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### OUR

# PRESIDENT & CEO



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The pandemic may have closed our physical doors, but even in the virtual environment we are opening doors to quality living—for all.

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Eugene E. Jones, Jr.
 President & CEO

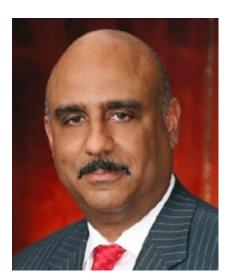
The year 2020 was like no other. The highly contagious coronavirus (COVID-19) struck our nation, sparking a series of complex challenges from rising unemployment and underemployment rates to evolving health and safety concerns and compounding hardships on already-stressed populations. Sadly, many low-income essential workers earning below a livable wage absorbed the brunt of these negative outcomes, as they were sent into the front lines, at high risk to their own wellbeing, to keep our city operating safely. We owe them a great debt.

In this moment, our mission at Atlanta Housing is as important as ever. When tragedy struck, we were at the battlefront serving those most impacted and protecting those most vulnerable. AH was there to fight for those at risk of eviction and homelessness, and for the families, workers, seniors, and disabled persons in need of supportive pathways and career opportunities to get through this uncertain time.

Our company culture of compassion and purpose made continuing our efforts through the pandemic possible. When times got tough, Atlanta Housing remained focused on the work. We expanded housing opportunities by nearly 1,000 more households served than in FY 2019. We created additional opportunities for job placement, career training, and entrepreneurship; and we implemented new service measures to minimize the risk of the virus spread to our seniors and families. I've never been more proud of the exceptional work of this dynamic staff.

As we continue to build pathways to self-sufficiency and open doors to opportunity, I invite you to celebrate Atlanta Housing's vision, mission and promise as outlined in this report through the successes of our residents, the impact of our work, and the dedication of our employees. The pandemic may have closed our physical doors, but even in the virtual environment we are opening doors to quality living—for all.

# OUR BOARD CHAIRMAN



longside the sudden transitions required by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, our country faced intense cultural clashes and debated about what sacrifices are required to create the world we want to live in. As Atlanta Housing continues its mission, we must remain engaged, compassionate, and even brave enough to approach the matter of affordable housing as one of social justice and equity, and as a moral imperative and human right.

Through the pandemic, we witnessed the rise of the essential employee. Seen as heroes, these same people who kept the country running

often earn well below a livable wage and teeter on the brink of homelessness, family separation, and illness. The AH Board of Commissioners and AH staff are committed to expanding housing opportunities for these families and creating opportunities for job placement, training, and entrepreneurship.

I am particularly proud of our Section 3 program, a HUD mandate to support public housing participants and low-income city residents through entrepreneurship and active contracting opportunities with AH and its partners. In 2020, AH fully committed to this program and its aims with the launch of a resident entrepreneurship program that produced 23 resident graduates.

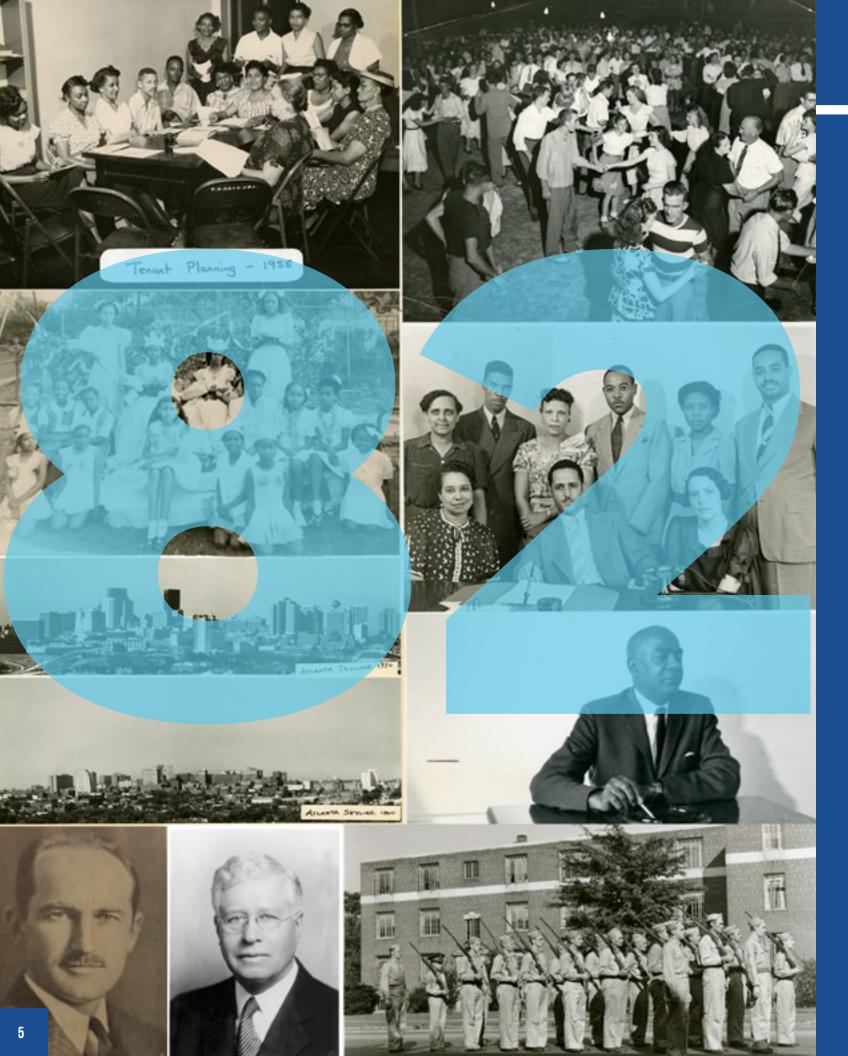
This year challenged us to reimagine our world, our work, and how we connect to others. It also renewed our commitment to our agency's values. This end-of-year report celebrates our residents and their successes; and it captures our impact and highlights the people within AH who do the work that drives our mission and make it possible to serve our residents holistically.

Thank you for your continued support and trusting us to do this life-changing work.

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This year challenged us to reimagine our world, our work, and how we connect to others. It also renewed our commitment to our agency's values.

