

THE November ORACLE

HOUSING AUTHORITY AWARDED FUNDING FOR COMBINED FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM

Last month, the Housing Authority was notified that it had been selected for continuation of its successful Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) programs. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development awarded us \$101,665. With this new funding, the previously separate Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) and Public Housing (PH) FSS programs will now operate as a single program. In our case, the two programs have always worked together to make the most efficient use of resources but the PH FSS Coordinator could not serve HCV clients and the HCV FSS Coordinator could not serve PH residents. With this new funding, we have expanded the program from 55 to 80 households and our Coordinators will have increased flexibility in how they recruit and serve FSS participants.

Our FSS Coordinators are Megan Spiller and Gracie Campos. Megan has been in charge of the PH FSS program at the Chapultepec Homes and Gracie has been running the HCV FSS Program. They have worked closely with both the Public Housing and Section 8 offices to ensure the best possible outcomes for their clients. Check our [website](#) or call the SMHA Resident Services office (512-396-3364) for more information about FSS. Successful participants are highlighted in this newsletter on a regular basis. You can also drop by the Chapultepec office to see the FSS Wall of Success! See our [September 2014 newsletter](#) for a story about the Wall.



In September, Housing Authority employees Maria Calcaben, Amy Valles, Megan Spiller, and Rose Miranda participated in The Color Run at Fiesta Texas. The Color Run, also known as the Happiest 5k on the Planet, is a unique paint race that celebrates healthiness, happiness and individuality.



Housing Authority offices will be closed on Tuesday, November 11 for Veteran's Day and on November 27 & 28 for Thanksgiving. Invite a veteran to dinner!

Attention All Residents!

Outdoor trampolines are not allowed at any of our housing sites. Section 9 of your lease (page 10) states that residents may not install or add equipment or major appliances without written permission from Housing Authority management. Parents! Search the Internet for "trampoline injuries" and click on images if you think trampolines are safe. Warning: graphic images.



ALLEN WOODS HOMES — PODER LEARNING CENTER

Día de los Muertos

Noviembre
1—2

Día de Los Muertos es una época de pagar respetos a los que han pasado lejos, y también una época de ser agradecido por su propia vida. En esencia, celebrar la muerte es celebrar la vida.



<http://www.nps.gov/cham/historyculture/day-of-the-dead-in-spanish.htm>

BEYOND PODER

As much as we love having our kids come to our after-school program, our main goal is to encourage the children to be involved in school and their community to stand up to negative influences. Many of our kids are involved in band or

choir, groups such as drum club or reading club, and sport teams. Although they might not come everyday to the center, they still come for tutoring and the camaraderie. On the left is Sean

Williams, who was a former participant of the PODER After-School Program and who now plays basketball and football for the San Marcos Rattlers! On the right are 6th graders Jasmine and Ana in their first choir concert. "I was so nervous!" confessed Jasmine, but with the support of her mom and Service Coordinator Maria Calcaben, she sang her heart out! We are so proud of all the kids that go through the program and continue to use the skills they learned at PODER!



A Night Out in Texas

Dancing and cake and chili, oh my! The Texas Night Out attracted residents of all ages to free games and prizes, a bounce house, free food, chili and hot sauce contests, and dancing. Congratulations Lola Bell for winning the Chili Contest and Mary Ann Lopez for winning the Hot Sauce contest! The Allen Woods Resident Assembly successfully raised over \$150 with a fundraiser raffle! A big thanks to Chi Beta Delta and Sigma Delta Lambda for volunteering to run the booths and games. The neighborhood was also visited by the San Marcos police officers and firefighters that brought everyone special treats! We'd also like to thank the following sponsors for their generosity: HEB, Target, Pennington's Cakes, Tuttle Lumber, Paper Bear, The Hub Cyclery, Hungry Gamer, Tantra Coffeehouse, Out of the Blue Salon, Jimmy John's, CarQuest, Conley's Carwash, Rene Velezuela, and Half Price Books. Your support helped make this evening a night to remember!



