



THE VOICE OF CHOICE

PSO TRANSFORMATION NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO



A Message from Janet Abrahams, President and CEO of HABC

Dear Perkins Family,

The PSO Transformation Plan is making great progress. Five phases have been completed and soon the sixth phase will be completed. In June the development team had the financial closing on Perkins 4 and it is now under construction. There are only two more phases to go and all of the nine phases will be closed and under construction.

We implore you to come back home!
You can do this by coming into the

leasing office located at 210 S. Caroline Street and expressing your interest in coming back to Perkins as a right to return resident. Don't miss this opportunity to come back to one of the newly development homes.

Janet Abrahams,
President and CEO, HABC

A Note from your CNI Manager, Arlisa W. Anderson

Dear Friends of Perkins,

We are excited to see all the progress that is being made on the PSO Transformation Plan. However, we are very concerned that we will not have enough replacement units for our right to return residents because our families are waiting too long to come in and lease their unit.

Residents need to understand that there are only 629 replacement units. As of today 310, of the 629 units have been leased. Perkins 3 has started the pre-leasing process for this phase which 71 of the 152 units are set aside for the former Perkins Homes families.

As a part of the leasing process you will have to be lease compliant, be able to get BGE in your name and have your \$50 security deposit to move into Perkins Square as a right-to-return resident for the replacement units. If you are not sure about being able to get BGE, please call BGE now at **410-653-0123** to see if you can get service in your name. As always, please feel free to reach out to me at **410-361-9014** or via email at Arlisa.Anderson@habc.org.

Arlisa W. Anderson, Manager, Choice Neighborhood Initiative



Funding provided by:



Development Updates



Perkins Square Leasing Office



Perkins Square-Phase 1

Perkins Square Update

Perkins 1 and 2: 100% leased.

Perkins 3: Perkins 3 has begun pre-leasing.

There are 71 units set aside for the former Perkins Homes residents. If you are interested in coming back to Perkins Square, please call the leasing office at **410-220-5343** or visit the leasing office at 210 S. Caroline Street.

Perkins 4: The financial closing occurred in June 2025. The construction schedule is estimated to take 24 months to complete.

Perkins 5: The development team continues to work towards a year end closing.

Somerset Update

The projected financial closing for The Blake will occur sometime in the third quarter as the development team continues to make great progress on getting to the final phase at the former Somerset Homes site completed.



People Updates



Youth Council Hosted a Mother's Day Event

This past May the Youth Council hosted a Mother's day event where young participants showcased their culinary skills! At Bmore Pasta Kitchen the youth showed the women in their lives how much they appreciated them by cooking them a meal!

If you have a teen between 6th to 12 grade that you would like to participate in more out of school activities, please call Kevin Davis at **443-551-7778**.

Parents at Play Celebration at Port Discovery

Our most recent Parents at Play cohort ended with a celebration at Port Discovery and participating families got a FREE 6-month admission to the Port Discovery Play Museum.

The Parents at Play programming is designed for parents and caregivers to learn fun ways to help their children learn through their day to day interactions at home.

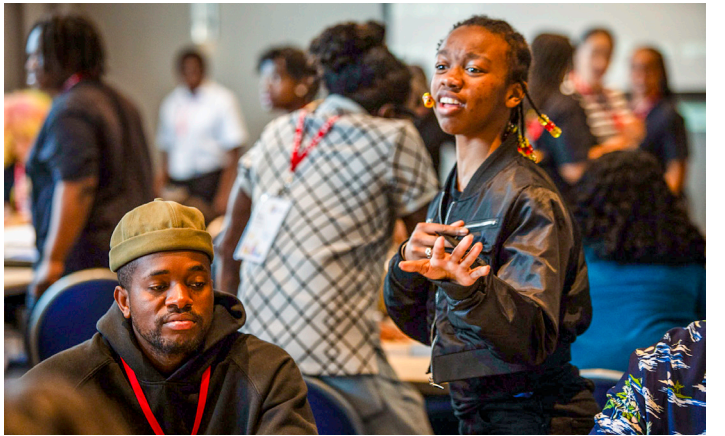
If you have children 0 to 6 years old, please call Kevin Davis at **443-551-7778** to let him know you are interested in being a part of the next cohort.



2025 Choice Means Choice Conference



2025 Choice Means Choice Conference



Upcoming Programming



Urban Strategies **Community Art Classes**

Perkins II

226 S. Caroline Street
August 14
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

The Ruby at Somerset

420 Aisquith Street
September 4 and September 25
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm



Register Today!

Limited Slots Available

First come first serve. Registration required!

Reserve here: bit.ly/artinPSO or scan the QR code >



Upcoming Programming

USI Offering Tutoring for All Students

Beginning in September, USI again will be offering tutoring for all students of all ages and grade at our North Avenue Office (10 E. North Ave Baltimore MD 21202)

Urban Strategies provides transportation support for families interested to ensure that they are able to participate.

