

Community CONNECTION

SPRING 2010

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FROM THE
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY



A college education pays!

BY DARLENE McINTOSH

A college graduate will earn nearly one million dollars more over a lifetime than a high school graduate, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. That's a strong motivation to go to college! However, parents and students may be overwhelmed by the expense of attending college, and the federal government wants to help. It has set policies to determine a student's financial need based on the family's financial resources compared to the cost to attend college or a trade school. Applications for federal aid can be submitted via the internet at the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) website: www.fafsa.ed.gov.

Several kinds of financial aid are available to help students pay for their education expenses:

- **Grants** are financial awards, usually from a state or federal source, that do not need to be repaid.
- **Loans** are money that is borrowed and must be repaid. Funds may be borrowed from government entities, the school of attendance or a financial institution. Interest rates and repayment structures may vary.
- **Scholarships** are financial awards based on merit (talent or performance) or merit plus need. Scholarships may be from private or government sources and do not require repayment. The competition for scholarships can be intense, so begin early. Potential sources for scholarships and grants include civic organizations; associations; local businesses; employers of family and friends; educational institutions.

• **Work-Study programs** are funded by federal and state governments. These programs are usually included in the student's financial aid package. Work-study provides jobs for undergraduate students, allowing them to work and earn money while accommodating their class schedule.

REMEMBER...completing the FAFSA is the first step in attaining financial assistance.

As you prepare to apply for financial aid:

- Be aware of deadline dates; schools and states may have their own deadlines;
- Apply for student and parent Personal Identification Numbers (PIN) at www.fafsa.ed.gov before completing the FAFSA online. This will allow you to sign your application electronically.
- Gather required documents: Social Security number; driver's license, income tax returns, bank statements, and investment records.

Federal financial aid deadlines for the 2010-2011 School Year (July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011):

- FAFSA on the Web applications must be submitted by midnight Central Daylight time, June 30, 2011.
- Corrections on the Web forms must be submitted by midnight Central Daylight time, September 15, 2011.

—CONTINUE ON PAGE 2

Financial aid is available to help you attend college and greatly increase your lifetime earnings.



Going healthy Going smoke-free

Did you know that the Waterman Gardens and Colton public housing communities and the Mt. Vernon Senior Apartments in Colton are now designated as smoke-free communities? Surveys were distributed and collected from residents, and the overwhelming majority supported the idea of a 100% smoke-free housing community, and the policy change was approved by the Housing Authority Board of Commissioners. No smoking is allowed inside the units or anywhere on the premises.

Current resident smokers will be given one year to transition to the smoke-free policy, but this policy immediately applies to new residents, visitors, vendors, and all Housing Authority staff. Residents are responsible to see that their guests comply with the non-smoking policies. In the near future residents from other sites will also be surveyed to potentially transition other sites to smoke-free communities.

Tobacco smoke has been proven to be a toxic air contaminant, and no level of exposure is safe. Approximately 500,000 Americans die each year from smoking and secondhand smoke exposure, including children and infants. Secondhand smoke is a serious health issue, and research proves that no exposure to smoke is safe, especially for children and elderly individuals.

Even if you do not smoke, you are still exposed to secondhand smoke because it lingers in the air for hours after cigarettes have been extinguished, and the smoke can travel to other parts of a building and outdoor areas. Smoke travels through plumbing, electrical systems, cabinets and closets, ceiling fans, fireplaces, ventilation systems and under doors, even if they are closed. Exposing yourself and your family to smoke increases the risk of lung cancer, heart disease, asthma, bronchitis, and other chronic illnesses.

Smoking materials are also the leading cause of fire death and the third leading cause of fire injuries in the U.S., according to the National Fire Protection Association.

Together we can keep our communities clean and healthy.

BY ANA GAMIZ:
DIRECTOR, POLICY AND
COMMUNITY AFFAIRS



• Note: Your school must have your complete and correct information by your last day of enrollment in the 2010 – 2011 school year.

State Student Financial Aid: Board of Governors Enrollment Fee Waiver (BOG)

California has a program for eligible community college students that is different from federal loan programs such as FAFSA. Eligible students receive a waiver of the enrollment fees at San Bernardino Valley College (SBVC). Students may apply for a BOG by using the application in the class schedule each semester, by downloading and submitting the BOG application on the SBVC website, or by completing and submitting a FAFSA application.

