



THE VOICE OF CHOICE

PSO TRANSFORMATION NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO

A MESSAGE FROM JANET ABRAHAMS

Dear Perkins Family,

The COVID-19 Pandemic continues to impact our daily lives. However, the pandemic has not stopped the momentum that has begun with the redevelopment of Perkins Homes. We have relocated families from Block A and most of the families from Block B. Because of unforeseen circumstances we have had to expedite the relocation of our remaining residents and have made great strides in doing so. Although we have not relocated all of our families our team continues to pursue the goal of relocating all of the Perkins families as soon as humanly possible.



We are on our way of accomplishing many of our goals and objectives for the PSO Transformation Plan. The TIF was signed by the Mayor and is now law.

The Finance Department has begun the process of getting the bonds issued so we can begin using those funds for the public infrastructure that is required for the PSO project area.

HABC continues to communicate with our residents about the progress that we are making on the PSO Transformation Plan. The HABC website has up-to-date information about the PSO Transformation Plan. If you do not have a computer, you can always call our CNI Manager, Arlisa Anderson at 410-361-9014.

We wish you and your family a Happy New Year.

IMPROVING EDUCATION PROVIDED USI WITH 16 BEDTIME IN A BOX THIS YEAR

In each box, there was a reading/counting learning kit, books, pajamas, toothbrush, toothpaste, a stuffed animal, and a bath time kit. Over the next year, families will receive 4 kits (every three months), and 8 books (on the off months). This provides USI an in-person touchpoint with families over the year, especially now that they have moved throughout Baltimore City. This will also help us learn how to better support parents and drive better outcomes with students. Education Specialist Subira Brown, is working hard

to find ways to encourage fun learning for children in Perkins from ages 3-5 years old. Our goal is that youth begin kindergarten ready to learn on gradelevel!

As the boxes were being delivered to our office, parents were excited to see what was in the boxes. A few of the moms asked for additional boxes for some of their other children to support reading. Before partners were able to reach all the homes, one receiving parent sent pictures of her son playing with the items in the box. **#EducationPillar**





A NOTE FROM YOUR CNI MANAGER, ARLISA W. ANDERSON

Dear Friends,

As 2020 is winding down, I wanted to take a moment to thank you for all of your patience and support during these very trying times with the onset of the global pandemic. HABC has had to adapt to this new environment in order to continue to assist our residents with

their needs and concerns.

The relocation team continues to assist our residents with relocating to their new temporary homes until the PSO Transformation Plan is completed.

The two relocation firms that are assisting our residents are Diversified Property Services (DPS) who can be reached at 443-900-1910 and Comprehensive Relocation Housing Services (CRHS) who can be reached at 410-831-9366. Both firms remain located at 313 S. Herring Court. CVR Associates is no longer working with us on the relocation efforts at Perkins Homes.

We hope that you and your family have a Happy New Year!

Arlisa

THE TRANSITION TO YOUNG ADULthood – GRADUATE, FIRST TIME VOTER & CAREER EXPLORATION

Congratulations go out to Mr. Demetric Witherspoon, a 19-year old original Perkins Homes Resident! Demetric is a 2020 high school graduate of the prestigious Baltimore “City” College High School. He wanted to initially attend Coppin State University but ran into some enrollment challenges. USI began to work with Demetric in hopes of streamlining the college enrollment process for him. Demetric has decided to pursue a degree in Nursing! In Spring 2021, he will begin his first year as an undergraduate college student – 100% tuition FREE! According to the Registered Nursing Board, undergraduate education in Maryland ranges from \$34,000-\$50,000 for a nursing degree. Demetric has been working closely with his mentor and USI’s student intern Amira Jabbar a senior Social Work major at Morgan State University.

In addition to Mr. Witherspoon pursuing his academic goals, he voted for the first time in his life in this year’s 2020 election. Like many young adults, Demetric was skeptical about voting. The mistrust in government and the system as a whole – impacts many residents. He mentioned that he was not



aware of the past events and everything we endured for the ability to vote and have our vote counted.

“It was only 1965 when the 15th amendment was passed which gave us the right to vote. And still we had our right to vote suppressed due to restrictive laws known as Black Codes,” Amira informed him. She explained how black people marched, went to prison, and even lost their lives for us to be able to vote.

Demetric responded, “You know what, I’m going to go to Dunbar right now to vote.” Demetric did his civil duty and voted that very same day! He was so excited to vote and he said that it felt good. On this day – he made history. There will be much more to come from Mr. Witherspoon in the future... who knows, he may just be one of your registered nurses in the future!

