

The Bulletin



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KCDC, local leaders break ground on Liberty Place

K CDC, along with local leaders and residents, officially broke ground Aug. 16 on a new housing development that will undoubtedly help those who served their country find a warm, comfortable place to live.

Liberty Place, a 32-unit permanent supportive housing site off Division Street in West Knoxville, is KCDC's first development specifically for veterans and will offer one-bedroom units to those who are homeless or in danger of becoming homeless.

"Liberty Place will provide essential housing for veterans who need assistance to stabilize their life and living accommodations," Ben Bentley, KCDC executive director and CEO, said. "It's important that these residents also have the resources to maintain that stability. We're committed to not only providing a safe, quality home, but also a place that can provide supportive services."

Funding sources for the \$15 million project include \$2 million in federal funds; \$500,000 in affordable housing funds from the City of

Knoxville; \$7.1 million in tax credits from the Tennessee Housing Development Agency; \$1 million from the HOME Investment Partnerships American Rescue Plan Program; and land donated by Knox County. Wells Fargo is providing construction and permanent debt and First Horizon Bank is offering tax credit equity.

"Today is a day for celebration as we begin a project that provides much-needed assistance for veterans in Knoxville experiencing housing challenges," Indya Kincannon, Knoxville mayor, said. "With a roof over their heads and a supportive community, these individuals can begin the process of regaining personal stability and ultimately, thriving. I am grateful to all the partners who are making it possible to build the kind of housing that is effective in ending homelessness in veterans' lives."

Veterans living at Liberty Place will participate in the HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing voucher program, which is a joint effort between the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to move veterans and their families into permanent housing.

The VA will have offices on site to give case management to residents that include



Liberty Place will not only provide a roof over their head, but it also will bring much-needed services directly to them.

- Tim Burchett

coordination of medical services and community resources. Intensive case management and long-term housing assistance will provide robust resources.

“Our veterans deserve so much appreciation from us, and today is just one way to thank them for serving our country,” U.S. Sen. Tim Burchett, R-Tenn., said. “Liberty Place will not only provide a roof over their head, but it also will bring much-needed services directly to them. I look forward to returning for the official opening of Liberty Place to personally thank our veterans.”

Liberty Place’s construction will take 16 months and will include 15 fully accessible Americans with Disabilities Act units.

“Liberty Place is an example of multiple entities working together to find the best solution,” Glenn Jacobs, Knox County mayor, said. “Veterans will receive permanent and stable housing in a community that serves their needs. On behalf of Knox County, I am glad we had a role in the process.”

With accessibility at the forefront of design, units will be fully furnished and will also include utilities and conveniences such as walk-in showers and on-site maintenance. KCDC is partnering with Electric Power Research Institute, Tennessee Valley Authority and Oak Ridge National Laboratory to include solar panels and higher efficiency equipment including heat pump water heaters, which are firsts for the organization’s housing developments. All equipment and solar panels will be monitored on an ongoing basis to track performance and efficiency data. Additional partners include local civic groups that will provide the soft goods for each unit.

BarberMcMurry is Liberty Place’s architect with Jenkins & Stiles as general contractor.



Transforming Western Update



KCDC, along with other community leaders and residents, broke ground on Phase 1 of Transforming Western Aug. 3 atop the hill near Vermont Avenue, which will begin with the site's infrastructure.

The plan for the housing site and surrounding neighborhood includes enhanced access to housing, economic opportunity, transportation and youth development.

“Transforming Western is the result of the combined efforts and vision of the residents along with federal, state and local leaders who embraced the initiative to change a community,” Ben Bentley, KCDC executive director and CEO, said. “Western Heights and the Beaumont neighborhood will become a place where everyone can thrive starting with early education and continuing with improved access to employment, health care, recreation and supportive services to form a cohesive community.”

Funding for Transforming Western comes in part from a \$40 million HUD Choice Neighborhoods grant that was announced in September 2022. The City of Knoxville is investing \$4.2 million in infrastructure, as part of \$26.5 million committed over multiple budgets.

