



Volume 4, Issue 7

# ABILENE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Newsletter Date:  
December 31, 2011

## COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

### Special Points of Interest:

**HCV Tenants & LL's:** We are still searching for two tenants. All landlord spots are filled on our HCV Advisory Committee. If you are interested, contact **Brandy Cockrell @ 325-676-6385 ext. 6389** or at [brandy.cockrell@abileneha.org](mailto:brandy.cockrell@abileneha.org).

**Landlords:** Rent increases should be submitted to AHA 60-90 days prior to your tenant's recertification date. If you are unaware of these dates, contact **Brandy Cockrell @ 325-676-6385 ext. 6389** or email her at: [brandy.cockrell@abileneha.org](mailto:brandy.cockrell@abileneha.org).

### REMINDER!

**Landlords:** are responsible for enforcing their lease & collecting the tenant's rental portion.

**Tenants:** are responsible for paying their portion of the rent to the landlord by the date agreed upon in the lease.

**Landlords:** it is illegal to charge Housing Choice Voucher participants more in rent than you charge your open market tenants.

**Tenants:** removing the battery from a smoke detector is a safety risk. In addition, check to make sure that your smoke detectors are working properly. If not, bring it to your landlord's attention immediately.

**Landlords & Tenants:** landlords &/or tenants are not allowed to change who pays for utilities without the approval of Abilene Housing Authority.



# November/ December 2011: Abilene Housing Authority!

## REAC Inspection: *High Performer Status!*

Every two years, HUD's Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC), conducts an extensive on-site inspection of the Public Housing apartment complexes that AHA owns. Due to the HUD's efforts to revamp the Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS), AHA had to complete another inspection this year, even though AHA passed last year's REAC inspection in the "High Performer" range.

AHA is proud to announce that we passed the REAC inspection, again, in the "High Performer" range for the second year in a row!

As the Executive Director, I would like to thank the AHA staff for their attention to detail and their efforts to be a proactive property manager! I would also like to thank the AHA residents for doing their part in maintaining their units! It is truly the partnership between staff and residents that ensures the viability of the apartment complexes we own.

Keep up the great work AHA staff and residents!

**Pictured below from left to right:** John English - Interim LRPH Manager, Mario Najera - Maintenance Crew Chief, "Mo" Almazan - Maintenance, Chris Wilson - Maintenance, Earl Evans - Maintenance & Gene Reed - Executive Director



### Inside this issue:

HCV Program Acquisition	2
New HCV Employee	2
"GoSection8" Program	3
Text4baby Program	3
Employment Opportunity	4
TV/Furniture Tip-Over Prog.	4
Mission & Vision Statement	5





Volume 4, Issue 7

## ABILENE HOUSING AUTHORITY



### Direct Deposit Payments

**Landlords:** Do you know about our Direct Deposit program? It allows for your Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) to be electronically deposited into your bank account on the first business day of the month! Not only does it give you quicker access to your money, but it is also more cost-effective for the AHA. The process to get set-up is quick and easy. For more information on "Direct Deposit" contact **Paul Falade (CFO)** at 325-676-6385 ext. 5320 or email him at [paul.falade@abileneha.org](mailto:paul.falade@abileneha.org)

*"If you want more, you have to require more from yourself."*

Dr. Phil



### Abilene Housing Authority Family Self-Sufficiency Program

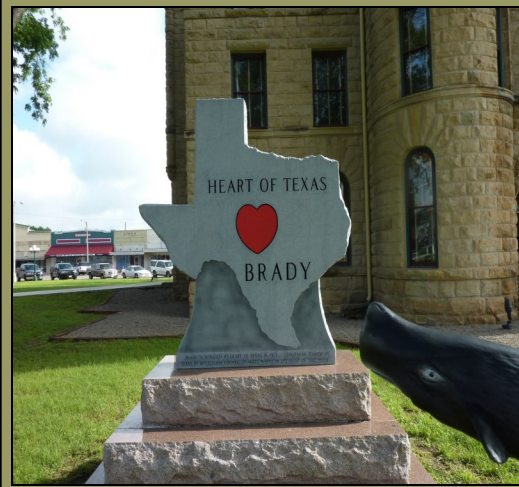
Assisting families to achieve financial self-sufficiency. For more information about this program contact **Tim Evans** at 325-676-6385 ext. 5326 or email him at [Tim.Evans@abileneha.org](mailto:Tim.Evans@abileneha.org)

