

NEW COMMUNITY CLARION



SERVING THE PEOPLE OF THE NEW COMMUNITY NETWORK SINCE 1968



NEW COMMUNITY HELPS CONNECT NEWARK RESIDENTS TO RENTAL ASSISTANCE

The COVID-19 pandemic has not only been a health crisis, but it has also had a devastating financial impact for many. One of those people is Anisha Mohammed. She lives in Newark and because she couldn't work during the height of the pandemic, she is four months behind on her rent. With eviction protection set to expire at the end of 2021, she fears losing her housing.

"I couldn't go to work and then I just started back at work this year," Mohammed explained. She paid her rent as long as she could until she exhausted her savings.

Mohammed and many other Newark residents have applied for the city's Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP). ERAP funds will pay up to 12 months of past-due rent and up to three months future rent for accepted applicants.

Such funding can be a lifeline for those in need, including Mohammed who has three children and a grandchild living with her.

"This would be helpful until I get back up on my feet because now I'm working," she said. "I want to qualify for money for the back rent because you still have to pay the one in front."

New Community is one of the community-based organizations that partnered with the City of Newark to help connect residents financially impacted by COVID-19 to emergency rental assistance. The city's ERAP program, which began in July, was so successful that applications had to be stopped on Dec. 10, prior to the original extension to Jan. 7, 2022.

New Community personnel met with applicants and assisted them throughout the application process. They scanned and input necessary documentation, set up email accounts for those without them and made sure applicants had all necessary documents for a complete application. They also followed up with applicants if additional information was requested.

"As a landlord, New Community is vested in our residents, neighborhoods and the community. We are assisting those that need help in applying for eviction relief funds," said NCC Chief Operating Officer Fred Hunter. "No one wants to see families being evicted. Also, this time of the year children should be enjoying the holiday season and not worrying where their family will be living come winter."

In addition to assisting ERAP applicants, New Community personnel participated in outreach to encourage more people to apply. They handed out information at events, put flyers in food boxes and displayed program details in prominent community areas.

Those who received ERAP application assistance with New Community also got information about other programs and services available to them.

"We never let people come for just one service," said New Community Family Resource Success Center Director Joann Williams-Swiney. "We try to make sure all their needs are met. Many of the residents who come in for ERAP also apply for the energy assistance program."



New Community Family Resource Success Center Director Joann Williams-Swiney, left, helps Newark resident Anisha Mohammed apply for the city's Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP). New Community is one of the community-based organizations that partnered with the City of Newark to help connect residents financially impacted by COVID-19 to emergency rental assistance.



Withum Partner Mike Pintabone hands a tray of Thanksgiving food to Harmony House Case Manager Angela Hall.

WITHUM PROVIDES THANKSGIVING DINNER TO HARMONY HOUSE FAMILIES

Accounting firm Withum provided individually wrapped Thanksgiving meals, including desserts, to the residents of Harmony House, New Community's transitional housing facility for homeless families. Volunteers from the firm cooked, baked and packed the items, which Withum partner Mike Pintabone delivered on Nov. 22.

In years past, Withum has hosted the dinner at Monsignor Linder Plaza (formerly St. Joseph Plaza). To ensure everyone's safety with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the firm decided to deliver prepackaged meals instead. Harmony House residents picked up the items to enjoy in their homes.

New Community thanks Withum employees for their caring and generosity.

See page 3 for more photos.

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AROUND THE NETWORK

YOUTH SERVICES HOSTS HALLOWEEN CANDY GIVEAWAY

New Community’s Youth Services Department hosted a Halloween Candy Giveaway on Oct. 29 in the Workforce Development parking lot on Camden Street in Newark. Children came in costume and received a variety of goodies ahead of the holiday. *Photos courtesy of Edward Morris.*



THE NEW COMMUNITY CLARION

The New Community Clarion is published as a community service. The editor reserves the right to withhold articles and photographs once they are submitted. Opinions expressed in columns are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of New Community Corporation.

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newcommunity.org



OUR MISSION

To help residents of inner cities improve the quality of their lives to reflect individual, God-given dignity and personal achievement.

NEW COMMUNITY IS RECOGNIZED AS:

- One of the largest and most comprehensive community development organization in the United States.
- A large-scale deliverer of comprehensive programs and services.
- A leader in affordable housing and economic development.
- A model among nonprofit, social entrepreneurship and CDC communities.
- Having beneficial partnerships on the local, national and global level.

Bingo!



