



**B'nai B'rith  
Senior Housing  
Network**



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# SENIORITY REPORT

## Inform

We want to do our best to stay in touch with you. Please remember to send pictures and updates on the events in your building!

## Sign Up

Reading the Seniority Report is a great way to stay informed on what we are doing here at CSS as well as having a pulse on aging in general. To sign up for this resource simply [Click Here](#)

## Contribute

Want to contribute to the next issue of Seniority Report? Email us your own story or suggestions at: [seniorservice@bnaibrith.org](mailto:seniorservice@bnaibrith.org)

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EDITOR: Breana Clark



## 2018 Managers and Service Coordinators meeting in San Antonio

*By Janel Doughten*

The B'nai B'rith Managers and Service Coordinators training meeting will take place June 20 – 22, 2018, at the Hotel Valencia Riverwalk in San Antonio, Texas. We are working hard to provide sessions that address the issues and needs identified in your building. I want to especially thank those who have provided feedback in post-meeting evaluations and surveys by email.

Topics to be covered at this year's meeting will include: Management and Occupancy Reports (MORs), a Congressional Update, Dealing with Difficult Residents and Residents' Mental Health Issues, Working with Adult Protective Services (APS), Avoiding Staff Burnout, a Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Update, Board Training Overview and Harassment Policies.

B'nai B'rith strongly encourages on-site building management, service coordinators and management agents to attend our annual training conference. We look forward to seeing the Center for Senior Services network of managers and service coordinators in June in San Antonio! Notice for the meeting and hotel has been sent via e-mail, for more information contact Janel Doughten at: [jdoughten@bnaibrith.org](mailto:jdoughten@bnaibrith.org).



## A Note From the Chair

By Seth Riklin

I want to thank our vice chair, Abbie, for writing our last column. I hope that her energy and passion for the senior housing work we do becomes infectious for all of us. I hope this edition finds you and your loved ones all healthy, happy and enjoying spring, Pesach, and the Easter season.

With the change of season, it is likely that all your buildings are busy cleaning up from the winter and perhaps refreshing your landscaping and physical plants. Last week, I had the pleasure of visiting one of our most unique

buildings in our B'nai B'rith senior housing family. Pasadena Interfaith Manor is unique in that it was built and operates as a partnership between the local Presbyterian Church, The Knights of Columbus and B'nai B'rith. The three religious based groups have harmoniously operated this project for more than 30 years. With all the divisions in our society today, their team work gives me hope for our country's future.

I was there representing all of you as Rep. Gene Green (D-Texas) came to visit and held a town hall meeting with our residents. Green has long been a friend of the Section 202 program and supportive of Pasadena Interfaith Manor and B'nai B'rith. The Congressman toured the property and visited the apartment of one of our residents, who discussed her experience at B'nai B'rith Perlman Camp with him. He diligently listened to our residents and offered his office's help to many of the residents to help them resolve their issues with Medicare, Medicaid, immigration and other problems with the federal and state government. I want to thank B'nai B'rith Assistant Director for Aging Policy Evan Carmen for his efforts in arranging this important visit.

I want to share with you that I have been spending a lot of my time the past few weeks working on the recapitalization of our building in the Bronx, with B'nai B'rith Director of the Center for Senior Services Mark Olshan, Senior Vice President Marvin Siflinger, and President of the B'nai B'rith House Board of Directors Marty Adelstein. Thanks to their tireless work, we are close to finishing the financing

and beginning the extensive renovations. Like many of our buildings, the property has aged in place like many of our residents. B'nai B'rith has been able to bring in a development partner to aid in the refinance and the management going forward. The Adelstein Family- Project H.O.P.E. B'nai B'rith House will soon be ready to provide brand new apartments to countless seniors for many years to come. If you think we may be able to help make your buildings' future more secure, please feel free to reach out to me, Mark or Marvin.

Finally, I was honored to be asked by B'nai B'rith President Gary Saltzman to serve on a Blue Ribbon committee to address the future of the organization. We have made a lot of progress in discussing solutions and putting together a host of recommendations for the Executive Board to discuss at their meeting in April. With the adoption of many of the recommendations from the committee, the future of B'nai B'rith and our senior housing will continue to be bright well into the future.

Additionally my membership on this committee and my time as a member of the Senior Housing Committee has moved me to run for president of B'nai B'rith International. This is not a decision I made alone or in haste, as the job would have great demands on me and my family. We have always worked on the Senior Housing Committee to help all our buildings to continue to run efficiently as well-run businesses. I hope to improve the fundraising and operations of B'nai B'rith International to strengthen its financial condition and ensure a long, healthy life for the organization. Of course, I would appreciate all of your support in this new endeavor.