Christopher Edwards, M.D. Chairman of the Board



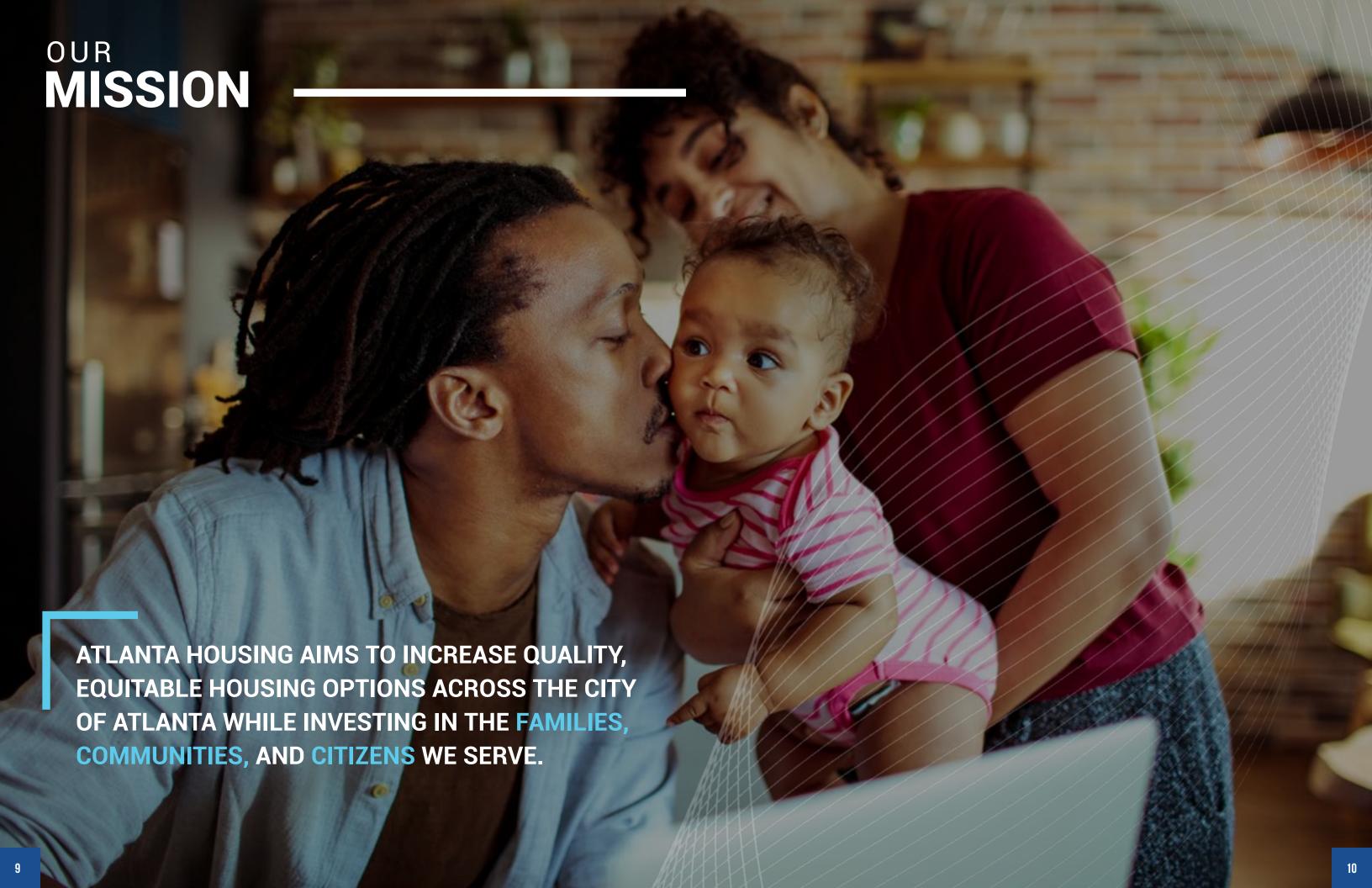
# OUR **FOUNDATION**

ur story begins with AH founders Charles Forrest Palmer, a successful real estate developer of his era, and **Dr. John Hope**, a civil rights leader and the first Black president of Morehouse College. Recognizing the impoverished conditions of Atlanta's most destitute communities, Palmer and Hope sought civic change that would rebuild those neighborhoods into communities of promise, worth, and increase. With funding provided by the Public Works Administration (PWA) under Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal initiatives, Palmer and Hope teamed together to construct the all-White Techwood Homes and all-Black University Homes. Construction began in 1934, and these communities became the first federally subsidized public housing in the United States. Nationwide, they would serve as shining examples and empirical proof of the power of community support.