Springtown Villa



bingo



meet & greet



loteria



scooter race winner Bill Cruz

Thank you Texas Night Out sponsors



Bee First Primary Home Care



ProGressive
Home Health Agency

HOME



On October 7, residents at Springtown Villa gathered to celebrate Texas Night Out. Neighbors enjoyed the evening playing loteria, bingo, and football toss but the main event this year was the **scooter race**! All of the activities were sponsored by community organizations. After all the fun, residents enjoyed chili cheese dogs, chips and soda. All of the food was donated by residents.

C. M. ALLEN HOMES — KAD KORNER STORE



Conway Park opened for National Night Out on October 7! The park now serves as a safe area for the kids to enjoy the outdoors while having fun and being active. The official ribbon cutting ceremony took place on October 20.



Professor Karen Meaney was a driving force in pushing for the renovation of the park.



San Marcos Mayor Daniel Guerrero made a special appearance and participated in face painting, hosted by the women of Kappa Delta Chi.



Professor Gail Dickinson hosted Family Science Night on Oct 9. The kids became scientists for a night. Mwahaha!

Our thanks to our sponsors and volunteers: Kappa Delta Chi, Inc., Powerhouse Church, HCCADA, Travis County Underage Drinking Prevention Program, Crescent Dental, San Marcos Police and Fire Departments, Bee First Primary Home Care, DJ Marcos, and Mayor Daniel Guerrero.

CHAPULTEPEC HOMES & ADULT LEARNING CENTER



Congrats to our new Resident Assembly Officers! Pictured from left to right are Nisa Hooper (Vice-President), Roxanne Burnett (Secretary), Mary Moore (Treasurer), and Chenitha Ellis (President). Not pictured is Brenda McKinney, our new Historian.

And speaking of Brenda McKinney, she is a recent graduate of the Family Self-

Sufficiency Program and was super excited to show the Chapultepec staff the flooring she picked out for her Habitat for Humanity House! Brenda's home is in the process of being built and will hopefully be ready for move in the first part of 2015. Congrats Brenda! We couldn't be more proud of you and all of your accomplishments!



October 7 was **Texas Night Out!** Residents, police officers, firemen, and city officials enjoyed 15 lbs of fried catfish, tater-tots, a cake walk, a pumpkin ring toss, and balloon animals provided by Derrick Bryant of the Boys and Girls Club! Resident Assembly officers Chenitha Ellis and Nisa Hooper, and FSS Coordinator, Megan Spiller, prepared the food. Thank you to everyone who



participated and to all who donated the items necessary to make this event one of the best yet!



SAN MARCOS PUBLIC LIBRARY NEWS:

- Texas Author Day — Sunday, November 9 at 2:00 p.m.
- Health Insurance Marketplace Sign-Up — Wednesday, November 19, from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- Humanities Texas Exhibit — The Way Things Were: Texas (Settlers and Their Buildings, 1860s to 1930s), October 15 through November 15
- Lego Mania! — Tuesday, November 4 at 4:00 p.m. (Ages 4 & up)
- Itsy Bitsy Ballet: Nutcracker Sweets — Thursday, November 13 at 10:00 a.m., River City Ballet brings culture and movement to the library with an interactive dance experience. (For ages 1 to 6 Registration Required)
- Plant Family Patterns: The Aster Family — Thursday, November 13 at 7:00 p.m.



**SAN MARCOS
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

There is also the usual collection of Storytime, Puppet Shows, Creation Station, Computer Classes, Book Discussions, and more. Call 512-393-8200 or go by the Library to see the rest of their November Calendar. You can also get a copy of their calendar at any of our Resident Services offices.

**Bobcat Promise**

In an initiative to increase access to higher education, Texas State University has developed the Bobcat Promise. This program guarantees free tuition and mandatory fees for 15 credit hours per semester (not to exceed your demonstrated need) to new entering freshmen with a family adjusted gross income that does not exceed \$35,000.

