

NEWSLETTER



Mary Dade
Housing Program Manager

● UPCOMING EVENTS

Second Annual Readiness Conference

Planning for the Second Annual Readiness Conference is already underway. The Housing Department is building a new network of supporters, including climate activists and protectionists from the region. Staff is scheduled for relevant training, attending the Environmental Justice Summit 2025, meetings with the Resilience Hub and other experts, and securing renowned speakers for the conference. Doctors Mustafa Santiago Ali and Jylana Sheats will be keynote speakers.

The save-the-date flyer has been published and distributed broadly. Scheduled for September 19, 2025, we will explore how climate change intensifies existing inequities and what we can do to prepare, respond, and rebuild stronger.

Housing Department

The Housing Department, seen all around town, still achieved its deliverables.

Homeownership Month activities themed “Your Home, Your Power” were a spectacular success. It highlighted a successful collaboration between Citi Bank, the Washington Real Estate Brokers Association, and Clark Premier Realty. Our partners were committed to its success. The “Turn Assets into Opportunities” was the highlight of the series. It sparked genuine conversations about myths and misconceptions about how to handle a mortgage over 30 years. The primary misconception is that the belief that homeowners should refinance every seven years is not true. Conversely, making smart principal-only payments is the best strategy for creating generational wealth.

Department of Housing and Community Development’s (DHCD) National Homeownership event our Program Manager was invited to serve as a panelist. She spoke on a variety of topics: Who MHCDO is and what we do, the expanded reach of the Housing department services to other states and territories, highlighted certain services such as reverse mortgages and emergency preparedness, as well as our financial literacy core topics, Estate Planning, and Cloud-Based Recordkeeping. She introduced the topic of generational wealth through the proper use of home equity.

Workforce Development

As the month of June comes to a close, the Workforce Development Unit announces the successful completion of the ABC CORE Construction Basics class with 20 participants. Graduates completed the six-week 80-hour class that included safety certificates in OSHA 10, Fall Prevention, and CPR.

Conceived and funded by co-developers of NRPC and MHCDO, Cohort 2 was designed to select, train, and fast-track hiring for the joint program known as Emblem located at 301 Florida Ave., NE located in Ward 6's NOMA neighborhood. Training was provided by Associated Builders and Contractors of Metropolitan Washington. Participants had to meet DOES' eligibility requirements of 1) being a District resident; 2) having a DC picture ID; and 3) presenting a social security card in order to participate in the Alternative Work Plan monitored by the Office of First Source Compliance.

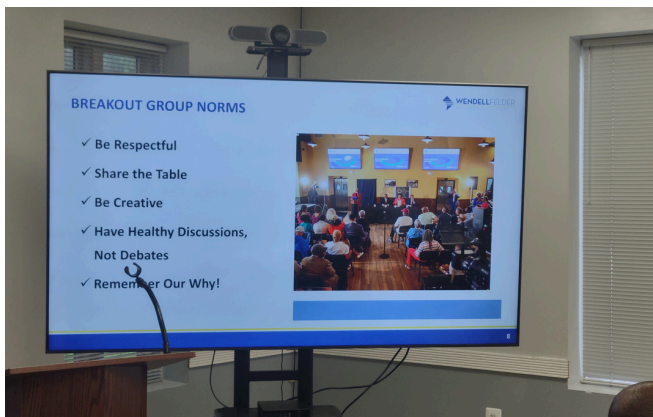


Blythe Patenaude
Director of Business Development





Elridge Allen
Director, Small Business Development Program



Small Business Development

Celebrating Eid al-Adha with Our Neighbors

On Friday, June 6, MHCDO joined hands with East River Family Strengthening Collaborative to provide event and logistics support for the Masjid Muhammad Community Center's joyful Eid al-Adha celebration. Known as the Festival of Sacrifice, Eid al-Adha is a deeply meaningful holiday for Muslim communities worldwide. The celebration included prayer, gift-sharing, and food distribution, underscoring the spirit of generosity and togetherness. MHCDO was honored to contribute to this vibrant community gathering and share in the celebration of unity and faith.

Empowering Entrepreneurs at the ENCOURAGE Workshop & Certification Day

The MHCDO SBDA and Workforce Development teams were thrilled to lead small business and entrepreneurship training during the ENCOURAGE Workshop & Certification Day, hosted by the DC Department of Employment Services (DOES), Division of State Initiatives (DSI) on Wednesday, June 11. Fourteen participants completed a day of immersive sessions focused on Entrepreneurial Readiness, Business Ideation, and Business Plan Development. Each received a Certificate of Completion, marking their commitment to growth and innovation. We commend these aspiring entrepreneurs for taking bold steps toward building strong business futures.

HBCU Entrepreneurship Empowerment Summit

On Friday, June 20, MHCDO's SBDA Team, represented by D. Jones and E. Allen, proudly participated in the 2025 HBCU Entrepreneurship Empowerment Summit Resource Fair, hosted by Howard University and the PNC Bank National Center for Entrepreneurship. Held at the Marriott Marquis in downtown DC, the summit brought together HBCU students, alumni, founders, and funders to connect around opportunities to support and grow Black-owned ventures. As ambassadors of MHCDO's programs and resources, our team engaged attendees in conversations about small business support, workforce development, and community-building initiatives. Events like this fuel the future of equitable entrepreneurship.