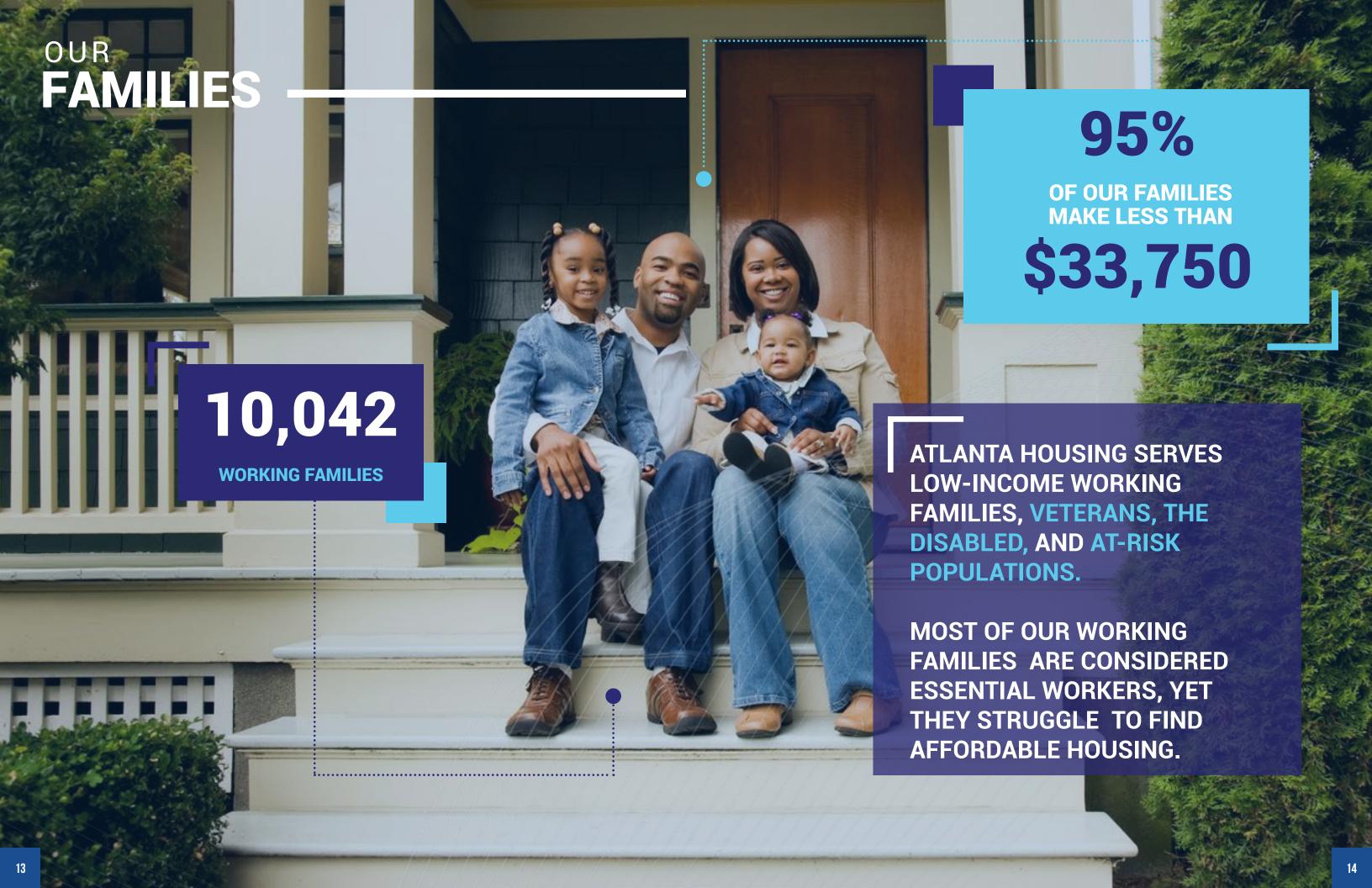
The history of Atlanta Housing is rooted in a sturdy foundation of serving others. Eightytwo years later, the legacy continues. To follow in the footsteps of our pioneering founders is a privilege. To provide access to quality affordable housing and tools for independence so that our families can Live, Work, and Thrive is an honor.

> The history of **Atlanta Housing** is rooted in a sturdy foundation of serving others. **Eighty-two years** later, the legacy continues.











# 



# OUR PORTFOLIO

### 1. HOMEFLEX

(FORMERLY PROJECT-BASED RENTAL ASSISTANCE)

Atlanta Housing encourages privatesector owners of single-tenant and family developments to reserve a portion of their units for eligible residents. This rental assistance, which is tied to the unit—not the tenant—offers long-term, affordable options for our residents.

The HomeFlex program provides more than 6,320 affordable housing units, including 504 new units introduced to the portfolio in FY 2020.

# 2. ATLANTA HOUSING-OWNED COMMUNITIES AND RAD CONVERSIONS

In FY 2020, 918 units were preserved as affordable through RAD. An additional 650 units are slated for FY 2021. AH is committed to preserving and improving our AH-owned public housing (PH) units, which currently serve our seniors, disabled adults, and small families. Through the Housing and Urban Development's (HUD's) Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program, AH partners with private developers in a long-term agreement to rehabilitate and convert aging PH units into Section 8 Project-Based Voucher (PBV) or Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA) units, while guaranteeing they remain fully affordable to low-income residents.

### 3. HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM (HCVP)

Housing Choice provides more than 11,000 households with the means to obtain affordable housing. Also known as Section 8, the HCVP lets families identify quality housing anywhere in the city or outside of Atlanta without paying more than 30 percent of adjusted income toward their rent and utilities. AH pays the portion of the rent not covered by the families. Recent enhancements to HCVP, such as technology improvements, landlord referral incentives, tenant education programs, and a damage protection plan, help to retain and attract quality property owners.

HCVP served more than 11,000 households with the help of 1,049 new units provided by landlord partners.



### 4. DOWN PAYMENT ASSISTANCE (DPA)

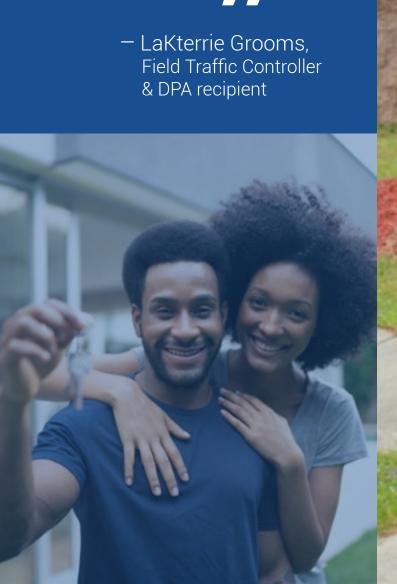
AH's homeownership program provides low-to-moderate income homebuyers with financial assistance to purchase homes within the city of Atlanta. After meeting the program requirements, recipients can receive up to \$13,000, with public safety officers, education and health care professionals, and veterans being eligible to receive up to \$25,000. This program is solely funded through AH reserves.

To date, AH provided

\$4,914,869 in down payment

assistance through

232 awards to eligible first-time homebuyers. Thanks to AH, I am a proud homeowner. Now I truly understand the power of independence and managing my money wisely.





