



For Immediate Release
Contact: Timika Simmons
C. 713.540.9817
E. timika.simmons@hchatexas.org

HOUSING CHOICE (SECTION 8) VOUCHER HOLDERS LEARN HOW TO ATTAIN FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE AT HCHA HOMEBUYERS FAIR

Houston, February 17, 2016 - To help current Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) recipients attain financial independence, Harris County Housing Authority (HCHA) held its quarterly Homebuyer's Fair on February 13, 2016, at its offices on Interchange Drive.

During the event, voucher holders learned about the Down Payment Assistance Program (DAP) from the Harris County Community Services Department (HCCSD), Credit Coalition and several local lenders and realtors. Attendees learned the importance of credit, budgeting, the home buying process, setting and keeping goals and most importantly, patience.

"What's so great about the program and our quarterly fair is that we are able to make such an impact with families who are ready to find a place to call home," said Adeline Benoit, Special Programs case manager at HCHA. "We know the process can be longer than anticipated, so the fair arms our recipients with the tools and knowledge on how to become a homeowner."

The DAP is an anchor of HCHA's homebuyer program and requires applicants to obtain a homebuyer certificate from a HUD-approved homebuyer education course as the first step in applying for resources. HCHA has helped over 30 voucher holders achieve homeownership.

"We help applicants understand the process themselves so that they can approach lenders as an informed consumer and speak intelligently about credit and finances," said Sherry Young with Credit Coalition, who offers a six-week homebuyer course.

Katrina Clark, a new homeowner through HCHA's program explained her experience. "Your pen and paper are going to be your best friends. [The Credit Coalition] teaches you so much," said Clark. Her process took a little over a year, and now Clark says that she is "so relaxed and satisfied. I thank the Lord every night for my new home."

Horace Allison, CEO of Harris County Housing Authority, spoke to attendees about the value of homeownership and encouraged participants to use the resources available to them.

"You are embarking on a journey to position yourself to start building wealth. You CAN become financially independent," said Allison.



To learn more about HCHA's Homebuyer's Program for Housing Choice voucher holders, contact Adeline Benoit at adeline.benoit@hchatexas.org.

###

About Harris County Housing Authority

Harris County Housing Authority brings high quality housing assistance programs and innovative housing solutions that go beyond the conventional boundaries of affordable housing to thousands of people throughout Harris County each year. For over 40 years, HCHA has offered desirable, livable, and sustainable communities for low income residents including families with school aged children, seniors, veterans, low income working families, and the disabled. HCHA is the general partner of eight affordable housing developments and administers more than 4,500 Housing Choice Vouchers. HCHA is committed to helping residents achieve self-sufficiency and economic independence by reducing the number of homeless families in the unincorporated areas of Harris County. By working towards a future without homelessness, we strive to break the mold of standard government assistance programs by removing barriers to growth for our program participants to help them reach their fullest potential - the **hchaWAY**. Learn more at www.hchatexas.org and on Facebook, or follow us on Twitter, @hchaTexas.