“The city’s \$26.5 million investment will support infrastructure and set the stage for the development of affordable housing in this community,” Indya Kincannon, Knoxville mayor, said. “The new Western Heights community will prioritize access to transportation, jobs, entrepreneurship opportunities, health care and technology with new park amenities that will become regional destinations. I was here last fall for the celebration of receiving the grant, and I presented the city’s budget on this site in the spring. I am elated to be here this summer for the groundbreaking.”

Housing construction will start in the coming months and occur in four phases. Phase 1, which will take 18 months, provides 76 rental units, including 31 subsidized replacement units, 30 affordable units and 15 market rate units. Phase 2 is projected to be completed in 2026, Phase 3 in 2027 and Phase 4 in 2028. Visit [here](#) for more information on Transforming Western.



Health & Wellness

By Matt Rogers

Fall starts Sept. 23, but don't fall into forgetfulness!

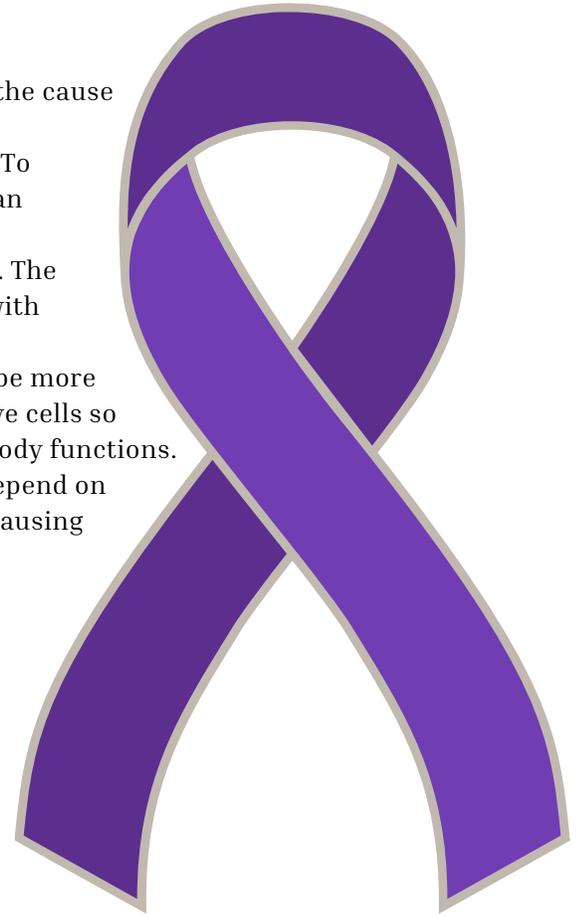
September is World Alzheimer's Month, including a full day devoted to the cause Sept. 21.

Alzheimer's is a rapidly growing disease that impacts millions globally. To understand the disease, we must first start with dementia. Dementia is an umbrella term for a collection of symptoms that are caused by disorders affecting the brain and impact memory, thinking, behavior and emotion. The most common is Alzheimer's disease, which affects 50%-60% of people with dementia.

The brain is made up of over 86 billion nerve cells, which is believed to be more than the total number of stars in the Milky Way. Dementia damages nerve cells so they are no longer able to communicate effectively and this is how our body functions. The specific symptoms a person living with dementia experiences will depend on which parts of the brain are affected and/or the specific disease that is causing their dementia.

Some common symptoms may include:

- Loss of memory
- Difficulty in finding the right words or understanding what people are saying
- Difficulty in performing previously routine tasks
- Personality and mood changes



Dementia at a Glance

1	<p>55 MILLION</p> <hr/> <p>The number of people dementia affects worldwide.</p>
2	<p>EVERY 3 SECONDS</p> <hr/> <p>A new case is diagnosed worldwide.</p>
3	<p>139 MILLION</p> <hr/> <p>The projected population living with dementia by 2050, tripling today's total.</p>
4	<p>7TH LEADING CAUSE</p> <hr/> <p>A top-10 reason for death in the U.S., with 199,399 in 2021 per the CDC.</p>

* Information taken from from Alzheimer's Disease International.

In Time for Class

CAC Back to School Block Party a big hit in Western Heights



For a couple hours Aug. 1, one street in Western Heights was buzzing with activity as families paced up and down West Oldham Avenue for the annual Back to School Block Party.