Additional sources of financial aid information include:

- www.studentaid.ed.gov
- www.actstudent.org
- www.students.gov
- High school counselors
- Local libraries

A computer lab is available at each Housing Authority public housing community to help you with application submissions. Contact your Resident Services Coordinator for lab hours. ●

Apply now for a 2010 Annual Scholarship Award

BY ROBERT SCOTT

In the last 18 years the Housing Authority has awarded approximately \$170,000 in scholarships to residents seeking higher education.

Applications for 2010 scholarships are available now at www.hacsb.com. Residents can print the application, fill it out and take it to 715 Brier Dr. San Bernardino, CA 92408, or return it to the property management office where you live. The deadline is Thursday, May 27, 2010 at 4:30 p.m.

Scholarships are competitive and will be awarded based on the applicant's grade point average, a written essay, and financial needs. Scholarships are for \$1,000 for a four-year university, or \$500 for an accredited vocational school or community college

For more information about the Annual Scholarship Award Program, contact your Resident Services Coordinator. ●

Tips to help you ace that test

BY GEORGE HOGAN

Each spring all students in California public school grades 2-11 take standardized tests. The results become a part of the student's permanent records, and are used to evaluate local schools' performance. The tests are often a great source of stress for students. Here are some tips to help you relax and do your best.

Before the Test

- **Eat well.** Studies show that you need good nutrition to concentrate and perform your best.
- **Bring the right supplies.** Bring your pencils, erasers, pens, rulers, compasses, calculators, or whatever else you'll need on test day.
- **Review the whole test before you start.** See how many sections and what types of questions are on the test. Consider how much time to allow for each section, basing your decision on the point value of each. You don't want to spend too much time on a question that counts for only a few points.
- **Jot down your first thoughts.** From your first look at the test, take quick notes on ideas you might forget. For example, you may want to outline your answers to written response and essay questions right away.

During the Test

- **Read the directions.** Never assume that you know what the directions say. For example, some questions may have more than one correct answer.
- **Answer easy questions first.** Answering easier questions may jog your memory about useful facts. You may also come across information that can help you with other questions.
- **Answer every question.** Unless there's a penalty for wrong answers, it can't hurt to try.
- **Ask questions.** If a question isn't clear, talk to your teacher. If that's not possible, explain your answer in the margin.
- **Identify key words.** This will help you focus on the main idea of challenging questions.
- **Rephrase difficult questions.** To understand questions better, rewrite them in your own words, but be careful not to change the meaning.
- **Organize your thoughts before you write.** Spend some time organizing your responses to short-answer and essay questions. You'll reduce the time you need to revise.
- **Write neatly.** Be sure you don't lose points on answers the instructor can't read.
- **Use all of the time you're given.** If you finish early, don't race out. Use the extra time to proofread and edit your answers. ●



Residents Use Computer Lab to Earn GEDs

BY ROBERT SCOTT

The Medical Center computer lab, headed by **Erika Farrar**, recently had nine residents obtain their High School Equivalency Diplomas (GED) from Mira Loma Christian School High School Equivalency Completion Program. These graduates participated in a Cap and Gown ceremony on March 26, 2010 at Johnson Hall. Approximately 100 people attended the ceremony and cheered for the graduates. Words of encouragement were spoken by **Dr. Velma Union** of One Light International, a non-profit organization that provides training and direct intervention services to low- and moderate-income families with a focus on at-risk youths; and by Housing Authority staff.

Dominique Weaver sang, "I Believe," a song made known by popular American Idol winner Fantasia. **Anthony Revis** and **Melissa Grant**, of Topflight, sang a poem to music written by Anthony titled, "It's Never Too Late." The highlight of the event was the speech by Graduate Valedictorian **Aquilla Breveard**, (below) titled "It's Never Too Late." The speech title was appropriate as Aquilla has recently celebrated her 61st birthday. ●



Community Development Citizen Advisory Committee

Judy Mlsna-Castorena (below), from the Waterman Gardens Housing community, was appointed by the San Bernardino City Common Council to be a member of the Community Development Citizen Advisory Committee on April 19. Judy was nominated by 1st Ward City Councilwoman Virginia Marquez.

Judy will inform citizens regarding the amount of Community Development Block Grant funds available, along with the range of activities that may be undertaken, and to ensure that program requirements are within compliance.



