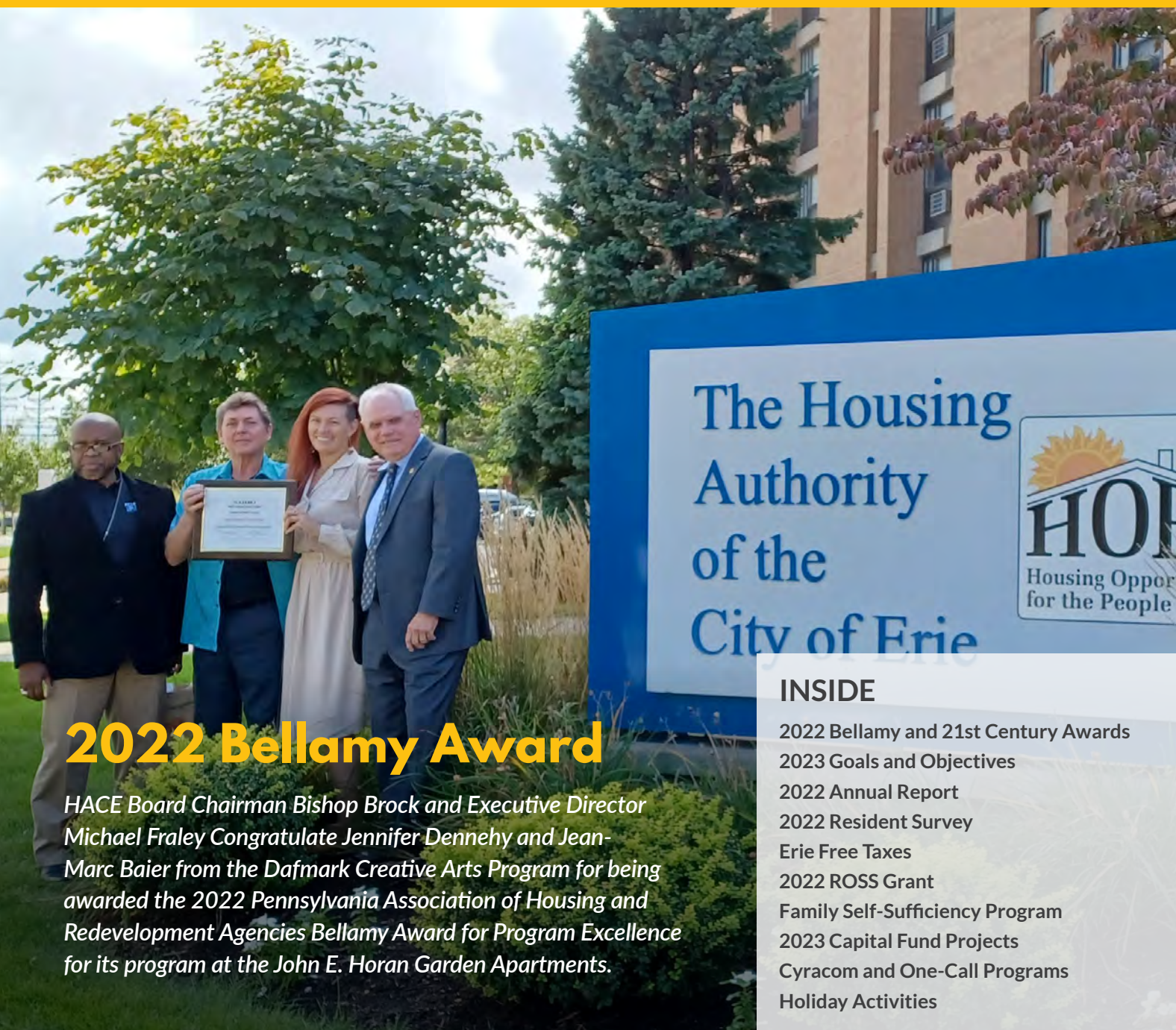


NEWS & VIEWS

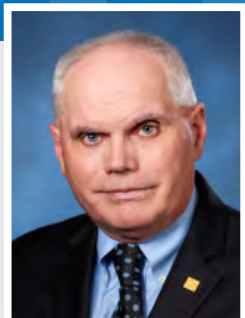


2022 Bellamy Award

HACE Board Chairman Bishop Brock and Executive Director Michael Fraley Congratulate Jennifer Dennehy and Jean-Marc Baier from the Dafmark Creative Arts Program for being awarded the 2022 Pennsylvania Association of Housing and Redevelopment Agencies Bellamy Award for Program Excellence for its program at the John E. Horan Garden Apartments.

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Executive Director Commentary

By Michael R. Fraley, Executive Director

As we transition from 2022 to 2023 it is important to both reflect on the past year and begin making exciting plans for the new year.

