



Maximum Accessible Housing of Ohio

Winter 2009/10 Newsletter

11607 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44106

www.mahohio.org

MAHO Highlights

The past year has been busy for Maximum Accessible Housing of Ohio (formerly known as Maximum Independent Living). Here are some highlights:

- The Accessible Housing Resource Center presented the “Achieving Accessible Housing” seminar series to over 100 housing professionals, consumers, and advocates. The attendees learned how to make homes visitable, universally designed, and fully accessible.
- Executive Director Steve Hansler served on the Ohio Housing Finance Agency’s committee to develop the state housing plan that provides specific recommendations for state policy makers. Steve was the chair of the accessible housing sub-committee.
- New MAHO staff members include Office Manager Susan Ritter, Superintendents Art Hood at Sheffield Vistas and Nicholas Slaninka at Lake Vistas. Beth Glas was promoted to Assistant Executive Director.
- MAHO’s first and only Executive Director, Steve Hansler celebrated his 25th year of providing accessible housing and advocating on behalf of people with mobility disabilities.

Apply for a Vistas Apartment

Would you or someone you know benefit from living in a fully accessible and affordable MAHO apartment? For an application, call 216.231.7221 or visit www.mahohio.org.

MAHO Celebrates Vistas’ Anniversaries



Joe Davis and Nancy Palazzo peek at the gift bags that each Pine Tree Vistas tenant received.

In 1981, Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry recognized the need for accessible and affordable housing in the Cleveland area. They helped create Maximum Independent Living, which, in 1984, opened Circle Vistas Apartments, Cleveland’s first fully accessible apartment building specifically for people with mobility disabilities. In 1989, a second location, Pine Tree Vistas, opened in Parma.

Since opening, these communities (as well as our three communities that opened in the 1990s) have provided an accessible and affordable home

to hundreds of people with mobility disabilities, allowing them to live as independently as possible. Barbara Miterko moved into Pine Tree Vistas in 1989 and said she is grateful for her accessible home: “Without this building, many of us would have to live in a nursing home and couldn’t be independent.”

Circle Vistas tenants, Board members, and staff celebrated its 25th Anniversary with a reception on November 3. Guests had the opportunity to look at the latest drawings for the planned *New Circle Vistas* (see story on next page). Four current Circle Vistas tenants were honored for being among its first residents; two other tenants were honored for living there for over 20 years.

Pine Tree Vistas had a 20th Anniversary Celebration on June 3: tenants joined Board members and staff at a barbecue picnic. Tenants signed a guest book—the same book used at Pine Tree Vistas’ grand opening in 1989. Barbara and four of her neighbors were honored at the celebration for being among the first residents and still living at Pine Tree Vistas today.



Pine Tree Vistas tenants and MAHO Board enjoy the barbecue picnic.



Residents of Circle Vistas show off their new MAHO reusable totes at the reception.



Designs for New Circle Vistas Continue to Progress

The New Circle Vistas project will provide state-of-the-art accessible housing for its mobility-disabled residents. As MAHO looks forward to a 2010 construction start, the designs for a fully accessible, green building have continued to progress.

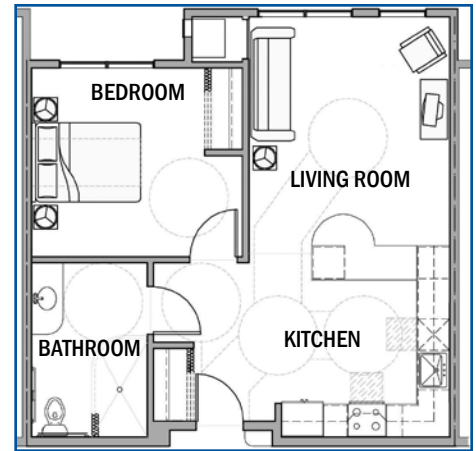
In January 2009, the plans were approved by both the University Circle Design Review Committee and the City of Cleveland Planning Commission. The designs developed by City Architecture were very well received. The next steps in the design process are the details that make this project a model of accessible housing.

To achieve this model of accessibility, MAHO staff and the architects have consulted with Circle Vistas' tenants for input. In addition to showing them



Steve Hansler observes Kathy Siska and Louise Wolfcale test the accessibility of the pathway from the kitchen to living room.

the plans, the exact specifications of the unit layouts were taped out on the floor of the community room for tenants to test the usability of the

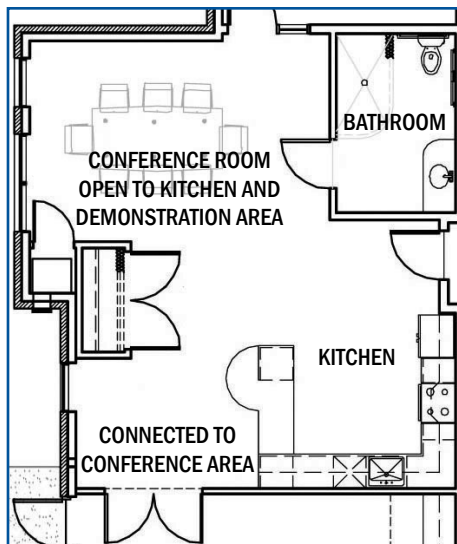


The unit designs are very accessible, with five-foot turning radii and minimal built-in items to keep the space open and flexible.

designs. Accessibility experts have also been consulted to ensure that New Circle Vistas will truly be a model of accessible housing.