# PROPERTY OWNERS

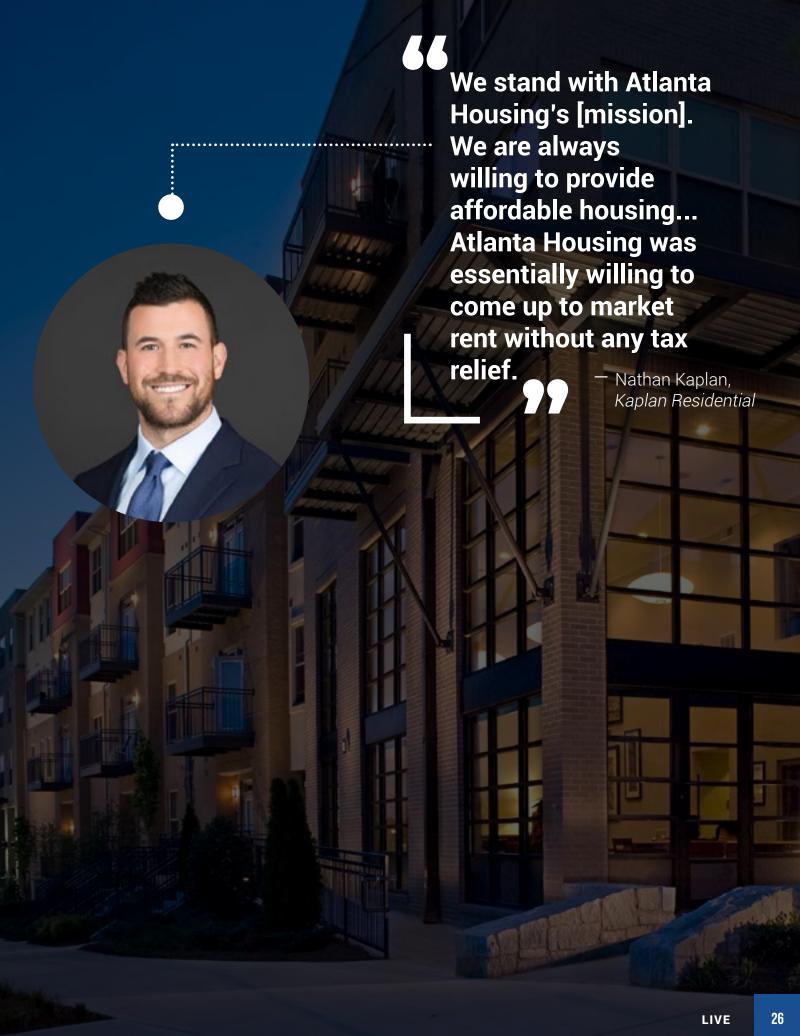
### PARTNER UP PROGRAM

Partner UP's collaboration with real estate investors focuses on improving Atlanta Housing programs, increasing the acceptance of Housing Choice Vouchers throughout Atlanta, and ultimately expanding the availability of housing options for AH families. This partnership requires us to understand and meet the needs of our property owners. Our property owners want simple processes. They appreciate incentives. But most of all, our property owners want results.

Our Rent Estimate Tool offers an easy-to-use resource for our property owners and interested investors to enter property-specific information and receive an estimate within a few days. This eliminates uncertainty through transparency. The Property Protection Program incentivizes our property owners with up to \$2,000 per claim for excessive tenant-related property damage from abuse or accidents. In 2019, there were no damage report claims for 98.5 percent of our 10,300 households assisted by HCVP.

Finally, when it comes to the results our property owners expect, AH delivers. Last year, we paid them over \$150 million in rental subsidies, proving that it pays to do business with AH





## OUR **NEIGHBORHOOD**

### **CHOICE ATLANTA**

Housing and Urban Development (HUD) **Choice Neighborhood Implementation** Grant (CNIG), Choice Atlanta is a neighborhood transformation initiative focusing on housing, people, and neighborhood. In partnership with the City of Atlanta, Choice is revitalizing the former University Homes and three surrounding neighborhoods—Atlanta University Center (AUC), Ashview Heights, and Vine City, known as University Choice Neighborhoods (UCN). Included in this effort is

Funded by a \$30 million Department of

Upon completion, the former University Homes, now Scholars Landing, will provide 512 mixed-income rental units. There will be 60 senior independent living rentals, 419 multi-family rentals and 33 townhomes—with the majority of the entire UCN portfolio being deemed affordable.

the preservation of the historical Roosevelt Hall.

In winter 2020, construction began on 72 units in the amenity-rich UCN community.

> Landing will provide 60 senior rentals, 419 multi-family rentals, and 33 townhomes.

