

# Telamon—Virginia

August 2013

*Empowering Individuals, Improving Communities*

## Message from the State Director Sharon Saldarriaga

It is with sadness that I write this newsletter message. Due to sequestration, funding for our National Farmworker Jobs Program was cut substantially, forcing us to make some hard decisions. Unfortunately, this led to the closing of our office on the Eastern Shore. Since 1975, other offices have opened and closed but that office was the very first one Telamon established in Virginia and it was hard to see it shut down. While the Eastern Shore still receives a significant number of agricultural workers each year, many were not eligible for the program and the ability to direct resources to employment and training activities was limited. Therefore, with resources dwindling each year, we made the decision to close that office and put additional resources into areas that have more opportunity for farmworker enrollments and workforce development. But, we will miss the Eastern Shore... the farmworkers, the growers, and its beauty. Thanks to all our staff and partners who worked with us over the years.

### In this issue

Lease/Purchase .....	1
A New Business .....	2
Staff Notes .....	2
Nando's Place .....	3
Full House .....	3
Best Ways to Regain Your Life! .....	4

## Lease/Purchase, an Alternative Path to Homeownership

By Mayra Nickerson  
Deputy State Director, Virginia

Challenging times sometimes offer new opportunities. Up to now, we have only been able to offer lease/purchase options with our new houses in Pittsylvania County. Telamon is also now participating in a lease to homeownership program in the City of Danville, VA. This is a joint partnership with the City of Danville and the Danville Redevelopment and Housing Authority.

The future homeowner must be an income-qualified household based on requirements put in place by our funding sources. The maximum income for the Danville homes is 80% of the Area Median Income, adjusted for family size.

*Maximum Household Income 2013  
(80% AMI) for Danville*

Family Size	1	2
Income	\$28,950	\$33,050
3	4	5
\$37,200	\$41,300	\$44,650
6	7	8
\$47,950	\$51,250	\$54,550



*Rachel Williamson is delighted to participate in the Lease/Purchase program. She is now living in a brand new home which is Energy Star certified. The house is built in accordance with Universal Design guidelines to allow a resident to age in place.*

The tenant/future homeowner will receive homeownership and credit counseling to help repair any credit issues that may exist and also to help build credit, as needed. It is very important to this program that the tenant/future homebuyer be ready to purchase in 18 months. Down payment assistance will be made available to program participants once all the necessary conditions to obtain a loan are met.

We currently have four beautifully renovated and affordable houses available for lease/purchase in the City of Danville.

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Lease/Purchase *(Continued from page 1)*

The first price is the selling price. The second is the monthly lease rate. Utilities, refuse, and lawn care are not included in the rent. We will continue to pay the real estate taxes for each house until it is sold.

**For pre-qualification and more information, please call Robin Roark (434) 509-4242.**



Gorgeous renovated +/- 2,018 square foot, four bedroom/two bath home includes a spacious rear yard with driveway, custom made kitchen cabinets, a laundry room with a stacking washer/dryer, and many quality historic features such as: a stunning entry hall and stairs, pocket doors, bay window in formal dining room, hardwood floors throughout, historic fireplaces, and much more.  
\$70,000/\$400mo.



Charming renovated +/- 1,500 square foot, four bedroom/one bath English style cottage with stone siding, spacious yard, and separate garage/workshop. Hardwood floors, stone fireplace in living room, beamed ceilings, and large bright kitchen with all appliances.  
\$73,000/\$400mo.



Graciously restored and updated +/- 1,771 square foot, two bedrooms/one bath Queen Anne style house on a double lot includes custom made kitchen cabinets, a separate laundry room with storage cabinets off the kitchen, living room, family room, as well as period architectural features such as a wrap-around porch, double entry doors, formal entry hall and stairs, bay window, and more.  
\$41,500/\$300mo.



Pretty 1,200 square foot, totally renovated, three bedroom/one bath house with separate laundry room and new kitchen appliances.  
\$39,500/\$300mo.

## A New Business

By Sara Lopez  
Workforce Development Specialist, Montross



Sergio Izaguirre, Jr. came to our Montross office with the goal of starting his own business. He received some farm land from a community donation and needed our support to get started. We assisted him in developing a business plan and purchasing a few items. He quickly put the plan into action. Sergio opened his produce business in June and was very excited. When Sergio first enrolled in our program, his household income was less than \$13,000 a year. Now, from the business alone, Sergio expects to make over \$50,000 a year. Sergio works hard, continues to meet with mentors, and is very grateful for the help we were able to provide to make his dream come true. We are proud of you, Sergio!

## STAFF NOTES



Hearty congratulations to Richard Ruffin, Weatherization Supervisor, South Hill on obtaining both the Building Performance Institute, Inc. (BPI) Building Analyst Professional certification and the Virginia Residential Building Energy Analyst license. Richard is one of the first in Virginia to accomplish this!

## Nando's Place

By Ana Nethken  
Workforce Development  
Specialist, Harrisonburg

When Fernando first came to our office, he was a seasonal farmworker. At the time, he was unemployed, and due to a language barrier and other obstacles, he was struggling to support his family. He had been working in production and agriculture at Bowman Apple Camp, but Fernando said that sometimes he would earn a few dollars fixing his friends' cars.

Through a comprehensive service process, Telamon provided extensive consultation and helped Fernando develop a plan to reach his goals. Fernando completed class work and earned his GED. In December 2012, Fernando began to study auto mechanic repair at Massanutten Technical Center. We provided coaching, counseling, and financial assistance for tuition and books.

His next goal was to open his own business, an auto mechanic shop. With continued support from our National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP), Fernando participated in the First Time Owners Seminar at Shenandoah Valley Small Business Development. Following good advice from our Pro-

gram Coordinator, Nelson Diaz, Fernando applied for his business license in April 2013.



