

COMMUNITY

DePaul celebrates completion of Rochester View Apartments

Submitted to the Post

DePaul recently joined with city, state, public and private partners to celebrate the opening of the DePaul Rochester View Apartments at an open house and presentation for the 61-unit community in Henrietta, serving income-eligible tenants.

The DePaul Rochester View Apartments are New York state's first apartment community to offer enhanced supports that accommodate income-eligible tenants who may be deaf or hard of hearing and those using American Sign Language.

The \$17.6 million project was completed with: a \$721,000 allocation of Low Income Housing Tax Credits from New York state Homes and Community Renewal; equity investment by First Sterling; a \$4.9 million award from the New York State Housing Trust Fund Corporation; a state of New York mortgage agency insured \$5.4 million pension fund permanent loan from the Community Preservation Corporation, and a \$200,000 award of Urban Initiative Funding. About 200 construction jobs and 30 long-term positions were created as a result of the DePaul Rochester View Apartments.

The DePaul Rochester View Apartments feature state-of-the-art communication equipment and high-contrast visual design. There are open floor plans with handrails, an elevator accessible from the common area, lighting for high visibility, adaptive equipment, bedrooms wired to allow for bed shakers in case of fire or other emergencies, hard-wired strobe lighting for CO2 and fire alarms, lighted door alarms, video phone and

video conferencing capability, controlled secure access, security cameras throughout the campus, signage with Braille markings and an on-site manager fluent in ASL. DePaul has partnered with local artists as well as the National Technical Institute for the Deaf to display artwork in the building.

Each one- and two-bedroom apartment features a fully-equipped kitchen with a range, refrigerator and microwave and a wall-mounted flat screen TV including cable service and closed captioning. Heat, hot water and electric are included in the rent and community laundry facilities are available at no cost. There is also individually controlled heat and air conditioning as well as off-street parking. Tenants have access to a community room, activity room, terrace, sun room and computer room.

The entire building is Wi-Fi accessible; there is a secure storage area for each tenant and fitness equipment is available. The building is 100 percent smoke-free. Optional on-site case management is available. Income and occupancy requirements apply.

Partners involved in the project included Christa Construction, DePaul, First Sterling, Monroe County, New York State Homes and Community Renewal, New York State Office of Mental Health, Rochester View Apartments Advisory Board of Professionals, SWBR Architects P.C., Betts Housing Partners and The Community Preservation Corporation.

"DePaul is pleased to be a community partner providing quality affordable housing options for people in need along with supports that can accommodate persons who may be deaf, hard

of hearing and those using ASL," said DePaul President Mark H. Fuller. "The DePaul Rochester View Apartments are the first of their kind in the state and we are so proud to be part of this pivotal project that will bring so much to this community. The DePaul Rochester View Apartments are an example of progress and partnership in action."

"Our substantial role in the DePaul Rochester View Apartments is a prime example of Governor Andrew Cuomo's mandate to expand affordable housing opportunities for New Yorkers across the state," said HCR Commissioner/CEO James S. Rubin. "By working in a true collaborative sense with colleagues in government, private and not-for-profit sectors, this new development is enhancing the quality of life for the persons who may be deaf, hard of hearing or use American Sign Language who call this place home. An added benefit to the larger community is the economic boost through construction jobs and local purchases that were associated with the project."

"Rochester View Apartments are a wonderful addition to our community. Their enhanced supports provide tenants with the accommodations they need to live independently at an affordable cost," said Majority Leader Joseph D. Morelle. "Thank you to DePaul for their continued commitment to creating a more inclusive society and helping people live the stable, productive lives they deserve."

"New Yorkers living with disabilities deserve the same quality of life and rights as everyone else," said Assembly member Harry Bronson. "The opening of the Rochester View Apartments is an important step

toward removing unnecessary barriers that impact the day-to-day lives of many of our neighbors, friends and family members. I applaud the hard working folks at DePaul for their commitment, SWBR Architects for this empowering design, my partners in government who are dedicated to improving the lives of our citizens and the families who will call the Rochester View Apartments home. You will live in a home you love that is in a safe and respectful environment. Everyone should be able to have the basic right of secure housing."

"DePaul has long been an important community partner, providing much-needed services and housing to many," said state Rep. Patrick Gallivan, R-59th District. "We congratulate DePaul and all of the project partners on the opening of the Rochester View Apartments, a project that is making the community and region stronger. It is gratifying to see the addition of quality, affordable apartments that will enrich the quality of life for our citizens."

"Having safe, accessible and affordable housing is paramount to helping people make their homes in a community," said state Rep. Catharine Young, R-57th District. "But a house can only truly become a home if it meets someone's unique needs. DePaul's use of innovative design and technology is an exciting breakthrough in providing affordable, accommodative housing that enhances independence for the hearing impaired. I applaud its investment in our community and am pleased that New York state could play a pivotal role in helping this project come to fruition."

"The Monroe County Office of Mental Health congratulates DePaul on

the completion and grand opening of this wonderful apartment community, Rochester View, which will offer high quality living opportunities for individuals in their community of choice and will assist in furthering the quality of life for so many," stated David Putney, director of community services, Monroe County Office of Mental Health.

"At CPC we believe that quality housing can offer people with special needs an enriching environment that acts as a foundation for stability and independence," said Rafael E. Cestero, president and CEO of the Community Preservation Corporation. "We are proud to be a partner in financing the DePaul Rochester View Apartments. With enhanced supports to accommodate the communication needs of those who may be deaf or hard of hearing, the tenants of Rochester View will be able to live comfortably and safely in their new homes. My thanks to DePaul, our partners at New York state HCR and OMH, SONYMA, as well as our state and local elected officials for their dedication to serving the unique housing needs of our communities."

"DePaul has paved the way toward providing the deaf community with much-needed affordable housing," said Anthony DiGiovanni of the Rochester View Apartments Advisory Board of Professionals said. "This process represents a long road for deaf community members since this topic has surfaced from time to time for more than 25 years. The spirit of a successful collaboration between DePaul and the deaf community is what brought RVA to Rochester. I cannot express enough gratitude toward DePaul for their leadership in bringing the

Rochester View Apartments to fruition."

Speakers at the event included DePaul President Mark H. Fuller; Leonard Skrill, assistant commissioner, New York State Homes and Community Renewal; state Rep. Catharine Young, R-57th District; New York State Assembly member Harry Bronson, 138th District; Tad Mack, director of community relations, representing New York State Assembly Majority Leader Joseph D. Morelle, 136th District; Jack Moore, Henrietta town supervisor; Christopher Marcello, coordinator of residential and fiscal services, OMH Western Regional Office, New York State Office of Mental Health; David Putney, director of community services, Monroe County Office of Mental Health; Michael Skrebutenas, senior vice president, The Community Preservation Corporation; Mary Dorn, assistant vice president, First Sterling; and Anthony DiGiovanni, member, Rochester View Apartments Advisory Board of Professionals.

DePaul partnered with local artists as well as the National Technical Institute for the Deaf to display artwork in the building. The Rochester View Apartments showcase a stained-glass piece created by Jacqueline Schertz, a local stained-glass artist who is deaf. Randy Dunham, a local artist who is deaf, painted abstract art that is displayed in the building. American sculptor Susan Ferrari Rowley created the sculpture that is featured in the lobby. The DePaul Rochester View Apartments also display photography by professional photographer Janet Cruz. The Deaf Quilt Club donated a handmade quilt now displayed w