Eligible students must apply and be accepted for admission, as well as submit a completed Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), no later than March 15 prior to the upcoming academic year in order to receive the guaranteed funds. Students may qualify for the program for up to eight continuous long semesters (fall and spring). This program

will provide up to the cost of 15 credit hours of tuition and fees each fall and spring semester (an award in excess of \$9,500 per academic year). Under the Bobcat Promise, tuition and mandatory fees will be paid (up to a student's demonstrated need) through a combination of federal, state and institutional funds. These funds include, but are not limited to, PELL Grant, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG), TEXAS Grant, Texas Public Educational Grant (TPEG), Texas State Tuition Grant (TSTG), institutional scholarships, college work study, etc.

To be eligible for the Bobcat Promise, you must:

- Be an entering first-time freshman (transfer students are not eligible)
- Be a Texas resident
- Have a family adjusted gross income of \$35,000 or less
- Be enrolled full-time and complete at least 15 credit hours each semester (fall and spring semesters)
- Apply and be accepted for admission, as well as submit a completed Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), no later than March 15 prior to the upcoming academic year
- Have financial need as demonstrated by the FAFSA

Get more info online at <http://www.finaid.txstate.edu/bobcatpromise>. See Guadalupe Suarez' story on the next page. This is for real!

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS LIVING IN PUBLIC OR ASSISTED HOUSING

The Public Housing Authorities Directors Association (PHADA) is taking applications for three different scholarships for graduating seniors who are preparing to enter college. You must have at least a "B" average. You can get the application online at www.phada.org. Application materials are due no later than January 30, 2015.

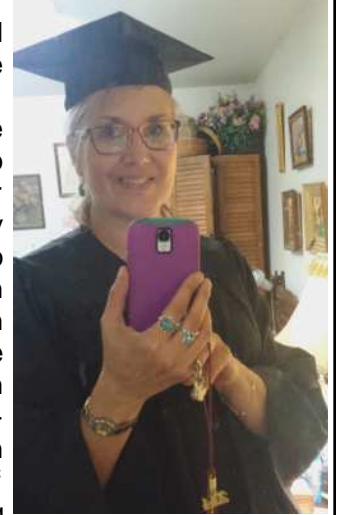
If you know an eligible high school senior living in public or assisted housing in San Marcos, please make sure they know about this opportunity. There is a \$25 non-refundable application fee but it's a simple application. Give it a shot!



The Best Abilities

by Maria Calcaben

Babe Ruth once said, "It is hard to beat a person who never gives up." Catherine Welsh was born in Tyler and had lived all over Texas until family brought her to settle down at the San Marcos Housing Authority. Because of a disability, Catherine was not able to pursue higher education at a typical age but over the years, as the management of her condition became much easier, she planned to return to school. She worked part-time at Bealls, where they accommodated her school hours, and was a full-time student and mom. The Housing Authority provided a home with flexible rent located close to the Bobcat Tram to take her to school, which was important because of driving restrictions. She even worked in our Section 8 office from 2006 to 2008. Catherine was also active in the Allen Woods Resident Assembly, which helped make positive changes for the neighborhood. She recently graduated Cum Laude from Texas State University with a major in Political Science and a minor in Psychology. Her plans are to work part-time at Texas State while attending grad school or finding a job at a non-profit, in local government, or in the human resources field. Her two daughters are proud of her and see an education as a valuable, attainable goal. For any parents thinking about going back to school, she advises, "Never give up on the idea. It's good for the kids and it's amazing what it will do for you. Don't be afraid to reach for something you really want. What have you got to lose?" Catherine worked hard to the best of her abilities and her abilities proved to be her best!



