

City of Las Vegas
Office of the City Council

Proclamation



- WHEREAS;* We, the Mayor and Members of the Las Vegas City Council are honored to designate the week of November 16th – 22nd as American Education Week; and
- WHEREAS;* "Great Public Schools" is a basic right and our responsibility for every child in America; and
- WHEREAS;* Since it began in 1857, the National Education Association supports and advocates for the nation's public schools, school employees, and the communities they serve by celebrating this event annually; and
- WHEREAS;* In order to have quality schools you must have quality teachers who become a part of the community; and
- WHEREAS;* To answer this call, the City of Las Vegas developed the Homeownership for Educators Program to assist qualified teachers with housing needs in our city; and
- WHEREAS;* Maureen Fox, Director of Management Process Systems for Clark County School District has worked diligently coordinating with our Neighborhood Services Department to not only make this program a success, but to insure its growth and sustainability for another two years; now
- THEREFORE;* We, the Mayor and Members of the Las Vegas City Council, do hereby take great pride in proclaiming November 16th – 22nd as:



American Education Week

In the City of Las Vegas and urge all citizens to do his or her part in making schools great.


Mayor Oscar B. Goodman


Mayor Pro Tem Gary Reese


Councilman Larry Brown


Councilman Steve Wolfson


Councilwoman Lois Tarkanian


Councilman Steven D. Ross


Councilman Ricki Y. Barlow

Dear Councilwoman Lois Tarkanian,

For the past few months I have been fortunate enough to receive assistance through the Clark County School District/City of Las Vegas housing assistance program. This program has allowed me the ability to begin paying off the student loans I obtained while trying to earn my degree to become a teacher. I truly do thank the City of Las Vegas and Maureen and Julie for all the work they have done in helping me to become part of this program. I am eternally grateful for the opportunity to succeed that this program has given me and I only hope that it can be expanded to assist other teachers in our district.

Sincere thanks to you all,



Tiffanie Offord
Social Studies/Senior Class Co-Advisor/FEA Co-Advisor
Ed W. Clark High School
(702) 799-5800

Submitted at City Council
Date 11/19/08 Item 7


Larissa Andersen
10405 Grassyrock Court
Las Vegas, NV 89129
October 31, 2008

Dear Las Vegas City Council:

Thank you for the Las Vegas Rental Assistance Program. It has meant a great deal to me to receive this assistance. Not only does it help ease my stress level as a second year teacher - it has also allowed me to completely pay off my student loans. Without this rental assistance program, I would still be in significant debt and would have had to get a second job. Thank you for supporting me through this program. I have been able to focus on becoming the best teacher I can, as opposed to stressing about my many bills.

This rental assistance has helped me in an incredibly significant way. I hope that this program can continue helping the many wonderful teachers in Las Vegas to work toward a more financially stable life.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Larissa Andersen". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Warmly,".

Larissa Andersen
English Department
Molasky Junior High School

October 7, 2008

Dear City Council,

I am writing to you today to express my many thanks in your rental assistance program. I am so grateful for your help.

When I moved to Las Vegas, I never realized how expensive it was to live here. The cost of rent alone was astronomical compared to where I used to live. I was in the process of looking for a job for nights and weekends when I heard about this assistance. Even as I applied for the assistance I had in the back of my mind that there were so many people that needed help that it would be unlikely I would have been chosen. When I received the notice that I was going to be on the program I was completely relieved. This assistance allowed me to concentrate on my teaching job and not have to work a second job. I was also able to pay all of my bills during the month, before I was juggling things around like crazy.

Again I thank you so much and I know that it will be a relief to others in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Van Horn". The signature is written in black ink and has a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Michelle Van Horn

Rebecca Puckett
3460 Quadrel St.
Las Vegas, NV 89129

November 16, 2008

Re: City of Las Vegas Teacher Rental Assistance Program

To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to express great appreciation and gratitude to all those who were involved in helping provide rental assistance for myself and my family.

