

# The Bulletin



## Landlord recruitment and you!

We need everyone's help to let the community know we are looking for landlords! With the current housing market, we need to increase our landlord contacts. We are looking for landlords who are willing to rent to families with Housing Choice Vouchers. You can help us get the word out!

### 1 Housing Choice Voucher program

The Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program is the federal government's primary program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly and persons with disabilities to afford decent, safe housing in the private market. Since housing assistance is provided on behalf of the HCV tenant, participants are able to find their own housing, including single-family homes, townhouses, manufactured homes and apartments. KCDC enters into a contract with the landlord to provide housing assistance payments on behalf of the family.

### 2 Landlord's role

The role of the landlord in the HCV program is to provide decent, safe housing to a tenant at a reasonable rent. The dwelling unit must pass the program's housing quality standards and be maintained up to those standards as long as the owner receives housing assistance payments. The landlord enters into a lease agreement with the tenant.

### 3 Landlord benefits

Below are benefits the landlord will receive:

- They will get timely and dependable payments from KCDC.
- They will receive the full Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) from KCDC.
- They will receive regular inspections of the tenant space.
- They may request annual reasonable rent increases.
- They have the opportunity to help low-income elderly, disabled and veteran households, as well as families with children by providing affordable housing.



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## 4 Mythbuster

Below are some assumptions some may have on HCV participants:

- “Landlords can’t charge HCV participants the same rent as their non-HCV tenants.”
  - FALSE – Landlords can charge the full rent no matter who the tenant is. The housing authority must determine that the proposed rent is reasonable and is not higher than units in that area with similar amenities.
- “HCV tenants are problem tenants.”
  - FALSE – Actually, HCV tenants are typically long-term tenants, living in a unit for 7-8 years on average. There are no documented statistics showing that HCV participants are any more likely to damage units or not pay rent than are non-HCV tenants. Landlords use their own screening criteria and should screen HCV tenants as they would screen any other non-HCV tenant to avoid problem tenants.
- “It is almost impossible to evict a HCV tenant when they violate the lease.”
  - FALSE – HCV tenants are bound by the terms of their rental agreements and are subject to eviction as is any non-HCV tenant.
- “If you accept one HCV program tenant, then all of your units must be rented to HCV program tenants.”
  - FALSE – Renting unit(s) to HCV tenants does not in itself further obligate you to rent to other HCV tenants. For each vacancy, you should follow your established policies for screening prospective tenants.

## 5 New role



As you may have seen on the job board, KCDC has created a new position – Landlord Engagement Manager. We are excited that Shana Love has accepted the position and will soon become your main point of contact for landlord recruitment. In this new role, Shana will work to retain current landlords while engaging new landlords for the Housing Choice Voucher program.

## First Creek Phase II officially opens

Knoxville’s Community Development Corporation, along with business and community leaders, stakeholders and residents, officially cut the ribbon Aug. 29 on the second phase of First Creek at Austin, part of the city’s first mixed-income, affordable housing community.

Located just east of downtown, Phase II provides 180 one- to three-bedroom units near the city’s urban center with a fitness center, outdoor green space and indoor community spaces.

Click [here](#) for a video of the event.



## Breaking ground on First Creek Phase III

Knoxville’s Community Development Corporation officially broke ground Aug. 1 on the third phase of First Creek at Austin, the city’s first mixed-income, affordable housing community. Phase III will offer 161 new units, including 50 supportive housing units for low-income seniors, age 62 and older.

Click [here](#) for a video of the event.



# CAC, Boys & Girls Club co-host back-to-school event in Western Heights

The fourth annual Back to School Block Party in Western Heights occurred July 25 at the Boys & Girls Club.

Co-hosted by the Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee and Boys & Girls Club, this year's event brought together 35 partner agencies who provided school supplies, backpacks, food, activities and resources to 284 area residents. Of that total, 206 were children. Half of the households present were from Western Heights, Lisa Higginbotham, CAC special projects director, said.