In 2022 HACE residents saw the end of most COVID-19 restrictions and supports including the Rental Assistance Program and Eviction Moratorium. The result of this was a concerted effort by HACE staff to work with a larger than usual number of residents who were behind in their rent and facing eviction. While we have seen successes in working with residents the increase in evictions has resulted in the HACE occupancy rate declining. We expect that to stabilize by the end of the first quarter of 2023 and occupancy to increase throughout the remainder of the year.

Programmatically HACE has seen expansion of its food program partnerships with the Second Harvest Food Bank and the Erie Food Rescue Program providing residents with much-needed food stability. HACE and its program partner Dafmark Creative Arts were recipients of the 2022 Pennsylvania Association of Housing and Redevelopment Agencies Bellamy Award for Program Excellence for the John E. Horan Garden Apartments Dafmark Creative Arts Program.

HACE awarded and completed several Capital Fund and Extra-ordinary construction projects throughout all HACE neighborhoods in 2022 totaling over \$4,000,000. HACE continues to upgrade the recently acquired Better Housing properties to bring them up to modern-day standards. In 2022 all entry doors were replaced with metal security doors, new windows and security screens were installed, and the electrical system was upgraded. 2023 will see the installation of new furnaces and the installation of air conditioning.

Keystone Research conducted the 2022 HACE Safety and Services Survey. Overall results show that the majority of HACE residents feel safe in their neighborhoods and homes, they appreciate the safety initiatives especially the COPPS program, and they would recommend their home or apartment to friends and family. The 2022 Resident Survey can be viewed on the HACE website at www.hace.org.

2023 will see the evaluation of all social service programs offered by HACE, the development of a five-year strategic plan, a further expanded youth summer recreation program, and the awarding of over \$5,000,000 in Capital Fund Projects to further improve HACE neighborhoods and homes.

I want to thank the HACE Board of Directors, staff, and program partners for their efforts in making our neighborhoods the safe and positive places that they are for the families we serve. Our motto has been and will continue to be "It's About People!"

2022 Bellamy Award

HACE and its program partner Dafmark Creative Arts was awarded one of two prestigious Bellamy Awards for program excellence by the Pennsylvania Association of Housing and Redevelopment Agencies. The Bellamy Award was for the John E. Horan Garden Apartments Dafmark Creative Arts Program.



The Dafmark program offers creative and fine arts programs to public housing youth primarily living in the John E. Horan Garden Apartments. Programs/classes include painting, pottery, musical instrument lessons (cello/violin), theatre, dance, computer, poetry/writing and hoop dancing.

Dafmark was recently awarded a three-year 21st Century Grant from the Pa. Department of Education to provide educational support to students from Edison and East Middle School who primarily reside in the John E. Horan Garden Apartments. The 21st Century Program provides on-site tutoring services at DafMark in the John E. Horan Garden Apartments. One of the key components of the programs is the coordination and communication between

DafMark and the staff at Edison and East Middle Schools. For more information call 874-3694.

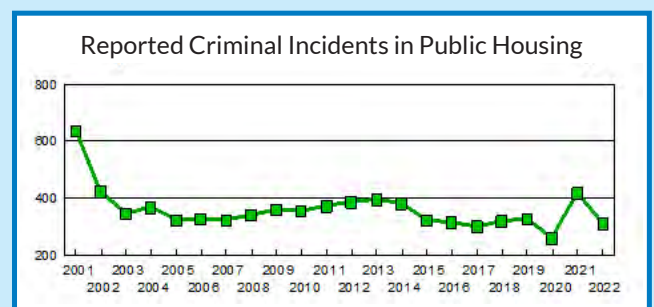
HACE is pleased to announce that the John F. Kennedy Center was also awarded a 21st Century Grant. For more information on the JFK 21st Century Program contact Tim Ward at 898-0400.

2023 Goals and Objectives

The Housing Authority Board approved the agencies 2023 Goals and Objectives at its January meeting. The Goals and Objectives consist of six primary goals and multiple corresponding objectives that are utilized throughout the year to guide HACE staff when planning projects and programs that benefit HACE residents and improve the availability of affordable housing leading to long-term stability and self-sufficiency. To see the 2023 Goals and Objectives, visit the Housing Authority of the City of Erie website at www.hace.org. Copies are available at all HACE offices.