Residents of Manor Senior, 545 Orange St., Newark, enjoyed bingo in the Community Room thanks to UnitedHealthcare. *Photo courtesy of Erika Furcal.*

PRESENTATION AND PRIZES AT MANOR SENIOR

Residents of Manor Senior, 545 Orange St., Newark, heard a skin care presentation and received prizes from Mary Kay, a skin care and makeup line of products, in the building’s Community Room on Nov. 12. *Photos courtesy of Erika Furcal.*



LEARNING NICOTINE AND TOBACCO RECOVERY STRATEGIES

Residents of Associates, 180 South Orange Ave., Newark, learned about ways to quit nicotine and tobacco products like cigarettes during a presentation from RWJBarnabas Health MBA Educator Keri Britske on Nov. 10. Britske explained why using these products is harmful and offered strategies to kick the habit. *Photos courtesy of Anne Moran.*



DISTRIBUTING FOOD

New Community holds a monthly Community Food Distribution on the first Tuesday of each month at 220 Bruce St., Newark. On Nov. 2, NCC personnel helped distribute items including bread, apples and milk. Community members are encouraged to visit the facility to receive food. No identification is required, but people must sign that they received items. Participants must also bring their own bags and carts to receive food. *Photo courtesy of Anibal Alvelo.*

WITHUM PROVIDES THANKSGIVING DINNER TO HARMONY HOUSE FAMILIES

FROM PAGE 1



Withum Partner Mike Pintabone, left, delivered Thanksgiving meals to Harmony House on Nov. 22 on behalf of his colleagues. Harmony House staff members and New Community Chief Financial Officer/Interim Chief Executive Officer Elizabeth Mbakaya, right, accepted the home cooked meals, which were distributed to residents.



Harmony House residents of all ages were able to enjoy a traditional Thanksgiving meal thanks to accounting firm Withum.



Residents of Harmony House were able to pick up individually wrapped traditional Thanksgiving meals thanks to accounting firm Withum.



Withum Partner Mike Pintabone unloads Thanksgiving meals for Harmony House families on Nov. 22. Harmony House Relocation Case Manager Jennifer Wicker-Buchanan assists him as New Community Chief Financial Officer/Interim Chief Executive Officer Elizabeth Mbakaya looks on.

INDEPENDENCE360 DONATES THANKSGIVING BASKETS TO HARMONY HOUSE

For the ninth year, residents at Harmony House, New Community’s transitional housing facility for homeless families, have received baskets of Thanksgiving supplies from Independence360, a comprehensive program serving adults with autism and related developmental disabilities. Individuals in the Indepence360 program collected nonperishable food items from Oct. 15 to Nov. 19, packaged them up and delivered them to Harmony House on Nov. 22. The group was able to donate 15 full Thanksgiving baskets plus seven additional bags and boxes of pantry and hygiene items. *Photos courtesy of Lumane Metellus.*



NCC SENIOR BUILDINGS HOST COVID-19 VACCINE CLINICS



Roseville Senior, 1 South Eighth St., Newark, hosted a COVID-19 vaccination clinic on Nov. 29 for all Essex County residents. *Photo courtesy of Gladys Artis.*

With booster shots encouraged for all adults six months after receiving the Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine or two months after receiving the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, there is a new push to ensure access to the shots. To help, New Community is hosting the Rapid Mobile Response Team with the New Jersey Department of Health which is administering COVID-19 vaccines.

Commons Senior, 140 South Orange Ave., Newark; Roseville Senior, 1 South Eighth St., Newark; and Manor Senior, 545 Orange St., Newark, all held vaccine clinics in November. The clinics were available to all Essex County residents and no appointments were necessary.

Additional vaccine clinics will be happening at New Community properties going forward thanks to ongoing partnerships.

NEW COMMUNITY RESIDENTS CELEBRATE THANKSGIVING

Residents in New Community senior buildings enjoyed Thanksgiving meals in the Community Room ahead of the holiday.



