

Better Homes.  
Better Communities.  
Better Lives.

# Betternews

**Better Housing Coalition** changes lives and transforms communities through high quality, affordable housing.

## BHC at 20: Success and Innovation Fuel Growth



Celebrating the completion of BHC's 100th home in Church Hill with a ribbon-cutting (from left to right): T.K. Somanath, Lissy Bryan, Mary Thompson, Councilman Chris A. Hilbert, and Councilman Bruce W. Tyler.



**BHC has invested \$18 million into the revitalization of Church Hill to date, and on October 22 celebrated the completion of its 100th Church Hill home.**

**“The Better Housing Coalition has done more for this city than any other housing organization.”**  
– City Councilman Bruce W. Tyler

### More Revitalization in Store for Church Hill

After two decades of transforming communities and improving lives, BHC is making another major investment in Church Hill. The site of the H. Beckstoffer's & Sons lumber mill, which occupies more than a block on North 28th between R and S Streets, will be restored to a new vigor after a projected \$15 million investment.

BHC acquired the vacant building from Richard Henry Beckstoffer, grandson of the company's founder, and plans to redevelop it and the surrounding lots into a mixed-use community of 18-21 loft-style apartments, 16 townhomes, 3 rehabilitated residences, and a 32-unit senior facility. The original structure of the mill will be rehabilitated to historic standards. Sidewalks and trees will line the streets, encouraging pedestrian traffic.

“We've done things on this scale before, but this is a unique opportunity to work on an entire block in Church Hill and act as an anchor for future transformations,” says Senior Project Manager Lee Alford.

BHC has had a long, successful history in Church Hill. Over the past fifteen years, 150 BHC homes and townhomes, parks and community gardens have sparked redevelopment and new investment in many of its neighborhoods. Our holistic approach to revitalization, emphasis on quality, and adherence to the principles of sustainability guarantee that homes we build will be around for a long time to come. Durable materials combined with high energy efficiency also ensure that residents are able to afford to live in and maintain their homes.

Co-founders Mary Tyler McClenahan and Carter McDowell set BHC on this systemic approach to community revitalization in 1988 with the help of their charter board members. “We determined to change the environment in which extremely dangerous conditions could exist,” recalls McDowell. “Providing high-quality affordable housing in safe, livable neighborhoods became our focus.” Today, BHC continues to build communities that engender a sense of ownership and pride among residents.

“With careful planning, we have been able to provide long term solutions for buyers, renters and seniors while reinvesting in Richmond,” says CEO and President T.K. Somanath. “Our formula for success involves strong partnerships with local governments and agencies, financial institutions, foundations, corporate sponsors, individual donors, and of course the communities themselves. We're looking forward to our next 20 years!”



The historic Beckstoffers lumber mill produced some of the region's finest custom woodworking for decades. The first phase of redevelopment is scheduled for completion in spring 2010.

### Save the Date!

**What:** 20th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION & SUSTAINABILITY AWARDS

**When:** Friday, March 20, 2009, 6 – 8 p.m.

**Where:** H. Beckstoffer's & Sons Lumber Mill in Church Hill, 1209 N. 28th Street

**Dress:** Green

Celebrate past, present, and future initiatives and join us in honoring our award recipients! Come see the mill as it stands today and be among the first to envision its future transformation into a vibrant new community. For more information, sponsorship opportunities or participation in the Sustainable Community Day on March 21, contact Drew Melson at [d.melson@betterhousingcoalition.org](mailto:d.melson@betterhousingcoalition.org).

For more information on Sustainability Awards, visit page 3.

# BHC Awarded for Excellence and Impact

## 2008 Virginia Housing Award Best Housing Organization

BHC received the Virginia Housing Award for Best Housing Organization on November 13 at the Governor's Housing Conference. The award in this category went to BHC for its outstanding commitment, effectiveness and innovation in meeting a diverse range of housing-related needs. Several of the BHC staff members attending the conference accepted the award.

## Richmond History Maker Award Promoting Stronger Communities

The Valentine Richmond History Center annually recognizes organizations and individuals who actively improve the lives of people in the greater Richmond region. BHC received the History Maker award in

the "Promoting Stronger Communities" category. T.K. Somanath accepted the honor at the October 21 ceremony, in which he was recognized for the positive direction he has given the organization since its establishment in 1988.

