



## Redevelopment of Former School Fosters New Growth

DePaul celebrated the completion of the Riverside Apartments at 238 Ontario St. in Buffalo, New York with an open house in June. DePaul renovated the former Buffalo Public School #60 building, which had been closed since 2005. The 68-unit workforce housing community for income-eligible tenants is filled to capacity. The Riverside Apartments have been listed on the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places.

"From meeting the growing need for quality affordable housing options in Buffalo and throughout New York state, to the rebirth of a major centerpiece in the community, this project has been a win-win for all involved," said DePaul President Mark Fuller.

Speakers at the open house included (pictured below) City of Buffalo Common Council member (North District) Joseph Golombek, Jr., Community Preservation Corporation Senior Vice President and Regional Director of the Eastern New York and Supportive Housing Program Michael Skrebutenas, New York State Homes and Community Renewal's Assistant Commissioner of the Western New York Region Leonard Skrill, President of Rediscover Riverside Evelyn Vossler, President of the Black Rock Riverside Alliance, Inc. Mary Ann Kedron, Erie County Department of Mental Health Commissioner Ellery Reaves, Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown, DePaul President Mark Fuller, Assistant Vice President at First Sterling Financial Mary Dorn, Senior Vice President of Community Development Banking at JP Morgan Chase David J. Walsh and Fiscal Coordinator for the New York State Office of



Mental Health Christopher Marcello (not pictured).

Much of the historical architecture was retained in the project's design and the original auditorium received an extensive update. The gymnasium flooring was repurposed in the hallways, former chalkboards were reused in the design of the new mailboxes and the school's old granite bathroom stalls were used

to make the walls in the new bathrooms, according to Vice President of DePaul Properties, Inc. Gillian Conde. Décor includes antique items which were once a part of the school including a marching band drum and class portraits donated by former employees, students and teachers.

The \$21 million project, funded by a combination of \$3.25 million from New York State Homes and Community Renewal, \$1.5 million in city HOME funds, along with state and private funding, created over 350 construction jobs and added 40 permanent jobs to the community.

Mary Ann Kedron noted many memories are attached to the Riverside building. Under

DePaul's ownership, she said, the building will continue to serve as a place for people to grow, learn and succeed.

"We have an obligation to take care of all of our community members and this is a magnificent place to do that," she said.

The DePaul Riverside Apartments were made possible through the following who collaborated on the project:

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# Beginning Again - John Gibson, Jr.

The DePaul Riverside Apartments in Buffalo, New York have served as a springboard of sorts for John Gibson, Jr., a native Buffalonian with a resonant voice as smooth as butter who is rebuilding his life. Gibson, 54, is a veteran who entered the service at 17 when he joined the United States Army where he remained for three years traveling as far as Germany. Upon his return, he earned his GED and returned to business school only to leave when he married and started a family. "It was a pattern with me to sometimes not finish things I started," he said.

Gibson went on to have six children, all grown now, and worked for many years as a machinist, however as jobs evaporated he was left trying to find gainful employment. Eventually a divorce compounded issues, and he fell on hard times, living in a Salvation Army shelter prior to making his home at Riverside.

"The Riverside Apartments represent starting over for me," said Gibson. "Even at 54, I have this drive. I'm determined to do what I can to take care of myself and living here is a big part of that. It's so convenient here and not stressful. I don't have to worry about paying the gas bill, going somewhere to wash clothes, everything is right here. It's so efficient and one price



takes care of everything. That's big for me."

Referred by the Veterans One Stop Program for homeless veterans, Gibson was incredulous at his good fortune in getting the last apartment available at Riverside. "I'm amazed and still in awe," he said. "They did a great job of preserving this structure. After I applied, I never thought I was going to get this. Then they called and asked me to sign the lease and I thought 'Are you kidding me?' I could have cried."

Gibson is most pleased that he can offer his seven grandchildren a safe, clean place to visit. "Of all the different dwellings I have lived in, this is the best!" he said. "It's brand new, conveniently located and has all the amenities. The tenants are all real good people. Thank God for this place. It's a godsend and I never dreamed of being in a place like this. It's made a big difference in my life."