At completion, Scholars



# OUR NUMBERS AT A GLANCE

17,057

HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER HOUSEHOLDS

3,546

DISABLED HOUSEHOLDS

1,261

AH-OWNED HOUSEHOLDS

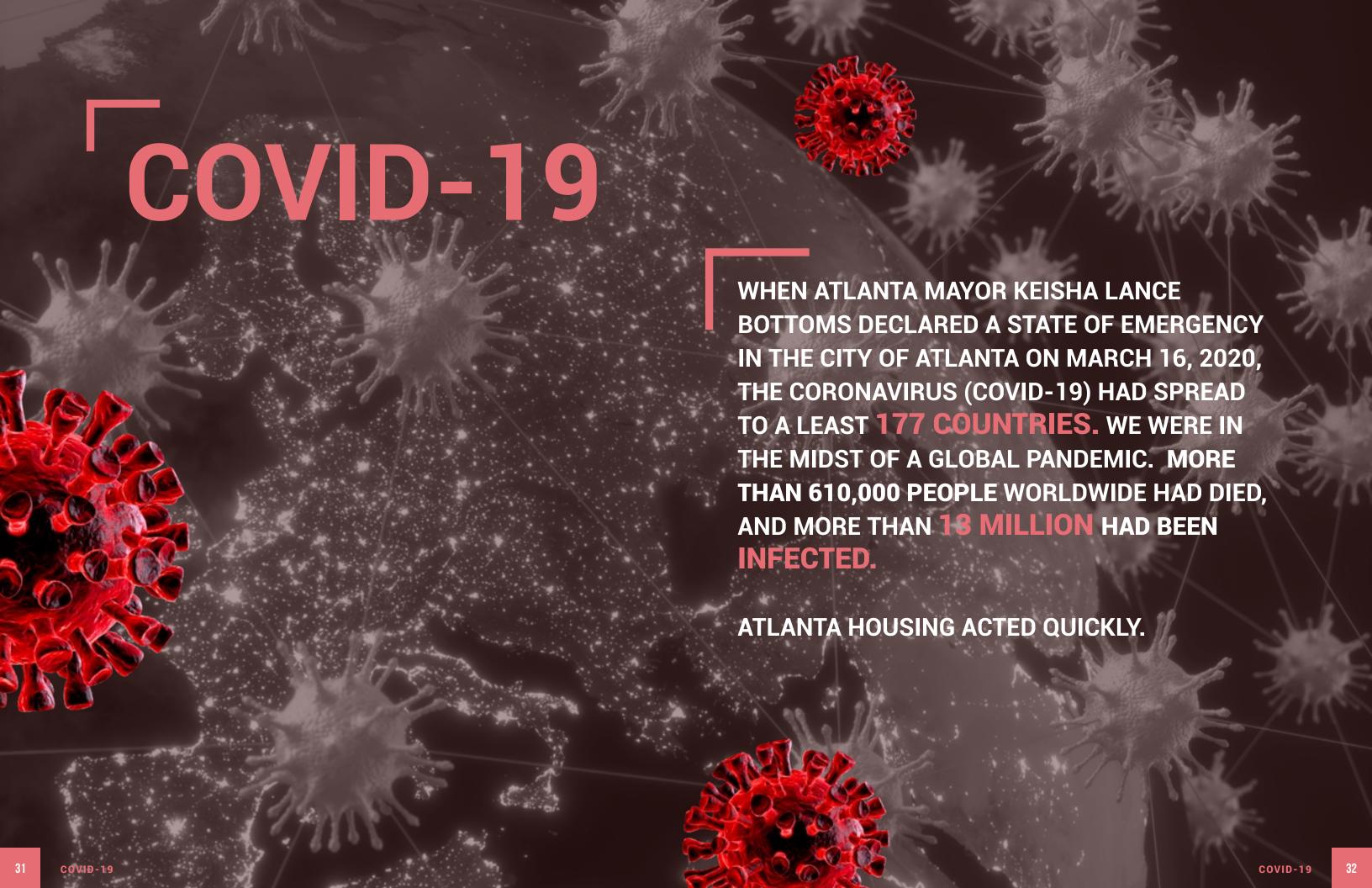
4,423

MIXED COMMUNITY HOUSEHOLDS

7,458

SENIOR HOUSEHOLDS 8,087

HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN



# OUR PIVOT -

President and CEO Eugene Jones, Jr. made the bold and deliberate decision to close all AH offices to protect our residents and employees and to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. The pandemic presented a series of challenges to our operations model, but AH pivoted quickly with Gene, the IT department, and Facilities Management leading the way.

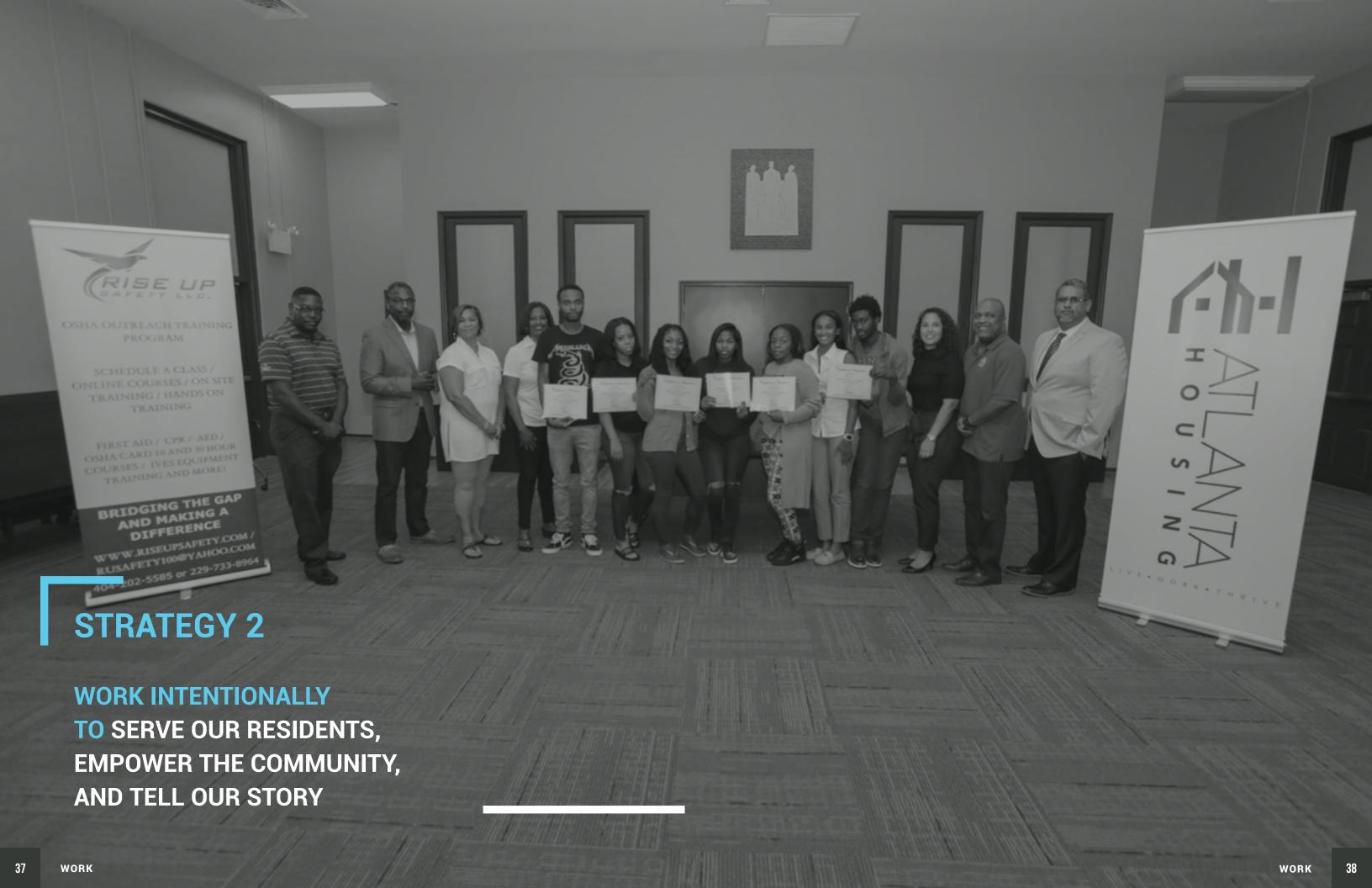
Clear protocols following CDC guidelines were established to navigate COVID-19. We sterilized AH offices and AH-Owned senior high-rises, enforced limited re-entry, and required masks and gloves. For business continuity, virtual call center capabilites were strengthened, enabling continued customer service; and computers and other office equipment were delivered to the homes of employees, who transformed dining and living rooms into office space and "Zoomed" while homeschooling. Additionally, a series of video check-ins from the president and CEO helped to keep employees informed and hopeful.

