



# Helping people help themselves

news, views and success stories

## Homeless custodial fathers move into permanent housing



### *Families celebrate new beginnings at Camden Apartments*

Early this summer, 23 previously homeless families celebrated a new chapter in their lives, begun when they moved into the newly built Camden Apartments. A June open house featured singing, food, and words of encouragement from residents, funders, community and government leaders. A clear highlight of the day was the ribbon cutting on a playground built for the children who live in the complex by Faegre and Benson volunteers. (See photos on back page.)

After caring for his daughter while frequently moving from hotels to transitional housing, Anthony says Camden is a real home, in a real neighborhood, with a real community.

PPL and Emerge developed the building as partners. PPL now provides property and asset management. Emerge provide ongoing services to Camden residents, including housing support, individualized

counseling, family intervention and stability, job training assistance and parent education. Emerge is a nonprofit focused on building stronger communities through social enterprise and community development.

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# A community responds

**As we see a new bridge rising from the wreckage, and remember the many selfless individual acts during that horrible time, let us be inspired to address with equal vigor and purpose our quiet community tragedies.**



*An unimaginable tragedy has rocked our community. In the aftermath, thoughts turn to both our collective responsibilities as expressed through government action and what we as individuals can do.*

While there are questions about past decisions and policies, MnDOT will rebuild the I35W bridge with federal help. And the collapse will spur a stronger transportation investment policy — an unintended legacy from fellow citizens who were simply in the wrong place at the wrong time.

In terms of individual action, the Twin Cities has received national and international praise for how people responded with both strength and compassion. I'm proud to live here.

In the life of our community, other unfolding tragedies — spreading and deepening poverty, violence, and employment and educational disparities — aren't suddenly and unexpectedly thrust in front of us. They aren't by their nature subject to a spurt of 24/7 news coverage. They have been with us a long time, and their effects are wrenching to the lives of those affected and tear at the fabric of our community. These quiet tragedies also require renewed focus on collective and individual responses.

We live in an area known for its generosity, a fact reaffirmed through our response to the bridge collapse. On many measures of volunteerism and philanthropy, the Twin Cities leads the nation. But just as a freeway can't be rebuilt by individual initiative, we won't make as much headway confronting our intractable social and economic

challenges without a stronger collective will. In addition to giving our time and treasure, we must expect more of our public response.

I think it's fair to say that, during the last state legislative session, modest improvements were made in key areas like affordable housing, support of the working poor, and education. But so much more is needed. With enlightened leadership prompted by higher public expectations, we can do better.

As we see a new bridge rising from the wreckage, and remember the many selfless individual acts during that horrible time, let us be inspired to address with equal vigor and purpose our quiet community tragedies. We are always at our best when we help others help themselves toward a brighter future, whether through personal or government support. All of us are better off as a result. That is PPL's commitment, and we thank you for your support which makes our work possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Cramer', written in a cursive style.

**Steve Cramer**  
**PPL Executive Director**



# “We’re working on building a new America.

*It’s going to be built by men and women like those of you in this room who are dedicated to bringing the vision, the dream — whatever you want to call it — into reality. We have to give a blueprint. We are the next wave.”*

Dr. Calvin Butts, during keynote address at PPL’s 35 year anniversary celebration

“We’ve come to encourage each other in our work,” Dr. Calvin Butts told 700 PPL friends and supporters at PPL’s 35th anniversary celebration luncheon.

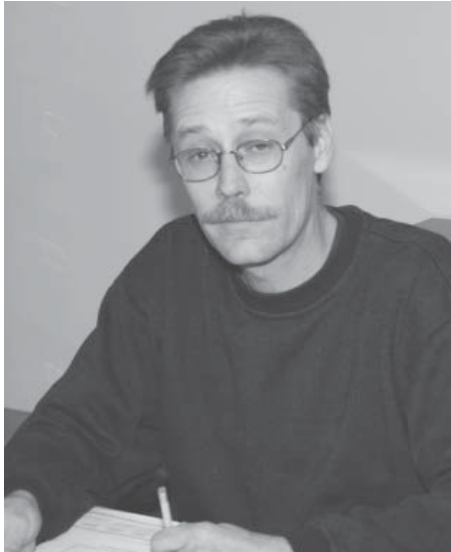
The pastor of The Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem delivered a high energy and inspiring keynote address at the Hyatt in downtown Minneapolis, on June 6, 2007.