## Interested in Applying? *Online Application*

AHA has online applications for interested applicants on its website. When you access our website at ([www.abileneha.org](http://www.abileneha.org)) click on the second tab and follow the easy-to-use process. You can choose from the Public Housing Waiting Lists and/or the Housing Choice Voucher Waiting List. Once you complete the online application you are automatically placed on the Waiting List(s) of your choice!



## HCV Program Acquisition: *Brady Housing Authority*



AHA completed the acquisition of the Brady Housing Authority HCV program on December 1, 2011. AHA also began paying Brady HA landlords on December 1, 2011. This acquisition adds 85 vouchers to the AHA HCV program. It also expands our service territory to 20 counties in West Central Texas! *Housing Families One Home at a Time!*

## New Employee: *Amy Bower!*



*If you've been to visit AHA at the Cypress Street office lately, you've probably already met*

***Amy Bower!** Amy is our newest employee and brings with her a strong background in customer service! Please join AHA in welcoming Amy Bower to our TEAM!*





*“Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great.”*

Mark Twain

**HUD-VASH PROGRAM**

The HUD-VASH program is designed to assist Homeless Veterans find counseling through the VAMC and housing with rental assistance provided by AHA.

58 families have been housed so far!



**New Service for Landlords & HCV Participants:  
Free Online Advertising & Search Feature!**

Abilene Housing Authority has partnered with an organization called “GoSection8.com” to provide a **free** listing service for landlords interested in advertising their properties to Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) participants! The same system allows HCV participants to search for available units online as well!

In the past, AHA offered this service to landlords & participants via a hardcopy list only provided in the lobby of our office. Now Landlords & tenants will be able to list & view properties 24/7 on our website ([www.abileneha.org](http://www.abileneha.org))!

This system will provide landlords with another cost affective way of doing business with AHA & will provide an efficient & easy way for HCV participants to locate a unit! The goal in renting properties is to reduce vacancy rates & AHA is providing another means for landlords to take advantage of the power of the internet!



**Abilene Housing Authority**

Equal Opportunity in Housing

Search Rentals

List Your Property

**AHA Promoting New Program to Program Moms:  
Text4Baby**

Despite major medical advancements & decades of public health outreach & education, more than 500,000 babies are born prematurely & an estimated 28,000 children die before their first birthday each year in the U.S. Of the roughly 4.2 million babies born every year in the U.S., 8.2% are low birth weight & 12.6% are born prematurely. Furthermore, about 1 in 28 infants was born to a woman receiving late or no prenatal care & only 50% of pregnant women received a flu shot. These statistics illustrate the need for innovative strategies to improve maternal & child health.

To help more pregnant women & new moms increase their knowledge about caring for their health & giving their babies the best possible start in life, the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition launched **text4baby**, the first free health text messaging service in the U.S. Text4baby supports moms by providing accurate, text-length health information & resources in a format that is personal & timely, using a channel they know & use.

Text4baby’s power lies in its ability to get the most essential health information to mothers in need quickly & easily using a technology they regularly use & rely on. Over 81% of American women have a cell phone & 72% of cell users send & receive text messages. For more information about this program visit, [www.text4baby.org](http://www.text4baby.org). AHA is promoting the program in its HCV & Public Housing lobbies.





*“To succeed in life in today's world, you must have the will and tenacity to finish the job.”*

*Chin-Ning Chu*

### Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Grant:

Grant provides \$100 million to private non-profit organizations & consumer co-ops that will coordinate or provide supportive services to low-income veteran families who meet the criteria.

Deadline to submit application for this grant is Feb 15, 2012, 4 pm Eastern Time.