## A.C.O.R.N. Marguerite Crumley Preservation Award

T.K.'s role in developing BHC into a major force and his dedication to preserving Richmond's historic neighborhoods led him to win the Marguerite Crumley Preservation Award at the 2008 A.C.O.R.N. (Alliance to Conserve Old Richmond Neighborhoods) awards on October 7.

Thanks to all of our supporters who have helped BHC earn renown as a model Community Development Corporation.



T.K. accepts the "Promoting Stronger Communities" History Maker award, presented by Greg McQuade (Anchor and Reporter, WTVR Channel 6) and Katherine Busser (Executive VP, Capital One).



BHC is named Best Housing Organization at the Governor's Housing Conference

## Bren and Johnson Retire from Board after more than 35 Years of Combined Service

Karl Bren, Vice Chairman for twenty years and Professor Gary Johnson, Board and Committee member for fifteen, will assume positions on BHC's Advisory Committee at the end of this year. Karl, a founding member, has been instrumental in steering BHC on a steady course towards environmental sustainability. Gary's planning knowledge and expertise have guided BHC's sound development strategies to be truly transformative. While no longer Board members, Karl and Gary will continue to be sources of wisdom and inspiration for BHC.



T.K. and Jon Stanhope,  
Chief Minister of the Australian Capital Territory

## Australian Chief Minister Tours Winchester Greens During U.S. Visit

The shortage of quality affordable housing is not a problem unique to the greater Richmond area - it is an unfortunate reality around the world. According to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, many seniors in the capital city of Canberra cannot afford the high costs of living in a retirement community. However, after Chief Minister Jon Stanhope came to Richmond to tour BHC's Winchester Greens community, he feels confident that elderly Canberrans can live within their means and still receive the care they need in high-quality housing.

Winchester Greens has won multiple awards for its innovative mixed-use, mixed-income design.

**"The model I saw...certainly sparked for me the possibility of us thinking more laterally about how to provide affordable accommodation for older Canberrans in a supported and supportive environment" says Stanhope.**

## BHC Promotes Economic Prosperity through Environmental Responsibility

Twenty years ago, the concepts of green building did not appear on the priority list of any housing organization. Now, in 2008, as rising energy costs and human influence on the environment are leading national issues, BHC is already well-established as an industry leader of green building in Virginia.

In 2006, BHC built Carter Woods II as the first EarthCraft certified multi-family dwelling in Virginia. Since November of that year, all BHC homes have been built according to EarthCraft standards - meaning they are at least 15% more energy efficient than a code-built home and are in compliance with guidelines set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy. Many of our homes exceed these guidelines and are up to 30% more efficient.

The low maintenance costs and health benefits of green building improve the daily lives of our residents. BHC is committed to increasing energy efficiency going forward.

**"Residents living in these homes recognize substantial savings in their energy bills, allowing them to build personal wealth," says BHC Board Member Karl Bren, a green building consultant.**





A Lincoln Manor apartment building prior to renovation.

## BHC to Revitalize Lincoln Manor Apartment Community

BHC plans to revitalize the Lincoln Manor apartments in North Richmond to alleviate overcrowding and improve the residents' quality of life. Long-term changes to this VHDA-foreclosed property include the addition of a park, reconfiguration of apartment units, increased curb appeal, and on-site social support. A 3,200 square-foot community resource center is also being constructed with a generous grant from the **Robins Foundation**. These improvements will foster a safe, sociable community for residents.

The first phase of Lincoln Manor's revitalization – the rehabilitation of 115 apartments - is currently underway, and the second phase will begin next year.

For 20 years, rebuilding the social structure of Richmond's distressed neighborhoods has been at the forefront of BHC's mission. It all starts with innovative planning and development – where you live can change your life.

## Community Social Work: Benefiting Residents of all Ages

Since 1997, BHC's Community Social Work Program, led by Joyce Jackson, has been at the heart of our signature holistic approach to transforming communities. Pre-schoolers to seniors benefit from free services and programs designed around community needs, and the results can change lives.

**“You (BHC) are positively impacting and shaping the lives of so many people... not only the children you work with regularly, but their families as well. I could not have asked for a better group of people to entrust my babies with.”**  
 – Winchester Greens resident



Erin Cox, a BHC social worker, spends time with senior residents at the Monarch Woods apartment community located on Jahnke and German School Roads.

### BHC to Honor Leaders in Sustainability

On March 20, 2009, BHC will honor individuals and organizations who have exhibited extraordinary leadership in promoting the fundamental pillars of sustainability.