#EducationPillar

BALTIMORE-AREA CONSTRUCTION COMPANY DISTRIBUTED COVID PERSONAL PROTECTION EQUIPMENT (PPE) AND WINTER ESSENTIALS TO PUBLIC HOUSING RESIDENTS

In collaboration with USI – Commercial Group, a family of development and construction companies, sponsored a giveaway as part of Commercial Group’s commitment to Baltimore. The winter essentials giveaway was just one of many community outreach efforts this year by Commercial Group.

The giveaway provided some of our Perkins families with masks, socks, hats, scarves, gloves, other winter essentials, and headphones for students who are engaged in online learning. Many of the items included in the giveaway carry inspirational messages such as “I AM Brilliant” and “I AM Strength.” Kevin Johnson, CEO of the Commercial Group said, “We can’t take away the pain of losing a job, friend or relative, but we can show residents of Perkins Homes that they are cared for and not alone.” If you were not a part of the 300 residents supported during this effort and would like winter or PPE essentials, please contact your USI case manager.

#HealthPillar #HousingStabilization



RESIDENTS OF PERKINS ARE BECOMING PUBLIC HEALTH AMBASSADORS!!!



Eight Perkins residents began training this fall to become a community public health ambassador for families in Perkins. The residents applied with USI and were selected to participate in virtual trainings and have completed COVID-19 contact tracing, sexual assault and abuse, sex trafficking, smoking cessation and stress management training over the last three months. The residents have a robust training schedule in the spring but soon will be certified community health ambassadors! **#HealthPillar**

NEW CITY SPRINGS SCHOOL



Dear Family and Friends of City Springs,

I never could have imagined that our school building would be shut down for nine months and we would be educating students virtually. I could, however, imagine a new, thriving community and school building for Perkins and City Springs. It is no longer a thing of my imagination. It is actually happening!

Having children learning from home has been a challenge for all of us—parents, students, teachers, and me. I live for the day when I can hear the sounds of learning throughout the building, and I am hopeful that day is coming.

I am also hopeful that the new diverse community that is coming through the PSO Transformation Plan will be incredible.

I look forward to welcoming returning families and new families to this new community where City Springs will still stand as a pillar of strength and hope as it has for over fifty years.

The only difference is that we will be doing it from a brand-new school building! As I watch our Perkins families moving away, I hope our families know that City Springs will continue to be a source of support and a mainstay of this community all the way throughout the relocation and transformation process.

The Housing Authority of Baltimore City has included me every step of the way of the PSO Transformation Plan. They have allowed me to consistently be a voice for the City Springs children and families. Although I have been interested in the planning of new housing, parks, and jobs, you will not be surprised to hear that the most exciting part for me has been the designing of our new school building. The new City Springs Elementary/Middle School will be a focus of the new community, welcoming all who will live here with the promise of a first-class education in an exciting and supportive school environment and an ultramodern, attractive school building.

I know that the process to get to this new dynamic community is going to be painful at times, but just as we will get through the current pandemic together, we will get through this transformation process together and when we get there, the rewards will be endless and joyful.

Together we will!

Rhonda Richetta, Principal
City Springs Elementary/Middle School

LIVING CLASSROOMS UPDATE

YOUTH SERVICES

- The POWER House has provided over 65,000 meals since March and continues to serve as a community hub for the Perkins community. The POWER House has continued to serve students daily in a hybrid model, providing homework help, tutoring, and enrichment sessions.
- 21 high school students graduated virtually from our TIZ Summer program. Our team delivered school supplies, notes of encouragement, and important support.
- Bloomberg and Tribeca Films presented a virtual screening to 275 Baltimore Youth on December 4th with short films that address social emotional and racial disparities that plague our youth. Students watched the films and there were panel discussion and a master class in film production for students interested.

Send story ideas and calendar events to Arlisa Anderson at Arlisa.Anderson@habc.org

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- To date in 2020, Workforce Development at the POWER/UA House has placed 37 individuals into full-time employment, enrolled 74 individuals into skills training courses (PerScholas, GED, Bayview, Pre Apprenticeship Training, and granted 86 industry recognized certifications, which included: A+, Network+, Forklift, OSHA 10, Aerial Lift, Scissor Lift, Site Safety, CPR-First Aid and AED, and Johns Hopkins Contact Tracing. To date, our program has provided referral services to 62 Perkins Residents. During the pandemic, our program has been conducting a monthly Virtual ID Clinic assisting individuals with obtaining his/her birth certificate and social security card.
- The Truist Foundation has provided a generous grant supporting virtual Financial Literacy workshops designed to create an understanding of basic banking budgeting, savings, credit and debt reduction for clients, young people enrolled in our programs, staff, and the community at large. The goal of these workshops is to provide the community with a creative and successful pathway to financial success.
- Building on the last year and successful summer programming, our Bloomberg College/Career Readiness program has secured funding from Bloomberg Philanthropies for \$400,000 to continue to implement LCF Year-round College/Career Readiness program. Over the next year, our program will be working with 15 in-school youth.

