

WINDOW ON MANNA

Winter 2020



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Founders Corner

Dear Friends,

Thanks to you, 2019 was a wonderful year for MANNA.

Your gifts have allowed us:

- To help over 210 households to become first-time homebuyers;
- To complete construction at Pohlman Towns, a six-unit homeownership property in Shaw, and Knights Ridge, a six-unit homeownership property in Congress Heights;
- To start building at Oramenta Gardens, a twelve-unit homeownership property in Anacostia;
- To line up our next two projects: Hanover Courts, a 76-unit affordable rental property in Woodland and Tivoli Gardens, a 49-unit affordable rental property in Columbia Heights;
- To provide homebuyer education and one-on-one credit counseling to 300+ households this year;
- To maintain a portfolio of 540 affordable rental units;
- To provide condo management services for 15 condo associations of MANNA homeowners which represent 215 homes;
- To help 130+ households move up in mortgage-readiness tiers

2020 is going to be an exciting year for MANNA. This year, MANNA will be completing construction on Oramenta Gardens, a twelve-unit homeownership property in Anacostia for low- and moderate-income families. MANNA will host a Grand Opening at Oramenta Gardens upon project completion in Summer 2020.

MANNA also hosted an event to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Whitelaw on February 6th in honor of Black History Month to display the importance of the Whitelaw Hotel in African-American history in Washington DC. MANNA's Housing Fair & Town Hall will be Saturday, April 4th and MANNA's 5K Race for Affordable Housing will be Saturday, May 2nd. Subscribe to our email list for event details by emailing ahertzog@mannadc.org.

Blessings and prayers to you and yours,

Rev. Jim Dickerson
Founder & CEO



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Window on MANNA

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Honoring MANNA Friend, Board Member and Advocate: Maybelle Bennett

This year, Maybelle Bennett received a ceremonial honor from the Council of the District of Columbia and Ward 1’s Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC 1B) for her exemplary service to the DC community. A Native Washingtonian, Bennett has an A.B. in Black Studies from Vassar College M.S.U.P. in Urban Planning from Columbia University and over 40 years of community development experience. At Vassar, Bennett established the Black Studies program, which recently celebrated its 50th anniversary.

She has been the Director of Howard University’s Community Association for over 20 years, where she managed Howard’s community service corps, information dissemination, and convening of neighbors. She is retiring from Howard University this year. Prior to Howard University, Bennett worked in the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia for 16 years. Bennett also is a board member for MANNA Ventures,

MANNA’s real estate wing, where she brings a knowledge of land use and an appreciation for MANNA’s mission.

“As Commissioner for the DC Zoning Commission, I was working to ensure that low and moderate-income households were treated fairly as it related to federal dollars,” said Bennett.

In the late 1980s, Bennett was involved in the first housing linkage program which involved MANNA and Jubilee Housing. “There was a set of regulations which required downtown developers to put housing downtown,” said Bennett. “I wanted to make sure that people could afford that housing and that it was put in areas that needed housing most.” As part of the linkage program, the downtown developers could forgo the requirement to build housing if they made funding available to MANNA and Jubilee Housing to build affordable housing.

After getting to know Reverend Jim through the linkage program, Bennett began to volunteer at New Community Church’s (Rev. Jim’s church) after-school program as an art teacher. She also recruited students from Howard University to volunteer, as she felt that community service should be part of the lifestyle at Howard.

As part of the convening of neighbors aspect of her role as the Director of Howard University Community Association, Bennett worked on initiatives that would benefit the campus and the neighborhood. This often included assisting non-profit developers like MANNA through HUD funding. Through Howard University’s resources, Bennett was able to assist MANNA in building Oakshire Condominium in the Shaw neighborhood, among other projects.

“MANNA is an exemplary organization that many people can learn from,” said Bennett. “It is established and has not withered away, which has to do with the dedication and spiritual foundation in which it has been founded.”

