

Albalris Farquhar, First Place Winner, Unsung Hero Category Excellence in Low-Income Housing and Tax Credit Management Awards, 2009

Management Company Name: AHC Management LLC
Name of Nominee: Albalris Farquhar
Name of Property: Gates of Ballston
No. of Income Restricted Units: 465



Alba has been a Leasing Consultant at the Gates of Ballston for more than two and a half years. She began working at the 464-unit community when the property was under renovation – a particularly challenging process.

During that time, Alba was responsible for helping 143 families that had to relocate while their apartments were being renovated. Of these families, 135 remained onsite and some chose to move two or three times because they wanted to return to their original apartments. Alba worked very hard to make the process as easy and stress-free as possible for residents. Thanks to her empathetic nature, more of the original households chose to stay at The Gates than is typical at other renovation projects in Arlington.

The key to Alba’s success is her welcoming and warm personality – she really cares about people and does her best to work with each family personally and meet their unique needs. “I try to make people feel comfortable, like it’s their home,” explains Alba. “I want to make them feel like they’re important and that we want them to live here.”

Alba’s personal touch has continued to help her successfully meet the challenges of the leasing process – before and after the property was completely renovated. Since she began at the Gates, Alba has rented about 340 apartments.

One of her supervisors uses four words to describe Alba’s approach to her job – dedicated, enthusiastic, motivated and pleasant. “Alba always approaches any assignment with the confidence to succeed,” says

Dennis Dorsey, AHC Management Vice President. “She always has a smile, and keeps everyone in a positive mood when completing difficult team assignments.”

Alba’s consideration and positive approach also help potential residents navigate the sometimes challenging aspects of filling out rental applications. She provides them information about potential community programs they can access, and helps them fill out all the forms. “A lot of people have no idea there are programs out there that can help them,” says Alba. “Sometimes people come in here and cry. I tell them don’t worry, we’ll do the most we can to make sure you have a place to live.”



Alba’s responsibilities include more than just working with potential residents. She also has to work closely with the property management staff to keep the apartments neat, clean and presentable for new tenants. She coordinates the Section 8 program with Arlington County as well.

Marketing the apartments is also her responsibility. She works hard developing strategies to make apartments more appealing. “She recently had the idea to set up a model to give people an idea of what the apartment would feel like with some personal touches,” says Richard Dickerson, Maintenance Director. “It really worked. The unit rented that next week. ”

She also works hard to keep residents happy once they’ve moved into The Gates of Ballston. “I anyone has a problem, we try to resolve it as fast as possible,” says Alba. “We try to maintain the property the best we can.”

It is the combination of Alba’s professionalism and personal touch that makes her such an Unsung Hero. She takes pride in going the extra mile to help people and to make them feel at home. “I remember everyone, and they always come back to see me,” she explains.

