

SHOWCASE OF THE MONTH

Picture Perfect on S. Aiken

By Aggie Brose Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

Friendship – The Showcase of the Month for June is 204 S. Aiken Ave. in the 8th Ward, City of Pittsburgh. According to the Allegheny County Real Estate website, the recorded owners are Michael and Holly Dolan who acquired the house in March 1991.

This property, built in 1910, is one of many outstanding homes on S. Aiken Avenue in the Friendship neighborhood. When you look at this house, it is “picture perfect,” from the decorative wrought-iron fence winding up to the front steps, to the porch’s meticulously painted wooden balusters and posts, to other vintage architectural features – everything is in pristine condition. The landscaping is simple but attractive. The house also has a unique garage door that complements the house.

Dolan told Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation staff that when he acquired the property, it was a three-family unit, and most of the houses on the block were also multi-unit. He stated that he was one of

the people who spearheaded conversion of S. Aiken’s grand old homes back to single-family. “People saw us put a lot of work into the house, and it gave them confidence that they could put dollars into their houses and fix them up, too.”

“We are very happy here in the Friendship area,” Dolan said. “It is a great neighborhood.” The Dolans have raised three children there, two of whom are now college age.

The Dolans also own three rental properties in the neighborhood within a block of their home. Dolan said he wants to be an inspiration to other landlords to bring good tenants into the neighborhood.

The Dolans are also very community-minded people who engage in neighborhood issues that affect the quality of life in their neighborhood.

The BGC congratulates the Dolans for their commitment and investment in the neighborhood of Friendship. ♦



ABOVE: This property is one of many gems on S. Aiken Avenue. Photo by Paula Martinac

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ENEC Tools Match Clients with “Perfect Job”

By Carolyn Ristau The Bulletin

Garfield – In the past year, the Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center (ENEC) has helped 239 local residents find jobs, over half at more than \$10 per hour. Through a partnership with the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation's Pittsburgh CONNECTS technology lab, computer software and workshops are available for people to develop the skills and confidence they need to get a new job or a promotion.

The ENEC, located at 5321 Penn Ave., is open to everyone, not just the unemployed. “You don't have to be out of work to come here,” said Bill Freed, workforce coordinator at ENEC. “You don't have to hate your job.” It is ENEC's mission to help “people get the right job,” Freed explained. ENEC even helps those new to the job market to replace or supplement job experiences with what Freed calls “pride experiences”—for example, raising a family or getting good grades.

A new seminar series at ENEC uses software and online skills-matching tools to help local residents enhance their relationships and careers and find the best vocation or college major for them. “This series helped a local mother advance her career at Highmark,” explained Freed. The services work like a dating website, assessing a client's personal inclinations and skills and matching them to the perfect job.

The ENEC uses a three-step process: a self assessment, a job market assessment and a decision-making process. The Holland Codes assessment, one of the programs provided by Pittsburgh CONNECTS, asks 180 short questions about interests, abilities and temperament to determine personality

type. For example, are you realistic, artistic or investigative? It then creates a list of occupations compatible with the answers. Once the information is gathered, ENEC staff members show residents how to use the assessments to the best advantage in choosing and applying for jobs.

In addition to looking at people's skills and educational background, the ENEC considers the barriers individuals may be facing. “We help you think proactively about what your barriers are so you can get the job,” Freed explained.

The results affect more aspects of people's lives than just their careers. “In our mission to help people in career and workforce development know themselves, know the market and make the match, we can help them plan ways to continually improve themselves across several aspects of their lives in learning, earning and wellness,” Freed said.

Through Pittsburgh CONNECTS, ENEC uses the Department of Labor's career exploration services (O*Net) and other assessments to provide local residents with self-improvement counseling that would cost hundreds of dollars elsewhere, but is free at ENEC's sessions. These programs will be installed in the three other Pittsburgh CONNECTS labs in Homewood, the Hill District and Southside Hilltop.

For more information on the seminars and sessions ENEC offers, call Gina Grubb at 412-362-8580. The ENEC offices are open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., and weekends from noon to 6 p.m. ♦