



UNIVERSITY NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION

2012 ANNUAL REPORT

"We like living near our workplace and being an active part of our neighborhood and community. We want to form close, local relationships and make our neighborhood a better place. UNPA's grant program will help us afford the down payment on our first house! Thank you."

E. Bodnaruk

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 25 buyers who participated in the FY 2011-2012 **University Neighborhood Homebuyers Assistance Program**:

- 72% were first time homebuyers
- 48% are SU/College of Forestry/Upstate Medical faculty and/or staff
- 100% agree that the neighborhood is the perfect location for proximity to schools, parks & cultural attractions
- 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 18 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. In Round V, UNPA invested \$30,000 in UNSAAC allocations to assist HHQ in closing 17 additional loans. This remains a strong and well-received program.

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.

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 presenting action strategies to the community 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 has committed some of our own funds 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. Exterior work is scheduled to begin by Early Spring, 2013.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The UNPA Board of Directors is proud to report we have maintained an active 17-member Board since 2001.

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

Joseph Russo, President	2008	Economic Development Manager - National Grid
David Michel, Vice President	1989	Retired from City of Syracuse
Sonnet Loftus, Treasurer	2007	Financial Consultant - Michael Roberts Associates
Ana Fernandez, Secretary	2011	Associate Director of Administration, Syracuse Center of Excellence

Resident Members:

Christine Capella-Peters	1989-91, 1995	Representative – NY State Historic Preservation Office
Eric Greenfield, President	2004	Research Forester - US Forest Service
Tanya Johnson-Ruffin	2010	Program Manager - Community Folk Art Gallery
Christopher Davis	2010	Education Services Coordinator – Enable
Jasmine McNeally	2011	Assistant Professor – Syracuse University/Newhouse School of Communications
Brad Hunt	2012	Attorney- Mackenzie Hughes

At-Large Members:

Tim Rice	1995	Community Advocate
Patrick VanBeveren	2007	Supervisor of Physical Therapy - St. Camillus Rehab Center
Khristopher Dodson	2012	Communications & Program Manager- Syracuse CoE

Ex-Officio Members:

Eric Persons, Resident	2012	Associate Vice President, Syracuse University, Office of Government & Community Relations
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