HELPING PEOPLE SUCCEED

Need a special helping hand?

BY JANICE B. SIMMONS, M.Ed.

You're attending or planning to attend school, but realize you need to buy textbooks and possibly a bus pass to make it happen. The Housing Authority's Supportive Services can help!

Supportive Services is another way the Housing Authority can help families achieve self-sufficiency. The Resident Services Coordinator in each public housing community is eager to help any public housing tenant who wants to achieve self-sufficiency, whether it's assistance with tuition or gas cards and bus passes for school, work and job interviews.

If you need of some of these services, here are some basic guidelines you need to follow:

- Provide receipts for the class, agency or company for which you're requesting reimbursement, plus additional back-up material such as class schedules, transcripts, etc.
- Expenses should be current and should not be more than two months old.
- Services should be used for an immediate and temporary need only and not on a continuous basis. Each RSC will review all cases individually.

Education assistance:

1. You need to exhaust all other outside funding resources (i.e. FAFSA, GAIN/Welfare programs, etc.) before requesting Supportive Services help for schooling.
2. Class registration and book reimbursements will be granted only if you provide transcripts showing successful course completion.
3. Advance payments for classes are available *only* if there's a family

hardship:

- You have applied for all other funding sources;
- You were denied other outside funding or are currently waiting for funding;
- You are not able to cover the cost because you are below the poverty guidelines, or you are below the 80% area of medium income;

Any advance payment should be made payable to the school and should cover only book, tuition and registration.

If you drop a class, you must arrange a payment plan to repay the funds before requesting any additional services.

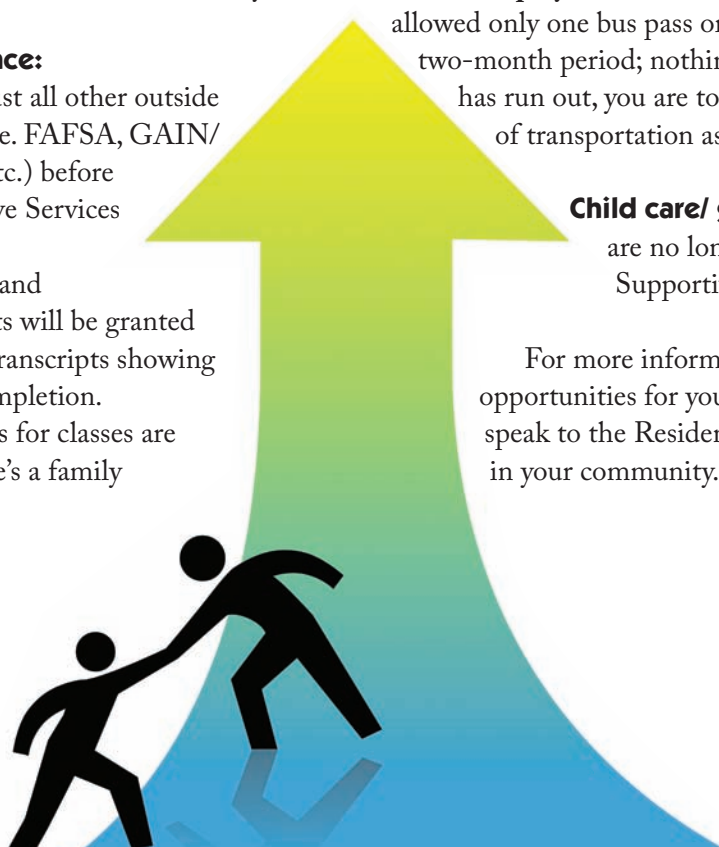
Transportation assistance

- **Gas cards:** Gas card amounts come in increments of \$25 or less depending on the need, and are to be used for *immediate* need. You eligible for a gas card or bus pass upon proof that you are seeking employment or attending school.
- **Bus passes:** You are eligible for either a monthly or day pass depending on the need.
- **After employment/schooling begins,** you are allowed only one bus pass or one gas card for a two-month period; nothing more. Once the time has run out, you are to seek your own means of transportation assistance.

Child care/ grocery assistance

are no longer available under Supportive Services.

For more information about these great opportunities for you and your family, please speak to the Resident Services Coordinator in your community. ●



The Great Southern California Shake Out

BY ESTELLA NUÑEZ



The 2010 Great California ShakeOut on October 21 is eight months away, and already more than 1.8 million Californians are registered to participate. News from Haiti and Chile continues to remind us of how important it is to be prepared—as individuals, organizations, communities, and beyond. The ShakeOut is an opportunity for us to prepare together, hopefully before a major earthquake happens again here in California.