He takes pride in his immaculate apartment and uses the common area computers to search for vocational and training opportunities that he's eagerly pursuing.

"I want to be a productive member and give back," he said. "My life is changing. I'm interested in working in the medical field and being a role model to people around me. This place is a big part of that."

## Redevelopment

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DePaul staff including Gillian Conde and Christopher Syracuse, DePaul Board members, SWBR Architects, general contractor R&P Oak Hill, the city of Buffalo, Erie County, New York State Homes and Community Renewal, New York State Office of Mental Health, Southern Tier Environments for Living, First Sterling, JP Morgan Chase Bank, the New York State Housing Trust Fund Corporation, the Community Preservation Corporation, the Black Rock Riverside Alliance, the Black Rock-Riverside Good Neighbor Planning Alliance and Rediscover Riverside.

## Holiday Helpers Needed

You can make a difference for a DePaul client in need this holiday season by becoming a Holiday Helper! Sign up and you'll be matched with a holiday wish that includes the individual's gender, age and size

if appropriate. You can also donate generic items such as hats, gloves, scarves and socks for adults, or personal care items. Past wish lists have included requests as simple as a piece of chocolate cake, cat toys or socks. For more information about how you, your family, place of worship, club or workplace can adopt someone in need, contact Amy Cavalier at (585) 719-3102 or [acavalier@depaul.org](mailto:acavalier@depaul.org).



# Inspired by The Remember Garden



They were buried without a word; without a proper grave or headstone. The land on which Highland Park in Rochester, New York is now situated was once home to the Monroe County Insane Asylum, Almshouse and Penitentiary. Some 700 of the former prisoners and patients were buried in unmarked graves on the surrounding properties. Unearthed in 1984, DePaul's Remember Garden now serves as a living memorial to those buried there.

Mary Lee Pifer of Dansville, New York is hoping the poem she has written will ensure those individuals are not forgotten.

"I attended the dedication of the garden and I read what was on the plaque," she said. "It seemed to me like the commemorative stones dedicated to those who were buried there were talking to me. I felt their stories needed to be told. They deserve the respect they were denied in the state hospitals."

Pifer, who's suffered from depression herself, has been writing poetry for many years. She was a consumer at Hilltop Industries for 18 years where she performed various assembly line jobs, and she is now a member of Compeer, Inc. in Livingston County. Pifer has had several poems published in anthologies and in publications produced by Eber and Wein Publishers. She said she wrote "The Remember Garden" to help break some of the stereotypes associated with living with a mental illness.

"I hope that my poem leads to a deeper understanding and greater acceptance of people with mental illness," she said.

## The Remember Garden

Yesterday I saw a garden  
not of flowers but of stone  
filled with the souls of people  
whose stories it finally told

People once jailed for some crime  
some went just because they were poor  
Some were judged not sound of mind  
and shut away behind locked doors

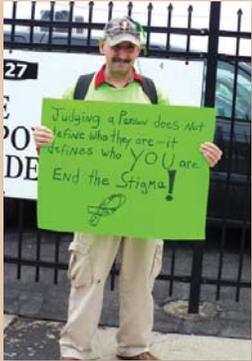
Once inside those doors  
they were diagnosed the same  
the staff gave them numbers  
and took away the dignity of their names

Some were not able to adapt  
to the life of their day and age  
Some were treated like animals  
and locked away in a cage.

In this Remember Garden  
we can hear their voices say  
"Thank you for the dignity and respect  
that we should have received in our days!"

*By Mary Lee Pifer*

## Celebrating Success in Mental Health



Residents in DePaul's mental health programs in New York are helping to raise awareness, giving back to their community and finding fellowship with a variety of activities!

Residents of Seneca Square, a DePaul Single Room Occupancy Program in Buffalo, New York, recently participated in the Mental Health Awareness Flash Mob. Pictured, Brian K. of Seneca Square holds a sign at the flash mob.