Residents of Associates, 180 South Orange Ave., Newark, enjoyed a Thanksgiving dinner on Nov. 21 brought by Bishop Andre Speight and Assemblywoman Shanique Speight. *Photo courtesy of Anne Moran.*



Orange Senior Resident Services Coordinator Sister Pauline Echebiri gives a resident a basket that was raffled off during the building's Thanksgiving celebration on Nov. 18. UnitedHealthcare donated the baskets. *Photo courtesy of Alisha Chatman-Jenkins.*



Douglas Homes, 15 Hill St., Newark, hosted a Thanksgiving celebration for residents on Nov. 18. They enjoyed a good meal and had the opportunity to take festive photos. *Photo courtesy of Desiree Crespo.*



Residents of Commons Senior, 140 South Orange Ave., Newark, helped serve their neighbors during the building's Thanksgiving party on Nov. 18. *Photo courtesy of Jill DeRios.*



Residents of Manor Senior, 545 Orange St., Newark, enjoyed a Thanksgiving celebration in their building's Community Room on Nov. 23. *Photo courtesy of Anibal Alvelo.*



Food was plentiful at the Thanksgiving party at Hudson Senior, 21-27 Orchard St., Jersey City, which was held on Nov. 19. *Photo courtesy of Tram Duong.*



Many residents came to the Community Room at Douglas Homes, 15 Hill St., Newark, to celebrate Thanksgiving on Nov. 18. *Photo courtesy of Anibal Alvelo.*



Bishop Andre Speight, standing, celebrated Thanksgiving with residents of Associates, 180 South Orange Ave., Newark, on Nov. 21. He brought Thanksgiving dinner along with Assemblywoman Shanique Speight. *Photo courtesy of Anne Moran.*



Residents of Orange Senior, 132 William St., Orange, participated in a raffle to win baskets donated by UnitedHealthcare during the building's Thanksgiving celebration on Nov. 18. *Photo courtesy of Alisha Chatman-Jenkins.*



Residents of Hudson Senior, 21-27 Orchard St., Jersey City, enjoyed food and the company of their neighbors during the building's Thanksgiving party on Nov. 19. *Photo courtesy of Tram Duong.*



Many came out for the Thanksgiving party at Commons Senior, 140 South Orange Ave., Newark, on Nov. 18. *Photo courtesy of Jill DeRios.*



Manor Senior, 545 Orange St., Newark, hosted a Thanksgiving luncheon on Nov. 23. Residents gathered in the Community Room to enjoy a meal with their neighbors. *Photo courtesy of Anibal Alvelo.*

During the holiday season, Family Service Bureau of Newark (FSB) would like to continue to remind the community that FSB is open and providing a comprehensive array of services in mental health and addiction in consideration of the Bio-Psychosocial-Spiritual continuum. We provide the necessary treatment and/or resources for those in need. For an explanation of services, contact Executive Director Vito Andrisani or Assistant Executive Director Dametria Wertz.

How do I contact FSB and what should I do if I want to refer a person for a substance abuse or mental health assessment?

- In Newark, please call 973-412-2056 and speak with Director of Clinical Services Karl Roman, LCSW, SAP. FSB in Newark is located at 274 South Orange Ave.
- In Kearny, please call 201-246-8077 and ask for Director of Clinical Services Christina Ward, LCSW, LCADC. FSB in Kearny is located at 379 Kearny Ave.

We would like to remind the community that during the holiday season alcohol consumption does increase and that can be problematic. Over the holidays, it can be a challenge to manage alcohol. It's important not to feel pressured to drink because other people are. Adults should be mindful of how much they're drinking around children. Kids are watching and no adult wants to be that drunk uncle falling to the ground as the family gathers for festivities. On such occasions, people often inadvertently mimic binge drinking even if they are not binge drinkers. The issue becomes suffering the consequences of binge drinking from getting sick to acting out of place to being arrested for a DWI.

Binge drinking is defined as having five drinks for men and four drinks for women in a two-hour timeframe. During the holiday season, as stated, binge drinking can happen inadvertently because of the inherent social pressures. That's why experts say spacing out alcoholic beverages throughout the

day can be essential. U.S. dietary guidelines recommend no more than one standard drink a day for women and two for men. Notwithstanding, for some individuals, even one drink can be problematic and simply having alcohol on your breath at times can

lead to a DWI. It is recommended to not drink any alcohol if driving and if not driving do not drink shots or mixed drinks. These drinking behaviors lead to drinking considerably more and lead to negative consequences or the start of problematic drinking.



New Community Adult Learning Center
563 Orange Street, Newark, New Jersey 07107
(973) 558-5536
www.newcommunity.org/services/adult-learning-center/

Available Courses

English for Speakers of Other Languages
Mondays through Thursdays:
10 AM to 12 PM or 6 PM to 8 PM

Citizenship
Saturdays:
9 AM to 12 PM

Computers – Basic & Intermediate Levels
Saturdays:
9 AM to 12 PM

ABE, Pre-HSE, & HSE (English only)
Mondays through Thursdays:
9:30 AM to 1:30 PM or 5:30 PM to 8 PM

Free Services

Health Screenings
Mammograms, Cholesterol, Blood Pressure, Nutrition, Eye Screenings, etc.