I have been a resident of Las Vegas and the surrounding areas for over 20 years and have endured adequate to extreme living conditions. I was a teen mother and was compromised to receive state housing programs through HUD. During that time and eventually getting off assistance, I came to appreciate the programs intended to benefit people's lives. Now after graduating from UNLV, I am currently a 4th year teacher for CCSD. I have really appreciated the help that the teacher's rental assistance program has provided for me so that I could get adjusted to my new career and lifestyle into the real world.

After two years of the program, it has helped me take care of my special needs child by allowing me to take him to adapted extra curricular programs to help in his continued progress. It has also allowed me to pursue other outlets as I will be starting to my Master's Degree program in Educational Technology in January of 2009.

Once again I am truly grateful for this program and hope it continues to help many other teachers in the future.

Sincerely,



Rebecca Puckett
Walter E. Jacobson ES
3rd Grade Teacher

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November 17, 2008

Dear City Council,

I just want to say with heartfelt thanks how much I appreciate you giving me mortgage assistance when I purchased my first home this summer. I am a single mother of 2 daughters who was living with my parents for the last 8 years trying to get on my feet to where I could buy a house of my own. Due to the costs of mortgages, I would have been able to pay the mortgage on a house and possibly the utilities but I would not have been able to provide food for my kids. This summer I was able to find a house in my price range and because of your assistance I am able to afford the mortgage payments because I was able to take out a lower amount on my loan.

I truly am grateful to you all for the support that you have given to myself and to others and knowing that I will be able to spend the holidays in my own home with my girls is a blessing that you may never know. My girls love our new house because they each have their own bedroom, a playroom, and a yard to play in. They are making friends in the new neighborhood and the neighbors seem to really look out for each other.

Thank you for everything that you have allowed me to be able to do because of your assistance.

Sincerely,

Michelle M. Jepsen

Las Vegas City Council
400 Stewart Ave # 10
Las Vegas, NV 89101
(702) 229-6405

11/10/2008

Greetings!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank both the City of Las Vegas, and the Clark County School District for providing me with rental assistance. Last August, I moved from Eau Claire, Wisconsin to Las Vegas, Nevada so that I could pursue my teaching career. I was only able to bring items that fit in my car. I had no furniture. The first few months were tough for me to settle in and catch up on my bills. The rental assistance program has truly helped me to get back on my feet without taking on another job. I am grateful for this program because I dedicate many extra hours to my profession. As a new teacher, finding time to work a second job would be difficult. Not having to worry about my rent has been a huge relief for me. I am able to focus on other aspects of my life such as, taking night classes and meeting new friends. For this reason, my quality of life has improved dramatically! Again, I just want the City of Las Vegas to know how much the rental assistance program has made a positive impact in my life.

Thank you so much for all you do!

Sincerely,

Jessica King

Katz Elementary School

1800 Rock Springs Rd.

Las Vegas, NV 89117

Darren E. Jacobs
10532 Brownsville Ave
Las Vegas, NV 89115
November 16, 2008

City Council of Las Vegas
City Hall, Tenth Floor
400 Stewart Avenue
Las Vegas, NV 89101

Dear City Council of Las Vegas:

Words cannot convey the gratitude and appreciation my family, and educators across the Valley, have for the generous monetary support provided through the City of Las Vegas' Rental Assistance Program. Moreover, your unyielding support demonstrates an awareness and understanding about the importance of education that is rarely felt within the community!

On a personal note, as the sole-provider of a family of six: (2) adults (2) teenagers and (2) pre-adolescents, it was difficult to secure sufficient and affordable housing to accommodate the needs of my growing family. In fact, we relocated (3) times within our first year in Clark County due to rising rent prices and landlord foreclosures. Due to the generous support of the City of Las Vegas' Rental Assistance Program, I am able to provide a secure, stable and suitable home environment that accommodates the needs of my growing family at a price that does not present an economic hardship for my family. Additionally, the money we are saving as a result of the Rental Assistance Program is being used to help fund my daughters first year of college. What's more, I don't have the worry about where my kids will live next year or what school they'll attend due to the stability afforded my family through the Rental Assistance Program. And for that, I am a better teacher.

