



### A MESSAGE FROM SKYLAR STEPHENS- 2021 OHAC Scholarship Recipient



-Skylar Stephens  
Xavier University of Louisiana '25  
Mass Communication Major

Based on studies of higher education, there are about 16 million undergraduate students in the United States and Black people only make up about 12%. At a young age, I knew that I would join this percentage. It was only a matter of how I would do it.

Education has always been important to me, and it has showed in my hard work. I am a first-generation college student who has always dreamed of improving my economic situation. Education and scholarship were the key to doing so.

On paper, I was the perfect student for college but cost of higher education is a barrier for many students, like myself. Fortunately, I received the Ohio Housing Authority Conference Scholarship and was able to offset the cost.

Today, I attend one of the best HBCUs in the nation and am on track to graduate a year early. I have had the opportunity to intern with multiple organizations and join many clubs. I am even President of my campus' chapter of Public Relations Student Society of America, all while making Dean's List.

My success in college wouldn't be possible without the funding to do so. Education is important to the social mobility of minorities, but cost prevents great minds from making it to university. Scholarships like the OHAC Scholarship make success stories like mine possible.

### SMHA WILL BE CLOSED ON FRIDAY, APRIL 7, 2023

#### DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

As we enter into the Spring months, I am excited to see what the warmer months bring. There are several things that bring me a lot of excitement.

- I recently visited Gage Gardens which is one of our public housing communities in Canton. The recent renovation upgraded the outside and inside of the units with over \$4.2 million in rehab. We are excited we could improve this site for you our residents who live there.
- We are currently rehabbing our Pike and Mahoning Public Housing site in Alliance. When complete, the authority will have spent \$4.6 million in rehab cost
- Cherry Turner Towers in Canton is receiving several million in rehab. This is being done by bringing outside investors who are making all of the rehab possible.
- I am mindful that so many of our sites need more maintenance and rehab. Unfortunately, HUD does not fund us all that we need to complete needed repairs and renovations. We take seriously providing our residents with good living environments. I will work with our team and bring as many resources as possible to help rehab/repair/improve our properties
- The authority is making a big push to issue more vouchers and fill vacant public housing units as quickly as possible. We understand these are important community resources and we want to maximize them as much as possible.

I would encourage you to join our various resident councils and get involved in your community. We need to hear from you. Our residents and program participants are the sole reason we exist as a housing authority and our mission is to serve you and our community.

Josh Crites (he/him/his)  
Executive Director  
Stark Metropolitan Housing Authority

**College Scholarships Available for High School Seniors and Adult Students**



**The Albert H. McIlwain Memorial Scholarship Fund**

- The amount granted is \$500.
- Applicant must be a resident of Stark County residing in SMHA public housing or housing subsidized by SMHA (Section 8 Voucher)
- Minimum scholastic requirements for consideration is a 2.5 GPA
- Deadline for applying is May 19, 2023

For questions about scholarship requirements and to apply, please contact Resident Services Coordinator, Tenicia James at 330.454.8051 Ext. 309 or at [tjames@starkmha.org](mailto:tjames@starkmha.org)

**Summer Jobs Available at SMHA Sites**



SMHA is hiring summer lunch workers and van drivers for the summer lunch program. The lunch sites will be at Jackson Sherrick, Linwood Acres, Ellisdale, Creeks Crossing, and Mahoning Manor. There will be an information session to share more about the job requirements, job sites, and timeline. **The information session will be held on April 6, 2023, 1:30 PM-2:30 PM at 400 Tuacarawas St. E, Canton, OH 44702.** If you are interested in applying for summer employment, **contact Resident Services at (330) 454-8051 ext. 309 or [rs@starkmha.org](mailto:rs@starkmha.org) to sign up for the information session.**

**JURISDICTION WIDE  
RESIDENT COUNCIL**  
It's time to vote for your  
**Jurisdiction Wide Resident  
Council Officers at the**

**JURISDICTION WIDE RESIDENT  
COUNCIL MEETING**

(SPECIAL MEETING DATE)  
**TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 2023 AT 6:00PM**

**400 E. TUSCARAWAS STREET**

Please contact Diana Hickman at  
(330) 413-3251 to reserve your space and  
secure transportation by 4/11/23

**ACTIVE RESIDENT COUNCILS :**  
Plaza Terrace Apartments- Canton  
Next meeting **APRIL 11TH at 5PM**

**www.StarkHelpCentral.com**  
For connections to food, rental, utilities, health care, and other resources.  
**FREE, accessible 24/7/365 and completely confidential.**

**Pop-up Food Pantry at Jackson Sherrick**



The Akron-Canton Food Bank is partnering with SMHA to provide a pop-up food pantry at Jackson Sherrick Homes. **The pop-up pantry visit is scheduled for Wednesday, April 12th, at 12:00 PM-2:00 PM.** If you have any questions about the pop-up pantry, call (330) 535-6900.

**DISCOUNT MEMBERSHIP**

Resident Services provides all residents of SMHA with YMCA vouchers that provide discounted annual membership pricing. YMCA locations also offer yearly, semi-annual, and quarterly payment options for SMHA residents dependent upon the location. **For a YMCA Voucher Application, call (330) 454-8051 ext 309.**



**RESIDENT SERVICES**  
(330) 454-8051

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**Tenicia James**  
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**Marilynn Schoen**  
Resident Opportunity Self-Sufficiency  
Service Coord.-Plaza Terrace  
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*social media* /StarkMHA @StarkMHA @StarkMHA

**Unable to visit Resident Services  
during monthly on-site office hours?**

Call to schedule an appointment or  
discuss service/program needs with a  
member of our team.

**(330) 454-8051 ext 309**

**Cleveland Clinic  
Mercy Hospital**

**Cancer Screening and Prevention Event**

Tuesday, April 11, 2023  
9 a.m. – 3 p.m. | Breast Cancer Screenings  
5 – 8 p.m. | Oral and Skin Cancer Screenings

**Mercy Hospital Health Center, St. Paul Square**  
1450 Superior Ave. NE NW  
Canton, OH 44705

Join all in honor of National Health Month, Mercy Hospital is offering free cancer screenings and other preventative health services to the community. All are welcome.

- Breast, head, and oral skin cancer screenings
- Pap smears and skin cancer checks
- Colon and prostate cancer screenings
- Free gift items
- Free gift baskets and other prizes

Registration required by April 6. Call 330-489-1333.

Sponsored:  
Canton Darlene Bass, MSN, LSW, Diversity Social Worker, BaseDiversity at 330-489-1102

**Yes! You Can Afford A VACATION**

Get expert tips and help to plan your next trip from a professional travel planner!

Date: **Friday April 14th**  
Time: **12p - 1:30pm**  
Location: **SMHA Central Office**  
Questions? [ssweat@starkmha.org](mailto:ssweat@starkmha.org) [tjames@starkmha.org](mailto:tjames@starkmha.org)

**Royal Caribbean**

**Disney World**

**Kalahari Waterpark**

**Vignia & Myrtle Beach**