"This event is a true collaboration with Community Action Committee, the Boys & Girls Club, and sponsorships — each takes a lift to make this a fun event," Lisa said. "It was a festival atmosphere with cotton candy, snow cones, hot dogs, locally grown produce, information and game booths, and take-home giveaways — including a fully stocked backpack."

Comcast offered 350 backpacks filled with general supplies like spiral notebooks, glue sticks and pencils, Courtney Durrett, Comcast manager of external affairs, said.

"We want to have partnerships, especially in the areas where we have service," Courtney said. "We try to promote back-to-school events as much as we can, and we want to give back to the community, and so this was one of the ways that we could do that is by donating backpacks and school supplies. I have two kids and oh my gosh the cost of school supplies is continuing to rise. We want to just be able to give back as much as we can."



# Back-to-school parties held at Vista, North Ridge

Back-to-School parties were held Aug. 6 at The Vista at Summit Hill and Aug. 7 at North Ridge Crossing.



# CIC attends Shoes for School

Community Involvement Committee members Stephanie Romines, Grae Potter and Tina Muncey, with help from Stephanie's husband and a coworker of his, attended this year's Shoes for School Aug. 3 at the Jacob Building and handed out 1,100 KCDC bags. A special thanks to Stephanie for taking these photos!





## Mud volleyball

The KCDC Tigers participated in a mud volleyball tournament hosted by the Knox County Sheriff's Office Aug. 3 at Holston Chilhowee Ballfields. This year's team included Eugene Littlejohn, Courtney Swatzell, Ashley Ward, Darlene Farmer, Emily McCormick, James Jones and Randall Brown. Although they didn't win, they had fun playing in the tournament. Eugene was team captain. This marked the third or fourth time KCDC participated.

"We just tried to get involved into it again because it helps the community and puts our company out there," Eugene said. "Let them know what we care about the community, and it's for fun."

Proceeds went toward KCSO's Employee Assistance Fund, which assists employees and their families during health crises, the death of an immediate family member or other financial hardships.

"I had an absolute blast at the KPD volleyball tournament," Courtney said. "It was for a great cause, and I was happy to be part of it. The tournament was super messy, but it was nice to let loose and play in the mud. Our team worked so well together, and I can't wait to do it again next year! Thanks to Eugene for getting our fantastic team together and thanks to Jeremy for documenting the mess we made. Go KCDC Tigers!"

A gallery of photos can be found [here](#).

## KPD connects with Western Heights youth

Knoxville Police Department played wiffle ball and had a cook-out with the kids July 30 at the Boys & Girls Club in Western Heights. The event was used as a way to connect with youth similarly to the May kickball game and cook-out in Montgomery Village. KPD Sgt. Kyle Loveday, KCDC's liaison, hopes it builds a rapport with families.

"I think this will kind of help bridge that gap a little bit where they see the officers out here having fun, playing games," Kyle said. "Playing with the kids and then the kids playing with the officers. I think it'll be a great interaction and I just hope that wherever they see us at they come up and say, 'Hello'."





## Love Towers dog park opens

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held July 31 at Guy B. Love Towers for the opening of a new dog park. The installation was one of two the city of Knoxville celebrated that day, with the other being in Fountain City. Both were built by city crews and afforded in part by grant funding through the Boyd Foundation's Knox Neighborhood Dog Parks program.

## Appreciation lunch held

Several of KCDC employees came together 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Aug. 20 at Kern's Food Hall to catch up with coworkers and enjoy a meal. Of KCDC's 149 total employees, 117 RSVP'd for the appreciation lunch.

"This really is a cool occasion for us just to say thank you to everybody that's doing important work," Ben Bentley, KCDC executive director and CEO, said during the event. "... There are so many groups across the state and in Knoxville – they do work, they work hard, and they make things happen, but they don't get to provide a direct service, a foundation for families to live like we do, direct housing, and that's because of you all here."

Eleven of our coworkers were recognized for their service with KCDC, one of which hit 40 years.

