

OTR UPDATE

Improving Lives Through Accessible, Affordable Housing

From Executive Director Eric Huffman

May 2018

Dear Friends,

Each month, I like to highlight an important part of OTR's work that extends far beyond building apartment communities. This May, I would like to focus on the residents of OTR's apartment communities. With support from our Resident Service Program, OTR's residents are out in the community giving back in numerous ways through community partnerships, mentoring, and volunteering. Here are just few examples:

Artfully Abled- Giving back through artwork



For the third year, OTR residents will participate in Evanston Made, a community arts initiative that facilitates engagement between the public and Evanston's artists. For the last year, OTR residents have been taking art classes put on by the Evanston Art Center and past Gallery OTR artists. The artwork is displayed at Gallery OTR at the Hill Arboretum.

On June 14th, Gallery OTR will host an opening reception and Gallery talks. The residents who participated in the classes will speak about their artwork, the experience, and being able to work with different mediums of art.

Save the Date! June 14th | 2-4 pm

North Shore Country Day School- Giving back to youth

Wrapping up its 4th year this month, OTR residents will be receiving their final project that they created with their 5th grade groups at North Shore Country Day School.

For the last 4 years, residents of OTR's Evanston apartment community have been working with the 5th grade students to create projects with a 3D printer to make an aspect of their life easier. The children and the partners meet multiple times during the school year, write letters, and

learn about each other and their similarities, differences, and each other's lives.



Carmen Young- *Giving Back As Volunteers*



Carmen Young, a resident of Gustafson Apartments in Waukegan, currently volunteers at the Independence Center (IC). The mission of Independence Center is to enhance the quality of life, to promote independent functioning, and to facilitate personal growth for adults with a history of mental illness.

Through IC, Carmen is learning how to become a mental health technician. The program will take her about one year to finish. At the end, she will be volunteering at hospitals to better assist individuals suffering from mental health issues.

These are just a few examples of the residents of our 11 apartment buildings who are a vital part of the communities in which they live. Constantly looking for ways to get involved and give back, they have become mentors, artists, advocates, and volunteers for others with disabilities and for their communities. They make our world a better place to live.

"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members." - Coretta Scott King

Sincerely,

Eric Huffman
OTR Executive Director