Capital Campaign

The Capital Campaign has received over \$280,000 in foundation grants, donations, and pledges to date. These contributions will fund accessibility improvements and green upgrades. Donors who give \$1,000 or more will be recognized on a plaque dedicated at the grand opening of New Circle Vistas. **Your donation will make this building truly maximum accessible housing.** Please send your tax-deductible donation today in the enclosed envelope or donate online at www.mahohio.org.



A Home for the Accessible Housing Resource Center

Another exciting part of New Circle Vistas is the Training Suite, part of an actual home for MAHO's Accessible Housing Resource Center. The suite will adjoin the conference space and be a place to provide hands-on training on accessible housing, universal design, and visitability. This much-needed training will help housing professionals, advocates, and people with disabilities access the information they need to provide and obtain accessible housing.

MAHO's Executive Director Receives 2009 Judson Smart Living Award

By *The Lutheran Messenger*
Reprinted with permission

Judson at University Circle's 2009 Smart Living Awards celebrate the movers, shakers and unsung heroes of all ages dedicated to the dynamic atmosphere of University Circle—Northeast Ohio's cultural hub. The award recipients are recognized across five categories: Arts; Education; Healthcare; Philanthropy and Volunteerism. Judson culled nominations from its fellow University Circle institutions and the public.

Healthcare winner Steve Hansler celebrated his 25th anniversary with Maximum Accessible Housing of Ohio (MAHO) and Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry in May, and has been a member of Hope, Cleveland Heights for 25 years.

The few steps leading to a home's front door can be a painful obstacle

for people with mobility issues. Housing that is affordable often is not accessible, but Steve Hansler has helped change that reality as CEO of MAHO. "Someone may have all the abilities in the world, but if they don't have the ability to get out of their house and go to work or school, they are stuck," Hansler says.

MAHO has built and manages five independent accessible living communities for individuals with mobility issues. Its first facility in University Circle houses 50 people. MAHO is in the process of finalizing funding to build a new building next door to its current location.

Hansler interviews every person who applies to live in the facilities—he has watched residents move in and grow as individuals who work and participate in the community. University Circle is a prime location for the MAHO building, Hansler



Executive Director Steve Hansler

says. Tenants take full advantage of the area's cultural opportunities and world-class medical facilities.

Concurrently, MAHO plays an equally important role in enriching the diversity of University Circle, Hansler says. "When people talk about diversity, they often don't think about including people with disabilities," he relates. "But by providing a place in University Circle for people with disabilities to live, this population becomes part of the fabric of the community."

The awards program, hosted by WCLV's Robert Conrad, was held on Thursday, April 16 at Judson Manor.

Visit us Online at the New mahohio.org!

The MAHO Web site has been redesigned to make it even easier to apply for an apartment, get updates on the Accessible Housing Resource Center, and contribute to MAHO. Visit www.mahohio.org today to:

- Get the most up-to-date plans and information on New Circle Vistas
- View pictures of the Vistas apartment communities and accessibility features
- Download a Vistas application, MAHO brochures, and archived newsletters
- Donate online to support accessible housing in Northeast Ohio
- Sign-up for MAHO's e-newsletter

More features and information—including videos and a tenant page—will be added in 2010.



MAHO Board of Trustees

Ann Russell, P.T., Ph.D., *President*
Thomas Meyer, *Vice-President*
Frank Anderson, *Secretary*
Scott G. Strawn, *Treasurer*
Kathy Cotman, *Past-President*

Renee Boykin
Jan Hollinger Jones, M.S., P.T.
Roger Lynch
Michael V. Palcisco, M.N.O.
Donna L. Prease
Mattie Shaw
Marcia Romano
Carol Fredrich, *Ex-Officio Trustee*

MAHO is looking for people interested in helping to meet the housing needs of people with mobility disabilities by serving as Board Members, Committee Members, or other Volunteers. To learn more about volunteering with MAHO, please visit www.mahohio.org, or contact Steve Hansler at 216.231.7221 or e-mail info@mahohio.org.



Maximum
Accessible
Housing of
Ohio

% **Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry**
1468 West 25th Street
Cleveland, OH 44113-3102



There's ordinary housing. There's accessible housing.
Then there's **maximum accessible housing.**



MISSION STATEMENT

Maximum Accessible Housing of Ohio's mission is to develop and/or facilitate options in housing for persons with physical disabilities.

Maximum Accessible Housing of Ohio (MAHO), a non-profit agency, fulfills its mission through two program areas. MAHO owns and operates the accessible and affordable **Vistas Apartment Communities** in Avon Lake, Sheffield Township, Mentor-on-the-Lake, Parma, and University Circle. Through the **Accessible Housing Resource Center**, MAHO provides information about and advocates for accessible housing. **For a Vistas application and more information, please call 216.231.7221 or visit our Web site at www.mahohio.org.**

Did you know that the majority of Northeast Ohio's current housing is not liveable for people with disabilities?

Maximum Accessible Housing of Ohio's Accessible Housing Resource Center (AHRC) is working to change that as a vital source of information on visitability, universal design, and accessibility. Through the AHRC, we can share our expertise in accessible housing in many ways:

- Educating housing professionals and consumers
- Advocating on a local and state-wide level to ensure that the need for accessible housing is addressed
- Providing information and referral on various disability issues
- Collaborating with other disability and housing organizations in the community

Your support is needed to continue these efforts and grow the AHRC. Please send your tax-deductible donation today in the enclosed envelope or donate online now at www.mahohio.org.