Official rescue teams from the U.S. and other countries who have searched for trapped people in collapsed structures around the world, as well as emergency managers, researchers, and school safety advocates, all agree that “Drop, Cover, and Hold On” is the appropriate action to reduce injury and death during earthquakes.

Immediately when earthquake shaking begins:

DROP down onto your knees (before the earthquake knocks you down). This position makes you a smaller target but allows you to move if necessary.

COVER your head and neck (or your entire body) under a strong table or desk. If there is no table to get under, get down near an interior wall and cover your head and neck with your arms and hands.

HOLD ON to the furniture or to your head and neck until the shaking stops.

More information about what to do during an earthquake can be found at www.earthquakecountry.info/roots/step5.html and www.dropcoverholdon.org ●

What Home Means to Me Poster Contest

BY DARLENE McINTOSH

Nearly 100 of our young residents participated in last summer’s “What Home Means to Me” poster contest sponsored by the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO). Three categories were judged: elementary, middle, and high school. Each of the twelve national honorees received a framed certificate and a \$100 U.S. savings bond. The grand prize honoree received a \$500 U.S. savings bond plus an all expense paid trip to Washington D.C. for the entire household family to attend the NAHRO’s 2010 National Legislative Conference.

Housing Authority participants used markers and crayons, yarn, glitter, noodles and other household items to create their imaginative posters. The poster contest is a great way to have some family fun and possibly open a dialog with your children about the importance of home and family.

HACSB will participate in the contest again this summer. Watch for information in your community newsletter and community meetings. Resident Service Coordinators are preparing to have artists speak with our youth about creative expression through various art media this year. Parents, encourage your children to participate; you may be surprised by the hidden artist living under your roof! ●

Employment Services and Assistance

BY JANICE B. SIMMONS, M.Ed.

Still looking for that job/career that best suits your qualifications? What have you done lately to make it happen? Many programs and services are available that might be what you're looking for.

The Employment Development Department (EDD) has partnered with the Housing Authority to provide employment advisement, computer classes, and excellent workshops. Take advantage of all EDD can offer you.

EDD is currently providing services in the Redlands Public Housing Community Room to all residents of public housing as well as participants in the HCV program. If you're interested in résumé writing or information about green jobs that will soon make a great impact in San Bernardino County, then you definitely want to be

TO NEXT PAGE

Family Self-Sufficiency at Work

BY ESTELLA NUÑEZ

We were just your classic story," says Daniel and Jackie Garcia. The family was facing tough times before they applied for housing assistance with the Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino (HACSB). They had several school-age children and one on the way. "Our whole family was living in a tiny rented room," recalls Daniel. "I remember being so cramped and wanting to breathe."

The family knew it might be a long wait for the call announcing they had been selected from the waiting list for housing assistance. When that call did come in July of 2008, Daniel said that "... it just made me so happy and filled me with hope knowing that we would get a fresh start."

When the Garcias were offered a unit in the Waterman Gardens community, Daniel was apprehensive. That came from memories he had from childhood when his family lived in and near Waterman Gardens. But the Garcia family found a changed community. Daniel said "it was cleaned up a lot; I could see the problems were removed and they [Housing Authority] wanted to make it feel more like a community, a home for residents."

Along the way, Daniel met Resident Services Coordinator Estella Nuñez, and with her encouragement and guidance began making the right choices for himself and his family. Mrs. Nuñez signed the family up on the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program, and they joined other Section 8 and Public Housing residents who have committed themselves to reach economic self-sufficiency and move beyond assistance to independence. Jackie says that they joined the FSS program because it provided the support and assistance they needed to remove barriers that had hindered them. "We didn't have to join; we chose to." FSS provided someone the Garcias could talk to, bounce their ideas off of, validate their efforts, and encourage them; all so they could improve their quality of life for themselves and their children. The



The Daniel Garcia family is on the way toward independence thanks to the Housing Authority's Family Self-Sufficiency Program.

Garcia family describes FSS as "...a reward."

Before long Daniel decided it was time for him to get back into school. He started attending Everest College with the goal of receiving his Electrician Certification. The electrician program is giving Daniel the technical, scientific, communication, and interpersonal skills he needs for

successful employment in residential, industrial and commercial work. Daniel expects to graduate in September of 2010.