Mr. B reported that since his 5-year old and 9-year old girls started participating in the tutoring program, he has noticed that the girls have demonstrated excitement in going to school, and that they are excited to participate in tutoring. If you are interested in having your youth sign up for tutoring. Please reach out to your family support specialist or the USI main number: **443-470-8983**.

Looking for a Therapist or Other Mental Health Support?

If you're feeling stressed, sad, low on energy, or just want to be a better version of yourself, reaching out for mental health support is easier than you think. Our partner is here to guide you through the process, helping you understand what your insurance provides, find a provider, and schedule an appointment in as little as 3 days. We have only heard great reviews so far from those that have signed up: usi.hhpcollaborations.com

Free Membership to YMCA for Families

If you are interested in getting free access to the YMCA gym, classes, and resources call Ms. Jada at **443-218-2583** or contact your family support specialist to get signed up.

YMCA Head Start Enrollment

YMCA Head Start offers quality early education for children ages 3-5 across 8 locations. Programs run Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM, with meals provided daily.

Documents needed to apply: Proof of income, residency, and age, along with health-related documents upon enrollment.

Ready to apply? Complete the pre-enrollment form here: [Welcome to Public Recruitment: https://ymaryland.org](https://ymaryland.org). After eligibility is confirmed, an appointment for final registration will be scheduled.

For more information: Visit the YMCA Head Start webpage: <https://ymaryland.org/programs/headstart> or contact Tijuanna Huggins at tijuannahuggins@ymaryland.org.

Kids Care Plus: Did you know that there is free childcare for up to 4 hours available at FamilyTree? If you have errands to run and in need of childcare, the Kids Care Plus program for children ages 1 to 8 years old from 8:00am to 4:00pm call **800-243-7337**.



PSO Stories

From Perseverance to Power: A Baltimore Story

By Tijanna Jowers—Former Perkins Youth, Current College Student, Future Leader and Change Maker

Growing up on the east side of Baltimore, I didn't always feel proud of where I came from. At 23 years old, reflecting on my journey from Perkins Homes to the podium, I see now that the very things I once questioned have become the foundation of my strength.

For 14 years, Perkins wasn't just where I lived, it was where I grew up, learned resilience, and found community. The projects weren't perfect, but they were ours. From walking home from City Springs School with friends to attending afterschool programs together, there was a unique bond in that neighborhood. It's a kind of closeness that doesn't come from polished buildings but from shared experiences.

One of the people who helped shape that bond was Ms. Glewwie, a teacher who went far beyond her job description. She taught me, my brother, and my cousin, not just academics, but life. She brought cultural experiences and programs like Girl Scouts into our classrooms, often using her own money. She made us feel seen, special, and capable in a world that often overlooks kids like us.

Baltimore's beauty doesn't lie only in its skyline or harbor views. It lives in our culture, our language, and the pride we take in who we are. We are not blind to our city's struggles—we live them. But in that pain, we've created something meaningful: a strong sense of identity and a hunger for something more.

Organizations like Urban Strategies have helped open doors I never thought possible. For so long, my family didn't believe real help existed. The system always seemed to work against us. But USI's support felt different—real, consistent, and rooted in care. They helped me access opportunities that once felt like distant dreams. And it's that kind of presence—authentic and consistent—that can transform lives.

Still, the fight is far from over. Many of us remain trapped in a housing system that punishes progress. Work more hours, and your rent goes up. Make a bit more money, and you lose benefits. The cycle leaves little room to save, dream, or move forward. Programs meant to help are often tied up in red tape or impossible wait lists. It's heartbreaking to do everything "right" and still feel like you're falling behind.



To city leaders, HUD, and decision-makers: We don't just need more opportunities, we need access. Real, tangible, reachable access. Don't just put programs on a website and expect people to find them. Show up. Stay. Walk with us. We don't need more empty promises. We need policy that lifts burdens, not adds to them. We need systems that create freedom, not more forms.

What gives me hope is that I'm still here. Still showing up. Still believing in change. My story isn't unique—but my voice might light a path for someone else. I dream of Baltimore where young people don't just survive—but lead, own, and redefine the city they love. And until that vision becomes reality, I'll keep pushing.

Neighborhood Updates

Chick Webb Recreation Center to Feature New Community-Inspired Art Installation

Baltimore is home to more than 250 murals, transforming the city into a vibrant outdoor museum that reflects its deep history, diverse culture, and strong sense of community. These public artworks tell powerful visual stories that honor the heritage and identity of Baltimore's neighborhoods.

In keeping with the City's commitment to fostering art through community engagement, the newly renovated Chick Webb Recreation Center will debut a two-part public art installation this fall: an exterior wall mural and a decorative crosswalk.

Over the past year, Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks has worked closely with a dedicated community working group to select an artist who could capture the spirit of the neighborhood. After reviewing more than 20 applications, Mural Masters, led by artist Shawn James, was selected to bring the vision to life. Through a series of public meetings and visits with Dunbar High School students, Mr. James has collaborated closely with residents, Chick Webb alumni, and local youth to ensure the final designs reflect community voices and values—while offering a fresh, creative interpretation.