Open Community
Free workshops conducted by private institutions and/or volunteers for the general public

Other Services

- Community organizing
- Community rooms
- Social services referrals

Cursos Disponibles

Inglés para Hablantes de otros Idiomas
Lunes a jueves:
10 AM a 12 PM o 6 PM a 8 PM

Ciudadanía
Sábados:
9 AM a 12 PM

Computadora – Nivel Básico e Intermedio
Sábados:
9 AM a 12 PM

ABE, Pre-HSE, & HSE (Ingles solamente)
Lunes a jueves:
9:30 AM a 1:30 PM o 5:30 PM a 8 PM

Servicios Gratuitos

Exámenes Médicos Gratuitos
Mamografías, Colesterol, Presión Sanguínea, Nutrición, Examen de la Vista, etc.

Comunidad Abierta
Talleres gratuitos conducidos por instituciones privadas y/o voluntarios para el publico en general

Otros servicios

- Organización de la comunidad
- Sala de reuniones
- Referidos a servicios sociales

*** Weekdays and Saturdays courses are 9, 10, and 21 weeks long depending on the selected course.**

HELP WANTED: NCC IS HIRING

There are a number of open positions available with New Community Corporation in a variety of departments. To see all job listings, along with descriptions and requirements of each position, visit newcommunity.org and click "Careers." Click "Apply" next to the position of interest to see the full description and then "Apply Now" to complete the application process.

NCC requires job applicants to fill out an online application for consideration. If you have difficulty with the online application process, you can chat with a representative for technical support or check out the Frequently Asked Questions page. For additional information, job seekers can call New Community's main phone number at 973-623-2800.

The site is continually updated, so check back often to see if there is a job of interest.



VNA Health Group

Visiting Nurse Association Health & Hospice

Wellness Tip

December 2021



Winter Prep

Safety Tips





Prepare your Home

- * Check your heating system to ensure it's running properly
- * Make sure you have enough heating fuel if applicable
- * Check and replace batteries in smoke detectors and CO alarms
- * Insulate water line to avoid pipe freezing and/or bursting



Prepare your Car

- * Check your tire treads, install snow or all-terrain tires
- * Check and refill antifreeze and windshield washer fluid
- * Keep an emergency kit in case you get stranded. Include: first-aid kit, car phone charger, jumper cables, and flash light



Plan for Weather

- * Regularly check weather forecasts
- * Stock up on non-perishable food and water
- * Keep cell phones charged
- * Keep shovels and salt/sand handy for clearing snow or icy walkways
- * Invest in a generator for when the power goes out

For more information about VNA Health Group's services & programs, please call 800.862.3330 or visit www.vnahg.org

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: JAMES MASSEY



Capt. James Massey has worked in New Community's Security Department for more than 22 years.

Captain James Massey is a familiar face throughout the New Community network. He has worked in various roles in the organization's Security Department for more than 22 years.

His long tenure wasn't planned. When he initially joined New Community in 1999, Massey anticipated he would stay for five years. But as time passed, he became close with coworkers and began receiving accolades for his work.

"Everybody here is my family," he said.

Massey has been promoted several times within the department. He started off as a Security Officer in 1999, became Site Supervisor of Harmony House in 2004, Sergeant in 2013 and Captain in 2019. He also had the opportunity to run the Security Department on an interim basis after the departure of its head in 2021.

He has assisted incoming Security Operations Manager Derek White, who joined New Community in June.

"When I started this job, one of my challenges was immersing myself in the NCC culture, getting to know who was who and developing a routine. Captain Massey has provided me with tremendous support and was the one person I relied on to get me up to speed," White said. "He has served NCC with a professional and personal commitment to the residents, the employees and those whom he supervises. NCC couldn't ask for better."

Massey tries to help in whatever way he can, whenever he can.

"I don't say no. If you need me to do something, if I can do it, I'm going to do it," he said.

That mindset has led to him receiving a number of recognitions during his tenure at New Community. He has received awards, plaques and letters of recognition over the years, including the Monsignor Humanitarian Award, named for NCC's late founder, which recognized him for his "contribution, support and dedication to the New Community mission."

Massey encourages others within New Community's Security Department to put in the work to push their career further.

"I earned everything that I have: the ranks, the awards, so on and so forth. I earned all that," Massey said. "You can do the same thing. You just have to work just as hard as I have."