From 3-5 p.m., residents from Western Heights and the Beaumont area checked out what 38 youth and parenting partners had to offer.

This year marked the third time Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee organized the event, and its turnout was bigger than ever. Lisa Higginbotham, CAC special projects director, estimated attendance reached 409.

“It was hugely successful because the residents know and trust us more because we are there every day,” Lisa said. “This year was also unique because five lead partners worked together and took on specific roles to organize the event.”

While CAC was lead project manager, it couldn’t have done the event alone. Lisa pointed to The Center at Western Heights providing about 200 backpacks, the Boys and Girls Club offering free food and its building as “home base,” Youth Rising being a funder and purchasing a videogame truck and foam machine rentals, and Amerigroup serving as a fiscal sponsor.

The Back to School Block Party was formed years ago after families asked for an activity to focus on children, Lisa said. She thanked KCDC staff, including activity coordinator Stephanie Fisher, and Western Heights property management and maintenance for their help getting the event up and running.

“Check-in went smoothly because Stephanie was a huge help laying out the partner booths and organizing volunteers,” Lisa said. “The day-of-event logistics would not have gone well without KCDC’s support from

several of their teams working together.”

Lisa believes the event was a big success for the community.

“The fact that the residents and partners told us how much fun they were having, and everyone stayed until the end of the event,” she said. “Many of the partners also ran out of materials.”

The Center at Western Heights set up in the Boys and Girls Club gymnasium and offered backpacks filled with supplies for students in kindergarten through 12th grade. This year marked the first time the center has done the block party after CAC approached them, Allison Wilder, center children and youth ministry director, said. In prior years a separate back-to-school event was held.

“I think just because I see every day the need for different things in the community,” Allison said of the event’s importance. “It’s nice to be able to take at least one thing off the parents when the kids go to school.



We do something for Christmas as well just for our program kids, but it's nice to be able to get involved in the community and do it on a larger scale."

Western Heights resident Jennifer picked up supplies from the center up until 2017 when she attended school. Now, years later, she's doing the same thing for her two children, who are in CAC Head Start and kindergarten.

“*The fact that the residents and partners told us how much fun they were having, and everyone stayed until the end of the event. Many of the partners also ran out of materials.*”

- Lisa Higginbotham

“It helps to get at least a head start for all of it so you don't have to worry about it,” Jennifer said.

While it may not cover everything, Jennifer said the supplies help offset some of the cost getting her children ready for school.

That's what Western Heights resident Pamela hoped it offered families. Pamela, along with other volunteers, provided free clothes, largely for children but also some for adults, too. New clothes and shoes were also raffled off separately from the clothes scattered on a table.

Clothing was collected a few months in advance through residents and a local church, Tangeria, Pamela's daughter, said.

“I feel like the clothes is what they need more so than the bookbags and the pencils and papers because that kind of stuff you can really go and buy it cheap, except for the bookbags, but I just couldn't get nobody to volunteer to give them a bookbag,” Pamela said.

Tangeria and her two children came from Powell to help. As a parent and former CAC employee, she understood the financial hit getting ready for school could have on families.

“I think it's really important because school supplies alone – I only have two children – I spent like \$170 just on school supplies, and you can spend hundreds of dollars on clothes,” Tangeria said. “I think it's really important to offer the kids bookbags and stuff like that, because everybody's not able to buy it sometimes.”





Shoes for School

Members of KCDC's Community Involvement Committee spent a few hours handing out supplies Aug. 5 at Cansler Park during Knoxville Area Urban League's annual Shoes for School. A special shout-out to Grae Potter, Tina Muncey and some in Accounting for spending time the day before filling bags with various school supplies! Volunteers during the event included Grae, Tina, Stephanie Fisher and her fiancé Austin Romines, Lanita Puckett, John Turner and Jeremy Nash.



Bikes for Kids

Thanks to an effort largely spearheaded by the Knoxville Police Department and Kickstand Community Bike Shop, 50 kids who live in KCDC communities walked away with a free bicycle and helmet Aug. 19 outside The Change Center.