Fernando opened his new business on May 1, 2013.

**Nando's Auto Repair** is located at 954 South High Street in Harrisonburg, Virginia. The business is

growing and clients are very happy with Fernando's work. After deducting for business expenses, Fernando is now earning about \$17.60 per hour.

Fernando feels confident he will continue to meet the challenges ahead. He said, "I am able to provide for my family, make my own hours." Fernando said our program helped to change his life through education, training, and support. "I am embracing a new future, which makes my family and me happy."

One of the things that surprised Fernando was how quickly he was able to reshape his life by following his own dreams and using our support and services. In about one year, he was able to achieve accomplishments he thought it would take six to eight years on his own. He said, "Thanks again to the NFJP program, to Nelson Diaz the Coordinator, and to Ana Nethken my Case Manager."

## Full House

By Sara Lopez  
Workforce Development Specialist, Montross

Before coming to our office, Olga Cardenas had only done farmwork. Her husband also did farmwork and there just was not enough money to support the family. In addition to the limited work history, Olga had other barriers, including the fact that she had no driver's license



We worked with Olga to complete assessments, including a personal inventory of strengths, weaknesses, needs, wants, and goals. Olga decided that what she really wanted to do was open her own family home care. We assisted her in the process of planning and taking care of details. We also purchased some of the items she needed. Olga got certified in CPR, registered her business, and was ready to start watching children. When everything was ready, parents began to contact her, and before she knew it, she had a full house.

Olga is so excited and thrilled to have this opportunity. She enjoys her job every single day and thrives to make a positive impact on the children she cares for. Olga came into the program with no pre-earnings and is now well on her way to making over \$20,000 a year. We are so happy for you, Olga! Keep up the good work!

## Best Ways to Regain Your Life!

By Nelson Diaz, Program Coordinator

Does money grow on trees? No, but that doesn't mean you have to work hard all your life making it, either. All of us have experienced financial hardship from time to time, but moving forward with positive thinking and preparation can get you out of the hole you might think you are in while unemployed. Opportunities are everywhere but only those who prepare and are looking for them most of the time achieve them.

One of the things I learned while unemployed was to never give up! Prepare, network, research, and get help. I also discovered that I was eligible for so many free things: programs, training, education, etc., even a free cell phone and bus passes. Amazing!

Here are my best tips for you to become independent, successful, and happy for the rest of your life.

**Set your goal:** Create a vision of your perfect future and write it down. Be very specific; find a friend or family member who can hold you accountable and build a support network.

**Prepare:** My father was right; perfect practice does make perfect. My father told me once, "If you want to be a runner, you not only will have to learn how to run and find where to run, but also you will have to learn how to breathe while you run." So basically, you will have to plan, prepare, build confidence, invest energy, and work hard at it. Nothing comes easy but it is rewarding once you achieve results.

**Attitude:** I always think about my grandfather and how happy he was every time the weather man would call for a rainy day. He always would say, "This time we will have big tomatoes." Attitude is important. Regret nothing about your past;

instead, evaluate and assess what you did that made you who you are, what made you happy, and what you think you did well or what you were good at. That will help you to begin structuring your goals.

**Positive thinking:** "Nothing lasts forever, even cold November rain," said a popular song, but really thinking positively about life and your goals is critical in the process of pursuing a new life. This will make it easy and will feel like you are getting closer to your goals. One day after being hired as a quality control supervisor at Pompeii in Miami, I asked the plant manager why he hired me, if he knew I did not know how to do the job, did I do something magical. He chuckled and smiling said, "I knew you were hungry, you were very positive about learning, and you were somebody that could be trained." "How about that!" I thought.

**Time:** Set time aside to breathe, to think, to set priorities, and to clear your mind.

**Change:** Change changes us, change is good but be well informed about your choices before you make your decisions; that will help insure that the career you choose is right for you.

**Research:** Research allows you to pursue your interests and to learn more about a career. These days we all have access to internet via phone or any other electronic device. Take advantage of it and visit some of my favorite websites such as:

<http://www.onetonline.org/>

<http://www.careeronestop.org/>

<https://www.vawc.virginia.gov/analyzer/>

<https://www.marccgreenworks.com>

There you can find information on career exploration, assessments, green technology, education and training, resumes and interviews, fastest growing jobs, jobs with most openings, and descriptions of jobs. These are great tools for building your resume, finding out about salaries and benefits, etc. Sometimes hitting the wrong key or typing the wrong word can get you the right answer too.

**Get help:** But get help from those who know or that are going through what you are experiencing. Countless times, while looking for a job, I had many conversations with friends and people who I knew that had jobs. All I heard from them was "Don't worry, you will get a job," but really, you need more than that. Visiting an employment and training office can make a difference. I remember at the one I visited, I was able to interact with people who knew where the jobs were and what employers were asking. Plus, I was able to talk to an expert in career development who gave me real advice. The one I spoke with helped me with my resume and interview skills, gave tips on hidden markets and even gave me all kinds of ideas from free training to where to get a free cell phone and free bus passes. Only in America my friends!

**Educate yourself:** Education teaches you how to gather, learn, and apply knowledge while interacting with other people. There are plenty of free federal Pell grants available. But remember, school is not for everybody. For those of us who think school is too long and want results faster, a certificate or an On-the-Job Training (OJT) can be a great idea. Through an OJT, you will gain hands-on experience and learn new skills while working in the same place and with the same equipment that will be used regularly to do the work.

**Focus:** Staying focused can help you accomplish almost anything. Know exactly your goals, believe in yourself, review your progress, continue to be positive, and always ask yourself why you are doing it.

And lastly, be grateful for all that you have and look for ways to strengthen those who have less than you have. Remember, success comes to ordinary people who do things in extraordinary ways.