Quoting pleas and directives made by poets, presidents and prophets over centuries, Dr. Butts drew out a common vision of a world where all people can succeed.

The Harlem leader is nationally known for his work promoting social justice, community building, and empowerment. In addition to his lively address, a 25-member gospel choir sang “Lean on Me,” and a video presented personal stories from participants and others accounting the many ways people help each other. Native American drumming closed the day’s event.



Dr. Calvin O. Butts is pastor of The Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem. He is also president of SUNY College at Old Westbury, and co-founder and current chair of Abyssinian Development Corporation, a comprehensive, community-based nonprofit organization, responsible for over \$500 million in housing and commercial development in Harlem.



# Honoring individual hard work and success

This June, 24 PPL participants were honored for their great strides toward self-sufficiency and community building during PPL's Recognition Awards celebration. For the 230 folks in attendance the feeling of celebration made it a lively time with much laughter and a few tears.

Also acknowledged at the event were Bob Eue, an outstanding volunteer, and U.S. Bank and Wells Fargo, two exceptional partner/donors. The dinner event featured remarks by awardees, a video presentation, live music, and a keynote address from Sandy Vargas, The Minneapolis Foundation President and CEO.

The awardees and their families came together over dinner with many PPL staff, friends, and supporters at Zuhrah Shrine Center. Each was presented with a certificate and cash award by the staff member who best knew him or her. A number of them also spoke, crediting their success to family, in some cases faith, and in many cases, the PPL's programs and the personal relationships they developed with PPL staff members.

## **Award Winners**

### **Self-sufficiency Award**

- Yolanda Grennette Smith*
- Hangatu Dhaye*
- Shamsa Omar*
- Yolanda Smith*
- Aleeshia Wiley*
- George Adamson*
- Ayan Farah*
- James K. David*
- Esau Meahyen*
- Suldana Nuno*
- Dyenese Martin*
- Cameron Taylor*
- Antoine Williams*
- Consuelo Matsen*
- Christina Scott*
- Christian Jimenez*
- Teresa Mullins*

### **Outstanding resident**

- Gayle Albee*
- Lydia Thompson*

### **Outstanding youth**

- Angel Ivy*
- Yordi Abera*
- Daren Martin*
- Asia Turner*
- Zakaria Wagad*

### **Outstanding Volunteer**

- Bob Eue*

### **Outstanding Partner & Donor**

- US Bank*
- Wells Fargo*

## **Thank you anniversary sponsors:**

Benfield, Inc., Phil Campbell and Stephanie Steel, CenterPoint Energy Minnegasco, General Mills Foundation, LISC Twin Cities, Marquette Financial Companies, MicroGrants, Target Foundation, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, Travelers Foundation, U.S. Bank, Valspar Foundation, Wells Fargo Bank, Western National Mutual Insurance Company

# mission moments

*Staff & participant experiences of success in daily life.*

## Stories of PPL Participant Award winners

*The three PPL participants profiled below were among 24 honored at an award ceremony in June. Although their stories are very different, each awardee has demonstrated courage, determination, a positive attitude and the willingness to work hard to achieve goals.*

**Cameron** entered PPL's Young Dads Supportive Housing Program without a home or a job, and he only sporadically saw his two children. His goal on entering the program was to change all these circumstances. In just a few months Cameron got a meaningful job. And since joining the program, his daughter has moved in with him and his son stays with him every weekend. — Award presented by Pat Morely, Program Coordinator,



**Cameron continues to work to become the person — and the father — he wants to be.**

Joyful and optimistic, **Hangatu** wears a brilliant smile despite the many challenges she has faced. Hangatu came to the U.S. with two of her five children as a refugee from

Ethiopia with virtually no English skills. As a first step toward success in her new country, she studied and became fluent in English. Following a training program, she secured a living-wage job and moved off public assistance. Hangatu worked hard to bring her husband to this country and is currently working with lawyers she met through PPL to secure visas for her other children, still in Africa. —Award presented by Tina Platt Wombacher, Connections to Work Program Manager



**Hangatu came to the US from Ethiopia and quickly learned English. She's working to get visas for her whole family.**

**George** (pictured opposite page) had no home when he began work at PPL Industries. Today he has an apartment, a good job, and is able to take care of his family. He works hard at every task and has done an exceptional job in a variety of assignments at Industries. He is currently the Payroll/Administration Supervisor. —Award presented by Doug Jewett, COO PPL Industries

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## Affordable Housing

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### Grain Elevator site in southeast Minneapolis to be revitalized with for-sale and rental housing

PPL and Cabrini Partnership will break ground on Van Cleve Development September 12. Partners on the project, the two agencies have planned a redesign for the Bunge grain elevators in southeast Minneapolis that will create an economically integrated area with opportunities for individuals who have experienced long-term homelessness to grow and succeed.