The effort started a few months ago after KPD Officer Nate Skellenger said he was looking for more positive community-police interaction opportunities with residents. Upon recommendation from KCDC, Nate reached out to Kickstand to start discussion. He put out a request for donations in June, and it wasn't long before the used bicycles started to roll in for Kickstand representatives and KPD volunteers to work on.

"The only hard part was when KCDC, Stephanie Fisher (activity coordinator) was attempting to contact families – she actually had to go to each apartment in person because when she called the parents or guardians on the phone most thought it was a scam or lie," Nate said.

Children aged 2-12 were recommended by property managers at Five Points, First Creek at Austin and The Vista at Summit Hill. In total, KPD donated 40 bicycles, Chilhowee Hills Baptist Church donated eight bicycles and Knoxville Fire Department donated two bicycles. East Tennessee Children's Hospital provided the helmets.

"We're working with other community groups – The Change Center, the police, KCDC, etc., those organizations know who needs a bike," Paul Laudeman, Kickstand director, said. "We know bikes, we got bikes, but we don't get out in the community and meet people at The Change Center or at KCDC housing. Having those organizations, this space, these volunteers all work together, makes it a lot easier for everyone, and it's more fun that way."

After a successful first go-around, Nate said he believes this event could make a return in the future.

"The joy on the kids' faces will make this all worth it and special," Nate said. "With all the negativity in the world and the stress our children have, this little bit of daily escape from hurt or worry that kids can get on their bikes will be worth the effort we have put into this."



Showcase

Section 8

By Kimberly Trame

The KCDC Section 8 office administers several different housing program types which provide over 4,000 people in our community with affordable housing options.

Voucher programs include the Housing Choice Voucher, the Project-Based Voucher (PBV), the Mainstream Voucher, the Non-Elderly Disabled Voucher, the Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV), the Choice Mobility Voucher, the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Voucher (HUD-VASH), the Family Unification program Voucher (FUP) and the Foster Youth to Independence Voucher (FYI). The Moderate Rehabilitation program (MOD) offers housing subsidy currently at two different apartment complexes.

The first point of contact at our office is Michelle Mahone, our Section 8 receptionist. Michelle is our newest staff member and the first person that engages with clients when they come into our office.

On average, we see 500-700 people per month in our office. Our office also receives on averages 5,400 phone calls monthly, which is around 64,800 calls annually. That's a lot of calls!

Diana Willett and Tiffany Adams work in our Admissions department. They complete preparation and data entry on all applications that come through our office. Monthly our office receives 350-400 applications. Diana and Tiffany also assist applicants in office that cannot complete the pre-application online and need assistance 8 a.m.-3 p.m. the second Wednesday of each month when the Section 8 portal is open. There is a lot of busy work for these ladies when it comes to applications. It takes great skill to keep all these different program applications in motion.

FUN FACTS

- 15 Section 8 staff members help 4,000+ clients.
- Section 8 provides more than \$2 million monthly in housing subsidies.
- The department has a Higher Performer rating – those scoring at least 90% – through the Section Eight Management Assessment Program.



Back row, from left, are Michael Hodges, Kimberly Trame, Debbie Taylor-Allen, Venus Styles, Corbett Smith, Diana Willett and Tiffany Adams; front row, from left, are Lisette Fortson, Jennifer Bell, Beverly Silvano and Maggie Fulton.

Maggie Fulton and Lisette Fortson work in our Leasing department. They complete the leases for all Section 8 programs except for the PBV program. This entails processing Request for Tenancy approval forms, requesting inspections, scheduling lease signings and lease preparation. Maggie and Lisette have been with KCDC for several years, together they are a two-person team that works like a well-oiled machine. I cannot even begin to count how many leases they have signed, providing a family with a roof over their head.

Lisa Taylor, Beverly Silvano, Corbett Smith and LaDreama McClellan keep the momentum going. Each of them manages a caseload. Not only do they have tenants as clients but also landlords as clients. They each complete 45-50 recertifications a month, numerous interims and all other tasks the role of an occupancy specialist entails. They all do a great job of juggling all required tasks and getting it done.