Awards will be presented for:

- Transforming communities
- Environmental Responsibility and Innovation
- Creative collaboration
- Changing Lives

Details and nominee criteria will be available in January 2009.

### Did You Know?

- Since 1988, BHC has created over 1000 sustainable, energy-saving homes and made local urban neighborhoods safe places to live.
- Did you know that 64% of Richmond workers make less than the \$73,000 needed to purchase a median priced home? Donate to BHC this holiday season and help us in our mission to change lives through high-quality affordable housing.
- Children who participate in after school programs at the Mary Tyler McClenahan Child Care Center read at or above their grade level.
- More than 1,000 BHC residents have received BHC's support services in 2008 alone.



Volunteers contribute to the sustainability of our communities.

## Volunteers Aid in Beautification Project on Cary Street

Resident volunteers, BHC staff, and property management came together on October 18 to dress up the streetscape along their Cary Street properties, planting new trees, bushes, and flowering plants.

As demonstrated by all BHC developments, attractive and well-maintained surroundings directly impact safety and positive behavior. A resident living in a rehabilitated Cary Street home once commented, “I was afraid, and I used to keep my bedroom air conditioning unit running all night, even in the winter, because of the noise. Now I sleep right through the night.”

BHC thanks everyone who contributed to the fall plantings, and asks anyone interested in participating in beautification projects to call us at (804) 644-0546.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## FOUNDERS

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

Carter Woods, Jefferson Mews  
222-4395

Cary 2000, St. Andrew's,  
The Columns on Grove, Randolph Place  
354-9455

Rockwood Village  
745-0911

Winchester Greens  
743-7030

Market Square Apartments  
279-0133

Monarch Woods  
320-4301

Better Housing Coalition  
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## Thank You to the following organizations for their major gifts:

Aloca	Jenkins Foundation
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The Brink's Company	Philip Morris U.S.A.
Capital One	Richmond Association of Realtors
Cameron Foundation	Richmond Memorial Health Foundation
Dominion Resources	Robins Foundation
Franklin Federal Savings & Loan Assoc.	SunTrust Foundation
Grace & Holy Trinity Episcopal Church	Universal Leaf Foundation
Home Depot	

*Thanks also to all of our individual donors – your valued support enables us to change lives.*

## You Can Change Lives

**Maximize Your Gift:** When you make a gift to BHC, it may be eligible for state tax credits. A gift from an individual of \$500 and above is eligible for a 40% tax credit. For businesses, the gift must be at least \$1,000 to receive the 40% tax credit. For more information contact **Drew Melson** at (804) 644-0546 ext. 23 or [d.melson@betterhousingcoalition.org](mailto:d.melson@betterhousingcoalition.org).

**Designate Your Gift:** When you give to United Way, use code 3158 or simply write "BHC". Use code 3624 when you make a gift to the Combined Virginia Campaign, and your donation will go to BHC.



### BHC WELCOMES DAN MORTENSEN TO BOARD

As Senior Vice President, Corporate Real Estate for Capital One, Dan is responsible for all aspects of the Capital One's physical workplace, including workplace strategy, real estate portfolio strategy, capacity planning, construction, real estate information strategy and facilities management and services. "I believe that improved housing is a key to improving our community," says Mortensen. "I am impressed with the work that the BHC has done and their enhancement of peoples' lives and the neighborhoods in which they live."

## New Websites to Launch early 2009

Visit [betterhousingcoalition.org](http://betterhousingcoalition.org) this January for a fresh look at our services, homes and communities in a dynamic new layout. Launching simultaneously with these changes is a second site: [BHChomes.org](http://BHChomes.org). From [BHChomes.org](http://BHChomes.org), residents will be able to login and make rent payments or maintenance requests, while prospective renters and homebuyers can view listings, floor plans and virtual tours, or download applications. All additional content is designed to facilitate the application process and offer our residents a higher level of convenience.

## Spring Tour Dates 2009

Haven't seen our communities? We'd love to take you on a tour! Please call Drew Melson at 644-0546, ext. 23, or email [d.melson@betterhousingcoalition.org](mailto:d.melson@betterhousingcoalition.org) if you are interested in attending on any of the following dates.

Tuesday, April 28	Thursday, April 30
Wednesday, May 6	Tuesday, May 12

*All tours run from noon to 2:00 p.m., lunch included!*



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