Today, the Garcia family continues along their path toward greater self-sufficiency. They know it will take dedication and perseverance, but they are committed to pressing forward toward their goal of independence.

For more information about the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program, please contact your on-site Resident Services Coordinator. ●

Goodwill is hosting its **3rd Annual Hope, Jobs and Futures** event on Tuesday, June 8, 5:30 PM, at Victoria Gardens Cultural Center, 12505 Cultural Center Dr., Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91739. Outstanding achievers, graduates and valued business partners will be honored. For details contact Lowell King at RSVP4HJFIE@goodwillsocial.org or via phone at 909.386.6233.

Goodwill
Southern California

8120 PALM AVENUE, SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92410

Section 3 Resident Training Program

BY JANICE B. SIMMONS, M.Ed.

Program offers employment aid in administration, management, clerical support and construction.

The Housing Authority's Section 3 program is geared to help low- and very-low-income public housing residents in San Bernardino County where a HUD-assisted housing project or community development is located.

The program fosters local economic development, neighborhood economic improvement and individual self-sufficiency. The goal of Section 3 is to provide jobs for residents and award contracts to businesses looking to receive certain funding using HUD financial assistance.

Section 3 brings job training, employment and contract opportunities for the residents. Employment resulting from these expenditures, including administration, management, clerical support, and construction, is subject to compliance with Section 3.

Employment opportunities listed under Section 3 include: Accounting, architecture, appliance repair, bookkeeping, bricklaying, carpentry, carpet installation, catering, cement/masonry, demolition, drywall, electrical, engineering, fencing, heating, janitorial, landscaping, marketing, painting, plastering, plumbing, printing, research, surveying, tile setting, transportation, and word processing.

Persons who receive priority under Section 3 include those who:

- Live in public and assisted housing;
- Live in the area where the HUD financial assistance is spent;
- Are participants in HUD Youthbuild programs;
- Are homeless.

To receive more information regarding the Section 3 Program, contact **Janice B. Simmons** at 909.890.5320 ext. 3423. ●

A Spelling Bee Star

BY GEORGE HOGAN

Rayana Wilder is a 10-year-old resident in Barstow public housing. Her family moved to California from Washington state, and recently she participated in her school's spelling bee and won first place. Rayana then advanced to the District competition, where she won second place.

Before the Regional competition in Barstow, I asked how she thought she would do. She replied, "When I win the District competition, then I will go to Washington D.C. and compete in the Nationals. I want to go there and win."

Rayana did not place in the contest, so she will not go to Washington D.C. this year. But she said she will study harder and go for it next year.

I was able to spend a little time to talk with Ryana and ask a few questions about her experience.

George Hogan: *"How did winning first place at school make you feel?"*

Rayana: **"I felt so happy."**

GH: *"Although you did not win at Regionals, how do you feel about the experience?"*

Rayana: **"I am glad that I got the chance to compete. I am going to study harder and try to make it to Washington D.C. next year."**

GH: *"What are your future goals?"*

Rayana: **One day I want to open an art museum and make my very own music CD playing the saxophone.** ●



on board to receive these FREE services.

Another great tool that is available to all residents and program participants is the new HACSB *Resourceful Job Hunter* newsletter, which contains job listings currently available throughout San Bernardino County. You'll also find information on upcoming job/career fairs in your area, interviewing tips and great resources to help you find the job that's right for you.

To learn more about the EDD services, contact Janice Simmons, Resident Services Coordinator in Redlands. If you haven't received a copy of the HACSB *Resourceful Job Hunter* newsletter, contact the Resident Services Coordinator in your community. Be sure to ask your Resident Services Coordinator about other great job-hunting resources available to you. ●



Community CONNECTION

715 EAST BRIER DRIVE, SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92408 | VOICE: 909.890.0644 | FAX: 909.890.4618 | WWW.HACSB.COM

COMMUNITY CONNECTION is a resource distributed by the Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino to the residents it serves. To learn more about the Housing Authority's rent subsidy or Homeownership programs, or to add your name to our mailing list, contact your Resident Services Coordinator or call 909-885-1593.

