

News from Henry Street

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Winter 2006



A Credit Suisse volunteer shoulders three campers during a visit to Camp Ralph and Rose Hittman in July.

Neighborhood Resource Center Makes Connections

Comprehensive case-management approach integrates HSS services

Getting by as a new immigrant is tough enough. To be a non-English-speaker with three children in a one-bedroom apartment, living on food stamps and a \$9-an-hour factory job, owing back rent, and getting little or no financial support from one's spouse would be enough to make almost anyone hopeless. Yet hope is exactly what Ms. A, an Asian woman in this situation, found when she turned to Henry Street's newest service, the Neighborhood Resource Center (NRC), for assistance.

The NRC, funded in part by the Robin Hood Foundation and the American Red Cross, provides individuals and families with comprehensive case management and access to Henry Street programs, crisis intervention services, and referrals for free legal assistance, financial counseling, and other vital services. The NRC opened in its permanent location at 281 East Broadway in July. Since January 2005, it had been operating out of Henry Street's Community Consultation Center (CCC) at 40 Montgomery Street. The new site features a consumer-friendly, holistic service structure, using what is termed a "bio-psychosocial needs assessment model," in other words, evaluating all areas of clients' lives, addressing both current and potential crises, and providing for simultaneous interventions that can lead to more rapid stabilization. The NRC team is led by Lorraine Ahto, Deputy Program Officer of the Health and Wellness service cluster.

When Ms. A visited Henry Street's Workforce Development Center to improve her job skills, an intake worker who recognized problems beyond her employment status referred her to the NRC. Her initial consultation revealed a history of emotional abuse from her husband. Also, she was evicted by her brother-in-law, who owned the house where she lived, and who she claimed had made threats to her life after she had made allegations to the police that he was abusing her sister.

The NRC broke the language barrier and partnered with a shelter worker to help her access safe housing services after obtaining an order of protection against her brother-in-law. She now lives in another borough near her children's school. The center's ongoing advocacy connects her to mental health

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left: The Neighborhood Resource Center opened in its permanent location at 281 East Broadway in July.

Speaking in Chinese, Case Worker Yoke Chai consults with a client. Nearly 1,000 individuals have benefited from the Neighborhood Resource Center's on-site direct services.



photos: Eric Walter

Volunteers Make Vibrant Contributions

Henry Street Settlement is grateful for the support and hard work of the hundreds of corporate volunteers who passed through our doors in droves this year. "While volunteers have worked at Henry Street throughout our history, the interest in giving back to our community has grown significantly over the past 10 years," states Catherine Cullen, Chief Officer for Operations. "To make a volunteer's time meaningful and productive, it requires a great deal

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The flowerbeds in front of 265 Henry Street get a makeover from Goldman Sachs visitors in May.

below: An NBC Universal volunteer decorates Abrons Arts Center for the Halloween Extravaganza.



photos: Sari Weintraub

Letter from the Chief Executive Officer

Making Our Strategic Plan a Reality

This is the latest in a series of updates sharing the progress of our strategic planning initiative. In the fall of 2004, we began to develop and articulate a coherent vision for Henry Street Settlement. The plan has two phases. In Phase I, we will implement strategies to enhance our programmatic effectiveness and increase our investment in staff. Phase II focuses on our capital resources and how to ensure that we maximize the use of our physical plant and real estate to most efficiently meet the needs of all programs. I will address Phase II at greater length in future letters.

During Phase I, we are clustering our core services into four primary divisions to improve collaboration and integration among programs. The **Health and Wellness** service cluster includes the Community Consultation Center and Home Care and Senior Services. **Youth and Workforce Development** consists of the education, training and development programs offered by Youth Services and the Workforce Development Center. **Visual and Performing Arts** includes the arts education, pre-professional training, and cultural programs at Abrons Arts Center. And **Shelter and Transitional Services** includes our three homeless shelters, housing for survivors of domestic violence and all programs that support these individuals and families in their transition to self-sufficiency.

Phase I also calls for an enhanced administrative support structure, which includes a Chief Program Officer to lead the programmatic team. Diane Rubin filled the new position in December. (See related article on p. 4.) Diane takes primary responsibility for programming so I can devote significantly more time to fundraising and other government and external relationships critical to Henry Street's future and stability.

Despite employing over 900 people, Henry Street Settlement has been functioning without a formal human resources department throughout its long history. To remedy this, we recently began a search for a Human Resources Manager.