Together, I hope we can continue to share ideas and best practices, as we look for new ways to support the Boards and Management of all our buildings in the Network.

Be Well,  
Seth

## RESOURCES

### Social Security Administration: Your Retirement Checklist

<https://bit.ly/2lrz6eS>

### Repealing Net Neutrality Has Negative Effects on Older Americans

By Evan Carmen

<https://bit.ly/2q42FMI>

### The 2020 Census Will Affect Low-Income Seniors

By Evan Carmen

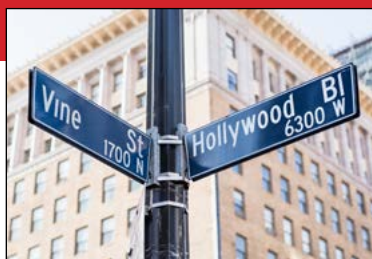
<https://bit.ly/2q5bMMz>

## SAVE THE DATE

### B'nai B'rith Conference on Senior Housing

Oct. 28 – 30, 2018

Hollywood, California







# ON THE HILL

By *Evan Carmen*



First let me thank everyone for their advocacy efforts as we try to educate members of Congress on the importance of affordable housing for seniors. Whether it's working with your residents to write their elected representatives or providing us with statistics about your buildings, all this work goes a long way to ensure that Congress understands the importance housing plays for low-income seniors.

As always, I look forward to seeing everyone during the Managers & Service Coordinators meeting in June. In the meantime, if anyone has any questions about policy or what's going on in Washington, D.C., please feel free to reach out to any of us in the D.C. office.

## **B'nai B'rith Advocates for Section 202 Funding from Congress**

B'nai B'rith continues to work with the American Association of Service Coordinators (AASC) in advocating to Congress on behalf of low-income seniors. We have talked about the importance of affordable housing in relation to the Fiscal Year 18 & 19 Budget, Medicaid, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Supplemental Security Income and so much more. We met with staff members from Sens. Ben Cardin (D-Md.), Tammy Duckworth (D-Wis.), Bob Menendez (D-N.J.),

Richard Shelby (R-Ala.), Roy Blunt (R-Mo.), John Boozman (R-Ark.), Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), Dick Durbin (D-Ill.), Chris Coons (D-Del.) and Chris Murphy (D-Conn.) as well as Reps. Donald Norcross (D-N.J.), Gene Green (D-Texas), Charlie Dent (R-Pa.), Katherine Clark (D-Mass.) and Matt Cartwright (D-Pa.) and senior staff of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation Housing and Urban Development.

We are pleased that Congress recently passed legislation to sufficiently fund Section 202 buildings

and service coordinators for the rest of the fiscal year. In addition, the legislation increases states' allocation of funding for the Low Income Housing Credit (LIHTC) and provides additional funding for the Section 202 capital advance program.

While we are disappointed with the White House's Fiscal Year 19 Budget, we are optimistic that Congress will fully fund Section 202 buildings for Fiscal Year 19. As always, B'nai B'rith will continue to advocate for low-income seniors and Section 202 housing.

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**LEFT:** Pasadena Interfaith Manor staff and volunteers on a building tour with Rep. Gene Green during a visit from the Member of Congress. (L-R) Pasadena Interfaith Manor Management Agent, Phyllis Davis, Onsite Manager, Mike Garcia, Rep. Gene Green (D-Texas), Chair of B'nai B'rith Senior Housing, Seth Riklin, and Mort Peltzman, member of the Board of Directors.



**RIGHT:** Rep. Gene Green addresses Pasadena Interfaith Manor residents during a Q & A session.

## RESIDENT EXTRAORDINAIRE

### Donna Evans, B'nai B'rith House, Reading, Pennsylvania

By Evan Carmen and Janel Doughten

Donna Evans has called the B'nai B'rith House in Reading, Pennsylvania “home” for the past eight years. When she initially toured the building, she knew this was where she wanted to live.

A valuable member of the B'nai B'rith family, Donna volunteers in the building at every opportunity. One of her favorite programs is Family First, an organization which brings speakers to B'nai B'rith House to educate the residents on a myriad of issues, including health care and senior scam awareness. Since a hot meal is included for all participants, Donna is always there to help set up and make sure everyone is served. She is an integral part in building community by helping put on events like

the carnival last fall, and is always a warm and friendly face for new residents.

Donna recalled the welcoming residents she encountered upon moving into the building, and always wants to return the favor!

Donna has attended the B'nai B'rith Resident Leadership Retreat twice. Having learned a lot at both retreats, she says the workshops have helped her to become a leader in her building.