Residents from DePaul's Main Street, Neighborhood of the Arts and Ridgeview Commons Treatment Apartment Programs, as well as from DePaul's North Chili, Corn Hill, Shelter Cove, East Ridge and Elmgrove Community Residences enjoyed the Second Annual Black and White Ball which took place in June at DePaul's Administration Building in Rochester, New York. Pictured at the Black and White Ball are Hannah A.



of Elmgrove Community Residence and Jeffrey T. of the Main Street Treatment Apartment Program.

"It was joyful to see everyone dressed up and enjoying each other's company," said Ridgeview Assistant Supervisor and Black and White Ball organizer Juanita Prince.

Visit DePaul on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/depaul.org](http://www.facebook.com/depaul.org) to view the full album of photos from the Black and White Ball.

Residents of DePaul's North Chili Community Residence are finding solace and offering assistance at H.O.R.S.E. Rescue and Sanctuary, a farm for horses that have been abused, neglected or abandoned. Residents regularly deliver shredded paper collected from several DePaul locations which is used for the horses' bedding.



"I feel a connection with the horses because they have overcome challenges the same way I have," said North Chili resident Mike B.

Pictured here, residents Garrett F. and Mike B. For the full story, visit DePaul's blog at [blog.depaul.org](http://blog.depaul.org).

# Seniors Celebrate Milestones

Many milestones are celebrated in DePaul's Adult Care Communities in New York, North Carolina and South Carolina throughout the year including centenarian birthdays and wedding anniversaries. DePaul's seniors have plenty of experience and advice on longevity and everlasting love.



*"Don't argue. We just agree that we disagree if needed."*

~ Cambridge House resident Mildred Ballew's advice on 68 years of marriage.

*"No one is the boss. We work it out between us."*

~ Cambridge House resident Frank Ballew on 68 years of marriage.



*"Eat your veggies and get plenty of rest."*

~ Westwood Commons resident Mary Sherry on turning 100 years old.



*"I don't know, but I was never a smoker, and the only time I drank alcohol was a beer while I bowled."*

~ Glenwell resident Dominick Salviola on turning 100 years old.



*"I've always strived to do my best while in school, working on the farms and working with animals. All of that was possible due to the love and devotion of my small family."*

~ Cambridge House resident Ruth Nordwick on turning 100 years old.

## DePaul Partners with Niagara Memorial to Address Housing Needs

Living Opportunities of DePaul, Inc., received a \$400,000 annual, two-year grant from the New York State Department of Health to provide supported housing to 40 of Niagara County's health home care management recipients. The majority of these individuals lack safe, affordable housing and have a diagnosis of a psychiatric disability and/or other physical disabilities.

The goal of the program and partnership is to help individuals retain safe, affordable housing along with adequate supports that will result in increased independence, improved overall health and a reduction in hospitalizations and emergency room visits. Supported housing provides individually-leased apartments in individual locations throughout Niagara County. People in the program lease their own apartments and are provided with furniture, security deposits, rental stipends and staff supports, in addition to health home care management supports provided by Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center care management staff.

"We are pleased to partner with Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center to provide quality services to a population in need," said Christopher Syracuse, Executive Director, Living Opportunities of DePaul.



## Community Support for PROS

DePaul PROS, a Personalized Recovery Oriented Services Program, is the proud recipient of a \$1,000 donation from the Greek Orthodox Church of the Holy Spirit. Pictured here, Reverend Father



Patrick Cowles presents a check to PROS Administrative Coordinator Eileen O'Brien. The donation will allow individuals working to achieve recovery from a serious mental illness to address their individualized knowledge and skill deficits to facilitate rapid success with step-by-step guidance to reach their goals. On behalf of those we serve, many thanks!

# Growth and Renovations Continue at DePaul

DePaul is expanding its ability to serve individuals in need with continued progress on several new projects and with renovations at several communities.



**Twelve Oaks**

Twelve Oaks, a DePaul Senior Living Community in Mt. Airy, North Carolina, Pee Dee Gardens, a DePaul Senior Living Community in Florence, South Carolina, and Rutherford Place, a DePaul Community Residence in Depew, New York, are all undergoing or completing renovations with upgrades including new flooring, paint and lighting, window treatments, wall coverings and décor as well as infrastructure and accessibility updates.