As another way to support staff, we are pleased to announce that we renegotiated our contracts to cover annual cost of living adjustments (COLA). An annual COLA, with a minimum wage increase, was announced in November 2005.

Finally, we began working with a marketing firm on a *pro bono* basis to consult in the formation of some unified messages about the agency. We have every confidence that with each step forward we take in our strategic directives, messages of inspiration will be more and more self-evident.

Good luck to you in 2006!
And thank you for your continued support and interest.



Verona Middleton-Jeter



Visitors from Morgan Stanley green and preen in Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park at 265 Henry Street in June.

Volunteers continued from p. 1

of advance coordination and planning.” Cullen gives special thanks to Credit Suisse, who funded the creation of a volunteer program that helps the Settlement match corporate and individual volunteers with significant projects throughout the agency.

Last summer **American Express** volunteers organized a carnival at Sol

Lain playground and built new bunk beds at Camp Ralph and Rose Hittman. A team from **Citigroup** painted the corridors of the 301 Henry Street day care center. A **Morgan Stanley** crew planted, clipped and trimmed at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park, adjacent to 265 Henry St. **Merrill Lynch** volunteers did the same; painted interiors at 265 Henry Street, the Senior Center, and the 301 Henry Street student residence; and gardened and painted the fence at Abrons Arts Center. **Goldman Sachs** volunteers planted flowers and installed iron guards in the flowerbeds at 265 Henry Street, painted the front steps of Nos. 263 and 265, and planted and tidied up in the courtyard at the site. **Bank of Tokyo Mitsubishi** did garden work as well. And advertising agency **Margeotes Fertitta & Partners** (now Margeotes Fertitta Powell) beautified and brightened the Urban Family Center's community room.

Credit Suisse seemed to spend an entire summer on Henry Street. Several groups gardened and painted in MLK Park, planted flowers at Urban Family Center (UFC), played outdoor games with youngsters at Camp Ralph and Rose Hittman, and produced a “Crazy Carnival” for Camp Henry children at Sol Lain Playground.

below:
A Credit Suisse volunteer helps children decorate cookies at the Urban Family Center holiday party.





Neighborhood Resource Center (continued from p1)

counseling services and provides her with free tax preparation and guidance and assistance in legally separating from her husband, applying for affordable housing and researching schools near her workplace.

“Many of the services she needed are available right here through the Settlement,” says NRC Director Vita Iacovone, LCSW, BCD. To date, almost 1,000 individuals have benefited in this way from the Neighborhood Resource Center’s on-site direct services.

The NRC plays a vital role in developing systemic communication and cooperation among all Henry Street divisions. The comprehensive service model is a vision of Chief Executive Officer Verona Middleton-Jeter and was brought to fruition following the devastating impact of 9/11 on the Lower East Side. Henry Street Settlement set out to assist those affected by the disaster by providing referral, assessment, case management, crisis counseling, mental health and well-being services, public entitlement advisement, child care information, assistance to displaced and underemployed workers, small-business assistance, and legal needs—tools to help the average person, particularly immigrants, negotiate the overbearing bureaucracy of assistance programs. “The community needed guidance to access social services,” says Middleton-Jeter.

“If there’s anything 9/11 taught us it’s that we had to pull things together,” echoes CCC Co-Director Florence Samperi.

Four years after the tragedy, unmet needs persist in the community. The NRC’s successful model continues to provide direct and immediate service. Take the case of a Mr. B, a Latino man referred in February 2005, who lost his job as a downtown salesperson in post-9/11 recession layoffs. He had already received help from another agency to prevent eviction from his apartment, and he had secured full-time work on his own, but he still owed back rent. NRC case workers learned his wages were being erroneously garnished for child support for a 20-year-old son, a problem solved by working with the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance. With the higher income and more hours at work, he gained self-sufficiency. The center helped him secure a grant from Catholic Charities to fully pay the rent he owed. An NRC social worker referred him for a psychiatric evaluation so he could begin to manage the anger he felt about his past financial problems and life situations, and he has since been seen weekly at the CCC for individual therapy.



