

**Vincent J. Tufo**

*Chief Executive Officer*

**Natalie Coard**

*Executive Director*

**Jonathan Gottlieb**

*Vice President, Rippowam Corp.*

**Lisa Reynolds**

*Chief Financial Officer*

**Christine Young, Editor**



*Fairgate Farm will soon be in full bloom! For a complete calendar of events, visit us at [FairgateFarm.com](http://FairgateFarm.com).*

### **Board Meetings for 2017:**

- **June 28, 2017**
- **July 26, 2017**
- **August 23, 2017**
- **September 27, 2017**
- **October 25, 2017**
- **November 15, 2017**
- **December 13, 2017**

*The meetings will begin at 6:00 p.m. at Post House, 40 Clinton Avenue in the first-floor meeting room.*

## **Celebrating exceptional communities**

*By Ira Morrison*

**S**pring is a time of growth and optimism. We witness the return of bright blossoms on old flowering trees, and annuals like daffodils and tulips pop up all around us. But that's not the only new growth visible in Stamford. Thanks to Charter Oak Communities (COC), the City of Stamford and our many partners and investors, new buildings have arisen and been dedicated, ground has been broken, steel is rising, and Fairgate Farm is flourishing.

Just this spring, we've enjoyed the dedication of **Summer Place**, located at 992 Summer Street, opened in partnership with Inspirica, Inc. The development is for near-elderly and elderly residents (age 55 years and older), a growing segment of Stamford's population in need of affordable housing. It is replacing Czescik Homes, a 1960's-era state-assisted housing complex on Greenwich Avenue.

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*The dedication of Summer Place included community members, staff and distinguished guest speakers. From left to right: Former Connecticut State Representative Christel Truglia; Commissioner Evonne Klein, Department of Housing; John Zelinsky, Jr., Stamford Board of Representatives; Jason Shaplen, CEO, Inspirica, Inc.; Vincent Tufo, CEO, Charter Oak Communities; Stamford Mayor David Martin; Anahaita Kotval, COO & General Counsel, Inspirica, Inc. Missing from the photo, United States Congressman Jim Himes. Photo courtesy of Bernie Weiss.*



## Natalie Coard named Executive Director



The Housing Authority of the City of Stamford d/b/a Charter Oak Communities (COC) has named Natalie Coard as its new executive director, effective June 2017. As executive director, she will lead the Affordable Housing, Property Management, Facilities, Resident Services and Housing Choice Voucher

sectors of COC's operations portfolio. In this role, Coard will be supported by COC's corporate services function which includes human resources, finance, information technology, risk-management support and administrative services. She will report to Vincent J. Tufo, chief executive officer, and the COC Board of Commissioners.

Coard began her career with COC as a young intern, and formally joined the organization in 1994. Over the next 22 years, she worked in a wide range of positions, gaining experience in COC's Leasing, Housing Choice Vouchers, Property Management, Procurement, and Maintenance departments. She currently serves as Director of Properties and Facilities Management.

"Natalie has successfully undertaken many complex initiatives that have strengthened both the COC

organization and the Stamford community," said Tufo. "While we celebrate this promotion, we also commend Natalie for her integral role in COC's transformation from a traditional public housing authority to a mission-driven, hybrid organization that many have deemed 'best in class.' As part of COC's senior leadership team," Tufo added, "she will have a key role in guiding our path to a sustainable future. We're proud of her achievements, and delighted to see her assume this critical role."

Natalie obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice, and Master's of Business Administration degree, both from the University of New Haven, while working full-time at COC.

Please join us in extending warm congratulations to Natalie on her promotion to Executive Director!

## COC Employees bring 'Smiles' to Pacific House

Charter Oak Communities' employees volunteered and served dinner for the men at Pacific House this spring, formerly the Shelter for the Homeless in Stamford. The spirited staff served a complete dinner of meatloaf, mashed potatoes and vegetables to over 60 grateful men of all ages, which gave way to smiles on their faces. The meal was generously prepared and donated by Creative Culinary Service.



Back row left to right: Monique Moye, Annastasia Augustin, Monica Tinsley, Sandra Clarke, Frank Benavides, Elvin Rodriguez, Dan Persaud, Yvonne Bonus-Wickham and Daisy Bobb-Grant. Front row left to right: Cathy Peagler and Judith Paul. Missing from the photo is Lavern Jarrett.