So again, on behalf of my family and educators across the Valley, thank you for supporting CCSD teachers through the Rental Assistance Program.

Sincerely yours serving youth,

The Jacobs Family

October 6, 2008

Dear City Council Members,

It has come to my attention that the City Council of Las Vegas will recognize the teacher housing project collaboration between the Clark County School District and the City of Las Vegas on November 19th, 2008. I wanted to extend a word of gratitude for this program on behalf of my family. When we moved to Las Vegas in August of 2007, we did not think we would ever be able to purchase a home on my teacher's salary. The housing project made it possible for us to put a down payment on a house. We are now settled and my four boys have plenty of room to grow up in our new home. We feel happy and secure.

Every day, I thank God, and feel so grateful for all that we have. Not only did the city help us purchase a home, but I would also like to mention a couple of other ways the city has helped my family. The boys have lots of fun at the community center's track break program. Every weekend, we enjoy the beautiful parks throughout the city. The kids love to go to the water playgrounds during the summer. When my parents visit from Omaha, Nebraska, even they are impressed with how lovely the city has made the local parks.

Again, I extend my thanks to the City of Las Vegas Council Members for helping to make home ownership a reality for us, and our city such a wonderful place to live.

With gratitude,

Christine Shaighan,
Grade 3 Track 2 Teacher
CCSD Edwards E.S.

11/13/08

THANK YOU!

Dear City of Las Vegas Housing Program,

My name is Sara Dadabo and I am the choir teacher at Lied Middle School. I would like to take just a moment to thank you for offering rental assistance to teachers. When I first heard of this opportunity, I was delighted in knowing that such a program existed in Las Vegas. Coming from Cincinnati, Ohio, moving my entire life to Las Vegas has been costly at times, and the rental assistance has been very helpful. It is a good feeling knowing that assistance is available to those in need. I have friends teaching in other states that wish they had the same opportunity. Thank you again for caring so much about the teachers in Las Vegas.

Sincerely,

Sara Dadabo

Councilwoman Lois Tarkanian

Ref: Teaching Housing Assistance

Dear Councilwoman:

I would like to take a moment to let you know how important the housing assistance has been to me and my family. I have been on the program for just over a year now. As a single mom and teacher, I was forced to have two jobs to afford the high cost of housing in Las Vegas. I worked 7 days a week either teaching, waitressing, or both. In order to teacher here in Vegas, I could not afford to be home with my own children. Holidays, weekends, and school nights were spent on the second job. I take home less than \$3000 a month as a teacher and my rent has been around \$1300 a month. With living expenses, kids in school, and rising cost of gas, I depend heavily on the assistance to keep me above water. But more importantly, it has allowed me to be home more with my children and to have time to take RPDP classes and other enrichments with my colleagues. I am less stressed, more rested, and more available to my students after school (instead of running off to my second job).

I cannot impress upon you enough how vital this is to the teachers who take advantage of the program. My time will soon expire as the 2 year cap is fast approaching. I urge you to continue the program and perhaps extend it for the teachers already in it. Times are getting harder as second jobs are more difficult to find and expenses continue to rise. As I see my time on the assistance coming to a close this school year, I am faced with the definite possibility of relocating where rent and living expenses are not so high. I would not even consider it if the program was extended. That is how important it is to my survival as a teacher and single income earner here in Vegas.

I appreciate your support of this program and hope to see it extended.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Debra Petersen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Debra Petersen

Thank You

Dear City Council,
I want to take this time to say thank you so much for the teacher rental assistance program. I would not be able to get my master's degree without the extra help! As a first year teacher my salary barely covers the cost of living

and this program has allowed me the opportunity to go back to school. I am very appreciative of this program and hope that it continues for future teachers.

Thank you!

