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MARSHALL HEIGHTS COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION



NEWSLETTER



MHCDO–NRP Development Team Surpasses 50% Construction Milestone at 301 Florida Avenue NE

Marshall Heights Community Development Organization, Inc. (MHCDO) is proud to announce that construction of the fully affordable housing community at 301 Florida Avenue NE has officially crossed the 50% completion threshold. This transformational development—located at the gateway of NoMa and the Union Market District—is being delivered in partnership with The NRP Group, one of the nation's leading affordable housing developers. When completed, the project will bring 115 deeply affordable homes to a rapidly growing neighborhood where affordability is increasingly out of reach for many DC residents.

Project Team Tours the Site with DC Green Bank and Councilmember Allen's Office

As part of ongoing collaboration with project funders and government partners, the development team recently hosted representatives from DC Green Bank, a key financing partner supporting the project's sustainability and energy-efficiency components. The tour also welcomed staff from the office of Ward 6 Councilmember Charles Allen, who reviewed construction progress, design features, and early community impact. Visitors observed firsthand how the project's design is taking shape—modern architecture, thoughtfully planned units, and sustainability features outlined in the public renderings released earlier this year. The tour reaffirmed the project's focus on environmental stewardship, long-term affordability, and equitable development for residents across the DC.

Workforce Impact: New Roads to Middle-Income Careers

Beyond the building itself, the construction of 301 Florida Avenue NE is already creating powerful economic opportunities for DC residents—an essential part of MHCDO’s mission to foster economic mobility and community resilience. Through partnerships with general contractors, trade unions, and MHCDO’s workforce development programming, several DC residents have secured full-time jobs on the construction site, establishing footholds into stable, long-term careers in the skilled trades. Notably, some workers have already transitioned into registered apprenticeship programs, positioning them for earning potential exceeding \$120,000 annually once they complete their training and advance in their respective trades. These outcomes demonstrate the broader value of community-centered development: projects that not only create affordable housing but also expand pathways to family-sustaining employment.

A Milestone for Ward 6 and the DC

Crossing the 50% construction mark is a significant achievement for the entire project team and for DC’s ongoing efforts to preserve and expand affordable housing.

When completed, 301 Florida Avenue NE will deliver:

- **115 affordable apartment homes reserved for households earning between 30% and 60% of the Area Median Income (AMI)**
- **Modern, efficient units designed with sustainability in mind**
- **Access to nearby transit, employment centers, and commercial amenities**
- **A model for integrating community benefits—including workforce development—into real estate investment**

MHCDO thanks its partners, including The NRP Group, DC Green Bank, the Office of Councilmember Charles Allen, Bank of America, and the many workers whose efforts are bringing this vision to life.

We look forward to sharing additional updates as construction continues toward completion.





Blythe Patenaude
Director, Business
Development

Workforce Development

MHCDO began its second full Job Readiness Training (JRT) program sponsored by DOES on November 17th with twenty-seven participants eager to enter the workplace in the coming year. All DC residents qualifying for “First Source” status in Construction and Culinary Arts jobs by District contractors, participants started off the program with two weeks of Hospitality and Culinary Arts training facilitated by renown chefs and entrepreneurs Maurice Dixon of Chef Reese 210 and Furard Tate, President of Inspire Hospitality DMV and co-founder of DMV Black Restaurant Week. November’s programming culminated in testing for Food Handler Certificates and a Certificate of Completion in Customer Service. The MHCDO JRT curriculum now will concentrate on an 80-hour Construction CORE and Safety Week focus (OSHA 10, Fall Prevention, CPR) preparatory for entrance into construction jobs and apprenticeship programs.

The purpose of JRT is to provide eligible participants with a foundation of job readiness skills ready for additional occupational skills training and targeted job experiences. MHCDO’s program includes training in digital literacy, financial literacy, and the development of emotional regulation skills. Each component is specifically designed to address workplace skills capacity building and improve employment retention. The MHCDO JRT curriculum is specifically designed to provide certificates in two industry areas by increasing transferable skills and increasing employability during seasonal shifts in job openings due to weather (construction) or event bookings (culinary arts).

Class Success Stories: The first two weeks of the class were so impactful that four participants received jobs, returned to work, or received requests for interviews by the end of the eighth day. Lucky employers include the U.S. Government, Amazon, Chef Reese 210, and a private medical practice in Maryland. Congratulations to all active participants who received their Food Handlers Certificates and will now test for Food Managers Certificates and begin their Construction training.



Mary Dade
Program Manager, Housing Department



• UPCOMING EVENTS

Following the success of two Readiness Conferences, one of which was a global event, and an invitation to the National HUD Intermediary Training Conference to speak on the topic of Emergency Preparedness, MHCDO proudly announces "The Keynote Panel."

All of our speakers are experts in their respective fields. Expertise in Resilience Hubs, climate mental health, the Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) role, Climate Justice relating to unconstitutional policies, and Clean transportation.

On February 26, 2026, we invite you to meet these truly talented experts, as well as several more.

Housing Department

MHCDO's Post Purchase Education Program

The Post-Purchase program is designed to enhance your homeownership skills. Studies have shown that the post-purchase program is a key factor in promoting long-term successful homeownership. Skills that will be tested during regular times and provide greater resilience through disruptions, whether they be natural, technological, or terrorist-related.