NEIGHBORHOOD CORNER

Great News! 1234 McElderry (Somerset 1) is nearing completion.

You can take a virtual tour of the common area and see a two bedroom apartment by going to the PSO website (<https://www.habc.org/habc-information/programs-departments/planning-development/psa-transformation/>) and looking under Latest News for the 1234 McElderry article. Besides a tour of the elegant new building there is also apartment and leasing information.

Tell Your Friends! PSO Working Groups -- 2021!

PSO PUBLIC SAFETY WORKING GROUP

PSO Public Safety Working Group Meetings will resume in 2021, and take place on the second Tuesdays of every month at 1pm, beginning January 12, 2021. Public Safety is vital to the overall success and well-being of the PSO community, and we are committed to ensuring the components of our PSO Public Safety Plan are implemented during all phases of the Transformation Plan: Pre-development, development and post-development. As a group, we will review quarterly PSO crime and safety stats, and strategize with the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, BPD, the State's Attorney's Office, and various other community partners to plan activities that can be implemented to mitigate risk and reduce crime.

We would love to have resident input and representation on our PSO Public Safety Working Group. If anyone is interested in being a part of our PSO Public Safety Working Group, **please contact: Jaye.Matthews@baltimorecity.gov or 410-274-5860.**

PSO PUBLIC ART & NEIGHBORHOOD GATEWAY MARKERS WORKING GROUP

We are excited about the Public Art & Neighborhood Gateway Markers that will be a part of the beautification, branding and culture of the PSO neighborhood footprint! We received HUD approval in concept for the Public Art & Neighborhood Gateway Markers activities included in the Critical Community Improvements (CCI) Plan. We will engage the PSO residents and community on the design and installation of murals, mosaics, and other types of public art, throughout the PSO footprint.

We are happy to announce the launch of the PSO Public Art & Neighborhood Gateway Markers Working Group! We will be holding a Virtual Kick-Off Event on Wednesday, February, 10, 2021 at 6 PM to give an overview of this great part of the PSO Transformation Plan. Keep a look out for the flyers/invitations for this exciting upcoming event.

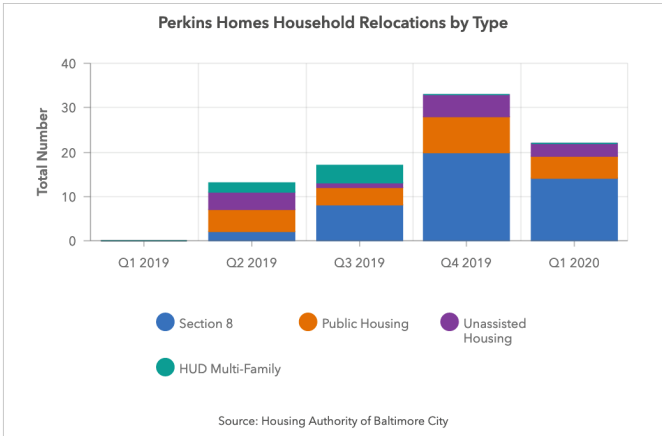
PSO PARKS NORTH CENTRAL PARK AND SOUTH CENTRAL PARK

We would LOVE to hear from you as we are preparing to plan and design our two new PSO Parks: North Central Park and South Central Park. What are some unique park elements and features that you would like to see in your neighborhood parks?
Email your ideas to Jaye.Matthews@baltimorecity.gov or text to 410-274-5860.

TRACKING THE PSO TRANSFORMATION PROGRESS

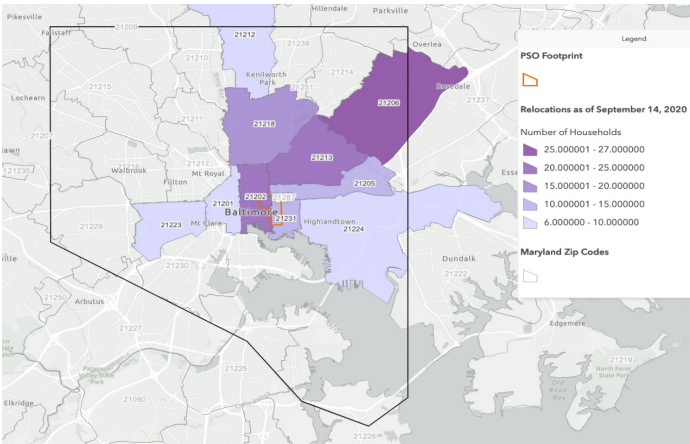
The Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance (BNIA) at the University of Baltimore has been engaged to develop an online tool to track the progress of the Perkins, Somerset, and Oldtown redevelopment project.