**The completed project will be PPL's largest to date, with 236 units: 85 rental and 151 for sale.**

Some work on the site has already begun; this spring, several circular concrete grain bins were removed. Four new buildings will include a mix of for-sale and for-rent units, including Habitat for Humanity townhomes. The “Head House” tower and a bank of grain bins will be converted to for-sale condos.

The first phase of this project is to build 35 units of rental housing, eight of which will be supportive housing. Cabrini Partnership, a non-profit supporting both transitional and permanent housing programs in Minneapolis, will provide service.

Cabrini and PPL worked closely with Southeast Como Improvement Association in developing this project.

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## Employment & Job Training

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### Cultural differences needn't make the work place a foreign place

In recent years, PPL has become an “agency of choice” for many in the area’s growing Somali population, in part as a result of adding native Somalis to the PPL. This year, PPL launched an employment and job training pilot program designed to have a substantive impact in the area of employment and work readiness for Somali residents.

The course addresses culturally specific employment barriers such as appropriate dress and perceptions of Muslims in the workplace, along with challenges faced by low-income job seekers regardless of ethnic or religious background. The first Somali class graduated in March, with ten students completing the course. When surveyed earlier this summer, all were either working, involved in an employment-related training program, or actively seeking a job.

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## Human Services

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### Expanded programs in Saint Paul make more one-to-one service possible

PPL has a growing presence in Saint Paul, with a housing portfolio now standing at 140 units and support services reaching many of our residents. This summer and fall our East Metro activities have been

expanded thanks to support from public and private sources.

- Our Saint Paul Young Fathers program, unique in the Twin Cities and possibly the only program of its kind in the nation, now provides 10 units of supportive housing for non-custodial fathers — up from four in previous years.
- A newly added Community Organizer for the Saint Paul area will plan and implement activities and community-building events that involve all

residents, linking them with each other and to the neighborhood around them.

- A new Youth Partnerships & Volunteer Coordinator for Saint Paul will establish a stronger Youth Development presence in the Selby-Dale neighborhood. Youth Development programs are divided between academic support provided by tutor/mentors, and enrichment and service activities led by AmeriCorps volunteers.

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**PPL's mission is to work with lower-income individuals and families to achieve greater self-sufficiency through housing, employment training and support services.**

## 2006 results



### Affordable Housing

*Served 2,751 people*

PPL owns or manages more than 747 units of affordable rental housing offering on-site human services, and creates affordable housing through both new construction and renovation of existing homes.



### Employment & Job Training

*Served 3,407 people*

PPL operates paid training programs through businesses and classroom instruction for adults dealing with multiple barriers to successful employment.



### Human Services

*Served 4,602 adults & youth*

Families, adults and children are assisted on a flexible, individualized basis in setting goals, finding resources and building skills necessary to be self-sufficient.

**903 volunteers contributed more than 39,300 hours, valued at \$697,945.**



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## Ribbon Cut at Camden Apartments playground built by volunteers



A clear highlight of the June open house was the ribbon cutting on a playground built for 63 young Camden residents by more than 30 Faegre and Benson volunteers.

### Formerly homeless families now have a permanent home

-Continued from front

Camden is a \$6.6 million, three story, 23-unit apartment building, located at 4643 Lyndale Avenue in North Minneapolis' Lind-Bohanan neighborhood. Developed by PPL as supportive housing for families, most of whom are headed by single custodial fathers, it features roomy apartments and substantial community space.

Construction on the Camden Apartments began in February 2006. The project architects are Rapson and Associates and the general contractor is Meisinger Construction. Financing was provided by HUD, Minnesota Housing, National Equity Fund, Hennepin County, City of Minneapolis, Federal Home Loan Bank and the Family Housing Fund. Funds to support family services are being provided by the Frey Family Foundation, Target Foundation, State of Minnesota and Greater Twin Cities United Way.