Jennifer Bell administers our Homeownership program and manages a caseload of voucher participants. Jennifer currently has 139 Homeownership participants. The program is a great opportunity and accomplishment for our clients. She does a great job interacting with clients, real estate agents and lenders to make it happen.

Venus Styles administers the Family Self-Sufficiency program. As the program's name notes, the goal is to help clients become self-sufficient. There are currently 40 clients enrolled in FSS. Venus has played a huge part in helping clients realize their goals, achieve their goals and become their own success story.

Michael Hodges is the Section 8 coordinator. Michael administers Portability in our office. Portability is when a client wishes to port their voucher to a different housing authority in a different city, county or state. Michael has clients porting in and out of our jurisdiction often. He also oversees all Housing Quality Standard inspections completed by our contracted inspection company and completes the Rent Reasonableness on all subsidized units. Michael has been with KCDC for 25 years

and is very knowledgeable.

Then, there's me, Kimberly Trame, as the special programs administrator. I administer HUD-VASH, FYI, FUP, MOD, EHV and PBV. When I first started at KCDC in 2008, the only Special Program was MOD. We have grown substantially in the programs we now offer. We currently have 15 PBV properties, and more are being built. Affordable housing is much needed in our community, the more housing opportunities we can be involved in the better. There is nothing like getting the keys placed in your hand to your new home.

Debbie Taylor-Allen is the interim vice president of rental assistance, who has returned a couple years after she retired from the very same position. In our office we are a family, and I am assuming she missed us. Why else would she come out of retirement to help? In all seriousness, Debbie is one of a kind and always will be. She knows the answers and if not, I can guarantee she will find them. Staff are grateful to have Debbie in the interim.

Section 8 staff rocks! Without our dedicated staff, we could not accomplish what we do!

with like-minded people in the Knox County community who want to improve their environment and support their fellow residents in impactful and meaningful ways. I'm hoping this experience will give me the confidence and skills to persist in such a taxing but rewarding field. At the very least, it will give me a unique perspective to bring to my future studies and career.

Though I have only just joined the team, I have already had a handful of really cool experiences at several of our sites: tabling at Back-to-School parties, hosting Bingo for elderly residents and even attending the groundbreaking for the Western Heights revitalization project. I'm excited to see what else is in store this coming year!

AmeriCorps

Three new AmeriCorps members have now joined the KCDC team with Lillie Sutton, who is in the middle of her yearlong service term. Please welcome Christina Slabinski, Parker Owens and Sarah Torres!



Christina Slabinski
AmeriCorps

I have spent the past four years living in Columbus, Ohio, as a student at The Ohio State University. During my time there, I earned a dual-degree: a Bachelor of Arts in international studies with a minor in Spanish and another Bachelor of Arts in women's, gender & sexuality studies with a minor in African-American & African studies. One may notice that this is quite the array of topics – this was always the plan. I have known for a while that I want to go to graduate school for a master's in peace studies, so I figured I should use my time in undergrad to learn about the world and learn from a wide variety of perspectives that will help me connect with people from diverse backgrounds in both my personal and professional life.

My studies taught me that theory and practice do not always look the same, so I wanted to make sure I had hands-on experience in the field before returning to academia. Thus, I applied for AmeriCorps and got a service position here at KCDC! My term started July 31 and ends July 29, 2024. I look forward to spending the year learning about housing and how it connects to, compounds and/or mutually constitutes one's standard of living. I am especially pleased to serve as the partnerships coordinator because it will allow me to connect



Parker Owens
AmeriCorps

I am excited to introduce myself as Parker Owens, one of the newly joined AmeriCorps members here at KCDC. I will be serving as the new open spaces coordinator. I am from Caryville, which is 30 minutes north of Knoxville, and I am excited about the opportunity to live here for the coming year.

Before I get into the professional side of things, here are some things about me. I have been an avid runner for the past eight years, participating in both track and field as well as cross country. I also enjoy being outdoors and kayaking. Photography has been an interest of mine, admittedly I have not done much of it recently. I enjoy 3D printing when I get the chance, however I do more maintenance of my printer than actual printing, and finally my top Spotify artist last year was Billy Joel.