Fueled by a sense of teamwork and the determination to #conquercovid19 together, Atlanta Housing continued its charge to WORK and THRIVE in excellence.

**ACCORDING TO THE "NEW** YORK TIMES," MORE THAN 13 MILLION **AMERICANS WERE INFECTED WITH** COVID-19 IN 2020.



# WORK.



## SERVING

# **OUR RESIDENTS**

### **CUSTOMER SERVICE**

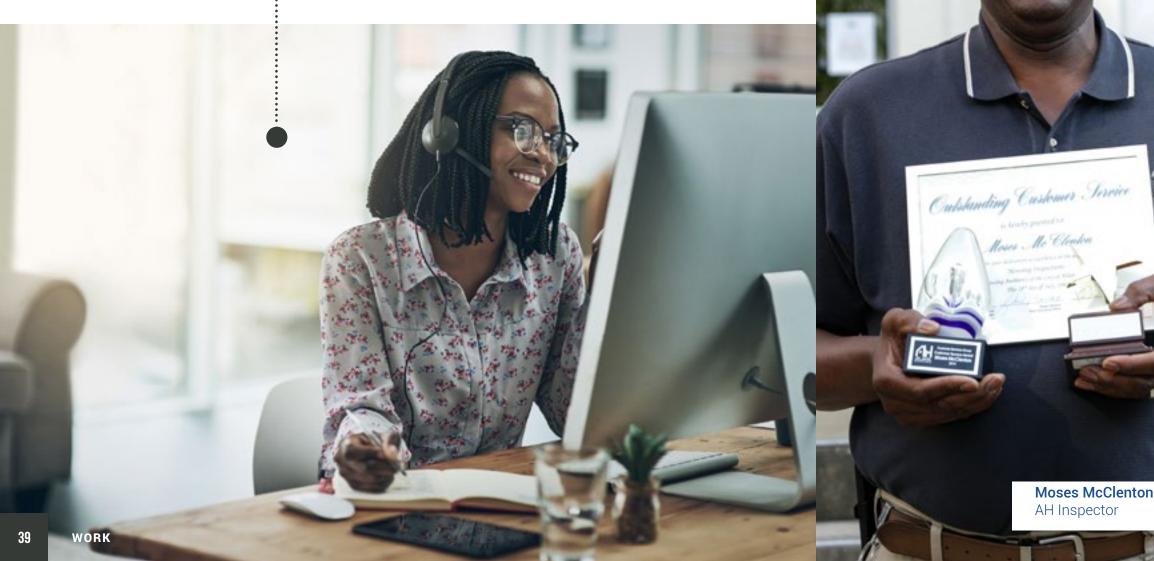
As a service agency, providing excellent customer service is important to meeting the needs of the community we serve. Atlanta Housing is dedicated to ensuring that our residents, community stakeholders, and professional and governmental partners all have a positive experience, which is key to moving our mission forward. Aside from issuing and monitoring tenant-based vouchers, our full-time, skilled customer service staff facilitates eligibility screenings, program intake, annual re-certification, and program termination. Our customer service team also responds to inquiries, identifies and de-escalates emergency situations, and refers individuals in need to the resources, authorities, and partners who can help.



Quality affordable housing is a necessity for any community to thrive. Our trained and certified inspection team ensures that every AH-subsidized home meets AH's Enhanced Inspections Standards and city building code requirements. Homes are inspected before tenants move in and periodically throughout their stay to confirm livable standards are maintained.



In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, AH introduced virtual, contactless inspections to protect the wellbeing of our staff and residents while continuing to certify the quality of our residential environments.



# EMPOWERING OUR COMMUNITY

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Atlanta Housing knows that community engagement is one of the most important exercises in gaining trust in our expertise and our intentions from the communities we serve. When communities feel well-informed, respected, and included, they are more willing to share information and even serve as ambassadors for the agency. Events such as our Seniors Farmers Market, voter and census completion drives, and clothing drives give us an opportunity to positively engage

our participants and the community; and they have been powerful vehicles for influencing behavioral and environmental changes that can lead to healthier communities and healthy citizens.

During the 2020 season of giving, we distributed 200 Thanksgiving turkeys and gifts for 1,530 children.

Volunteerism and charitable giving are an extension of our community engagement, and it is some of our most cherished work. Sharing our time, talents, and gifts with residents to help them succeed is a part of who we are as an agency. It's in our DNA. Through AH Cares, AH staff, family, and friends can volunteer time to AH-sponsored community events that help mobilize resources, improve relationships, and influence positive change. Partnerships are key. In 2020, our alliance with Atlanta Public Schools (APS), for example, helped us support local elementary and high schools through reading programs, mentorships, clothing banks, book drives, and more.

We are just as dedicated to being charitable in ways that demonstrate our love for humanity and desire to eliminate social ills. During the holidays, AH partnered with Fellaship Lounge and Hosea Helps to host the 2020 Thanksgiving Drive-Thru Harvest Share. We distributed 200 Thanksgiving turkeys, food boxes, and bags of fresh produce. We also partnered with Santa for a Day (SFD) and provided 786 AH participants with Christmas gifts for 1,530 children between the ages of 5 and 12.





### SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

The fight to end and limit homelessness in Atlanta is a noble task—a task that takes the collective work of community partners, private businesses, non-profits, and the local and federal government. Haven, a supportive housing program, provides at-risk populations with a stable housing arrangement that includes intensive case management and support services aimed at promoting self-sufficiency. This population includes homeless individuals and families; people with physical, mental, or developmental disabilities; military veterans; families separated due to the lack of housing; and youth aging out of foster care.

Through the reallocation of unutilized FLOW vouchers, Atlanta Housing partnered with Partners for **Home to provide Housing Choice Vouchers for** 100 individuals experiencing homelessness and most at risk of the impact of Covid-19. Additionally, in partnership with the **United Way, AH provided** emergency funding to 80 families impacted by COVID-19 through the Short Term **Housing Program to prevent** eviction.



