



October 13, 2021

African Career, Education and Resource Inc. (ACER)

Re: Tenants at Georgetown Park Apartments protest management’s predatory practices after a single mother of 3 has her car unfairly towed

Brooklyn Park, MN — On October 5, 2021, members of nonprofit African Career, Education and Resource Inc. (ACER) joined Georgetown Park tenants in solidarity with the tenants’ protest against new management. Tenants claim management engages in predatory and abusive practices against venerable members of the Brooklyn Park community.

Georgetown tenants and ACER, a nonprofit focused on supporting African immigrants in the Northwestern Minneapolis suburbs, rallied outside the leasing office to decry the towing of a Santa Fe belonging to a tenant—a disabled single mother of 3 children who works night shifts at a low-income job. Tenants say this particularly egregious incident was the final straw in a string of harmful incidents making living at Georgetown unbearable. Before the protest, the mother’s car was towed by Schmit Towing, contracted by Georgetown Park management. This occurred despite a handicapped parking permit being visible on the dashboard of her vehicle. Despite pleas and calls to management and the towing company by the mother and ACER organizers, her car was impounded for over a month and accrued over \$3,500 in fees while Schmit Towing demanded the vehicle title. The tenant filed a lawsuit, but if Schmit Towing sold the vehicle, her case would be jeopardized as the evidence of her parking permit could be lost. After pressure from tenants and ACER organizers, as well as the threat of a protest at their offices, Schmit Towing admitted that the tenant had a parking permit and agreed to return her vehicle.

However, the protest continued, moving outside the Georgetown Park leasing office. The organizers felt they had to continue the protest; they believed that this towing incident was just one example of a long history of predatory practices condoned and perpetuated by management. Tenant Organizer, Lovetee, gathered a group of tenants to voice their complaints to management. Tenants spoke against:

- **Lack of Maintenance:** Tenants allege that management is slow to follow up on maintenance issues and some have said they have been forced to spend their own money on critical repairs or replacing items such as refrigerators.
- **Lack of Communication:** Tenants allege that management is “very quiet” about their actions. They claim new management rarely gives reasons for their actions, so tenants feel they are left in the dark.

- **Retaliation:** Tenants allege that management engages in retaliation against outspoken tenants by not renewing their leases when they complain.
- **Rudeness & Racism:** Tenants allege that new management are rude, disrespectful, and racist towards the predominantly BIPOC residents.
- **“Self-Evictions” / Non-Renewals:** Tenants allege that actions taken by new management have forced people out of the complex. It was said that 3 tenants will be forced out through non-renewal of their lease and 4 former tenants have “self-evicted” because of retaliation and poor management.

Tenants and ACER say this is not the last time they will organize. The group is continuing its work during its bi-monthly meetings to address tenants’ issues and make plans going forward.

**African Career, Education and Resource
(ACER)**
6800 78th Avenue, Suite 101,
Brooklyn Park, MN 55445
info@acerinc.org
763-657-7711
www.acerinc.org

Contacts:

Communications Manager:

Agnes Omwoyo | aomwoyo@acerinc.org

Executive Director:

Nelima Sitati Munene | nelima@acerinc.org