"Some very long senior folks and some newer folks like me, I think as long as we just kind of lock arms and go forward together no matter what your job is, you're a part of that," Tracy Lang, KCDC senior director of human resources, said during the event. "You're a part of getting somebody a roof over their head no matter what you do."

Click [here](#) for a video of the event.



# Work Anniversaries

The following were recently recognized for annual milestones with Knoxville's Community Development Corporation. Congratulations on the hard work over the years!



**40 years**

- James Pruitt



**20 years**

- Denise King \*
- Wendy Hamon



**5 years**

- Jaycee Jackson
- Rachel Maples



**25 years**

- Beverly Mack
- Ashley Ogle



**15 years**

- Kimberly Trame

**30 years**

- Gerald Littlejohn Jr. \*
- Charlie Pyles \*

**10 years**

- Andy Morgan \*

**\* Not present**

# Health & Wellness

Good oral health is an essential part of our overall well-being and is a necessity to leading a healthy lifestyle. With October being National Dental Hygiene Month, let's take a look at what you can do to maintain good oral health.

According to the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, tooth decay affects 90% of adults aged 20-64, and gum disease impacts nearly 50% of adults 45-64.

The following are recommendations by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

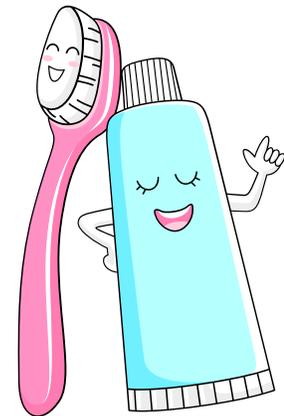
## Fluoride

- Use fluoride toothpaste. Fluoride protects teeth from tooth decay and cavities. It prevents decay by strengthening the tooth's enamel.
- Angle your toothbrush bristles toward the gum line allowing them to clean between the gums and teeth.
- Brush all the sides of each of your teeth gently, using small, circular motions, and avoid scrubbing back and forth.
- Make sure to brush your tongue.

## Flossing

- Use a string of floss about 2 feet long. Wrap it around the middle finger of each hand and grip it between your thumb and index fingers.
- Ease the floss gently between your teeth until it reaches the gum line, but don't force it into place as this could harm the gums. Curve the floss like the letter "C" around the side of each tooth. Slide the floss up and down under the gum.

For more information, visit [here](#).



## Did you know?

- 57% of youth aged 12-19 and at least 90% of adults at least 20 years old have had a cavity.
- About 34 million school hours and 92 million work hours are lost yearly due to unplanned or emergency dental care services.
- About \$46 billion of U.S. productivity is lost yearly due to untreated oral diseases.

\* According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

# 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](mailto:jnash@kcdc.org) if you think there's someone we should highlight.

## Tracy Lang

Senior Director of Human Resources



With more than 30 years of experience in human resources, Tracy Lang was already a seasoned professional before assuming the role of KCDC's senior director of human resources.

Tracy joined KCDC in December following 23 years as director of talent acquisition and employee relations for East Tennessee Children's Hospital. The transition has gone well and been a welcomed challenge.

"The mission is what brought me here," Tracy said. "After working at Children's for 23 years, my heart has to be somewhere I feel that I'm making a difference. ... I was looking for a place that I could further a mission that warms my heart, plus have the challenge of reestablishing HR guidelines and protocols and policies."

After years of heading up HR and managing 26 medical practices, Tracy wanted a place that would allow a better work-life balance at least partly because she knew she would eventually be a grandmother, although that happened sooner than she imagined. Her grandson, Oli Grey, was born Aug. 5 in Orlando, Fla.

Between her time at Blount Memorial Hospital as human resources information coordinator, Children's Hospital as director of talent acquisition and employee relations, and now KCDC as senior director of human resources, Tracy has 34 years of experience that she's been able to pull from to get the job done.

"The stuff that we do in HR is sometimes foreign language for other people, so sometimes it gets overwhelming, and people don't understand their benefits, or they don't understand requirements and are afraid to ask," Tracy said. "My talent is taking complex processes and breaking them down so anybody can understand them."

