



HAELU

HERITAGE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

SPRING
2004

HAELU: Derived from the Old English "haelo or haelu," it conveys the sense of soundness of body and mind, and of spiritual health—healing of the soul and the community. Our challenge "is to create a community of healing, involving supportive and caring relationships."



Ana Pereira, Andrea and Maurice DuBois discuss future developments at Heritage Housing's annual fundraiser.

COMMENTS by Ana Pereira, Executive Director

Another year has come and gone, and Heritage Housing continues to grow and prosper. We have new staff, new projects, and new consumers. Yet much of what makes us what we are is not new. It is our deep faith in the goodness and ability of people to overcome the odds, take control of their lives and find meaning in what they do and who they are. It is the loyal and dedicated staff, many of whom have been with the agency since its early years, who work long and hard for rewards that often come more from the progress of our consumers than from the financial rewards received. And it is the consumers themselves—some of whom have also been with us for many years; some of whom have come to work for us; many of whom have moved on to new housing, jobs, and opportunities.

Last year, we had accomplishments on many fronts. One of our Supportive Housing II consumers graduated from City College with a B.S. in Chemical Engineering and began a new job. Our 114-unit Jasmine Court project was completed, and staff filled all the apartments in a record six weeks. One of our Supportive Housing I consumers moved into a home of his own in Mount Vernon through the "Home of Your Own Program," sponsored by the Office of Mental Health (OMH). One consumer started work at the New York Foundation for Senior Citizens, and another at the Bronx Veterans Hospital. Our office building won a national design award from the American Institute of Architects.

And more. One consumer finished his major in Multimedia Video at Manhattan Community College. Perhaps our next **HAELU** will come to you on DVD! Our first 39 Temporary Assistance for Needy Families trainees graduated; out of the 17 who were successful in finding employment, 13 were employed by Heritage Housing in the field of social services. Our Heritage Heights Village community revitalization program was refunded by the City and continues to work with small merchants and owners in upper Manhattan. We received renewals of our four HUD supportive housing grants.

We are grateful for the accomplishments and hopeful for more to come. On the development front, our new 73-unit Morris Avenue Housing project will go into occupancy this summer. Our 42-unit Convent Avenue project should go out to bid and begin construction, also this summer. Work began on the total renovation of our commercial kitchen at the Simmons Residence. We have been awarded another 50-60 units by OMH and hope to find a site and begin work on that as well. The new projects will mean new staff and new consumers, more funding, and the need for new equipment and infrastructure. We are already outgrowing our new office.

But as we have for 35 years, we will move forward with both the new and the old, working to make life better for our special needs consumers and the communities we serve. ■

Executive Team:

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|-----------------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Michael Ford, M.D. | Kevin Walters | Rowland Orakwue | Kenneth Catoe | Joan Douglas |
| Ana Pereira, A.C.S.W. | Mike Rodell | Serge Joachim | Linda Padmore | |
| Jorge Abreu, C.S.W. | James Woods | Shelley Callender | Denise Beale | |