Deanwood Heights Main Street

The Strand Residences and Deanwood Smokehouse, located at 5119 Nannie Helen Burroughs Ave. NE in Washington, D.C.'s Deanwood neighborhood, have revitalized the historic Strand Theater by restoring its iconic rooftop sign. Originally opened in 1928 as the first movie theater east of the Anacostia River for African American patrons, the Strand was a cultural hub for over 40 years. The restored sign, part of a larger redevelopment project, celebrates the theater's legacy while transforming the space into a modern community gathering spot and restaurant, preserving Deanwood's rich history.



Paul Spires
Director, Deanwood Heights Main Street

Economic Development and Sustainability

MHCDO hosted the first of a five-session series for Councilmember Felder's Listening Session on the RFK Stadium initiative on May 29, 2025, 6:00pm. The event's focus was to gather input from community residents towards the framing of a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) for RFK stadium's redevelopment. Breakout groups provided feedback on the impact areas of housing, jobs/workforce, youth engagement/ opportunities, transportation, community access/open space, arts/culture, health & safety, and retail/small businesses.





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Pennsylvania Avenue East Main Street

2026 Budget Oversight Hearing

At the 2026 Budget Oversight Hearing before the Committee on Economic Development, Pennsylvania Avenue East Main Street's (PAEMS) director, Racquell Perry, delivered a powerful testimony on behalf of the Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD). Speaking to the importance of the Pennsylvania Avenue SE corridor, the PAEMS Director emphasized the real-world impact Main Street funding has on local businesses—especially in underserved areas like Pennsylvania Avenue SE.



Racquell Perry
Director, Pennsylvania Avenue
East Main Street

“Our small businesses are doing their best with what they have—but continued support is essential if we want them to survive, not just hang on,” she shared. The testimony highlighted how current funds are being used for beautification, safety improvements, and direct grants to help keep neighborhood businesses remain open. Amid growing economic uncertainty, she urged the Council to at least maintain existing funding levels to avoid setting back the progress being made.

Single – Room Occupancy (SRO)

Marshall Heights Community Development Organization (MHCDO) is thrilled to have been selected to participate in Citi's Affordable Housing Resident Initiative (AHRI)—a new national pilot program focused on advancing economic mobility for residents of affordable housing. Through this initiative, MHCDO will help residents at its Single-Room Occupancy (SRO) property strengthen their financial health by:

- ✓ Reporting on-time rent payments to credit bureaus
- ✓ Providing credit-building tools and financial education
- ✓ Supporting pathways to homeownership and long-term stability

"Marshall Heights Community Development Organization's participation in Citi's Affordable Housing Resident Initiative aligns with our mission to uplift DC residents by advancing financial inclusion," said Babatunde Oloyede, President & CEO of MHCDO. "Through rent reporting and financial education, we empower residents to build credit and enhance financial health, supporting long-term economic stability for our community."

Over the next year, MHCDO will help lead this important work to ensure that residents of affordable housing can leverage rent reporting and financial coaching as tools for upward mobility. The pilot is being implemented in partnership with the Credit Builders Alliance (CBA) and fintech partner MoCaFi, and includes the following participating organizations:

MHCDO (Washington, DC)
Project Access (California)
Phipps Neighborhoods (New York)

<https://www.citigroup.com/global/news/perspective/2025/launching-affordable-housing-resident-initiative>



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Citi's Affordable Housing Resident Initiative aligns with our mission to uplift DC residents by advancing financial inclusion.

-Babatunde Oloyede, President & CEO of MHCDO

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Emblem Apartments- Topping Out Ceremony

What is a "Topping Out" ceremony?

A topping off (or topping out) ceremony is a customary way to celebrate a significant milestone during the construction of a new building—when the final and highest steel beam is put in place.

The partnership between The NRP Group and Marshall Heights Community Development Organization Inc. (MHCDO) has "topped off" on the Emblem along Florida Ave NW. The 13-story Flatiron apartment building will offer 115 affordable units with 2,700 square feet of retail space. Upon its expected completion in 2026, the community will serve families and individuals earning up to 30 and 50 percent of the area median income.

Financial partners for the project include DC Housing Finance Agency (DCHFA), Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), DC Housing Authority (DCHA), DC Green Bank and Bank of America.



MHCDO Service Awards

Marshall Heights Community Development Organization is proud to celebrate 4 employees of their years of outstanding service and contribution. Your dedication, hard work, and commitment over the years have made a lasting impact on our organization. We are truly grateful for your service and proud to celebrate this achievement with you.

Babatunde Oloyede, President/CEO
7 Years



Bridgette Gaskins, Accounting
20 Years

Blythe Patenaude, Business Development Director
6 Years



Donna Baskerville, Director of Operations
33 Years

SHARE YOUR IDEAS ON GOING ELECTRIC IN YOUR HOME!

DC's Department of Energy and the Environment (DOEE) is trying to understand how residents feel about switching their **gas appliances to electric** and wants to hear from you!



Please take **5 minutes** to fill out this survey to share your experiences, thoughts, and concerns about electrification. **Survey closes July 27th, 2025.**

What you say will **help DC tailor its programs and resources** to better support residents who want to transition their homes to electric.

[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/ELECTRICDOEE](https://tinyurl.com/electricdoee)