



AFFORDABLE HOUSING RESIDENT PROFILE

Luz Serrano

Luz Serrano, a widow, moved from her home in Puerto Rico to Arlington, searching for a new beginning and a better school system for her two children, Ezequiel, 11, and Sarahi, 13. Unemployed, she qualified for federal Section 8 rent assistance for low-income applicants.

When they first arrived in Arlington, Luz and her family shared a room at a friend's house for three months as she searched for an apartment they could afford. Under Section 8, she would pay approximately 30 percent of her adjusted gross income toward rent, and the program would pay the remaining amount directly to the landlord.

A Paradigm Management Company billboard advertising low-income apartments for rent in Arlington led Luz to her new home. She wrote down the number on the billboard and asked a friend who spoke English to call Paradigm on her behalf.

A representative from Paradigm showed Luz a three-bedroom, one-and-a-half-bath apartment in the Cameron Commons Apartment, a Section 8 housing complex the company manages in the High View Park community.

“When I saw the unit, I knew this was the place for me and my family,” said Luz. “The unit has a great environment—lots of light. And the area is clean.”

To qualify, Luz had to document her income and provide other housing-related information the program requires. Two weeks after qualifying for Section 8 assistance, Luz received a call from Paradigm informing her that she was approved for the unit. After a quick inspection and a \$450 deposit, Luz and her two children had found a place to live.

Luz pays \$150 a month plus utilities for an apartment that would cost \$1,270 in the current rental market. Her rent will stay the same for as long as she is enrolled in language school.