In his free time, Massey enjoys watching football, basketball and hockey, particularly the Devils. He enjoys playing sports as well, including golf and tennis. He also likes to listen to a variety of types of music.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: EDWIN FRANK AQUINO

Edwin Aquino is very familiar with the area surrounding his home at Roseville Senior, 1 South Eighth St., Newark. He has resided in the building for four years but lived across the street long before moving into New Community housing.

Aquino was born in Perth Amboy and moved to Newark with his family around age 8. He has remained in the city except for several years when he went to Puerto Rico to help family purchase land. While in Newark, he lived across the street from Roseville Senior, where his family also owned a business. He liked the area and when he had the opportunity to move into New Community housing, he jumped at the chance to move into Roseville Senior.

Since becoming a resident, Aquino has assisted New Community staff members and his neighbors.

"Whatever I need him for, he is always there," said Roseville Senior Resident Services Coordinator Gladys Artis. "Mr. Aquino also bridges the gap when a translator is needed for my Spanish-

speaking population here. He has accompanied residents to the Social Security office before the pandemic and he even went as far as taking a resident to be tested for COVID-19."

Aquino also assists the leadership of the Roseville Senior Tenant Association, helps with events and food distribution and displays flyers, most recently for the general election on Nov. 2 since the building is a polling location for city residents.

Before retirement, Aquino worked a variety of jobs including in the area of security and for gas stations. Now at age 60, he spends his time helping others in his building and in his family.

"I want to help out," he said.

Aquino enjoys watching baseball and football. When he was younger, he used to play those sports. He also likes to go fishing, which he used to do in Branchbrook Park.

Lately he has been focused on volunteering at Roseville Senior. He brings donated food into the building's mailroom for distribution,



Edwin Aquino has lived at Roseville Senior for four years and has become very involved in the building. Photo courtesy of Gladys Artis.

helps new residents learn procedures like how to properly dispose of garbage and recycling and has informed his neighbors about details related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Aquino enjoys living at Roseville Senior and helping out when he can.

"We all get along," he said.

SOCIAL SECURITY NEWS: WOMEN AND SOCIAL SECURITY

BY AMMY PLUMMER, SOCIAL SECURITY DISTRICT MANAGER, SPRINGFIELD AVENUE, NEWARK, NJ

More women work, pay Social Security taxes and earn credit toward monthly retirement income in the 21st century than at any other time in our nation's history. Women, on average, also face greater economic challenges in retirement than men.

Women generally live longer than men while often having lower lifetime earnings. Women may also reach retirement with smaller pensions and other assets compared to men. These are two key reasons why Social Security

is vitally important to women.

Women and men may receive benefits based on their own work record or their spouse's. If you are a woman and you've worked and paid taxes into the Social Security system for at least 10 years, and have earned a minimum of 40 work credits, you may be eligible for your own benefits. Once you reach age 62, you may be eligible for your own Social Security benefit whether you're married or not and whether your spouse collects Social Security or not. If

you're eligible and apply for benefits on more than one work record, you generally receive the higher benefit amount.

It's never too early or too late to start saving and planning for retirement. We have specific information for women at www.ssa.gov/people/women. You can also read the publication *What Every Woman Should Know* at www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10127.pdf.

Please share these links with friends and family.

RUTGERS COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER: SCHEDULE YOUR FLU SHOT TODAY

Dec. 5-11, 2021 is National Influenza Vaccination Week. Influenza (flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by viruses. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), they can infect the nose, throat and lungs. The flu can cause mild to severe illness, and can also lead to death. Some individuals are at higher risk for developing serious complications related to the flu. Typically, older people, young children and individuals with certain health conditions are at higher risk. The best way to protect yourself and your family is to get vaccinated.

What are flu symptoms?

The flu is different from a cold. Typically, the flu comes on suddenly. The most common symptoms are:

- Fever or feeling feverish/chills (although not everyone with the flu will have a fever)
- Cough

- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue or tiredness
- Vomiting or diarrhea (although this is more common in children)

How does the flu spread?

Most commonly, the flu virus spreads by tiny droplets when someone with the flu coughs, sneezes or talks. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are close by. Less often, a person may get the flu by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

How can the flu be prevented?

The best and most effective way that the flu can be prevented is by getting the flu vaccine each year. The flu vaccine can reduce the related symptoms and reduce the risk of severe complications that can result in hospitalizations and even death. In addition to getting the flu vaccine, the CDC also recommends covering coughs, washing hands and staying away from people who are ill to reduce the spread of the flu.

Who is at high risk from the flu?