My academic background includes recently graduating from Maryville College with a Bachelor of Arts in health and wellness promotion, accompanied by a minor in statistics. During my time there I also worked as an outdoor facilitator as part of Mountain Challenge facilitating low rope courses and outdoor adventures in rock climbing, hiking, kayaking and tower climbs.

My initial start date with AmeriCorps took place during our orientation day on Aug. 7, while my official start at KCDC was on Aug. 14. The decision to join AmeriCorps came after a period of uncertainty at the end of my senior year. As part of a community health course I took, I found that this area of focus really spoke to me. One of our assignments was exploring health promotion agencies, and I decided to investigate the Peace Corps. Through this exploration, I naturally stumbled upon AmeriCorps. Conversations with a previous employer who was involved in CAC AmeriCorps solidified my choice to gain practical experience rather than pursuing a master's degree that I was not yet certain I needed. Although I am still discovering where within the public health sector I belong, I am genuinely excited about my role as the open spaces coordinator. This position presents an invaluable opportunity for me to engage with community development

for the first time, fostering my skills and offering enriching experiences. My main responsibilities entail creating outdoor recreational and educational opportunities for KCDC residents, as well as overseeing our community garden programs across different properties. Additionally, I will be actively participating in partnership-driven community initiatives, such as food distributions, Beardsley Farm's Green Thumb Program and community cleanups.

My time at KCDC has been interesting thus far, and I look forward to meeting more of the wonderful staff members here. Having already had the privilege to attend the groundbreaking ceremony for Liberty Place, I am excited to see more of the work that KCDC is doing for our local community.

Ultimately, I anticipate that this role will significantly contribute to my long-term aspirations. By enabling me to accumulate practical experience, build meaningful connections and unearth new passions, I hope to clarify the career path that aligns best with me. I am honored that I can serve as an AmeriCorps member at this point in my life and am excited to provide this service to our community.

Thank you all for the warm welcome, and I look forward to the things we will accomplish over the coming year!



Sarah Torres
AmeriCorps

My name is Sarah Torres and I am from Southeastern Arizona. Over the past 20ish years of living in Arizona, as a single parent, I raised two very successful adult daughters. I went to two community colleges and have more than 36 college credits that I plan to use toward obtaining my master's degree in social work with a focus on nonprofits, grant writing and working with those being released from incarceration and those involved within the legal system while here in Knoxville. I have obtained several credentials along the way and received a great deal of knowledge and wisdom throughout my path.

Starting my journey as a certified nursing assistant working in nursing homes, Alzheimer's units, home health and hospitals, I moved on to serve as a highly qualified paraprofessional working with Special Education students in K-12 for two school districts for about four years. Then I became a licensed massage therapist working to help relieve the pain that individuals experience within their physical body, mostly working with injured soldiers and athletes. I am also a recovery support specialist, helping and advocating for those battling mental/behavioral health and/or substance abuse issues. I found my true calling after being offered a position as a case manager in our local homeless shelter where I worked for about four years.

My first day at AmeriCorps was Monday, Aug. 28. I decided to join AmeriCorps because I have a deep desire and strong passion to give back, but mostly because I am very passionate about helping others who are in need.

With all the positions held, lived experiences and credentials gained throughout the years, AmeriCorps plays a huge role in what I plan for my future and the future of those I hope to help.

KCDC allows me the opportunity to gain firsthand experience in seeing the true needs of our community here in Knoxville and surrounding areas. Only being my first week with KCDC, my time here has been great, everyone seems to be nice and polite, and with the same goal and purpose of providing for those in need. I would like to, through KCDC, gain a greater perspective on the housing options and process to receive the appropriate assistance. As one of the food access coordinator with KCDC and through collaboration with our partners, we are focusing on helping provide the greatest resources to the people we serve by educating the residents of KCDC on healthier choices in eating and cooking and in assisting them to receive that which is entitled to them.

I hope to eventually open a nonprofit that will provide everything from housing and food to therapy and employment services. I hope that it becomes a safe haven for anyone seeking assistance and a place to temporarily call home and family!

Thank you again for your time, patience and understanding. Be blessed, and have a great day!