Sara Powell

To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Shelley Gross, and I teach 6th grade reading. I am currently in my 4th year of teaching. I have benefited from the Rental Assistance Program through the City of Las Vegas for the past year and a half. It has enabled me to complete my Master's Degree. It has been very helpful knowing that there was that monthly assistance available to me. I would like to express my appreciation for this service and say thank you for the aid it has given me.

Thank You Very Much,

Shelley Gross

October 23, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in recognition of the rental assistance that I receive and how it helps me. Without this I simply would not be able to live on my own. I am a single mother and I do not receive child support. This is my second year teaching so I am not high on the pay scale. I am also taking courses towards my master's degree through UNLV. If this assistance was not available I would not be able to better myself through furthering my education. This assistance is not only helping me, but also my students through my continued learning.

This program has helped me in so many ways. I truly appreciate all that the City of Las Vegas and CCSD has done to keep this program running.

Sincerely,

Patricia Munch
First Grade Teacher
Ernest J. May Elementary
Northwest Region

November 17, 2008

To whom it may concern:

I am one of the fortunate people to be qualified for the rental assistance program. I am a single mother, and without the financial help, I would truly struggle. With this help I am able to afford a nice place to live, take graduate classes, and simply give my growing son what he needs to get by. I am very grateful for this program, and pray that it continues to help people just like me.

Thank you,

Kara McGovern

November 12, 2008

To the Honorable City Council of Las Vegas, Nevada:

There are many wonderful things that this city has to offer its citizens. This city council has provided wonderful parks, recreational programs and community service projects. They ensure the safety and orderliness of its citizens and see to it that our basic needs are met including clean drinking water, power, sewer lines, gas lines and a host of other things its citizens require to live a happy life. We have sites and attractions known the world over and host world-wide conventions. Aside from all those things, through the Teacher Housing Project, this city has offered something you can't build, create, develop or offer...hope.

Please understand that my eternal hope is found solely at the foot of the cross of Jesus Christ, but my hope of teaching while my wife stays home to raise our children and owning our own home was lost. I was encouraged to thank you for the assistance because it might have provided some extra curricular activities for my children or allowed me to further my education, or otherwise facilitate a creature comfort in our lives. However the truth is that this assistance put food on our table, diapers and clothes on our children and gas in our vehicles.

This assistance also provided something that money can't buy...time with my family. The rental assistance I received prevented the necessity of a second job which would have resulted in little to no time with my family. So that brings me to what I want to thank this council for the most; jumping on the bed with my 7, 5 and 2 year old, tickle fights, hide and go seek, trips to the park, and riding bikes 'til the sun goes down. It is truly a joy to be able to say yes when my two-year-old's big brown eyes with his long black lashes look up at me and ask, "Wanna play?" I had times in my life where I had to work 3 jobs to put food on the table while getting a Masters degree and the option to say yes was simply not there. It was miserable feeling to have to turn down their pleading for time together.

When we purchased our home through this program this past August, our lifelong dream of owning a nice house to raise our family in was finally realized. I recently completed the district's leadership program for administrators and was going to try and move into that realm in an attempt to afford a nice home, but now I get to stay in the classroom and continue to try and mold the young lives of our future leaders into something this city can be proud of.

I encourage this council to renew and expand this program because this city needs to keep top notch dedicated educators that will commit to a long term investment in this district and the families it serves. I will proudly serve the Clark County School District and the City of Las Vegas over the next ten years as I will be able to come home at the end of a long day and enjoy my home and family knowing that this program was a major part of my family living the "American Dream."

With Deepest Gratitude,

Proud Homeowners Anthony and Jennifer Pucci

November 17, 2008

Dear City Council,

I just want to say with heartfelt thanks how much I appreciate you giving me mortgage assistance when I purchased my first home this summer. I am a single mother of 2 daughters who was living with my parents for the last 8 years trying to get on my feet to where I could buy a house of my own. Due to the costs of mortgages, I would have been able to pay the mortgage on a house and possibly the utilities but I would not have been able to provide food for my kids. This summer I was able to find a house in my price range and because of your assistance I am able to afford the mortgage payments because I was able to take out a lower amount on my loan.

