

SPRING 2024

# OUR COMMUNITY UPDATE

SCDHC QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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On Saturday, April 6, the Emporia Armory was transformed into a vibrant nexus of community and opportunity as SCDHC hosted the much-anticipated Emporia Housing Fair. Supported by the City of Emporia and Greenville County, this event became a delightful playground for families and a beacon of hope for prospective homeowners.

The fair featured a variety of activities that closely aligned with our organization's commitment to fostering thriving and sustainable communities. Attendees navigated through stations that showcased the services offered by SCDHC, including our Housing Counseling Center and Financial Opportunity Center. Adding a digital twist, virtual tours allowed guests to step inside our new modular homes on Belden Street, offering a peek at the future of sustainable living in Emporia.

Community partners played a pivotal role in the day's success, underscoring the collaborative spirit driving Emporia's growth. SCDHC extends their gratitude to Truist, Benchmark, Virginia Housing, Townebank Mortgage, Allstate Insurance, Credit Restoration Institute, Virginia Department of Health, Icon Realty Group, and River City Blues Realty for sharing their valuable resources and advice.

The fair was also a festival of joy and engagement. Children's laughter echoed around the face painting stations and bouncy houses, while a balloon twister added a splash of color and whimsy to the day. DJ Worldwide provided the perfect soundtrack, with tunes that had everyone feeling the beat, culminating in an exuberant line dance session that pulled together the threads of community spirit.

Local vendors such as Victory Fine Fragrance Oils, Blessed Creationz, Sparklz Creationz, and Ear Gemz showcased their products, infusing the fair with a unique charm. Meanwhile, food trucks including Hines Delights Baked Goods & More, Sidewalk Cafe, ANB Kitchen, and John's Fried Fish & Chicken served local culinary delights, ensuring the event catered to all senses.

As the day drew to a close, the sentiment was clear: the Emporia Housing Fair wasn't just an event - it was a celebration of community, a testament to the enduring spirit of Emporia, and a promising glimpse into its future.



# Sowing Seeds of Change in Emporia



At SCDHC, our commitment to empowering communities runs deep. As the oldest continuously Black-led community development corporation in Virginia, we've long been at the forefront of driving positive change. Recently, our work in Emporia caught the attention of the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond's Community Conversations team, who visited our office to learn from our experiences and insights.

Emporia, nestled in the heart of Virginia's Peanut Country, embodies the essence of small-town America. But behind its quaint facade lies a community grappling with economic challenges and historical disinvestment. At SCDHC, we recognized the need for action and have been working tirelessly alongside Emporia and Greensville County to pave the way for revitalization and growth.

Our collaboration with local leaders has yielded tangible results. One notable initiative is our mixed-income housing project, aimed at providing quality housing options for residents of all backgrounds. Through this endeavor, we're building communities, fostering a sense of belonging, and empowering individuals to thrive.

Moreover, we offer a range of support services tailored to meet the diverse needs of Emporia's residents. From financial counseling to workforce development, we're equipping individuals with the tools and resources they need to succeed.

The visit from the Federal Reserve Community Conversations team reaffirmed the importance of our work and provided validation of our approach. Together, with our partners and support of the community, we're building a brighter future for Emporia, one step at a time.

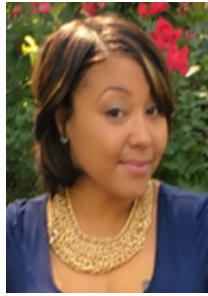


Checkout the Federal Reserve's article on the meeting [HERE](#)

## Celebrating Cierra



We're delighted to announce the promotion of Cierra Frye to Director of Homeownership Programs! Cierra's promotion to Director is a testament to her invaluable contributions to SCDHC. With over a decade of experience in finance and housing, including eight years directly in the housing industry



as a HUD-certified Housing Counselor, Cierra brings unmatched expertise to her new role. She'll oversee daily operations, provide homeowners with expert counseling, guide clients through the homebuying process, and facilitate essential classes in Credit & Money Management, as well as Homebuyer Education. Cierra's leadership will undoubtedly inspire our team to reach new heights of excellence and innovation as we continue to support our community in achieving their dreams of homeownership!

## Master the Flame

By Twandra-Lomax Brown



Let's spice up your cooking routine with some sizzling tips to ensure your meat and poultry are grilled to perfection!