On Location





KCDC Spotlight

The Spotlight aims to recognize the amazing things KCDC employees are doing to help make the community and workplace better. Email jnash@kcdc.org if you think there's someone we should highlight.

Eugene Littlejohn Courier/Tech. Assistant

Eugene Littlejohn has always had a willingness to help however he can.

Eugene first joined KCDC in May 11, 1998, after his uncle and two cousins – all three with the company at the time in maintenance – recommended he apply. He was working for local company Omega Plastics as a supervisor on third shift and wanted to find better hours. Several here now know him as courier/tech. assistant in the Procurement Division, a position he's held for about 11 years, but prior to that he served about 5-6 years in the grounds crew and about nine years in the exterminator crew.

Fast forward 25 years and Eugene's still here, which he believes is a testament to how well the work culture is at KCDC, a place he hopes to stay until he retires.

"Meeting some of the most amazing coworkers and friends here and just surviving being here 25 years. That's rough," he laughed, noting the highlight of his time with KCDC.

As courier/tech. assistant, Eugene's responsibilities include ensuring each KCDC community has everything it needs, getting in-office mail and making errand runs like doing hand document deliveries. Basically, he does anything that's asked of him.

"I'm just a jack of all trades," Eugene said. "Whatever needs to be done, I'm the guy if I can get it done."

When he's not working, Eugene can be found doing something related to sports whether that's watching his Dallas Cowboys or Tennessee Volunteers, or coaching up youth in Little League flag football.

While at Austin-East High School, Eugene spent three years in wrestling, four years in football as a running back and defensive back and



four years in track as a sprinter. His track team broke Knoxville's 4x100 relay record of 42.7 seconds. His team hit 42.3 seconds.

Without hesitation, Eugene said he misses competing. That's partly why for 15 years he's served as head coach for Under the Lights Flag Football for 7- to 15-year-olds. But there's more to it than that.

"I just like helping kids out. I like sports," he said. "A lot of times those kids don't have nobody to coach them, so I like doing that for volunteer work."

Some of those kids have grown up and gone to play college football. Schools include the University of Tennessee at Martin, Tennessee State University, Middle Tennessee State University and Carson-Newman University. He's also got

another who intends to play for University of Tennessee at Chattanooga as a freshman.

The head coaching role has been "very rewarding," Eugene said.

"It's just fun," he said with a smile.

Eugene also recently served as head coach for KCDC's kickball team, which fell off due to the COVID-19 pandemic. He hopes to get that back up and running soon.

"I like the competition," he said.

I just like helping kids out. I like sports. A lot of times those kids don't have nobody to coach them, so I like doing that for volunteer work.



Adronicus Thomas Named KFOA President

North Ridge Crossing and Valley Oaks property manager Adronicus Thomas received a big honor late last year in being named president for Knoxville Football Officials Association.

He's also the organization's first Black president, which Adronicus himself admitted he didn't know until two months after being elected in November.

"For a young Black boy from rural Alabama, it means a lot," Adronicus said. "I hope that I can be an example for not only young Black men but all young men, that through hard work, dedication and God blessing you accomplish everything your heart desires."

For 20 years Adronicus has been part of KFOA and refereed high school games. He said he got involved for the "love of sports and trying to find a way to give back." When he's not on the football field, he can be found on the basketball court refereeing games. His reach stretches about 70 miles from Knoxville, and over the years he's refereed 30 schools all over East Tennessee. Please join us in congratulating Adronicus on his success being elected KFOA president!

Photo courtesy of Knoxville Football Officials Association.

Partnership Appreciation

By Marisa Moazen

The Head Start program operated through the Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee, has provided on-site access to early childhood learning since 2005. Through our partnership, Head Start operates two facilities in KCDC communities – North Ridge Crossing and Western Heights.

The first site at North Ridge Crossing opened in 2005 to provide both child care and social services support to KCDC residents and other neighbors. This location serves 109 children ages 0-5 in five preschool classes and six Early Head Start classes.