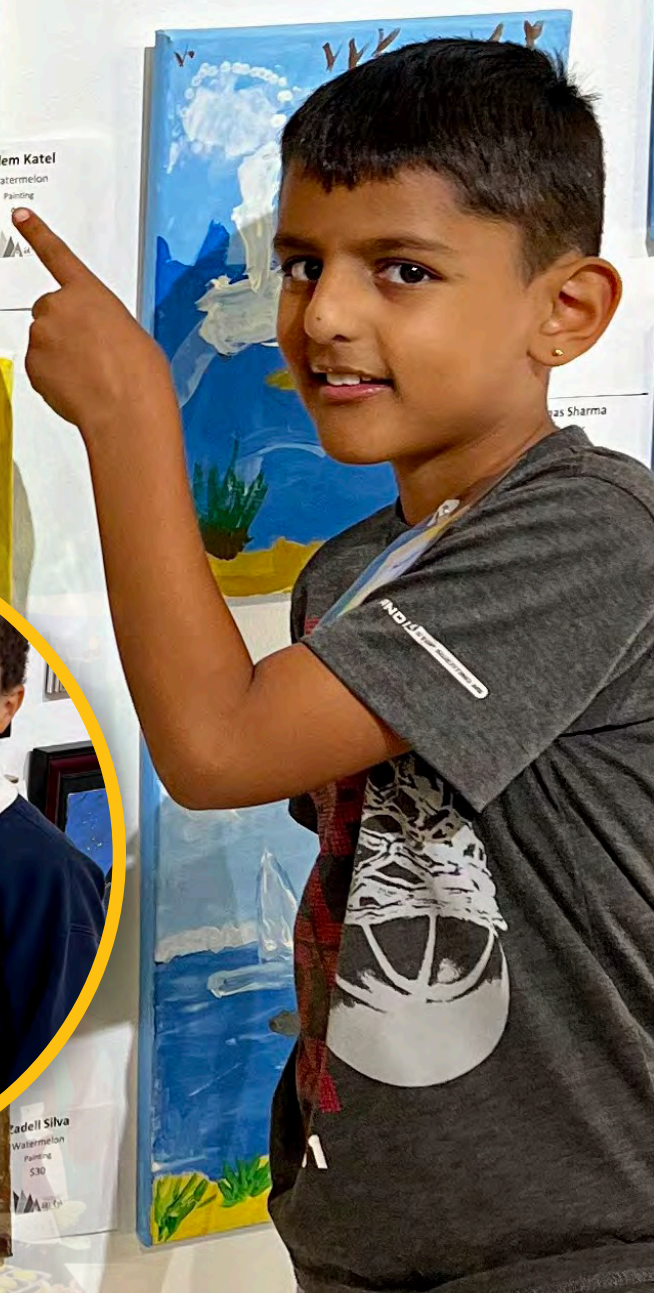
2022 Annual Report on the 2022 Goals and Objectives

Every year Housing Authority of the City of Erie (HACE) staff provide a year-end report to the HACE Board of Commissioners on the progress towards meeting the Goals and Objectives set for the prior year. Highlights in 2022 included two hundred and fifty-five (255) units being made ready for rental, providing housing rental assistance to 3,144 individuals and families, improved property and Management and Occupancy review scores at Better Housing, completion of several Capital construction projects at Better Housing, contribution of \$446,542 in Payment in Lieu of Taxes to the City, County and School District, a reduction of serious crime by 25.3%, public housing occupancy averaging 96.1%, 1,069 families receiving rental assistance from the Housing Choice Voucher program, and over 4 million dollars of completed construction projects. To review the entire report visit the HACE website at www.hace.org.



Dafmark Awarded the 2022 Bellamy Award for Program Excellence





2022 Resident Survey

The Keystone Research Corporation (KSRC) completed the biannual HACE Safety and Services Survey of residents who have lived in Housing Authority of the City of Erie public housing for more than six months. HACE has been conducting the Safety and Services survey since 2005. In 2022, 1,921 residents were sent surveys and 806 completed the survey, a response rate of 42% which is high for a mailed survey and ensures the answers are reflective of the true feelings of Housing Authority residents.

The Survey measures residents' feeling about safety and their interactions with HACE staff. In all safety measurements, the majority of residents indicate that they feel Always or Mostly Safe in their homes or apartments. They indicate that safety programs including the C.O.P.P.S. Program, security lighting and security cameras have made HACE communities safer.

In the area of HACE staff performance, between eighty-five and eighty-six percent of residents in the family developments felt HACE staff were courteous and provided timely information to their questions. In the high-rise buildings ninety-three percent felt HACE staff were courteous and timely in providing needed information. On average eighty-two percent of family development residents were pleased with the services provided by HACE maintenance staff and over 90% of residents were pleased with maintenance services in the high-rise buildings.

Seventy-nine percent in the family developments and eighty-four percent of the residents in the high-rise buildings would recommend their home or apartments to friends and families. The complete survey can be found on the HACE website at www.hace.org.



Erie Free Taxes

The Housing Authority of the City of Erie is partnering with the United Way of Erie County and the Multi-Cultural Resource Center (MCRC) to provide free tax preparation services for qualified individuals (Income of \$60,000 or less).