Successful homeownership requires you to become a champion in financial literacy, possess advanced-level homeownership knowledge, and have an understanding of climate change and its impact. The program is a five-part series including the following webinars:

- **Post Purchase Overview** – orientation of the program, why the program is essential, climate change, energy conservation, and advanced financial literacy topics
- **The Savings Plan** – including the use of high-yield savings accounts- without savings, you are at risk of not being able to weather a difficulty
- **Estate Planning** – for asset protection and level of security for you and your loved ones in the event of unexpected situations such as natural disasters, accidents, and sudden incapacitation
- **Smart Equity** – how to use your Equity wisely and not fall for the gimmicks that eat away your Equity.
- **Cloud-Based Financial Record Keeping** – securing your records in the cloud, why record keeping is essential, determining what records to keep, and how long to keep them.

Join for the monthly overview webinar by clicking the link below or visit our website at www.mhcdo.org to register:
https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_CtL1XodOSyiXWvank-gmCw

MHCDO



Marshall Heights Community Development Organization, Inc



Presented By:
Housing Program Manager
MARY DADE

POST PURCHASE *Webinar*

**EVERY 1ST TUESDAY
OF THE MONTH
5 PM -7:30 PM**

Once you have purchased a home, our post-purchase/non-delinquency education and counseling can help you navigate life as a homeowner. Common issues like home maintenance and financial management are covered in this HUD-approved housing counseling and education service.

REGISTRATION:



www.mhcdo.org



Eldridge R. Allen
Director, Small Business Development Program

Small Business Development

Branding, Marketing & Advertising: The Power Trio Behind Every Successful Business

In today's competitive marketplace, businesses must do more than simply offer good products or services—they must communicate who they are, what they offer, and why it matters. That's where the powerful trio of branding, marketing, and advertising comes in. While each plays a unique role, they work best when they work together.

Think of them as a connected system:

Branding defines the who and why.

Marketing determines the how and where.

Advertising delivers the what and when to spark action from customers.



Branding is the heart of your business identity—your mission, values, personality, and the reputation you build over time. It's what makes your business recognizable and distinctive among competitors.

Effective branding answers essential questions:

- What does your business stand for?
- What is your mission or core goal?
- What sets you apart?
- What visual cues help people identify you?

From your logo and color palette to your voice and customer experience, branding shapes how people perceive you and why they choose you.



Marketing is the engine that moves your brand into the world. It's your plan for reaching the right people in the right places with the right message. Marketing uses your brand story to build awareness, strengthen visibility, and generate leads or sales. It is ongoing, evolving, and multi-layered.

Common marketing activities include:

- Market Research
- Public Relations
- Search Engine Optimization
- Content Development
- Video, Email & Event Marketing

This strategic mix ensures your audience understands not only who you are, but why they should pay attention.



Advertising is the targeted effort to attract customers and drive immediate action. It takes the foundation of branding and the strategy of marketing and turns them into promotional messages that meet your audience where they are.

Examples of advertising include:

- Search Engine Marketing
- Influencer Marketing
- Social Ads
- Magazine Ads
- Media Placements
- Broadcast Advertising
- Print Ads
- Mobile Ads

The goal: increase visibility, inspire engagement, and boost sales.



Ariana L. Vasquez
Associate Director, Economic Development and Sustainability



Thriving Communities

MHCDO is proud to announce that we have been awarded a planning grant through the EPA's Region 3 Thriving Communities Grantmaking Program, administered by the Green & Healthy Homes Initiative (GHHI). This national program, created under the Inflation Reduction Act, ensures that community-based organizations in historically underserved communities have the support needed to address environmental and climate-related challenges.

Through this planning grant, MHCDO will lead a community-centered process to understand the social, environmental, and economic impacts of illegal dumping on Ward 7. Over the next year and a half, we will engage residents, local organizations, government agencies, and subject-matter experts to gather data, map neighborhood conditions, and perform small-scale cleanups.

This effort will culminate in a Ward 7 Illegal Dumping Plan, which will outline community-identified strategies to prevent dumping and promote cleaner, safer public spaces. It is our hope that these findings will guide future investments, policy recommendations, and initiatives aimed at reducing chronic dumping and improving neighborhood conditions.

MHCDO looks forward to engaging deeply with residents throughout this project. Stay tuned for upcoming opportunities for participation.



Paul Spires
Program Manager,
Deanwood Heights Main Street

Deanwood Heights Main Street

Deanwood Heights Main Street proudly supported Washington Parks and A1 Grocery Store during their Thanksgiving Turkey Giveaway and community dinner, an effort that brought together more than 150 community members for the holiday season. This collaborative event not only provided meals, but also fostered connection, gratitude, and a warm sense of togetherness for local families.

In continuing its commitment to community wellness and engagement, Deanwood Heights Main Street remains dedicated to uplifting residents through meaningful partnerships and events like this one. By aligning with local organizations that share a vision for service and unity, DHMS helps strengthen neighborhood bonds and ensures that families feel supported—especially during the holiday season.