PUBLIC HOUSING OFFICES



■ **Colton: Darlene McIntosh** | 909-824-8277
 Fax: 909-824-8121 | Dmcintosh@hacsb.com
 772 Pine St, Colton, CA 92324

■ **Chino: Darlene McIntosh** | 909-628-3413
 Fax: 909-628-2204 | Dmcintosh@hacsb.com
 13088 Monte Vista Ave., Chino, CA 91701



■ **9th/Medical Center: Robert Scott** | 909-890-5350
 Fax: 909-388-2546 | Rscott@hacsb.com
 1738 W. 9th St, San Bernardino, CA 92411



■ **Waterman Gardens: Estella Nuñez** | 909-885-1593
 Fax: 909-388-2218 | Enunez@hacsb.com
 425 Crestview Av, San Bernardino, CA 92410



■ **Barstow: George Hogan** | 760-256-8814
 Fax: 760-256-8873 | Ghogan@hacsb.com
 421 South 7th St, Barstow, CA 92311



■ **Redlands: Janice Simmons** | 909-890-5320
 Fax: 909-798-6762 | Jsimmons@hacsb.com
 131 E. Lugonia Ave, Redlands, 92374

■ **Employment Placement: Kandi Kinney** | 909-381-6886
 Fax: 909-386-7225 | 425 Crestview, San Bernardino, CA 92410

■ **Housing Program Office** | 909-890-9533 | Fax: 909-890-5333
 672 S. Waterman, San Bernardino, 92408

RESIDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL OFFICERS

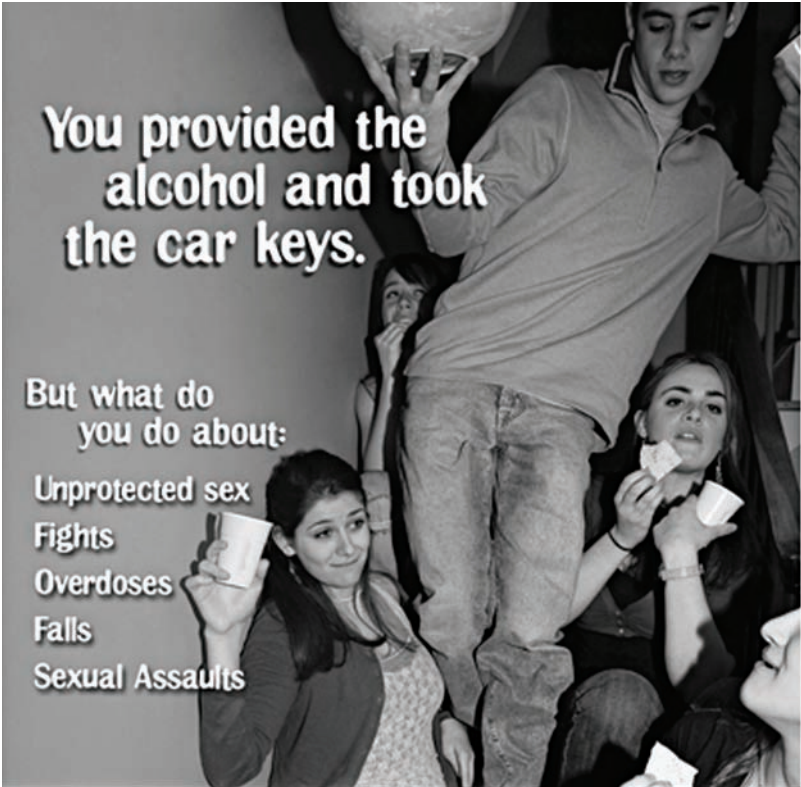
- **Roberto Talavera**, President | 951-662-9283
- **Valinda Lowe**, Vice President | 909-435-9767
- **Sylvia Miller**, Secretary/Treasurer | 909-725-7666

OTHER CONTACTS

- HACSB Maintenance Department | 909-388-2436 (after hours 1-800-494-6826)
- **Emergencies** | 911
- Animal Control | 909-384-1304
- Edison (Electric) | 1-800-798-5723
- Gas Company (to light heater pilots) | 1-800-427-2200
- HEAP (Utility Assistance) | 909-891-9157
- Inland Mediation Board | 909-888-3763



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You provided the alcohol and took the car keys.

But what do you do about:

- Unprotected sex
- Fights
- Overdoses
- Falls
- Sexual Assaults

There are a million things that can go wrong when youth drink.
Don't provide alcohol.