I truly am grateful to you all for the support that you have given to myself and to others and knowing that I will be able to spend the holidays in my own home with my girls is a blessing that you may never know. My girls love our new house because they each have their own bedroom, a playroom, and a yard to play in. They are making friends in the new neighborhood and the neighbors seem to really look out for each other.

Thank you for everything that you have allowed me to be able to do because of your assistance.

Sincerely,

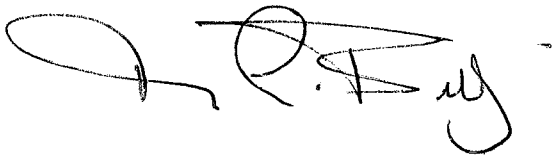
Michelle M. Jepsen

City Council of Las Vegas,

I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks; to you. I am fortunate that you were their to help me doing my time of need. Your program has helped me meet the many challenges that I have to face financially; in not only meeting my needs, but the needs of my teenage son. I am a single parent.

Today, your program continues to make an immediate difference in my and my child's life; as well as the many other families in the program.

With grateful appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tyrone L. Billingsley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "T" and "B".

Thank You,

Tyrone L. Billingsley
Teacher
Sedway Middle School

November 13, 2008

To the City Council of Las Vegas,

I am writing this letter to tell you how truly thankful I am for the rental assistance grant that I qualified for. As a recent college graduate and a new teacher, this assistance has really helped to keep my financially stable. This assistance has helped to make me less stressed about finances and therefore has enabled me to focus on my teaching career and get through my first year very successfully. Because of this, I know that I have a roof over my head. At a time of this economic struggle, I feel very grateful to have this program. It is a huge help for my household and me.

Thanks,

Sulayla Rowe
3rd grade teacher
Derfelt Elementary School

November 14, 2008

Candace Wagner
300 Wisteria Ave.
Las Vegas, Nevada 89107

To the City Council of Las Vegas:

I want to start out by saying that I feel so blessed to have this assistance available to me. As a somewhat of a new teacher, my salary is still on the lower scale of the spectrum. In addition, I am also a newly single mother with a pre-school student as well as a first grade student. Although I truly love what I do, the financial burdens that I had been facing started to really weigh on me.

I started teaching in the Clark County School District in the 2007-2008 school year. Getting through the year financially was really tough. I mean I was just keeping afloat. Wouldn't you know, my federal loans went into repayment and I had to start paying a pretty high loan payment. I really thought that was it. There was just no way that I could make it.

Within a few weeks of this I received word that I had gotten approved for this rental assistance program. It seemed like a miracle! It truly saved me and my children. Thank you from the deepest part of my heart for offering teachers like me a bit of relief from the financial burdens that we face.

Sincerely,

Candace Wagner

November 13, 2008

Dear City Council,

This is a letter to thank you for implementing the teacher housing project. It has been a blessing to receive that money every month. This is my second year in the district, and without the rental assistance I would be struggling to make ends meet. This assistance has allowed me to enjoy the city of Las Vegas and all that it has to offer. I take great pleasure in teaching my students and I do so at a wonderful school. I live close to where I teach, and this has all been possible because of the extra money I receive. Thank you again for allowing me the opportunity to be a resident of Las Vegas.

Sincerely,

Alysia Silvers

November 13, 2008

To Members of the City Council of Las Vegas:

I would like to take a moment to thank the City of Las Vegas for offering the Rental Assistance program to teachers, in the Clark County School District, like me. It truly is appreciated and needed by myself and my family.

I have been teaching and living in Las Vegas for the last 12 years and even though I have earned my Master's plus 32 (credits), I still find it hard to support my family of five on my salary.

