized the importance of this funding effort, stating, “American families deserve a safe and healthy place to call home. However, in many older homes, lead-based paint can be a serious threat to the health and well-being of children.” With this grant, we can identify and address homes where occupants are at risk of lead exposure and other health hazards, reinforcing our promise of a healthier, stronger community.



HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge

Empowering Our Community

At RHA, we have always been dedicated to creating safe and healthy living environments. This grant, administered under the Housing-Related Hazards (HRH) and Lead-Based Paint (LBP) Capital Funding program, provides vital resources to public housing agencies (PHAs) like ours. It equips us to evaluate and mitigate residential health hazards, including lead-based paint, carbon monoxide, mold, radon, fire safety, and asbestos – all of which directly impact the well-being of our cherished residents.

Fulfilling Our Promise

We are dedicated to fulfilling our promise of a healthier, stronger community. This grant aligns perfectly with our mission and enables us to protect families from hazards like lead exposure. As I mentioned, “We are dedicated to creating safe and healthy living environments. This grant aligns perfectly with our mission and enables us to protect families from hazards like lead exposure, fulfilling our promise of a healthier, stronger community.”



A Boost to Local Economy

This grant's impact goes beyond just improving living conditions—it injects a significant \$10 million into our local economy. This financial boost is not only an investment in safer housing but also a catalyst for local economic growth. It supports our Section III efforts for employment and creates long-term job opportunities, thereby benefiting our region.

Acknowledging Our Team

I want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the dedicated staff at RHA. Their unwavering commitment to our mission has played a pivotal role in securing this grant. Without their hard work and dedication, this achievement would not have been possible.

Looking Ahead

We are eagerly anticipating the transformative impact of this remarkable \$10 million grant on Rockford. Together, as an organization and a community, we are creating substantial positive change in the lives of our residents and the prosperity of our local area. Stay tuned as we embark on this journey to enhance residential health and safety and continue our mission of making Rockford a healthier, safer, and more vibrant place to call home.

Warmest Regards,
Laura



Rockford Housing Authority
223 S Winnebago Street
Rockford, IL 61102

Did you know?



“When inequities have historically blocked low-income families and families of color from buying a home, Illinois is stepping up to right those wrongs and pave the way to a better future for communities that have faced these barriers,” said Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton.

The Opening Doors Homebuyer Assistance Program is a recommitment to our mission of showing that housing is a right for all, and that every community deserves access to the opportunities that come with owning a home.” In 2022, IHDA’s down payment assistance programs helped over 5,200 households purchase a home in Illinois. Under Opening Doors, IHDA will provide a 30-year 1st mortgage with a fixed interest rate and \$6,000 in down payment and/or closing cost assistance. The down payment assistance is forgiven after five years, and no monthly payment is due from the borrower.

Learn More about IHDA: <https://www.illinois.gov/news/press-release.25929.html>