Julia Rosner, an attorney from Legal Services for New York City, assists NRC clients with a range of services, including family, housing, benefits, consumer and education law.

photos: Sari Weintraub

The Neighborhood Resource Center ensures that someone who receives services from one Henry Street program will not leave the agency with other problems going undiscovered and unassisted. The NRC philosophy is that of prevention and early intervention to promote health and

wellness and avoid chronic problems. Its focus is on overall life-management skills that lead to an enhanced quality of life. The idea, says Samperi, is to leave clients with the knowledge and tools they need to lift themselves out of economically compromised positions. To that end, NRC clients have access to what Samperi and Ahto call “education for living,” including workshops on housing, finances, and legal issues.

NRC services are free for everyone who lives or works in Lower Manhattan. The Center is open throughout the work week.

In December 2005, about 45 Credit Suisse volunteers hopped a bus bound for UFC to bring a family-style party to the children in residence. The crew wasted no time in completely illuminating the trees, hedges and handrails outside in the courtyard with strings of lights and bright ornaments. Rows and rows of sweets greeted the children and their families inside and out, as well as urns of steaming hot cider and cocoa. A decorated tree was set up inside where children could get their picture taken with Santa. The community room downstairs was transformed into a holiday workshop where children personalized frames for their photos and decorated their own cookies with icing and candy.

Volunteers from the **New York Stock Exchange** traveled to Harriman State Park in August for a play date with the youths at Camp Hittman. Michael Malave, who coordinated the event for NYSE, says he and his colleagues had a great day with the Henry Street kids. In an email he sent the day after the event, he said: “Based on the dozens of emails and countless phone calls I’ve received this morning, it’s pretty safe to say that the event...was a tremendous success!...Exchange employees, consisting primarily of attorneys, were pleasantly surprised at the level of care and professionalism...I wanted to take this opportunity to inform you of how fortunate Henry Street Settlement is to have such faithful, tireless and hard-working people...working with you.”

In September, Henry Street’s Senior Services division held its annual block party, funded by **UBS Financial Services** and coordinated by volunteers from the firm. Seniors were treated to a picnic buffet and a live outdoor band.

NBC Universal continued a mentorship program that teams up volunteer executives with Boys and Girls Republic youths. NBC also served about 500 children from the community at Henry Street’s Halloween Extravaganza, hosted at Abrons Arts Center. Volunteers packed giveaway bags with candy, decorated the interior of the Arts Center and created a festive welcome area on the front steps of the building. One delighted parent remarked, “This event handles everything in one shot, haunted house, show, candy. I am so glad that this is taking place, because I wanted to do something with my daughter before I have to go to work.”



New Leaders Join Henry Street at Critical Time of Strategic Transition

Chief Program Officer Diane Rubin (l) and Deputy Program Officer of Youth Services and Workforce Development Gregory Rideout (r).

New Chief Program Officer Sets Standard

The new position of Chief Program Officer is an outgrowth of the strategic plan. (See related article on p. 2.) In that role since December, Diane Rubin takes primary responsibility for agency programming.

“What excited me was the creation of a new position and its implementation at an agency with such a long and wonderful history, says Rubin.” She looks forward to working with the staff to “make what’s great even greater.”

She says she hopes to bring her knowledge of community centers, systems, and funding sources to bear on her work at the Settlement. She wants the Henry Street leaders to know that they have someone they can access whenever they need to. “I can help become the glue among the different divisions,” she says, “working among all the chiefs, helping to integrate.” Looking from one level up, she says, she may be able to see opportunities for collaboration that may not be apparent to others.

This level of leadership will come naturally to Rubin, who worked for 22 years at Riverdale YM-YWHA in the Bronx. She served there as executive director for 19 years, having started as assistant executive director. Prior to that she coordinated a single-parent family center at the Flushing YM-YWHA, in the '70s.

Rubin may be an administrator, but she says she’s a social worker at heart. She has a graduate degree from Hunter College School of Social Work.

She has found Henry Street to be a welcoming environment. “I am so impressed by the quality and scope of services and the professionalism of the staff,” she says. “And I’m impressed by the amount of staff with longevity. It’s something a not-for-profit should be proud of, that among high-level staff there is not a lot of turnover.” There must be a reason to stick around so long, she figures. Now it’s time to find out why.

New Youth Services Chief Administrator Hits Ground Running

Gregory Rideout traded an office in Brooklyn for workday accommodations on the Lower East Side when he assumed the role of Chief Administrator of Henry Street’s Youth Services division in September. He replaces Nilsa Pietri, who transferred last summer to another program.