“When I moved to DC and I was able to purchase a home, I used an organization similar to MANNA,” said Bennett. “I think we need to show up in the world in a certain way and need to make a difference in it.”

In retirement, Bennett plans on continuing the fight for affordable housing through her board membership at MANNA Ventures and Douglas Community Land Trust. “As progressive as our city is, I think we have more of a responsibility to lead the nation in the way in which we care for and respect our low-and moderate- income individuals and households, the most vulnerable,” said Bennett. “I believe that this city is now flushed with money that is being brought in by an in-migrating population. I would like to use this income to ensure long-term that the low-income can enjoy the fruits of development that are taking place.”

“Her friendship has meant everything to me, MANNA, and the city,” said Rev. Jim. “She has taught me so much! We are all so blessed by Maybelle!”

Oramenta Gardens Home Raiser

On Friday, September 27th at 10:00 AM, MANNA hosted a Home Raiser of twelve homes in Ward 8’s Anacostia neighborhood located at 2200 Hunter Place SE. Polly Donaldson, the Director for the DC Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) was the keynote speaker. Featured speakers included MANNA Founder and CEO Reverend Jim Dickerson and Ramon Jacobson, Executive Director of the Local Initiatives Support Coalition.

MANNA’s project will provide twelve three-story single-family homes with porches, equipped with Energy Star appliances, laundry, an individual HVAC system, energy efficient plumbing and electrical features, a fully automatic sprinkler system, and a parking lot. This is a new construction project on land that was previously a vacant lot.

Anacostia is a vibrant neighborhood in southeast DC with museums, bike paths, and a rich African-American history. As housing prices have gotten more expensive in DC, the rate of homeownership in this area has steadily declined. MANNA is excited to be bringing affordable homeownership to this area of DC, where the need is high.





Meet MANNA Homeowner Daffney Archer

Daffney Archer joined MANNA in the Fall of 2017 and became a homeowner on September 27th, 2019 in Upper Marlboro. She had been a resident of Prince George’s county for many years and was hoping to buy there to create a legacy for her son and daughter. Daffney was a recipient of NeighborhoodLIFT through MANNA’s 2019 program in partnership with Wells Fargo, NeighborWorks America, and Community Housing Partners.

Daffney’s friend had told her about the program and that MANNA provides workshops for aspiring homeowners. At the workshops, MANNA brought in individuals and companies to educate first-time buyers about how to become a homeowner and how to keep your home.

“TC was an awesome asset to me and my education,” said Daffney.

As a MANNA Homeownership Center member, Daffney worked with MANNA to improve her credit and get her finances and paperwork together for home purchase. She made spending changes and began to understand the importance of credit in the home purchase process.

“I made some mistakes,” said Daffney. “Having MANNA there helped me understand the home buying process and I no longer felt naïve. Thanks to MANNA, I knew what to expect and what I could and could not afford.”

“MANNA was true to its word,” said Daffney. “They were with me from the beginning of the process to keys in my hand.” Before Daffney moved into her home, she lived in an apartment in a neighborhood she was less excited about. “Once I had the keys to my new home, I was excited, nervous, and proud,” said Daffney. “I have more peace and quiet now and my home is my own.”

“I’m grateful to become a part of MANNA,” said Daffney. “I’ve been spreading the word to friends and family members about the program because I think getting educated is the best way to prepare for homeownership.”

New Faces of MANNA By: Charlotte Yacura

Robin Lewis



Robin Lewis was hired as MANNA’s new Director of Homeownership Programs and Quality Control in August 2019. As the Director of Homeownership Programs and Quality Control, Robin manages the activities of the housing counselors, develops curriculum for all educational programs, and ensures that MANNA in compliance with both NeighborWorks and HUD requirements as well as the National Industry Standards for Homeownership Education and Counseling. Prior to this position, she worked as a consultant for MANNA’s NeighborhoodLift program in Prince George’s County. Before MANNA, Robin worked with several non-profits as an environmental outreach consultant, planning and implementing various community engagement projects. Additionally, she is a certified project manager and has worked for over 10 years planning and implementing complex technical project launches for private organizations.