For a copy of the application packages, download directly from the SSVF Program web page. Questions should be referred to the SSVF Program Office via phone at (877) 737-0111 (this is a toll-free number) or via email at [SSVF@va.gov](mailto:SSVF@va.gov).



### Job Opportunities: *Always Seeking Go-Getters!*



Abilene Housing Authority (AHA) has the following job opening(s):

#### Public Housing Manager

Visit our website @ [www.abileneha.org](http://www.abileneha.org) for a detailed job description.

### TV/Furniture Tip Over Campaign: *Protecting Children!*

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is launching its annual TV/Furniture Tip-Over Prevention Campaign; each year, more than 18,000 children are injured when a TV, appliance, or furniture falls on them. The majority of tip-over injuries occur in the home to children five years & younger, & the most devastating injuries occur to the brain when children suffocate while trapped underneath a heavy piece of furniture. Most, if not all, of these injuries are preventable. This campaign works to encourage parents to anchor & secure furniture, TV's, & appliances in their child proofing efforts to prevent tip-over tragedies. CPSC's campaign works to inform families of easy & affordable safety tips & measures to prevent such strategies. AHA is promoting this program in its HCV & Public Housing lobbies.

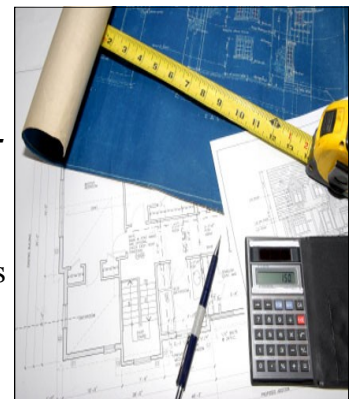


### AHA Website: *Promoting Business Opportunities!*

Businesses interested in working with AHA are invited to visit our website. AHA added the "Business Opportunities" section to its website in 2009 to offer a variety of procurement information to the public. In addition to providing printable versions of current RFP's, IFB's and RFQ's, this section of the website provides information on becoming a vendor, contracting requirements, cooperative purchasing affiliations, Minority Business Enterprises and Women's Business Enterprises (MBE/WBE's), and Section 3 of the HUD Act of 1968.

***Section 3 is a policy for providing preference to low and very low-income residents of the community and the businesses that employ these persons; without consideration of race or gender. AHA has included a model plan on its website for businesses to follow.***

For more information concerning business opportunities and Section 3, please contact **Cynthia Rodriguez** at (325)676-6385 ext. 6332 or email her at [cynthia.rodriguez@abileneha.org](mailto:cynthia.rodriguez@abileneha.org).





**AHA — Providing Homes for Families**

# ABILENE HOUSING AUTHORITY

534 Cypress Street  
Suite #200  
Abilene, TX 79601

Phone: 325-676-6385  
Fax: 325-676-6375  
Relay Services:  
711 or 1-800-RelayTX

Customer Service Email Address:  
[helpdesk@abileneha.org](mailto:helpdesk@abileneha.org)



## Mission Statement:

The Housing Authority's mission is to service the housing needs of low-income families in the Authority's jurisdiction in order to enhance self-sufficiency and promote community quality of life and economic viability.

## Vision Statement:

We will be recognized as a leading authority in moderate and low-income community development activities in West Texas.

**We're on the web: <http://www.abileneha.org>**

## AHA Board of Commissioners - Contact Email Addresses:

Larry Holmes - **Chair** - [larryholmes@aol.com](mailto:larryholmes@aol.com)

Vanessa Faz - **Vice-Chair** - [vfaz@ffin.com](mailto:vfaz@ffin.com)

Kiddy Boswell - **Secretary** - [kiddyboswell@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kiddyboswell@sbcglobal.net)

Mica Jones - **Board Commissioner** - [semica.jones@gmail.com](mailto:semica.jones@gmail.com)

David Mukire - **Resident Commissioner** - [dmukire@ymail.com](mailto:dmukire@ymail.com)

## Executive Director - Contact Email Address:

Gene Reed - **Executive Director** - [gene.reed@abileneha.org](mailto:gene.reed@abileneha.org)