### HR's focus

One of the biggest current priorities HR has is leveraging technology and transitioning to cloud-based software Paylocity, which Tracy described as a "one-stop shop for all things HR."

"The system that we have now has been in place for a really, really long time," Tracy said. "It doesn't allow for metrics; it doesn't allow for reporting. ... Inside their profile, employees will have access to their entire HR file and work history. They can do lots of new things like checking flexible spending account balances, be connected to all employees via the Paylocity Community, which will open communication lines so all employees have easy access to news, happenings and all things HR. Managers and supervisors will love it! They will have access to initiate and approve HR actions on the go and help them stay connected with their employees. More information on Paylocity is expected soon. The payroll portion should go live in October. Long term Tracy hopes to establish HR as more than just a



department that brings people aboard and lets people go.

"As we get involved in new properties and acquisitions and those things, HR needs to be at the table so we can talk about resources needed, what the impact is on employees," she said. "I think the biggest long-term thing that I have in my mind is all our employees to some degree need some kind of training, whether it's Yardi training, leadership or professional development training. Course to help grow all of our employees. I think providing resources and support is one of the biggest opportunities that we have here."

Any employee who wants professional-growth opportunities should be able to get it, she said.

### Bettering herself

Tracy's journey to KCDC may have never occurred had she not sought higher education years after graduating from William Blount High School in 1986. But before she could make that decision, she had to focus on providing for her family.

"When I was a senior in high school my mom was 37 and had to have open heart surgery, and so when I was that age, I had to bypass college and I actually worked to help make house payments and pay for all my senior supplies and all those kinds of things," Tracy said. "Life happened; I got married young. I got married in 1989 and I've been married 35 years, so that's why I didn't go the typical college route is because I had to take care of my family."

Tracy obtained her bachelor's degree in organizational management from Tusculum University in 2001 and a Master of Business Administration from Western Governors University in 2019. She went back to school to better herself, but to also provide things for her children that she didn't have growing up.

"I grew up in LaFollete from a very, very poor family, and experiences from my childhood wanted me to have so much better for my kids," Tracy said. "I wanted them to see me having to go to school and work full time, and so when they graduated

high school, they knew immediately they were going to college. We're so thankful that they did now."

Tracy's family is big into Disney, so much so that both her children went through its college and professional programs and eventually worked for Disney. Her daughter, Haley, is a pharmacist in the Orlando area, and her son, Kyler, is a VIP tour guide for Walt Disney World. Both live in Florida within minutes from EPCOT.

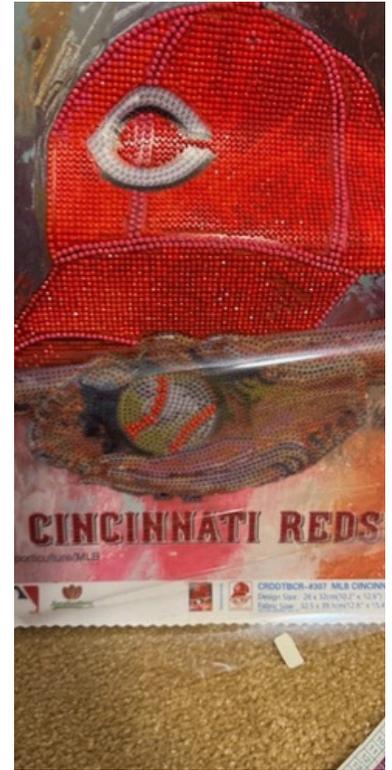
To this day, Tracy and her husband, Todd, vacation to Disney World each year, but with the new grandchild she anticipates trips to Florida will be less to see Mickey and more to see Oli.

## Free time

When not at work, Tracy can be found catching a few Cincinnati Reds games – a fandom by osmosis through marriage, volunteering in the community, expertly bargain shopping, or simply sitting in her living room diligently diamond painting, which she started because her husband said she needed a hobby since she didn't like golfing with him.