The Head Start at Western Heights opened in 2022 and provides both early childhood education and preschool for 132 children ages 0-5. The Western Heights facility includes four classrooms for infants and toddlers and six preschool classrooms inside 22,000 square feet of space. The site also features two playgrounds with covered and uncovered portions and a large multipurpose room.

Through our partnership, KCDC is able to construct the buildings on KCDC land and then lease them back to Head Start who then operates the programs. Our hope is to secure community donations for construction costs and partner with Head Start again to open sites at Montgomery Village and First Creek at Austin. The cost to construct one new center is about \$6 million.



Community Focus

Northgate Terrace

Northgate Terrace is a 14-story, 276-unit Elderly community for seniors ages 62 and older off Whittle Springs Road. Of the 276 units, 41 are designated for The Manor at Northgate Terrace, a HUD-subsidized community that's designed to give independent living to seniors experiencing issues with the aging process.

Northgate is undergoing a \$8.5 million remodeling that's scheduled to be completed in January. Improvements include various items, such as having the exterior building power washed and painted, doing sidewalk modifications to meet Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility, having all interior plumbing lines replaced, installing new water heaters, appliances and HVACs as needed, providing new LED lighting, among other interior changes.

Northgate Terrace is one of four KCDC communities that has an on-site wellness center through a partnership with Matter Health.



Did you know?

Plans for Northgate Terrace were initially approved in December 1967. The Vector Co., served as developer for the \$3.716 million project. Good & Goodstein and Bruce McCarty were architects.

A groundbreaking occurred February 1968. The following year, in March, a fire inside the building pushed the project's completion date back about 60 days. Residents started moving into the building in July 1969.



New Hires

The following were recently hired through Aug. 31 at Knoxville's Community Development Corporation:



Paul Cunningham

Hired: 7/3/23
 Title: Accountant
 Place: Main Office



LaDreama McClellan

Hired: 7/5/23
 Title: Occupancy Specialist
 Place: Section 8 Office



Tiana Okereke

Hired: 7/5/23
 Title: Asst. Property Manager
 Place: Nature's Cove and Autumn Landing



Thomas Bleeker

Hired: 8/1/23
 Title: Real Estate Redevelopment Senior Analyst
 Place: Main Office



Amy Garrick

Hired: 8/7/23
 Title: Admissions Specialist
 Place: Main Office



Mustafa El-zabet

Hired: 8/7/23
 Title: Maintenance Tech. II
 Place: Western Heights



Gerald Lowery

Hired: 8/22/23
 Title: Maintenance Tech. II
 Place: Montgomery Village



Tre Davis

Hired: 7/10/23
 Title: Maintenance Tech. II
 Place: Five Points



Michelle Mahone

Hired: 7/24/23
 Title: Receptionist
 Place: Section 8 Office



James Smith

Hired: 8/7/23
 Title: Maintenance Tech. II
 Place: The Vista



Toletha Merrell Van Keuren

Hired: 8/18/23
 Title: Leasing & Occupancy Specialist
 Place: First Creek

HR Update

Enrollment update

By Wendy Hamon

Benefits Open Enrollment is on the horizon. As usual, this process will take place through the VISTA HRIS/Payroll system and every full-time employee will be expected to complete the Open Enrollment process. Information will be available the second week of October with the deadline for completion within VISTA by Oct. 23. Any changes made will go into effect Jan. 1. There are no changes in insurance providers anticipated at this time.

Partner Agency Resources

- **Furniture Ministry** — CedarBrook Outreach offers free furniture to residents in need. Furniture can be requested and donated at cedarbrookoutreach.org/furniture-ministry.

Newsletter Dates

The Bulletin is scheduled to be released every two months. Unless a delay is needed, publication will typically fall on the first full week of the month.

- **November-December Edition:** Nov. 6-10

Newsletter Ideas

Got something you think could be in The Bulletin? Email information to jnash@kcdc.org. The deadline for content will typically fall on the last Monday or Tuesday of the month before publication.

Calling All Veterans

Are you an armed forces veteran? We would like to honor you at an upcoming event in November. Could you please let us know who you are and what branch you served in? We will let you know what the events are and you will have the option to participate. If you are interested, please contact Marisa Moazen at mmoazen@kcdc.org for more information.