The outdoor artwork will be complemented by interior interpretive exhibits that highlight the life and legacy of legendary jazz drummer Chick Webb, his musical collaborators, the history of the recreation center, and the vibrant story of East Baltimore's African American community.

We look forward to unveiling this exciting new mural and art installation in fall 2025—and we hope you'll join us in celebrating this meaningful milestone.



Artist Shawn James unveils his Chick Webb mural concept.

Nathaniel McFaden Learn and Play Park

If you haven't been past the former Somerset Homes site, you should take the time to go by and see the progress at the park. They are moving quickly to complete the park, it is starting to take shape, and you can actually see some of the elements of the Park. Take a look at a few progress photos of the park.



PSO Tours

HUD PSO Tour



On May 7, 2025, HABC hosted a HUD PSO tour. Invited guests included: Joe DeFelice, Assistant Deputy Secretary; Chris Taylor, National Director; Ashley Petrella, Deputy Regional Administrator, Elvis Solivan, Senior Advisor; Adan Kelly, Special Assistant; Patrick Brien, Special Assistant; Ashley Mendoza, Director; Traci Benjamin, Public Affairs Officer; Jill Yu, Field Office Director; Thea Becton, Senior Management Analyst; and Laurel Davis, Director – PIH.

The HUD leadership team sent HABC a note of thanks saying, "We want to extend our sincere thanks for taking the time to host us and provide such an informative and inspiring tour of the PSO Transformation. It was truly an incredible experience.

We were deeply impressed by the thoughtful and strategic work being done on the ground. The impact you are making in the lives of Baltimore residents is both evident and inspiring. From the significant decrease in student absenteeism to the notable improvements in credit scores

and the responsiveness to resident input, it is clear that the transformation is not only physical but deeply rooted in community engagement and empowerment.

We also want to give special thanks and kudos to our tour guides, who brought the transformation story to life with clarity, passion, and authenticity. Their knowledge, energy, and dedication were evident in every stop along the tour, and they did a fantastic job highlighting the collaborative efforts behind this success. The positive changes we witnessed reflect the hard work and commitment of all the partners involved. We commend the entire team for working together so effectively to create lasting improvements for the community!

Thank you again for your warm hospitality and for sharing your incredible progress with us. We look forward to continued collaboration and to supporting the ongoing success of this vital work."

PSO Tours

HUD PSO Tour



Goldsboro Housing Authority PSO Tour

HABC hosted a tour of the PSO Transformation Plan on June 11, 2025 with the Goldsboro Housing Authority and some of their wonderful residents.

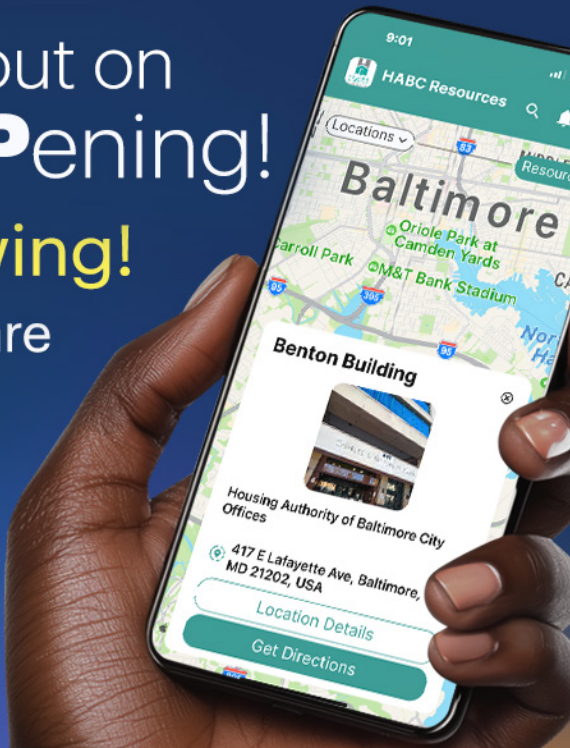
Our thanks go out to our own wonderful PSO residents Denise Street; Bobby Singletary, Benita Young; Jeannete Lewis and Daquan Tongue who provided helpful insight into what it meant to them to be part of a CNI redevelopment and how their voices impacted its design.



Don't miss out on
what's **APP**ening!

We're Growing!

Subscriptions are
up **124%** in just
one year!



PSO Event Calendar

**Perkins Square
Tenant Quarterly
In-Person Meeting
with Janet Abrahams,
HABC President
and CEO**

Date:

Thursday, September 11th

Time:

5:00 PM

Location:

210 South Caroline Street
Community Room



Stay in touch with your Housing Authority and follow us on social media!

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF BALTIMORE CITY

417 E. FAYETTE STREET

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21202