**Get Your Grill Ready:** Before you start grilling, give your grill a good scrape to ensure it's clean. Then, heat it up to kill off any microorganisms.

**Temperature Talk:** For ground meats, cook to a safe 160°F. When it comes to steaks, hit 145°F for medium rare, 160°F for medium, or 170°F for well done.

**Stay Hygienic:** Keep things separate by using different utensils for raw and cooked meat. Save the sauce for after cooking to avoid any premature browning mishaps.

**Poultry Perfect:** Cook your whole bird until it reaches 180°F in the thigh and 170°F in the breast for juicy, tender meat.

**Safety First:** Remember the two-hour rule - don't leave food out too long. When it doubt, throw it out!

## JIM'S HANDY HOME HINTS



*Really, is it spring already? Certainly is! Spring cleaning is a wonderful way to refresh your home after the winter months. Here are some tips to help you prepare your home for a thorough spring cleaning:*

1. **Declutter First:** Before diving into cleaning tasks, **eliminate clutter**. This includes outgrown clothes, broken toys, outdated papers, or expired foods. Clearing clutter will make the cleaning process easier and more efficient.
2. **Check Your Supplies:** Take a moment to **inspect your cleaning equipment**. Ensure your vacuum cleaner's roller bars are free of threads, empty the bin or bag, and change filters. Verify that you have all necessary attachments, and make sure mop heads and cleaning rags are clean.
3. **Set a Goal:** Decide what you want to achieve during spring cleaning. Create an **"organize my house"** checklist to split tasks into manageable parts. Some experts recommend tackling the hardest tasks first while you're full of energy.
4. **Top Spring-Cleaning Checklist Items:**
  - **Dust & Wipe:** Clean ceilings, walls, light fixtures, and furniture with a pole duster.
  - **Vacuum Thoroughly:** Vacuum window treatments, furnishings, and floors. Move large furniture to reach underneath.
  - **Window Cleaning:** Use glass cleaner and a microfiber cloth to clean.
  - **Kitchen Refresh:** Clean kitchen appliances, fixtures, and surfaces using appropriate cleaners and wipes.
  - **Home Maintenance:** Replace HVAC air filters, check smoke detector batteries, and install carbon monoxide detectors.
  - **Outdoor Cleaning:** Clean gutters and downspouts, pressure-wash the patio or deck, and wipe down furniture.

Remember, spring cleaning can be a significant undertaking, so take it step-by-step and enjoy the satisfaction of a fresh and organized home!

# Unlocking Doors to Homeownership



In February, SCDHC hosted an Employee Homeownership Workshop for City of Emporia employees and Rosie's Gaming Emporium staff. The workshop served as an informative session to introduce attendees to the programs and services offered by SCDHC aimed at assisting employees in their homeownership journey.



Attendees enjoyed food and giveaways while engaging with representatives from Truist and Benchmark, who emphasized the significance of homeownership. The event not only provided valuable insights but also fostered connections within the community. With its success, the workshop signifies another exciting chapter in SCDHC's commitment to empowering individuals and families in Emporia.



# Community Empowerment

SCDHC passionately engages with the community, regularly connecting with and supporting local initiatives. For example, our involvement in the Hispanic Resource Fair allowed us to share about our comprehensive services and efforts to meet the needs of the Latino community.

A common concern expressed by attendees was employment opportunities, something SCDHC works hard to address. In an interview with WTVR CBS 6, one of our team members noted that at SCDHC, we not only help people find jobs but also establish pathways to financial stability.

The event's success has prompted the Colonial Heights Food Pantry to continue hosting Resource Fairs, providing an ongoing platform for SCDHC to extend its support. We pledge to persistently address the evolving needs and aspirations of the Latino community, fostering a future that is brighter and more equitable for all.

## GRATITUDE CORNER

Our work would not be possible without these supporters:

- Fannie Mae
- Virginia Housing
- Amandla Fund for Economic and Racial Justice
- LISC Virginia
- Fulton Bank and the Fulton Forward Foundation
- Richmond Memorial Health Foundation
- Bon Secours Community Benefits Investments
- Community Foundation for a Greater Richmond
- Wells Fargo
- United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg
- Capital One Impact Initiative
- George Mason Mortgage
- Truist Bank
- First Citizens Bank
- JP Morgan Chase
- The Weyerhaeuser Giving Fund
- Chesapeake Bank



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