While life at B'nai B'rith House



centers on activities like arts & crafts, exercise classes, board games and even Wii bowling, Donna also enjoys when staff from her elected representative's offices visit B'nai B'rith House and listen to residents' concerns and provide valuable updates on issues that impact seniors.

Reflecting on her residency at the building thus far, Donna shared, “It gives me more of a purpose in life, living in a building where there are a lot of people around. It gives me a sense of family being here. It's different than living in a home, I just feel secure. I feel like I have extended family. You couldn't ask for a better staff.”

## BUILDING HIGHLIGHT

### Goldberg B'nai B'rith Towers, Houston, Texas

By Breana Clark

Recently, the staff of Goldberg B'nai B'rith Towers was awarded with the Excellence in the Workplace Award, an achievement granted by Leading Age. Phyllis Davis, Goldberg Tower's management agent, nominated the deserving staff. The LeadingAge Annual Awards honor LeadingAge member organizations and individuals that embody excellence in nonprofit aging services. Leading Age states, “award recipients make outstanding contributions to our field and represent models of leadership, quality and innovation.”

When asked about Davis' motivation to nominate her staff for the award, she shared her pride over the commitment of her team and their ability to endure tough times together: “Our Mission is to make sure we never lose sight that we do this work to maintain an excellent home environment for the residents and maintain this property to the highest standards. This staff came up with our motto while we were sitting at a lunch training one day: Doing the impossible is normal here. We take pride in that because we go above and beyond with the residents in mind.”

Amidst their hard work, and quarterly trainings provided by BHC Property Management, the staff at Goldberg Towers

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The Goldberg B'nai B'rith Towers team, recipients of the Leading Age Excellence in the Workplace Award. Back Row (L-R): Abel Rodriguez, Maintenance, Clotilde Cloter, Maintenance, Angie Futch, Manager, Marcy Sobolewski, Asset Manager and Onsite Project Monitor, and Jason Erickson, Maintenance. Front Row (L-R): Tulin Bennett, Administrative Assistant, Israel Escobar, Janitorial, Lulu Rodriguez, Janitorial, Michael Kahlenberg, Service Coordinator, Janet Pinner, Health Coordinator, Sherry Wright, Service Coordinator. Not Pictured: Andretta Foster, Onsite Project Monitor.

## On The Hill

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### Congressman Green visits Pasadena Interfaith Manor

B'nai B'rith was very excited to host Rep. Gene Green (D-Texas) at Pasadena Interfaith Manor in March. Green's tour of the building included a resident's apartment, the library, resident computer room, community room, resident grocery store and the building's grounds which include a dog park. As always, it's great to be able to show members of Congress how wonderful our sponsored Section 202 buildings are for low-income seniors, and the critical role they play in the community.

After the tour, Green spoke with residents about a variety of senior issues such as affordable housing, Social Security, health care, nutrition and Supplemental Security Income. Residents were able to explain to their elected representative how important these federal programs are in their life.

Green said, "I'm delighted to have had the opportunity to visit a facility like the Pasadena Interfaith Manor that provides crucial services and a supply of affordable, comfortable housing to the 29th District. I commend B'nai B'rith's diligent work in advancing Section 202 housing, a vital program for many low-income seniors in the 29th District of Texas, and I share their goal of doing all we can to protect federal funding for Section 202."



**LEFT:** Marta Gabriel, regional manager of the Lehigh Valley area of Sen. Pat Toomey's office, with residents of B'nai B'rith House in Reading, Pennsylvania during her visit to the building.



**RIGHT:** B'nai B'rith Homecrest House Executive Director, Center for Senior Services staff, residents, and special guest, Ken Reichard, following a Q & A led by residents. (L-R) Executive Director, Carol Cohn-Wolfe, B'nai B'rith associate director for the Center for Senior Services, Janel Doughnten, Homecrest House residents, Selma Canner, Yvette Teman, Emily (Trudy) Addison, and Michael (Mike) Maiman, The Assistant to Sen. Ben Cardin (D-Md.), Ken Reichard, and Homecrest House resident, Judith Grominger.

### Senate Staffers Take Tours of Section 202 Building

We are pleased to report that Marta Gabriel, regional manager of the Lehigh Valley area of Sen. Pat Toomey's office, visited B'nai B'rith House in Reading, Pennsylvania. Gabriel toured the sunroom, common room, social hall, library and two model apartments. She also visited with about 20 residents during her tour. They discussed seniors' issues such as Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security and rental subsidies.

Gabriel commented, "On behalf of Senator Toomey, I enjoyed the opportunity to tour B'nai B'rith in Reading and to learn more about the services provided to seniors. I also talked with many of the residents who said they really enjoyed living there and

appreciated the support provided by B'nai B'rith."

