

Fort Worth Housing Authority Housing Choice Voucher Family Self-Sufficiency Program



FSS Happenings



Spring 2014

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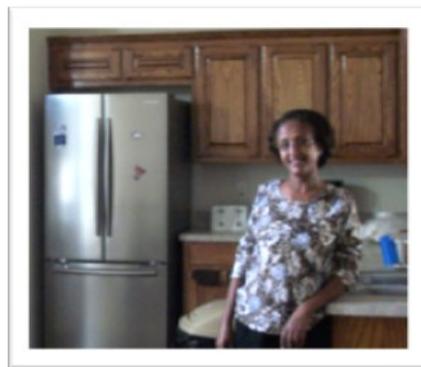
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A Long Journey Home



Rediat Wolana and her husband, Chala Negera, have come a long way for the dream of family self-sufficiency.....literally. Originally from Ethiopia, Rediat and Chala immigrated with their family to the United States in 2007. They submitted an application for the United States Diversity Visa Lottery and were one of the lucky few chosen. Each year over 500,000 Ethiopians apply for this Visa, but no more than 3,500 can be accepted in a fiscal year. April 17, 2007, they arrived in Iowa City, Iowa, ready to begin their American Dream! Although both Rediat and Chala were very well educated, they found it hard to find suitable employment that would sustain their family's needs. Rediat holds a Master's Degree in

Industrial Engineering, and Chala holds a Master's Degree in Electrical Engineering. Unfortunately, regional standards rendered their degrees futile. They found it hard to make ends meet, but fortunately the family was able to qualify for housing assistance through the Iowa City Housing Authority. In 2009 Rediat and Chala decided to transfer their assistance from Iowa to Texas. They were able to find employment in Fort Worth, however they still had bigger, better dreams for their family. They enrolled in the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program at the Fort Worth Housing Authority. Rediat and Chala were very active in the FSS program. They used every outlet available to them, which included: financial coaching, computer training, skills training, and homeownership education. Over the years they found better employment, learned how to budget more effectively, and were even able to set money aside into a savings account. Eventually Rediat and Chala were ready for homeownership! That in itself was a grueling, stressful process. Just when they thought they were done, another obstacle would arise to set them back. However, Rediat and Chala held strong in their determination and on July 25, 2012, they closed on their very own home! Their drive for success didn't stop there; they continued taking part in the FSS program to gain more knowledge and skills. Less than two years later, in March

2014, Rediat and Chala rose to the level of true self-sufficiency.... Based on their household income they graduated the FSS program and were no longer income eligible for housing assistance! Their hard work had finally paid off! Rediat and Chala's journey was long and often times very trying; it just goes to show how persistence and dedication can and will lead you to your goals.



If you want to
make your
DREAMS
come true, the
first thing you
have to do is
WAKE UP!

~ J.M. Power

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The "Unknowns" of Homeownership

One of the Fort Worth Housing Authority's most sought after treasures is homeownership. The FWHA Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program offers participants the option to purchase a home with their voucher; however, it's not always as easy as people may think. In 2013, seven HCV clients closed on their very own home. So far for 2014, three clients have closed, and several others are currently working with lenders. The process can be long and difficult at times, but it's definitely possible! The list below can better prepare you for your homeownership journey. Before you are able to see a lender for pre-approval you will need the following:

- ◆ Mid credit score of 620+
- ◆ Savings of \$1,500
- ◆ No insufficient funds/bounced checks within the last 2 months
- ◆ Employment information for past 2 years
- ◆ Residence address for past 2 years
- ◆ Check stubs from the past 30 days
- ◆ Child support history (if applicable)
- ◆ Complete tax return and W-2's for the last 2 years
- ◆ Driver's license and social security card
- ◆ No excess credit charges – charge no more than 30% of the credit limit
- ◆ No excessive credit inquiries—don't apply for credit in order to get a store discount

***Last but not least, be patient throughout the home buying process.
It'll be worth it in the end!***



Homebuyer Fair



Hosted by

FORT WORTH HOUSING AUTHORITY

"Investing in the Community"



Thursday, June 5, 2014

2:00pm to 6:00pm

**Fort Worth Housing Authority
Auditorium**

**1201 E. 13th Street
Fort Worth, TX 76102**

You are invited to visit with participating agencies and learn how YOU can become a HOMEOWNER!



How to Beat the Texas Heat

Warmer days are on the way, and in Texas that means it's HOT! Last year, just the thought of going outside any time after noon could make you sweat. Luckily, there are ways to beat the summer heat this year. If you plan to be outside, either for work or play, don't forget the basics when it comes to health and safety. Here are seven ways to beat the Texas summer heat:

- 7. Don't blow hot air.** Your A/C could likely use some TLC before the high temperatures hit. If it's been awhile since you've replaced the air filter, make sure to put that on your to-do list. If you are renting, talk to your landlord about getting a regular maintenance tune-up for your A/C unit. This could save money for you both in the long run.
- 6. Send your oven on vacation.** Nothing warms a house up like a juicy roast sweltering for hours in the oven. When the weather is warm, try a quick dinner on the grill or go for something simple and cool from the fridge.
- 5. Eliminate drying time.** Remember hanging up clothes in the backyard on the clothes line? People have dried their clothes for centuries that way. Opting for the old-fashioned route to dry your clothes is a good way to cut down on electricity and the heat-flow through your house.
- 4. Loosen up.** Tight fitting clothing will trap heat and moisture, preventing airflow. If you are outside, go with loose fabrics, like cotton. Also, choose lighter colors over darker shades to help keep you cool.
- 3. Time it right.** At the peak of Texas summer heat, there is hardly a good time to be outside. If you must be outside, try to get your work and play done in the mornings and evenings. If you have a choice, stay indoors during the hottest part of the day—around 2pm-5pm.
- 2. Chill out.** For a kid battling the Texas summer heat, popsicles are always a win-win. Not crazy about all the sugar in store-bought popsicles? You can make your own with fruit juice.
- 1. Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate.** It's all about hydration. Keep water handy at all times when working or playing outside. More than 200,000 Americans are hospitalized each year for dehydration. Heat exhaustion is no laughing matter either. Keep your body cool with water based fruits and veggies such as melons, grapes, cucumbers, and tomatoes.

Summer Programs

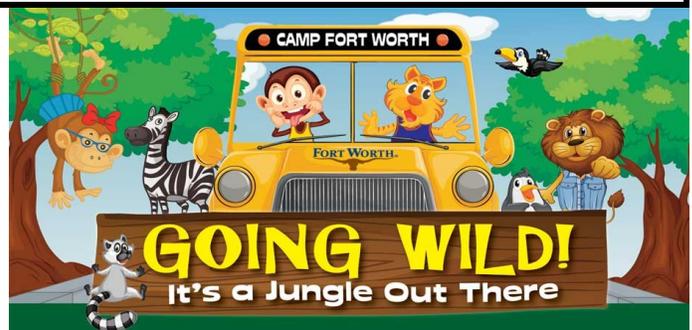
Tarrant County College District College for Kids Summer Program

College for Kids is a three-week summer enrichment program for children in the first through eighth grades.

Children can enroll in academic, arts and crafts, technology, science, health and fitness classes and more. Courses are taught by experienced and motivated faculty who encourage and challenge students in an atmosphere that supports inquiry and exploration.

Limited grants available based on family need.

For more information call (817)515-4233



June 16-Aug. 15, 2014

Only \$225 for nine weeks of fun. Includes daily activities from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Contact a participating City of Fort Worth Community Center for more information or visit their website at <http://fortworthtexas.gov/pacs/centers>

News You Can Use

Spring Employment Fair

Thursday, May 15, 2014

10:00am-1:00pm

Hosted by

Fort Worth Housing Authority
1201 E. 13th St
Fort Worth, TX 76102

For additional information
contact Glenn Nixon at 817-333-3523
or glenn@fthwa.org

What's Your Email Address?

FSS Specialists send out periodic emails containing valuable information about upcoming job fairs, job postings, and class announcements.

Contact Nicole Rubio at
817-333-3664 or
nicolel@fthwa.org to place
your name on the email list.

REMINDER:

All changes to household income and family composition **must be reported** **IN WRITING**, within **10 days of the change**. Failure to report changes in a timely matter could result in the termination of your housing assistance.

Free Training

The Women's Center

Jobs Skills Training

Through a partnership with United Way of Tarrant County, working or recently unemployed women and men can receive skills training to increase their income and advance in their careers. Services include career exploration, free skills training at local training providers, financial education, mentoring, links with community resources, and one year of retention and advancement assistance. There is no charge to you. Informational meetings held each week.

Call to register: 817-927-4050



DID YOU KNOW?

Someone who doesn't know how to use a computer has as big a barrier to employment as someone who doesn't know how to read? WE CAN HELP! Come learn computer skills with us...

The Ladder Alliance
1000 Bonnie Brae Ave #200
Fort Worth, TX 76111
817.834.2100
www.ladderalliance.org



Day and evening classes are available. Also inquire about our GED program.

Kid Friendly Recipes

Homemade Playdough

3 cups flour
1.5 cups salt
6 tsp. cream of tartar
3 tbsp. oil
3 cups water



Pour all ingredients into a large pot. Stir constantly over medium heat until a dough ball forms by pulling away from the sides. Knead dough until the texture matches play dough (1-2 minutes). Store in plastic container. To add color: Divide into sections, then knead in food coloring (liquid or paste). Kids love making the white play dough change colors. Use unsweetened Kool-Aid for color and scent, or add glitter for sparkly play dough.

Homemade Slime

1 teaspoon borax powder
1 1/2 C water, divided
4 oz (1/2 C) Elmer's glue
Food coloring



Add borax powder to 1 cup of water and stir to dissolve. Set aside. Pour glue into a medium mixing bowl and add 1/2 cup water. Add a few drops of food coloring until desired color is reached and then stir to mix glue solution until smooth. Pour the borax mixture into the glue mixture. Stir for a few moments and then use your hands to gather the mass. The mixture will be very soft and wet. Keep kneading until it firms up and feels dry. Discard excess liquid in bowl. The more you knead and play with the slime the firmer it will become. Store in a ziplock bag or air tight container.

3-D Art Projects

Shaving cream
Glue
Construction paper
Paint brush/popsicle sticks



Mix equal amounts of shaving cream and glue in three separate bowls. Add small amounts of food coloring to each bowl and mix. Use a paint brush or popsicle stick to paint pictures on construction paper. Unlike regular paint, shaving cream paint can be used in big globs to make three-dimensional paintings. Set the artwork out to dry, then check out the cool puffy creations the next morning!