Your program has allowed me to provide the little extras in life for my children; Sage 13, Dallas 8 and Grace 6. Dallas has been able to participate in little league, Sage was able to go to Boy Scout Camp last August, and the extra money has helped pay for Grace's cochlear implant mapping trips at UCLA medical center. I can't say enough how thankful I am to be a recipient of your generosity.

It is nice to know that this city, I call home, cares about the people who are dedicated to educating the children in this wonderful city.

Sincerely,

Mary Gutierrez
First Grade Teacher

November 14, 2008

Candace Wagner
300 Wisteria Ave.
Las Vegas, Nevada 89107

To the City Council of Las Vegas:

I want to start out by saying that I feel so blessed to have this assistance available to me. As a somewhat of a new teacher, my salary is still on the lower scale of the spectrum. In addition, I am also a newly single mother with a pre-school student as well as a first grade student. Although I truly love what I do, the financial burdens that I had been facing started to really weigh on me.

I started teaching in the Clark County School District in the 2007-2008 school year. Getting through the year financially was really tough. I mean I was just keeping afloat. Wouldn't you know, my federal loans went into repayment and I had to start paying a pretty high loan payment. I really thought that was it. There was just no way that I could make it.

Within a few weeks of this I received word that I had gotten approved for this rental assistance program. It seemed like a miracle! It truly saved me and my children. Thank you from the deepest part of my heart for offering teachers like me a bit of relief from the financial burdens that we face.

Sincerely,

Candace Wagner

October 15, 2008

To the members of the City Council:

I very much appreciate the financial assistance you have given me in the last few months. With the extra money I was able to buy school supplies, and to prepare for classes I had to take to clear my teaching license. Without the aid I would have had to take classes over the summer, but now I will be able to start my master program about a year earlier. Again I thank you very much for all your support.

Frank W Travis

Orr Middle School Math Teacher

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Levi Fay. I am a Mathematics teacher at Shadow Ridge High School, where I am now in my second year. I enjoy my job immensely and have to say that without the Rental Assistance Program, I would not be as effective an educator. Thanks to the City's generosity, I have been able to find a good home near my school. Living close to my school has allowed me to cut down on gas, which benefits not only me personally, but the environment as well. The reduced stress of living in a better home also makes me more available to my students.

Not only that, but this wonderful program has allowed my wife and I to start raising a family. We have a ten month old son, Ronan, and another little boy due in February. I'm sure that if they could talk, my children would say "Thank You" for helping us afford a decent home and having enough money to spend on educational books and toys.

The individuals administrating the program should also be recognized. Maureen Fox and Julie Morlacci have both been extremely helpful in getting me enrolled in the Rental Assistance Program. They are both friendly and knowledgeable.

In closing, I would just like to say thank you again from the bottom of my heart. It's been so nice as a new teacher to feel like I have a real support system to help me in the challenging, but rewarding, field of education.

Levi Fay
Shadow Ridge High School
Mathematics Department

October 7, 2008

Dear Las Vegas City Council,

I wanted to thank you for providing the rental and housing programs.

More than being a teacher through CCSD, I am also a single parent to two children. Through the rental program I am able to help my son with a few college expenses, my 4-year old daughter can attend dance classes through her pre-school, and I can save a few hundred a month to help with expenses when it comes time to own a home.

I know my words can not express what buying a home means to me; but I wanted you to know that it is one of the reasons why I'm staying in Las Vegas. I have wanted to own a home for my children since I graduated from college. As a never-married mom buying a house was an impossibility before this program. Now, in a few short months, I will be a first-time home buyer. The American dream will come to fruition.

You will always have my undying gratitude. And, though I know being a teacher here is one of the conditions, it is a joy to do so. Not only because I love teaching but because of how you have blessed my family and filled my heart with joy and possibility, I am making sure that I "Pay-It-Forward" with every student I meet by blessing them with all that I can.

Thank you for everything.

With great appreciation,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sandra Edwards".