I never had a place of my own. I never had a lot of people to help me like I have the help now. It has changed me emotionally and mentally. I feel like a whole different person.

Tony Morgan,
 HAVEN recipient



# TELLING **OUR STORY**

### **CONTENT STRATEGY AND BRAND MANAGEMENT**

### CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

arrating who we are, what we do, and why we do it is central to raising awareness, building trust, and garnering support. Corporate communications is the umbrella under which this effort falls, and it includes internal and external communications, public and media relations, crisis management, and marketing. Atlanta Housing's team of visionaries, tacticians, and artists worked together seamlessly to create measured communications aimed at positioning the agency favorably in the eyes of our participants, employees, stakeholders, and the general public. Our body of work included staff announcements, newsletters, press releases, media interviews, web copy, email marketing, videos, photography,

Corporate communications is the agency's vehicle for transporting intentional, clear, persuasive messages, which impacts productivity, heightens brand awareness,

graphic design, executive correspondence, and more.

and helps trigger innovation. Through effective corporate communications, we were able to meet our business goals and further our mission, one story at a time.

2,040

**MEDIA APPEARENCES** 

**IN FY 2020** 

43,467 **MONTHLY GOOGLE SEARCH** HITS FOR AH AS OF AUG 2020

> 2.1 B PEOPLE REACHED

> > 16,258

**SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS AS OF AUGUST 2020** 

If corporate communications is the vehicle by which our stories travel, content is definitely the wheels. Well-planned, thoughtful content moves our communications strategies and agency goals forward. In an era where "content is king," telling AH's story is an ever-present need. Because of social media, someone's always listening. Storytelling is an art that has the unique power to influence opinions, evoke emotions, and encourage action. Our content strategy was the foundation for all stories, providing intentionality and context, and helping to ensure that all of our communication and brand assets spoke with consistent tone and voice.



On location at Capital View Apartments with the City of Atlanta for co-investment fund

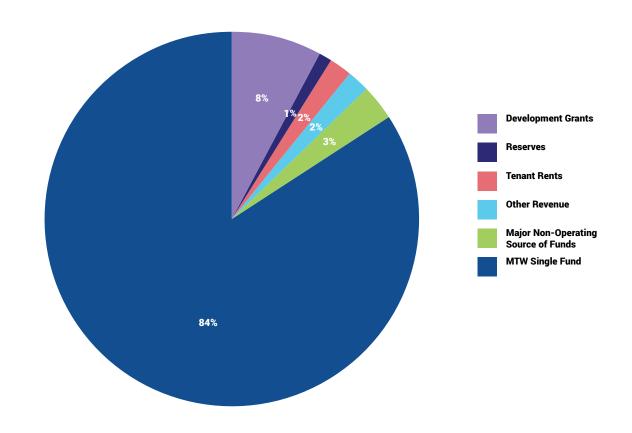
# MANAGING OUR FINANCES

At Atlanta Housing, we oversee crucial funds that aid tens of thousands of individuals. As the largest housing authority in the state and one of 39 Moving to Work (MTW) agencies in the nation, we take being efficient managers of our resources very seriously. Proactive, quality financial support and clear guidance on how our funds are used is key to effectively serve our families. In FY 2020, most of AH's funding came from HUD as components of the MTW Single Fund (Housing Choice Voucher Funds, Public Housing Operating Subsidy, and Capital Fund grants.) Other revenue sources include but are not limited to AH-owned residential rents, earned fees as a member of Georgia HAP Administrators, Inc., and fees earned in connection with activities under AH's Development and Revitalization Program. These assets have been smartly reinvested in our programs, services, and efforts to further our mission and accomplish our business goals.

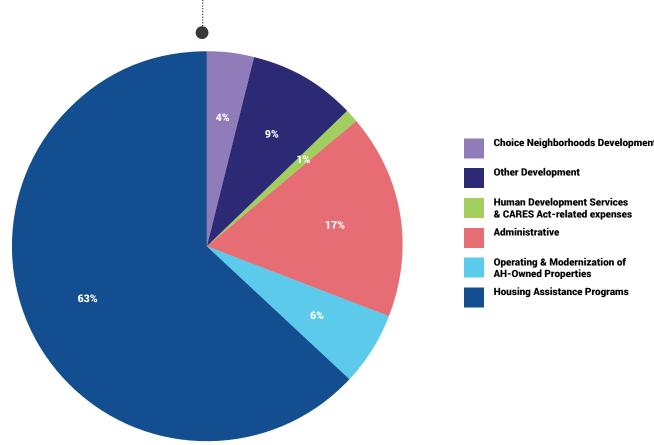
In FY 2020, AH provided a total of \$114.2 million in housing assistance payments for households under the tenant-based Housing Choice Voucher Program



### SOURCES OF FUNDS







# THRIVE.

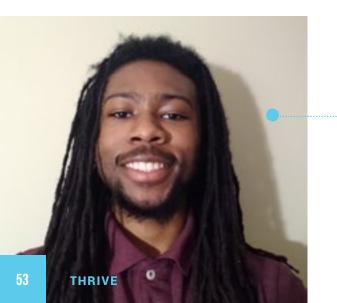


# OUR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

### **FOR YOUTH**

Atlanta Housing believes in the potential of people, especially our kids. Our human development services (HDS) help pave those early pathways to success through youth services in collaboration with community partners. This year, our youth enjoyed opportunities like summer camps, after-school programs, and immersive learning to help level the playing field for our low-income families.

AH also understands that education is the great equalizer. The newly renamed James Allen Community Scholars Award (JACSA), formerly the Atlanta Community Scholars Award (ACSA), was introduced in 2003 to provide scholarships to eligible AH-assisted individuals in support of their postsecondary education. To date, JACSA has awarded a total of \$692,000 to 175 students. The scholarship is distributed through our partnership with the United Negro College Fund (UNCF).







As a Morehouse student, I have maintained a 3.5 GPA.
Being a JACSA Scholar and having the support of Atlanta Housing helped me to achieve [this and more].