Lastly, The Assistant to the Sen. Ben Cardin (D-Md.), Ken Reichard, visited B'nai B'rith Homecrest House in Silver Spring, Maryland. Reichard spent time talking with residents of the building about how much they enjoy living at Homecrest House, the amenities that the building offers and how vital Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) rental subsidies are to them. HUD rental subsidies allow residents to afford their apartments at Homecrest House. After speaking with residents, Reichard toured the property and saw a model apartment, the salon, gym, library, dining room and computer room.

## Goldberg B'nai B'rith Towers, Houston, Texas

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benefit from an annual creative training session. Accordingly, the team recently participated in a glass blowing class, "It was amazing to see the staff cheering for each other and complimenting each other on their craft. This [type of outing] has truly helped us create a team that works together," Davis said.

Davis concluded, "I couldn't be happier for them. I am so very proud of

the team we have."

In May, Angie Futch, on-site manager at Goldberg Towers, will be introduced by Davis at Leading Age's conference and will formally receive the award on behalf of the Goldberg Towers team and alongside other accomplished recipients in the field. To view the acceptance video featuring Goldberg Towers staff, visit: <https://bit.ly/2GV2Zat>.

## WHAT'S GOING ON AT B'NAI B'RITH?

**June 20-22, 2018**

Managers & Service Coordinators Meeting, San Antonio, TX.

**Oct 28-30, 2018**

Annual Conference on Senior Housing, North Hollywood, Calif.



## Are the Diverse Languages Spoken in your Building a Challenge or an Opportunity?

By Janel Doughten

A concern we hear most from board members, building staff and even residents themselves is, “how do we bring people together when they do not speak a common language — English?” It may seem impossible, but understanding some of the reasons why not all residents speak English can help overcome the challenge.

It’s important to understand that some residents may speak and/or understand some English, but are not comfortable speaking it to native English speakers. It can be embarrassing. English is a hard language to learn, and not everyone can pick up other languages so easily. Many Americans have the tendency to speak very fast and loudly, which can make it very difficult to understand one another, especially in a group setting. Additionally, when considering an aging population, a resident may have a hearing aid. This can already make it very hard to be part of group activities and especially if someone is not confident speaking

English. Some residents have never had the opportunity to learn English, and may have not lived in the U.S. long enough to pick it up. While many buildings have staff interpreters for official management business and programming, for daily interactions with each other, residents are often on their own.

ESL (English as a Second Language) classes are helpful to those learning conversational English, but the key is to converse with native speakers. Residents that are native English speakers should be part of the ESL classes; there may even be residents that can run the class.

What I would encourage you to think about is bringing people together who speak different languages by holding conversational classes in other languages. Residents that are native speakers in another language — Spanish, Russian, Portuguese, Mandarin Chinese, Navajo to name a few, can teach conversational classes in those languages for all residents. Start out with “Hello” and “My Name is...,” and advance to basic

conversational sentences. This can help some residents realize that learning another language is not so easy, as well as instill some empathy for their fellow residents. Not to mention the value of continuing education and a friendly “hello” from your neighbor.

Another great way to bring people that speak different languages together is by learning about their culture. Whether someone speaks English, Spanish, Russian or many other languages, there are many countries and cultures that span those languages. Hold cultural pot-lucks and presentations about the different cultures. Even for those who are American born, realizing just how diverse English speakers are can make it easier to accept the diversity of non-English speakers.

Treating each other with respect and learning about each other in an approachable and accepting manner can help create a feeling of community in the buildings.

### WHAT HAS STAFF BEEN UP TO?

In February, Evan Carmen, B’nai B’rith assistant director for aging policy, visited B’nai B’rith House in Reading, Pennsylvania. Evan and Christine Haraschack, property manager of the building, welcomed Marta Gabriel, regional manager for Sen. Pat Toomey’s office, covering the Lehigh Valley, to the building. Evan and Christine gave Marta a tour of the property and arranged for her to speak with residents of the building.

Prior to the Omnibus spending bill being passed at the end of March, and in response to the administration’s budget proposal, the Center for Senior Services team spent a significant amount of time advocating on behalf of B’nai

B’rith buildings on Capitol Hill. We were pleased to see that Congress passed, and the president signed, a bill that sufficiently funds Section 202 rental subsidies, as well as other Federal programs that seniors rely on. We are confident that grassroots advocacy and constituent feedback were behind this major win.

In late April, the Center for Senior Services team held a meeting with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to discuss the 2018 Omnibus bill and its implications for senior housing. The spending bill for Fiscal Year 2018 included \$105 million for the Section 202 Capital Advance program.



B’nai B’rith Homecrest House resident, Trudy Addison, and B’nai B’rith associate director for the Center for Senior Services, Janel Doughten, following a tour of the building for congressional staff.