“I came to MANNA because MANNA has an excellent mission and to me the mission of homeownership is so critical in the American way of life.”

Robin has a BA in Economics and an MBA from Rutgers University, and an MA in Sustainable Urban Planning concentrating on Climate Change from the George Washington University. Her graduate research focused on the socioeconomic aspects of sustainability in urban revitalization, such as issues relating to displacement, gentrification, and affordable housing.

MANNA Young Professionals

Manna Young Professionals (YP's) is a group of young people who are interested and passionate about equity and justice. This group of people enjoys serving the communities they live and work in. The program is run by our AmeriCorps Vista Ms. Sheila Naya, with the help of the Corporate Development department.

Manna Young Professionals meets once a month to do a mix of fun or community service events. This year they have conducted six successful events.



June

Networking event at Penn social – local business professionals attended to learn about MANNA and to build their young professional networks

July

Manna YP partnered with the *National Center for Children and Families* to provide toiletries, baby items, shoes, clothing, toys and strollers for needy families.



August

Manna YP conducted the Children First Safety Initiative program to provide free baby proofing services to qualified families in DC.



September

YP held a free financial literacy workshop for other young professionals in the DMV area.

October

Manna YP's held a bowling and costume party at Lucky Strike.

December

Manna YP held a toy drive for children at the New Community Church youth group and MANNA condo owners.



**To join sign up to be on the mailing list for events:
Email Sheila Naya at :snaya@mannadc.org**

New Board Members

Chris Earley has been elected to MANNA's Board of Directors.



By Charlotte Yacura

Chris is the current Vice President of Development of the Mid-Atlantic Region of the Michael's Organization, a company working to bring comprehensive solutions to communities that jump-start housing, education, civic engagement, and neighborhood prosperity. Chris previously worked as a Senior Manager at the Capital One Bank for several years and spent nine years before that working with the DC Department of Housing and Community Development.

Chris has an impressive volunteer record, working with other non-profits like Lydia's House, Community of Hope DC, St Elizabeth's East Redevelopment Initiative, and Marshall Heights Community Development Organization.

Chris received his BA in Business Administration in Corporate Finance from Morehouse College and his Master of Business Administration in Finance/Real Estate from the University of Texas at Austin.



Julian Peters has been elected to MANNA's Board of Directors.

Born and raised in Washington DC, Julian has been a B.A in English and Creative Writing from Miami University and almost five years of corporate development experience at non-profit organizations. In late 2019, Julian joined Catholic Charities as their new grant writer. He is currently a member of MANNA's Housing Advocacy Team (HAT), where he develops strategies to advocate for affordable housing in the District of Columbia. His previous work experience includes development roles at Housing Up, Legal Aid Society, Elevate, and DC Urban Greens, as well as a Formalities Specialist position at Staas & Halsey LLP.

"I appreciate MANNA because they are focused on housing as an indicator of quality of life," said Julian. "I see homeownership as a long-term solution that is important and impactful. MANNA makes things available to people of lower income levels and provides them with an opportunity to build wealth, rather than a band-aid solution."

As a fundraising professional, DC native, and housing advocate, Julian bring development experience and an intimate knowledge of DC's housing crisis to MANNA's board. Some of his goals as a Board Member are to bring more homeownership opportunities to residents East of the River and to explore the intersection of affordable housing and sustainability.

MANNA's 24th Annual Friends of Manna Reception & Auction



The 24th Annual Friends of Manna Reception & Auction was a great success this year. Over 200 MANNA Homeowners, corporate sponsors, and individual supporters celebrated MANNA's 37-year history and raised over \$109,000 at the Darcy Hotel. Friends of Manna attendees heard from DC Council Chairman Phil Mendelson and MANNA first-time homebuyer Shatoya Brown, who attributes MANNA's Homeownership Center as a huge source of knowledge.