Geoffrey Thorpe,
 Junior at Morehouse College



I would like to thank Atlanta Housing for the opportunity for my son to go to camp this summer. I'm a healthcare worker, and I didn't know how he would be attending any camp because I'm also a single mom. I'm greatly appreciative, [and so is] my son. This is truly a blessing to my family.

-Laria C.



AH invested more than

\$20 million

in our senior communities

with green spaces,

community gardens,

exercise rooms,

computer labs, and

other common areas.

### **FOR SENIORS**

#conquercovid19

Our senior population is one of our most vulnerable. That's why we provide targeted services to them through Aging Well, Atlanta Housing's signature health and wellness program that empowers older adults to actively age in place. Leaning on partnerships to offer social engagement opportunities; to enhance connections to family, friends, and the broader community; and to promote physical and mental wellness, Aging Well encourages our seniors to adopt healthy behaviors designed to better their quality of life and preserve their independence.

1,517

SENIORS RECEIVED PROTECTIVE MASKS FOR COVID-19 SAFETY

FOR RESIDENTS



# 5-STAR TENANT PROGRAM

AH teamed with local non-profit agencies to provide financial literacy, credit counseling, and other supportive services through its newly launched 5-Star Tenant Program. One of AH's efforts to promote financial self-sufficiency and a better quality of life for AH-assisted families, this program empowers Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) participants by ensuring they are educated on responsibilities and program requirements. In its first year, **22 participants graduated** from the program. Successes included the establishment of new bank accounts, credit improvements to upwards of a 700+ credit score, and increased financial savings.

Strategic partnerships help us to provide services for our residents that improve their lives. Our alliance with organizations like WorkSource Atlanta, Urban League, Atlanta Center for Self-Sufficiency, and City of Refuge offered opportunities like career and entrepreneurship that helped position our families to earn more and progress toward self-sufficiency.

Job training was available—so was GED preparation, resume and interview guidance, and exclusive access to career fairs. Also, there was access to workforce development, education, various trainings, childcare, transportation, and health services.

To help usher residence toward success, case management is also key. Our highly-skilled staff identified barriers and provided individualized service plans that aided families on their journeys to economic independence and brighter futures.





# COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT



### **SECTION 3**

In January 2020, construction began on the new, state-of-the-art, \$166 million mixed-use Herndon Square. Atlanta Housing's Section 3 program engaged our development partners to open economic, job, and training opportunities to our Section 3 program participants as well as local minority-, women- and Section 3-owned businesses. Through the teamwork of HDS and Supplier Diversity & Inclusion, which partnered with Integrity

Inc. and Westside Works, 23 Section 3 program participants were hired—many of whom also received OSHA training and further skills development while on the job. As the City of Atlanta embarks on one of the most comprehensive affordable housing plans in its history, AH is proud to partner with Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms to send a clear message that Section 3 is an integral part of moving her initiative forward.





# OUR EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

### **HUMAN RESOURCES**

As the threat of Covid-19 lingered, Atlanta
Housing was reminded time and time again
that our employees are our greatest asset.
Through employee engagement, advocacy, and
professional development, we strived to foster a
culture of accountability, trust, and collaboration.
Maintaining quality operations was one of our
top priorities. Our HR department led efforts
to recruit, retain, and develop talent in order to
ensure efficient staffing; and initiatives such
as the launch of the agency's first Employee
Confidentiality Hotline gave employees a
voice they deserve, motivating them to protect
our values and feel empowered by their own
influence.





# **WELLNESS**

The wellbeing of our employees matters—and so does helping them establish a true work-life balance. Our Wellness Council and Engagement Team are intentional with providing opportunities for our employees to make their health a priority. Let's Move, our twice-weekly, temporarily-virtual fitness classes, offers free professional instruction that includes cardio, aerobics, and light weights. Our Walk Wednesday experiences give employees a chance to be one with nature through mind-balancing, low impact routines like light hiking and brisk walks through some of metro Atlanta's most scenic parks and sites.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



At AH, professional development is vital. Employees are encouraged to attend conferences, seminars, and trainings to help them cultivate or fine-tune key skills. **Toastmasters** was re-activated at the agency to support employees in their pursuit to become better communicators; and a subscription to **Skillsoft Percipio** gave employees access to interactive learning videos and the largest corporate course library in the world.

To date, AH employees have engaged in more than 200 hours of Let's Move exercise sessions.

THRIVE 62

#conquerce

# R Valuing those who do the work is as important as the work itself. I say it all the time, 'I have a great – Eugene E. Jones, Jr. President & CEO THRIVE

### **EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH**

Each month, Atlanta Housing recognizes and rewards outstanding employees nominated by their peers who demonstrated our core values, including impact and innovation, leadership, collaboration, and teamwork. In 2020, 11 honorees received the benefit of VIP parking for one month, a financial award, and a spotlight on the agency's intranet. They also had the opportunity to be voted Employee of the Year.



Being recognized as the 2019
Employee of the Year was
such an honor. I appreciated
and enjoyed the monetary gift
and complimentary tickets to
the Mayor's Masked Ball. But
nothing compared to being
recognized by my peers.
I love assisting people, and I
am able to accomplish great
things by doing what I truly

ove.

— Ovando Mortimer Information Technology, '19 Employee of the Year

# 25,751

**TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS SERVED** 

244

**AT-RISK OR FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS SERVED** 

\$30.8 M

**INVESTED IN NEW REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT** 

**560** 

**NEW HCVP LANDLORDS** 

10,042

**WORKING FAMILIES** 

2,804

**EMERGENCY FOOD DELIVERIES TO SENIORS** 

# **NUMBERS** AT A GLANCE

250

118 **FAMILIES GRADUATED FROM AH SUBSIDY** 

**PROGRAM** 

\$1M

**INVESTED IN EDUCATION AND INITIATIVES** 

1,607 **RESIDENTS RECEIVED LIFE SKILLS TRAINING** 

419

**CHILDREN SUPPORTED THROUGH AFTER-SCHOOL AND/OR SUMMER CAMP PROGRAMS** 



Atlanta Housing isn't just a public housing authority. We are a family helping families. The work we do is built on compassion and respect for mankind—and fueled by the clear understanding that quality affordable housing is a human right, not a privilege. As we seek prosperity for all, we will remain deliberate in our practice to honor our history, to provide affordable housing, and to create pathways to independence.

That's our vision. That's our mission. That's our promise.