"It calms me down. It slows me down and lets me focus," she said. "He'll watch the ballgames, and I'll sit and diamond paint in the living room floor. ... It's kind of like Paint by Numbers, but it's little pellets, little diamond cut pellets that you get and you put it into little spots. It takes thousands or hundreds of thousands to make a picture."

She has a few of Disney-related paintings that she hopes to eventually put in her grandson's room. Currently she's working on one of the Reds.



# HR Update

## New HRIS is on the way

By Tracy Lang

We are excited to be transitioning from our existing Human Resources Information System (VISTA) to a new Human Resources & Payroll Platform (PAYLOCITY)!

This system will enhance your employee experience, giving you more access to everything HR, improved communication and with new features that will simplify your searches and have everything located in one place.

The system will be introduced in segments with payroll and time entry being the first portions to go live. Access will be available on tablets, cellphones, PCs and laptops. Training will begin soon and be offered in person near you, interactively via Teams and through videos you can watch and refer to later. Be on the lookout for more information coming your way soon!

 Viewing, exporting or emailing paychecks and w-2s	 Updating demographic information	 Recognizing co-workers with Impressions	 Finding benefit information
 Submitting time-off requests & viewing balances	 Punching in/out (if Time & Labor is applicable)	 Updating tax exemptions	 Viewing announcements and other communications

## Open enrollment is coming

By Wendy Hamon

With pumpkin spice season also comes time for KCDC's open enrollment! Open enrollment takes place in October each year.

This is a time you can change your benefits without a Qualifying Life Event. Changes you can make include enrolling in medical, dental or vision coverage, adding eligible dependents, dropping coverage or dependents, changing your medical provider network and more. Details about any benefit changes and how to complete open enrollment will be sent out in late September or early October. We hope to have no major changes in benefits and to have minimal increases to premiums. Changes made during open enrollment will be effective Jan. 1, 2025.

As always, you can update your beneficiaries for life insurance and retirement plans anytime throughout the year. You may also make changes to your insurance coverage anytime you have a Qualifying Life Event. If you have any questions about your current coverage, please feel free to reach out to any of us in Human Resources. We are here to help!



# New Hires

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



**James "Andy" Davenport**  
 Hired: 7/15/24  
 Title: Maintenance Tech. II  
 Place: Small Property Collective



**Jarrod Whitehead**  
 Hired: 7/15/24  
 Title: Maintenance Tech. II  
 Place: Montgomery Village



**Mark Beaulieu**  
 Hired: 7/26/24  
 Title: Maintenance Tech. II  
 Place: North Ridge Crossing



**Lewis Polen**  
 Hired: 7/29/24  
 Title: Assistant Property Manager  
 Place: Autumn Landing-Nature's Cove



**Megan Domermuth**  
 Hired: 7/30/24  
 Title: Assistant Property Manager  
 Place: The Vista at Summit Hill



# Announcements

Got an announcement you'd like to put in The Bulletin? Email the information to [jnash@kcdc.org](mailto:jnash@kcdc.org). The deadline for content will typically fall on the last Monday or Tuesday of the month before publication.

- **Craft-a-Palooza**
  - The Community Involvement Committee (CIC) will host Craft-a-Palooza 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 21, in the main office parking lot. The event will include music, food, vendors and a CIC garage sale. If you have questions or are interested in being a vendor, reach out to [cicinfo@kcdc.org](mailto:cicinfo@kcdc.org) by no later than **Monday, Sept. 16**, and just say, "I'm in." There is a \$20 vendor fee. Half of the money raised will go toward BattleField Farms, whose mission as an urban farm is transforming the community's relationship to land and food in East Knoxville's underserved communities. Remaining proceeds will benefit the CIC for future events.



**craft**  
 - a -  
**palooza**

# Newsletter Dates

The Bulletin is scheduled to be released every two months. Here are the remaining newsletters for 2024:

- November-December

# Newsletter Ideas

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

# Follow us



Resident Resources