This tool, which is designed for public use by residents and other community stakeholders, tracks progress on several key community statistics for the core goals of the PSO Transformation project: Housing, People, Neighborhoods and Economic Development. The web tracking tool will be updated every quarter going forward for such indicators as the number of units under construction, resident participation in job trainings, residential relocations, various neighborhood conditions such as crime and vacancy, as well as, the types of investment funds coming to the PSO development.



The website uses interactive charts and maps so that users can see and understand the trends and patterns in the data. For example, one of the charts provides data about the type of relocations households have experienced from the PSO footprint. The graphic above shows that more than 30 households relocated in the 4th quarter of 2019 and the majority moved using Section 8 vouchers.

The site also includes many maps, such as the one below that displays the zip codes where many of the households that relocated from the PSO area have moved. The map helps everyone see that 21206, 21213, and 21202 have the highest number of relocated families.



The BNIA team will continue to work with all PSO stakeholders to ensure the website is updated every quarter so that the most up-to-date information is available for residents and other stakeholders. The website can also be updated with new datasets that answer questions that residents have about the project and the trends of the surrounding community.

Explore the website today at <https://www.bnijfi.org/psol>

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Urban Strategies is NOW RECRUITING – Youth Leadership

Are you 16-21 years old? Do you want to earn extra money?

The Youth Leaders are individuals who are committed to helping to improve the conditions of their neighborhood.

Urban Strategies is NOW RECRUITING – Residential Carpentry Training

- Free 12-week Training
- Stipends while learning
- Three Certifications
- Career Immediately Following Training at \$18-\$25 per hour
- All tools and uniforms provided

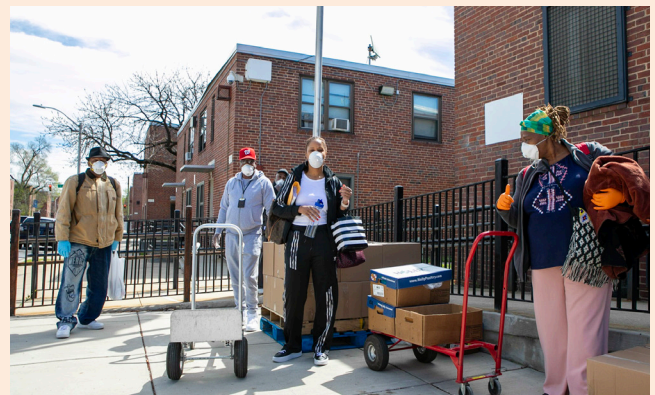
For more information or to apply please call (443) 470-8983

If you are a Perkins family that has faced financial hardship due to COVID-19, USI may be able to assist you with food, essentials, rent and gas & electric! If you need financial assistance, please contact a case manager at 443-470-8983 for more information.

USI PANTRY

Our onsite pantry provides a limited supply of items for Perkins residents only. Please contact our case management hotline to schedule an appointment (443) 470-8983, if you need any of these items:

- Women's Toiletries
- Baby Diapers, Wipes, Formula
- Household Cleaning Supplies (bleach, laundry detergent pods, disinfectant cleaning solutions, antibacterial wipes)
- Depends
- Bed Linens
- Books (youth)
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrushes
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Face Masks



- Hand Sanitizer
- Antibacterial Soap
- Toilet Paper
- Bars of Soap
- Lotion
- Shampoo & Conditioner
- Shaving Razors
- Dog Food (dry & wet)
- Cat Food (dry & wet)
- Cat Litter

**FOOD BOXES ARE AVAILABLE
EVERY FRIDAY & SATURDAY FOR
PICK UP! APPOINTMENTS ARE
REQUIRED FOR THE USI PANTRY –
CALL 443-470-8983**



BACK TO SCHOOL!

USI can help Support your family's learning!

Urban Strategies Inc. has once again partnered with Morgan State University to:

- Ensure children are logging into virtual learning!
- Provide one on one tutoring in English and Mathematics!

- Provide mentorship and fun learning incentives!
- Help connect you with learning and support programs in the Baltimore Community!
- Obtain electronic devices and internet service!

For more information call Subira Brown, Education Specialist at **443-608-5840**.