Hello! My name is **Guadalupe Suarez** and while I was growing up in the C. M. Allen neighborhood, I attended the KAD after school program. When I first moved there at the age of 11, my family was going through a rough time. I attended the after school program every day, and every day I was offered many chances to get help with my homework. I was going into 6th grade at the time and was surrounded by many bad influences. I started to rebel against my mom and school. Bonnie soon realized I was beginning to go down the wrong path. She started having conversations with me about problems that I was having in school. I could tell that she was very concerned about me. Coming to KAD every day was a great learning experience. My time there has helped me to build myself into a better student and a better person. The program encouraged me to participate in community service. Many of the other kids and I chose to serve our community by assisting with Meals on Wheels, cleaning up the Nature Center, and playing bingo with the residents of the nursing home. Those opportunities have helped me to learn the importance of helping our community to be a better one. The experiences I learned in KAD have already proven to be helpful and will continue to help me in the future. I recently graduated

from San Marcos High School as a member of the National Honor Society. Because of my hard work and excellent grades, I was accepted into University of Texas Permian Basin, University of Houston Victoria, Texas Southern, Blinn, as well as Texas State University. I currently attend Texas State University and plan on majoring in nursing. I am very pleased to say that I have been awarded a full scholarship through the [Bobcat Promise](#). Growing up here helped me through my grade school education and I want to thank Bonnie at KAD for leading me into the right path.



FREE & FUN THINGS FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY!

• Saturday, November 8 ~ Veteran's Day Parade

The annual Veteran's Day Parade Honoring all who have served. Downtown square. Time: 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM. Free Breakfast, Kids Bike Brigade and Performances.

• Tuesday, November 18 ~ Latinos & Sports in the Southwest

Witliff Collection at Texas State. Hosted by Texas State's Center for the Study of the Southwest, this three-program series explores how Latino participation in sports in the southwestern borderlands develops community life and cultural pride, is a vital component of Latino life, and is an important part of integration into the mainstream culture. William Winokur will talk about his novel and movie, *The Perfect Game*, which is based on a true story that began in Monterrey, Mexico. Watch the movie and see the story of a ragtag band of street urchins pursuing their dream—to dress up in actual uniforms and play just one “real game” in the United States. [More information here](#). Final Program of the series. The program starts at 5:30 PM.

*For more Novel November events go to: <http://www.toursanmarcos.com/events/index.html>



WHAT WE DO

The San Marcos Housing Authority has provided decent, safe, and sanitary housing for San Marcos Residents since 1950. We have three housing programs: Public Housing, Housing Choice Voucher, and Project-based Section 8. These programs provide housing for 574 low-income families and individuals, including the elderly and disabled. Our Resident Services Program consists of several initiatives designed to support Self-Sufficiency & Family Development, Elderly & Disabled Services, Youth Services, and Resident Organization & Community Development. All Resident Services initiatives are united in the overall goals of improving the quality of life for public housing residents, reducing dependence on the welfare system, and empowering our residents to take charge of their lives and of their environment.

WHO WE ARE

Board of Commissioners

Rose Brooks—Chairperson
Mary Barnhart—Vice-Chairperson
Susan Tilititsky—Resident Representative
Gloria Salazar—Commissioner
Frank Arredondo—Commissioner

Administration

Albert Sierra
Executive Director
Lana Bronikowsky
Accountant/Programs Manager
Albert Hernandez
Maintenance Supervisor
Rose Miranda
Public Housing Manager
Gene Martin, II
Resident Services Director
Frances Garcia
Section 8 Coordinator
Amanda Ramirez
Springtown Villa Manager

HOUSING OFFICES

Allen Woods Homes (Main Office)

512-353-5059

C. M. Allen Homes

512-353-1116

Chapultepec Homes

512-396-3364

Housing Choice Voucher

512-353-5061

Springtown Villa

512-396-3363

RESIDENT SERVICES CENTERS

Chapultepec Adult Learning Center &

Family Self-Sufficiency

512-396-3364

KAD Korner Store

512-392-6273

PODER Learning Center

512-396-3367

Springtown Villa

512-353-7343