In 2022 MCRC assisted over 140 residents in receiving over \$1,000,000 in tax refunds. For more information or to schedule an appointment call 1-888-829-5680 or MCRC at 814-454-1266. An additional site for Erie Free Taxes is the John F. Kennedy Center. For more information call 1-888-829-5680 or 814-898-0400.



2022 ROSS Grant

The Housing Authority of the City of Erie (HACE) was the recipient of a three-year Resident Opportunities and Self-sufficiency Grant (ROSS) for 2023 through 2025. The ROSS Grant will be used to fund a caseworker in the HACE Family Self-sufficiency program (FSS). The FSS program assists public housing and Housing Choice Voucher families (Section 8) in moving towards economic self-sufficiency and reducing dependence on government assistance. For more information on the FSS program contact FSS Caseworker Sebrina Ferguson at 899-8820 or visit the HACE website at www.hace.org.

Family Self-Sufficiency Program

The Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS) provides services to people in both the Section 8 HCV and Public Housing programs who are looking to overcome barriers that may be keeping them from completing their goals. Services include credit, budgeting, homeownership, transportation, job employment, ESL, GED, mentoring, continuing education, Dress for Success, clothing vouchers, food assistance, continuing education and more in the form of referrals and assistance. Participants also have the opportunity to save money through the escrow savings program, dependent on their earned income baseline when they enter the program.

When FSS participants graduate they must be working full time and not receiving any Pennsylvania welfare cash assistance. FSS graduates receive any monies they have in their FSS escrow account in the form of a graduation check, as well as a plaque.



Pictured is the Lysychenko family who purchased their first home upon graduation from the FSS program.

2023 Capital Fund Projects

HACE has multiple Capital projects scheduled throughout 2023 designed to improve our homes, apartments and outdoor living spaces. We will continue our multiple-year project to replace the majority of flooring in our apartments/ homes going from VCT tile and carpeting to laminate flooring which looks better and lasts longer. Other work will include a major project to complete façade work at Schmid Towers, replacement of all roofs at Pineview, continuing replacement of scattered site roofs with metal roofs, replacement of windows and security screens on Franklin Avenue in the John E. Horan Garden Apartments, painting the outside of Agnes Priscaro and Eastbrook apartments, replacement of siding at Erie Heights and sealing and striping parking lots throughout all HACE neighborhoods.

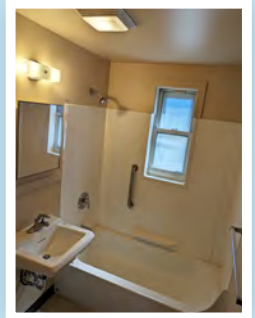
Bid packets will be available on the HACE website at www.hace.org.



New Security Windows and Doors at Better Housing!



Metal Roofs Spruce Up Neighborhoods!



Harbor Homes Bathroom Renovations

Cyramcom and One-Call Programs

HACE is engaging two new programs to improve communication with residents and applicants in 2023. One-Call which HACE staff began to utilize in 2022 allows HACE staff to send email, text, and voice messages to everyone receiving services from HACE or allows staff to select smaller groups for example by the community they live in, age or how long they have lived in housing, etc.

Cyramcom will provide HACE staff with on-line translation services that they will be able to access instantly by providing an in-person on-line translator in a multitude of languages utilizing a tablet or cellphone. This will improve communication when applicants who do not speak or understand English apply for public or Housing Choice Voucher/Section 8 programs at their move-in meeting and when HACE staff needs to communicate with residents needing information or maintenance services.



Housing Authority of the City of Erie Board of Commissioners

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Donald J. Fuhrmann – Commissioner

Michael R. Fraley – Executive Director and Secretary

Timothy M. Sennett, Esq. – Legal Counsel



"It's About People!"

Visit us at hace.org

Holiday Activities

HACE Resident Initiatives Coordinator Cherie Kinem and her partners from the HACE Inter-Agency Team spread "Holiday Cheer" throughout HACE communities for residents of all ages. Activities included Thanksgiving Dinners (Special Thanks to

Michael Hooks from Michael Making Life Better), distribution of food baskets (Special Thanks to the Second Harvest Food Bank), a Turkey Dinner Give-away (Special Thanks to Widget Financial and Onex Industries) holiday parties at HACE High-rise Buildings

and Santa and Mrs. Claus and their friends delivering gifts door to door delighting over 100 families.

Special Thanks to Family Self-Sufficiency Program Coordinator Sabrina Ferguson who organized a Secret Santa Gift Program for over 20 families. (Special thanks to HACE Staff and members of the HACE Inter-Agency Team for their generous participation in the event)