We extend our appreciation and gratitude to the staff for sharing their time in making a difference in the lives of these homeless men and young adults.

The mission of Pacific House is to provide emergency food and shelter for homeless men in lower Fairfield County and help them live more fulfilling lives through providing support services designed to help them find employment and stable long-term housing.





## Celebrating Exceptional Communities

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A few weeks later, we held our formal groundbreaking for **Park 215**, a new mixed-use facility located at the intersection of Merrell and Stillwater Avenues that will include housing and medical practice tenants.

Significant modernization activities are well underway at Lawnhill Terrace. The first phase has been completed, and the second phase will soon be in progress.

And at Fairgate Farm, our urban agricultural learning center and farm, the ground has been fertilized and prepared, and seeds and plants for a variety of fruit and vegetables have been planted by our many enthusiastic volunteers, under the direction of Peter Novajosky, our new Farm Manager. And we're already planning the first of many spring and



*Speakers at the groundbreaking ceremony for Park 215 included from left to right: Connecticut Department of Housing Deputy Commissioner Nick Lundgren, Bank of America Senior Vice President Carol Heller, Stamford Mayor David Martin, COC CEO Vincent Tufo, COC Board Chairman Courtney Nelthropp, Ken Boroson of Kenneth Boroson Architects, Anthony Gaglio of Viking Construction, HUD Public Housing Director Jennifer Gottlieb-Elazhari and Bank of America Senior Vice President Michael Claise. Photo courtesy of Bernie Weiss.*

It's clear that there is much positive growth and activity to celebrate here in Stamford. Even in today's uncertain political and financial environment, with stories published daily about state and federal budget shortfalls and challenges, COC has made and implemented sound programs and policies to ensure continued growth and success. We are committed to our ongoing reinvention, delivering on our mission, achieving maximum social impact, and to continuous improvement in all of our processes and systems. We will continue focusing our resources and skills on the health and wellbeing of our residents, the neighborhoods we serve, and the City of Stamford.



In the best interest of COC residents, please note the following summertime safety tips:

- All air conditioners in high-rise buildings must be in an approved COC sleeve. Please call the Work Order Department to schedule an appointment. **For the West Side developments, call (203) 977-1494. For the East Side developments, call (203) 977-1465.**
- Do not leave anything in the halls (shopping carts, trash, bikes, etc). It creates a fire hazard.
- The use of barbeque grills in or near any building, walkway, stairway, balcony or any area of the premises is **strictly prohibited**. Grills found on COC premises will be disposed of by management.
- Please report any unsafe conditions on the property to the management office.





## ***Strawberry Festival***

***Saturday, June 10 from 12 noon to 2 p.m.***

***Free and Open to All***

**Marking the official launch to the 2017 summer season, our fourth-annual Strawberry Jam Festival!**



**Join us for delicious, healthy snacks, face-painting and kids' crafts, music and more!**

## ***Tea time with residents at Scofield Manor***

**By Family Centers Resident Services Coordinator Alexa Griffin**



On Saturday, March 25<sup>th</sup> the residents of Scofield Manor were treated to greatness in small things. Under the guidance of Scofield Manor Administrator Lavern Jarrett, Family Centers Resident Services Coordinator Alexa Griffin and Family Centers graduate intern Pracilya Titus, tea was hosted in the Scofield Manor community room for residents, their families and staff.

To please a range of pallets, multiple teas were offered, including green, black, chai and chamomile. For those who appreciated the atmosphere of afternoon tea, but never considered themselves tea drinkers, coffee was available as well. Delicious

snacks of rugelach, biscotti, and flower-shaped sugar cookies were delectable treats for everyone to enjoy.

To complete the wonderful afternoon, many residents enjoyed laughter while reminiscing, and discussed topics and questions written on Popsicle sticks that were disguised as the centerpieces on each table. Some of the questions covered were: If you were an animal, what would you be and why? What was your favorite childhood memory? What was the best dish you've ever eaten?

Thanks to the overwhelming response to this event, residents, their families and staff agreed that afternoon tea time should continue. Lavern and Alexa plan to celebrate the change of each season with future afternoon teas at Scofield Manor.

