

# THE HRHA NEWSLETTER

News, announcements, and more from the  
Harrisonburg Redevelopment & Housing Authority



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## The HRHA Scholarship Application is Now Open!

We're thrilled to announce that applications for our college scholarship are now being accepted! In March 2023, HRHA proudly awarded a 4-year, \$4,000 overall scholarship to deserving high school seniors who receive housing assistance. This achievement was made possible thanks to the generous support of our local community through the Great Community Give fundraiser.

Scholarship recipients will be selected from HRHA residents or voucher holders who have maintained their HRHA residence for at least six months before April 28, 2024.

The scholarship provides \$500 per semester, up to \$1,000 per year, and is renewable based on continued eligibility. Don't miss this opportunity!

Visit <https://harrisonburghra.com/hrha-scholarship/> to learn how to apply today!

# The Great Community Give

Success! We gave out our first college scholarship last fall to JMU student Grace. We continue to raise funds for college and career training scholarships for students in our housing through the 7th annual Great Community Give on Wednesday, April 17, 6 am to 8 pm. Look for us under Shenandoah Housing Corporation.

At HRHA, 100% of your donation goes directly to fund scholarships. Help us reach this year's goal of \$4,000. Join us in lifting up our current and future students like Grace who are determined to excel in school and create a successful future for themselves. People who earn a bachelor's degree have median earnings 55% higher than those with a high school diploma.

The best way to support our effort is to give online on Wednesday, April 17th at <https://www.greatcommunitygive.org>. Donations will be matched through the generous support of our match sponsor Litten & Sipe.



## Money Smart Club- Youth Financial Literacy

HRHA acknowledges the significance of financial literacy, not only for adults but also for young individuals. The Money Smart Club aims to equip youth with the necessary tools and resources to cultivate robust financial habits that will endure into adulthood.

Through the Money Smart Club, participants will acquire essential skills and knowledge concerning responsible spending, saving, budgeting, and more, empowering them to make informed financial decisions throughout their lives. The program offers a blend of videos and games, ensuring that learning is enjoyable and captivating for participants.

This program will be ongoing, with registrations being accepted continuously from March to August 2024.

## Executive Director's Corner

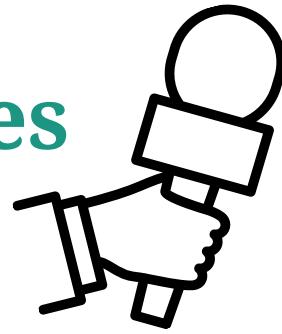


As we Spring into the new year, the Authority continues to make progress on its strategic goals of expanding housing opportunities and increasing resident self-sufficiency. These initiatives are outlined in HRHA's annual plan, which includes new housing development, preservation of existing affordable housing, increasing landlord participation in the HCV program, and increasing resident self-sufficiency through triennial recertification and implementation of a new FSS incentives program. These are all significant initiatives that will shape HRHA's future program and services. As we complete our initial year of activities we will be evaluating the impact of these goals to determine if any program modifications are needed. We welcome your input. Comments can be sent directly to me or through our website suggestions portal.

Wishing everyone a great Spring!!

Michael Wong, Executive Director

# Staff Highlight: Jacques Mushagasha



HRHA manages a variety of programs, grants, and initiatives. We serve hundreds of families through housing vouchers, programs like Family Self-Sufficiency, and city-wide campaigns. Through 2024, we plan to highlight members of the HRHA team who make this work possible.

## **1. What is your role in HRHA?**

I currently serve as the Family Self-Sufficiency Coordinator.

## **2. What is one of your favorite aspects of working with HRHA?**

Working with HRHA has allowed me to understand the correlation between housing and well-being, health, and human dignity.

## **3. Do you have any goals or aspirations in your position?**

My goal is to take as many training and education opportunities as possible to continue providing high-quality service to our families participating in the FSS program.

## **4. What is the best career lesson you've learned so far?**

So far, I have learned that providing the best service to customers uplifts both the service recipients and myself.

## **5. What do you wish more people in our community knew about affordable housing, our families, or the voucher program?**

I want more people in our community to understand that affordable housing is critical for many families. The shortage of affordable housing is a big challenge that calls for supporting projects that bring more housing to our area.



# Harrisonburg Redevelopment & Housing Authority

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 To reach all HRHA offices, call: (540) 434-7386

## Website



[www.harrisonburgrha.com](http://www.harrisonburgrha.com)

## Facebook



[@harrisonburgrha](https://www.facebook.com/harrisonburgrha)

## HRHA Board of Commissioners

HRHA is governed by a seven-member Board of Commissioners appointed by the Harrisonburg City Council. The Board establishes the Authority's policies and procedures and appoints the Executive Director.

Board of Commissioner meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 4:00PM. Meeting location/access will be posted prior to meetings and in line with local health guidelines.

+ Michael Wong, (Not a commissioner)  
Executive Director/Secretary-Treasurer

+ Kevin Coffman - Commissioner  
Term Expires: November 29, 2027

+ Luciano Benjamin - Commissioner  
Term Expires: November 29, 2024

+ Gil Colman - Commissioner  
Term Expires: November 29, 2025

+ Shonda Green - Commissioner  
Term Expires: November 29, 2025

+ Kenneth Kettler - Commissioner  
Term Expires: February 1, 2028

+ Amanda Leech - Commissioner  
Term Expires: October 13, 2024

+ Janet Awkard-Rogers - Commissioner  
Term Expires: April 25, 2027

## Upcoming Events:

The reopening of the Kelley Street Garden is just around the corner, and we're excited to share several of the activities planned for this season! Mark your calendars for April 19th and 30th! On the 19th, we'll have an orientation meeting about the garden. On April 30th, we'll host an indoor/container gardening DIY workshop. Join us to craft your very own take-home plant creation! Keep an eye on our Facebook page for more details and updates!