Sandra Edwards
7808 Robinglen Ave
Las Vegas, NV 89131
702-727-7489
sledwards@interact.ccsd.net

October 6, 2008

Dear City Council of Las Vegas:


Without the City of Las Vegas Rental Assistance Program, I do not know where I would be today. I would most likely still have to live with my Mother or a roommate because even as a third year teacher I barely manage to get by now with the rental assistance. If my rental assistance was taken away my \$150-\$200 medical bills every month would drive me into debt.

My current state requires me to live off of the assistance of many other people. I have help from my family who all live in Las Vegas and I am not a person with expensive tastes. Being a teacher has forced me to make cuts on an already thin budget. I am lucky that I do not want much. I bring cup of noodle to lunch with me and I don't go out very much anymore. I often hear myself saying "I'll take care of that next month:"

Thank you, City of Las Vegas. Even though I remember everyday that the world forgot about teachers, the students and me, I know whoever put this program together didn't.

At least someone is doing right.

Thank you so much,
Brian Ballentine

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Brian Ballentine". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed name.

To the City of LV,

November 12, 2008

I wanted to send my heartfelt thank you to the city of Las Vegas for the rental assistance program for teachers. I am a 3rd year teacher trying to support my husband and myself while he is in school. The extra income has helped us have a little extra money - so we can afford an extra date-nite, a 2 bedroom apartment w/ a room for our office, money for healthier meals, food storage, and helped us not have to take out extra

school loans that are harder to come by now.

Much Thanks Again

w/

Sincere appreciation,

Kristin
Bunker



October 6, 2008

Dear City Council of Las Vegas:

The rental assistance program has changed my life. Last year I was struggling with what I was going to do for the 2008-2009 school year. As you know the income for a first year teacher is barely enough to live on. Once you pay rent, phone, gas, power, gas for the car, and groceries you barely have anything left over. I was considering moving home to Michigan to live with my parents to save up some money. But then at the end of the year I saw this program. The rental assistance program was a way for me to stay in the city of Las Vegas and enjoy a better quality of life.

So how has my life changed? To begin with I moved into the city of Las Vegas so that I could qualify for the program. I moved into an area that was a bit more expensive, but it is safer. Now I am not scared to go home at night, or to be alone in my apartment. This January I am going to be taking classes for my master's. I had been putting it off because I didn't want to go too far into debt out here. My application is currently being processed at UNLV. Last year, there were times that I could not afford to go out with my friends on the weekend or even just out for dinner. Now, I feel more comfortable going. The program really has changed my life here in Las Vegas.

Thank You for the rental assistance program. The program has enhanced my life. Now I can afford to live in the city of Las Vegas, take classes at UNLV, feel safe, and have fun with my friends. The program really has been life changing, and thank you for making that possible. Without this program I would not be here, and I'm so happy that I am here!

Sincerely,

Jillian Kruze

October 6, 2008

Dear City Council Members,

It has come to my attention that the City Council of Las Vegas will recognize the teacher housing project collaboration between the Clark County School District and the City of Las Vegas on November 19th, 2008. I wanted to extend a word of gratitude for this program on behalf of my family. When we moved to Las Vegas in August of 2007, we did not think we would ever be able to purchase a home on my teacher's salary. The housing project made it possible for us to put a down payment on a house. We are now settled and my four boys have plenty of room to grow up in our new home. We feel happy and secure.

Every day, I thank God, and feel so grateful for all that we have. Not only did the city help us purchase a home, but I would also like to mention a couple of other ways the city has helped my family. The boys have lots of fun at the community center's track break program. Every weekend, we enjoy the beautiful parks throughout the city. The kids love to go to the water playgrounds during the summer. When my parents visit from Omaha, Nebraska, even they are impressed with how lovely the city has made the local parks.

Again, I extend my thanks to the City of Las Vegas Council Members for helping to make home ownership a reality for us, and our city such a wonderful place to live.

With gratitude,

Christine Shaighan,
Grade 3 Track 2 Teacher
CCSD Edwards E.S.