“The residents, their families and our employees love the look of our new home and Twelve Oaks is the buzz of the community,” said Twelve Oaks Administrator Penny Haynes.

Improvements at Pee Dee Gardens, which became

DePaul’s first senior living community in South Carolina last year, include adding 12 new single-bedroom units, among other updates.

“Residents, their families, and staff members are excited for these long-anticipated renovations which will bring Pee Dee Gardens in line with DePaul’s high standard of quality,” said Administrator Sherri Scott.



**Pee Dee Gardens**

At the Rutherford Place Community Residence in Depew, New York, a new fire alarm system was installed, along with new furnaces and central air. The driveway has been extended to accommodate more parking, and residents are enjoying soaking up some summer sun on the new deck and gazebo.



**Rutherford Place**

“A fresh new beginning enhances happiness and rehabilitation,” said Community Residence Manager Barbara Malecki.

Work continues on converting the former Cunningham Carriage Factory in Rochester, New York into 71 loft apartments for income-eligible tenants with an anticipated fall completion date. At the centerpiece of this historic project will be an original Cunningham brougham-style carriage which arrived from Vermont in September.



**Carriage Factory Apartments**



**Rochester View Apartments**

Construction is progressing on the Rochester View Apartments in Henrietta, New York with concrete being poured and steel foundations beginning to take shape. Featuring 61 one- and two-bedroom apartments for income-eligible tenants, the program will offer enhanced supports to accommodate tenants who may be deaf, hard of hearing or those using American Sign Language. The hope is to have the building enclosed before winter begins, according to DePaul President Mark Fuller.



**Ebenezer Square**

Funding has been secured and DePaul has received the approval to develop a 100-unit workforce housing community for income-eligible tenants in West Seneca, New York. The \$20 million Ebenezer Square project was approved in late August by the West Seneca Town Board after previously being approved by the town planning board. DePaul hopes to close on the property, which includes a vacant department store, on Seneca Street this fall. Plans call for demolishing the current structure and constructing a 102,000-square-foot, three-story structure with 96 one-bedroom and four two-bedroom units with kitchens and bathrooms.



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## Let's Play Ball!

Three teams competed in the 23rd Annual Bill Smouse Memorial Softball Tournament at DePaul's Recreation Department in Rochester in September. Participants came from social clubs and day treatment programs from DePaul including the Batavia, Ridgeview Commons, Cornerstone and Neighborhood of the Arts (NOTA) Treatment Apartments, as well as from the Bernar Park Day Program. Pictured here are DePaul clients Jacob V. (Ridgeview), Cameron L. (Halstead Square), Terry H. (NOTA), Herman S. (Ridgeview) and Juan G. (Ridgeview).

Started in 1990 by Recreation Director Dan Charcholla, the tournament recognizes the late Bill Smouse, a former employee at the Edgerton Recreation Center who donated his time to a community sports league to provide positive experiences for individuals with disabilities.

## Helping Change Lives

Our agency has now grown to serve some 5,000 people annually in programs that encompass mental health residential and treatment services, senior living residential services, addiction prevention and support programs, vocational programs and affordable housing. In all of our endeavors, we are proud to help people go beyond what they think is possible.



When you receive the DePaul Annual Giving Appeal later this year, we ask that you consider a gift that will help us continue caring for those we serve. Every time we make a difference, every life we change for the better, every achievement great or small is a triumph. We invite you to be a vital part of making a difference.

For more information on making a donation, contact Marcia Dlutek at (585) 426-8000 or [mdlutek@depaul.org](mailto:mdlutek@depaul.org).

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DePaul is a not-for-profit organization that provides senior living residential services, mental health residential and treatment programs, addiction prevention and support services, vocational services and affordable housing. To receive DePaul Details electronically, please provide your name and e-mail address to Lynette Wilson-Cox at [lwilson-cox@depaul.org](mailto:lwilson-cox@depaul.org) in DePaul's Communications Department.

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