Anyone can get the flu and develop serious complications, however some people are more at risk. People 65 years and older and children younger than 5 are at risk. Individuals who are pregnant are also at higher risk as well as people with chronic conditions such as asthma, diabetes, kidney disease and heart disease.

What are the complications of the flu?

Most people recover from the flu in a few days

or up to 14 days. However, some individuals develop serious complications. Some of these can be life-threatening and result in death. Serious complications include developing pneumonia, inflammation of the heart or brain and multi-organ failure. The flu can also make existing chronic conditions worse.

Who should get the flu vaccine?

Everyone 6 months and older should get the flu vaccine with some rare exceptions. Annual flu vaccines are particularly important for individuals at high risk. If you have any questions about the flu vaccine, talk to your health care provider.

Rutgers Community Health Center cares for patients of all ages. We provide a wide variety of primary care services, including flu vaccines. Call today to schedule an appointment at 973-732-6040.

- Convenient location in NCC’s health care building at 274 South Orange Ave.
- New patients welcome!
- Open for walk-ins.
- We offer telehealth and in-person visits.
- Accepting most health insurances including Aetna, Horizon and many others.
- We also offer CDL visits.



Community Health Center

Community is everything.

274 South Orange Ave., 3rd Floor
Newark, NJ 07103

973-732-6040 | rchc.rutgers.edu

LESLEY LESLIE: MAKE HAPPY HOLIDAYS



You want things to be like they were years ago. You know, before COVID. Before family gatherings were cautiously planned and virtually had. The reality is

things may never be the same. However, life still goes on. The decision to live life to the best of your ability is one that we are now faced with, and “gratitude” is the thing that can give you that push to go on with your celebrations.

It’s true that holidays can be the saddest time of the year for some people. Joyous occasions are often a reminder of lost loved ones, and it can be difficult to experience happiness and even harder to express happiness. However, consider that gratitude, the quality of being thankful, is something that you can express regardless of how you may be feeling on the inside. You can express gratitude for the simplest of things: a beautiful day, someone letting you have the closest parking space or allowing you to go in front of them at the supermarket.

Gratitude is the readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness. This holiday season you can make a conscious decision to seek out things to be grateful for in your life. It doesn’t mean you won’t still miss your loved ones that are no longer here. It just means you can try to focus on things that help you as you deal with your here and now. It’s an effort to “make” the holiday season the merry season it once was for you.

Blessings in the New Year!

NCC HELPS CONNECT NEWARK RESIDENTS TO RENTAL ASSISTANCE FROM PAGE 1

Mohammed was prescreened when she called about ERAP and obtained a dual appointment for the ERAP and energy assistance applications. Williams-Swiney helped Mohammed apply to both programs.

In addition to benefit programs, ERAP applicants are also introduced to New Community’s many offerings, including educational opportunities at New Community Career & Technical Institute (NCCTI) and the Adult Learning Center and behavioral health care provided by Family Service Bureau of Newark (FSB).

Applicants can also be assisted in other ways. During Mohammed’s appointment, she said she was having electrical issues and a rodent problem that hadn’t been addressed by her landlord. Williams-Swiney contacted the city’s Code Enforcement office on Mohammed’s behalf and provided her with additional information surrounding those issues.

“This is why it’s important to take a little time with people. Because there are bigger pictures in many cases,” Williams-Swiney

said. “We want to do what we can to try to help them holistically. Not just do the application and send them on their way.”

According to Newark Mayor Ras J. Baraka, the city has distributed or committed its full \$20.3 million allocation to more than 1,800 households, which made it necessary to stop accepting ERAP applications early.

New Community can still assist those who started applications but have missing information or need additional follow-up. Those who did not have the opportunity to apply to Newark’s ERAP are able to access the Essex County ERAP portal at <https://portal.neighborlysoftware.com/ERAP-ESSEXCOUNTYNJ/Participant> or apply at the Essex County Division of Community Action, 50 South Clinton St., East Orange.

To assist residents who missed the opportunity to apply to Newark’s ERAP, New Community is hosting Essex County ERAP personnel on Dec. 14 and 15 who will help residents apply for assistance through the county program.

NEW COMMUNITY

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CELEBRATING THANKSGIVING AT COMMUNITY HILLS EARLY LEARNING CENTER

Children at Community Hills Early Learning Center (CHELC), 85 Irvine Turner Boulevard, Newark, enjoyed a Thanksgiving meal ahead of the holiday. The students also got to make holiday-themed crafts in their classrooms. *Photos courtesy of CHELC.*