MANNA presented the 3rd Annual John Darr Award to David Bowers, a MANNA supporter and advocate in DC. In addition to recognizing MANNA's ongoing homebuyer education and financial literacy programs, MANNA celebrated the completion of six townhomes in Shaw and six condos in Congress Heights, as well as the start of construction of twelve townhomes in Anacostia.

Attendees joined us on November 7th for enlightening conversations on affordable housing, delicious food, and drinks. They also bid on 55 silent and live auction items from local businesses, organizations, and sports teams.



Georgetown University Students Develop Potential Solutions to MANNA's Mixed-Unit Properties

The Steers Center for Global Real Estate is the real estate department at Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business. Through the Steers Center course, the *Real Estate Game*, undergraduate students develop innovative solutions to real estate issues throughout Washington DC.

This semester, the course's professor, Matthew Cypher, partnered with MANNA to give students the opportunity to provide a space plan for MANNA's 614 S Street project.

"Housing affordability is a major problem in the city," said Dr. Cypher. "Georgetown is positioned to help with that. Students are able to learn about the challenges associated with housing affordability in the city where they are going to school."

MANNA's 614 S Street project is a development project MANNA has planned for Shaw to construct MANNA offices and affordable apartments around Rev. Jim's New Community Church. In December, students presented their space plan to MANNA CEO & Founder Rev. Jim Dickerson on how to balance the desire for affordable apartments and MANNA space with market rate uses.

"I was amazed by the students' enthusiasm and ideas," said Rev. Jim. "I learned a lot from them and their presentation was helpful as we plan our next phase."

The proposed floor plans are shown below.



In memory of our dear friend, Frank Lucician

By Charlotte Yacura



Sadly, on June 9, 2019, Frank Lucician, advocate, MANNA supporter, and friend, passed away.

Frank acquired his bachelor's degree from Gannon College and his master's in Urban Planning from Ohio State University. Frank was Director of Project Development at Interfaith Housing Alliance for three years and worked as Executive Director of Habit for Humanity of Henderson, KY for one year. Frank was executive director of CHANGE All Souls Housing Corporation up until his passing. For over 25 years, CHANGE All Souls Housing Corporation (CASH) has "promoted affordable housing in the Columbia Heights neighborhood of DC. CASH is a partner in 400+ units of affordable rental housing in this rapidly changing neighborhood.

Frank was the Executive Director of CHANGE All Souls for many years up until his passing, working tirelessly to provide housing in the Columbia Heights area and helped sponsor MANNA's Friends of Manna events. He was also an active community member, attending many city council meetings and was a long-time member of the Coalition for Nonprofit Housing and Community Development.

Frank leaves a legacy behind in his hard work at CHANGE All Souls and their work serving the community and developing housing in the Columbia Heights area. He enabled CHANGE All Souls to continue and put it on a good footing for the future. His passion and integrity shined through in his work, he exuded a wonderful energy around him and was known as both a team player and a smart businessman.

Frank is survived by his two children, Matt Lucician and Jen Dubois, his two grandchildren, Grant and Evan, and his sister Jean Lungren.

"He was always down at DC Council with us. We did advocacy around certain issues of housing and he really did believe in empowerment and enabling people to get the support they needed to move up the economic ladder and out of the low-income status. That was a passion of his and one of the things that bound us together."-Rev. Jim Dickerson



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SAVE THE DATE
MANNA 5K
RACE FOR
AFFORDABLE
HOUSING

SATURDAY
MAY 2, 2020

MANNA is hosting our annual 5K Race for Affordable Housing at Hains Point in East Potomac Park to raise money and awareness for affordable housing in DC. Attendees can support affordable housing in DC while enjoying the scenic East Potomac Park, getting some exercise, and meeting fellow supporters of MANNA.

For updates on events, please follow us on social media:

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