



UNIVERSITY NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION

2011 ANNUAL REPORT

"I have lived (rented) within one block of the 400 Block of Cherry for the past 4 years. I am so excited to be a permanent member of the University Neighborhood! UNPA, your Homebuyers Assistance Program has made it possible for me to purchase my first home. Thank you."

K. VanDerGeest

UNPA is a not-for-profit housing organization. Our mission is to maintain owner occupancy in the University Neighborhood, and to promote the Neighborhood as a great place to live. We have been doing this since 1991.

Despite a challenging real estate market, *the toughest selling conditions in years*, some analysts say, there continues to be a strong desire to purchase owner-occupied housing in the University Neighborhood. Of the 30 buyers who participated in the FY 2010-2011 **University Neighborhood Homebuyers Assistance Program**:

- 83% were first time homebuyers (up from 78% in FY 2009-2010)
- 53% are SU/College of Forestry/Upstate Medical faculty and/or staff (up from 44% in FY 2009-2010)
- 100% work in the City of Syracuse (consistent for the past 3 FYs)
- Also for the past 3 FYs, we have observed a wave of purchasers who were either renters in the Neighborhood, or who purchased the houses they were renting, or who are homeowners relocating to larger or smaller homes -- thus remaining in the Neighborhood

For the past 17 years, UNPA has assisted more than 700 homebuyers with more than \$3 million in grants and loans; and more than 300 homebuyers with more than \$800,000 in grants and loans within the last 5 years alone.

Neighborhood homeowners continue to improve their properties at a record pace, and looked to the **University Neighborhood Home Improvement Loan Program** to do this cost effectively. Launched in 2006, Round I originated from efforts of former Congressman Walsh to secure funding for the Syracuse Neighborhood Initiative (SNI). In that round, UNPA, Home HeadQuarters (HHQ) and the City pooled their respective funding sources to create a low-interest home improvement loan fund that was marketed exclusively to owner-occupants within the UNPA Service Area. Most recently, in Round IV, UNPA invested \$30,000 in UNSAAC allocations, and approximately \$21,000 of our own funds, to assist HHQ in closing 37 loans (more than \$500,000) in 3 months. That is an amazing number!

Something else to celebrate! In April 2011, UNPA collaborated with Empire Housing & Development on the rehabilitation of **104 Buckingham Avenue**. This 4 BR, 2058 SF single-family property fell into disrepair after the owner passed away. It will soon be owned and occupied again by a family of 4 with 3 and 6-year old children.

In November 2010, UNPA invested \$10,000 of our own funds to jump-start the **University/Westcott Neighborhood Housing Plan**. The Center for Community Design & Research at SUNY-CESF was contracted to facilitate development of the plan which is in the process of being compiled by an Advisory Committee. The purpose of this undertaking is to supplement the draft City Housing Plan. It will direct action and change to achieve specific outcomes as dictated by Neighborhood focus groups during the process of developing a vision statement. Goals have been set that contribute to the desirability of the Neighborhood as a place where people choose to live. The Advisory Committee is in the process of creating action strategies to achieve those goals.

On October 7, 2011, UNPA submitted a purchase offer to the City of Syracuse for 2004 E. Genesee Street, the former **Jewish War Veterans Home** and **Babcock Shattuck House**. This National Register-listed long-vacant property is situated at a gateway to the Westcott/University Neighborhood within walking distance from shops and restaurants, on a major bus route, with onsite parking, and along a principal corridor connecting the City with its eastern suburbs. As this project progresses, UNPA plans to commit some of our own funds as collateral for loans from the Preservation League of New York State and other sources to restore and renovate this iconic property. Our proposal is to develop four owner-occupied condominium units in a two-phased process. This property will have features no other existing condo has to offer. We also recognize this project as a unique opportunity to use historic preservation incentives, especially NYS Historic Preservation Tax Credits, for such a venture.



UNPA

UNIVERSITY NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The UNPA Board of Directors is proud to report we have maintained an active 19-member Board since 2001.

<u>Member since --</u>	<u>Occupation --</u>
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Officers (Residents):

Eric Greenfield, President	2004	Research Forester - US Forest Service
Joseph Russo, Vice President	2008	Economic Development Manager - National Grid
David Michel, Secretary	1989	Retired from City of Syracuse
Sonnet Loftus, Treasurer	2007	Financial Consultant - Michael Roberts Associates

Resident Members:

Misty Aue	2008	Appeals Rep. - National Government Services
Christine Capella-Peters	1989-91, 1995	Representative – NY State Historic Preservation Office
Patrick VanBeveren	2007	Supervisor of Physical Therapy - St. Camillus Rehab Center
Susan Wetzel	2000	Food Service Manager - LeMoyne College
Tanya Johnson-Ruffin	2010	Program Manager - Community Folk Art Gallery
Christopher Davis	2010	Education Services Coordinator – Enable
Rebecca Shaffer-Mannion	2011	Librarian – Fayetteville Free Library
Jasmine McNeally	2011	Assistant Professor – Syracuse University/Newhouse School of Communications
Caeli Sullivan	2011	Assistant Communications Director – Onondaga County Executive's Office

At-Large Members:

Andrew Besemer, Resident	2002	Real Estate Broker - Gallinger / Realty USA
Ana Fernandez, Resident	2011	Associate Director of Administration, Syracuse Center of Excellence
Darin Yoder, Resident	2011	Executive Director – Connections of Central New York
Tim Rice	1995	Community Advocate

Ex-Officio Members:

Luke Dougherty	2010	Planner, City of Syracuse, Department of Neighborhood & Business Development
Kathryn "Kate" Hammer, Resident	2011	Community Relations Associate, Syracuse University, Office of Government & Community Relations