As directed by Henry Street’s new strategic plan, the Youth Services and Workforce Development divisions are being folded into a single service cluster. Rideout will serve as the Deputy Program Officer for Youth and Workforce Development, a new position at Henry Street, with the primary function of ensuring collaboration between the two divisions. (See related article on p. 2.) They have already forged linkages by transitioning young people from the youth employment program, who are not going on to college, into Workforce Development programs.

Most recently Rideout served as Director of the Brooklyn West Family Center of Catholic Charities of Brooklyn and Queens. He’s been in the social services field for 10 years, focusing on program administration. Prior to his work in New York, he was a youth therapist and shelter coordinator in St. Louis, working mainly with adolescents. He earned his master’s degree in social work in St. Louis, at Washington University.

Rideout says the new job has been a good fit for him. “I like the settlement house concept and the ability to provide a continuum of services to a community,” he says. ■



Camp Ralph & Rose Hittman, summer of 2005

Sign Up for Summer Camp

Henry Street Settlement offers three exciting summer camp experiences for youngsters ages 6 to 14.

Camp Ralph & Rose Hittman

A chance of a lifetime for many city kids, this sleep-away camp for boys and girls is located in Harriman State Park, New York.

For more information, call: 212.686.8888.

Camp Henry

The city is our oyster with dozens of daily recreational and enrichment activities and extended after-care programs for working families.

For more information, call: 212.254.3100.

Barbara L. Tate Summer Arts Camp

Five weeks of arts education at Abrons Arts Center, including visits from practicing artists, weekly field trips to cultural attractions and performance opportunities.

For more information, call: 212.598.0400.

Registration begins in March.

For a more information about registration, a full schedule and applications, please visit us online at www.henrystreet.org/summercamp.

Barbara L. Tate Summer Arts Camp, summer of 2005



Successful



Honors Philanthropic Leaders



Ken Wittenburg



Patrick McMullen

top: Honorees Michael L. Eskew, Chairman and CEO of UPS, and Kenneth I. Chenault, Chairman and CEO of American Express Company, with Henry Street Executive Director Verona Middleton-Jeter (c).

bottom: Event Co-Chair Pilar Crespi Robert models an art deco diamond-studded bracelet up for auction at the Henry Street Settlement Fall Gala.

Henry Street Settlement presented its annual gala, a dinner dance and auction, on October 25, 2005, at the Puck Building in SoHo. The annual benefit is a chance to recognize individuals for their humanitarian efforts and philanthropic contributions to both New York City and to the Settlement. This year, the event honored Kenneth I. Chenault, Chairman and CEO of American Express Company, and Michael L. Eskew, Chairman and CEO of UPS.

About 450 distinguished guests and volunteers attended the event. A live and silent auction that night and sales of tickets to the gala raised \$750,000 for the Settlement. These proceeds are a direct, critical funding source for the social and health services and community arts programs Henry Street Settlement provides for more than 60,000 New Yorkers each year.

The gala's title, Raj, as well as exuberant décor in violet and jade and dramatic sprays of peacock feathers and palm fronds, evoked the evening's Indian-inspired theme. No less lavish were the gowns of the ladies in attendance, who seemed to inspire torrents of photographers' flashes at every turn.

The live auction followed dinner and was conducted by Auctioneer George McNeely of Christie's. A diamond-studded Art Deco bracelet/tiara, a luxury tour through India, and dinner for 12 at home served on stunning Christofle table service and prepared by Chef Daniel Bouloud, were just three of the fantastic prizes available. A showcase of silent auction items, including designer goods and accessories, exclusive services and dream getaways, were on view for bidding throughout the evening.

This year's event Co-Chairs were Pilar Crespi Robert, Valesca Guerrand Hermes, Eva Jeanbart-Lorenzotti, Cynthia Lufkin and Laurie Weltz. Henry Street would like to thank the New Dimension Committee, composed of Chair Anna Porcella Pinheiro, Frederick Anderson, Francisco Costa, Sebastian Echavarria, Zani Gugelmann, Douglas Hannant, Tinsley Mortimer, and Annelise Peterson. ■



Patrick McMullen

Henry Street Board Member and event co-chair Eva Jeanbart-Lorenzotti arrives.

below: Henry Street Board Chairman Bob Harrison and Henry Street Board President Dale Burch.



Ken Wittenburg

Rita Abrons Aranow and Client Successes Lauded at Workforce Development Center Dedication

At the formal Workforce Development Center (WDC) dedication, Henry Street Settlement officially thanked Rita Abrons Aranow and her family for the support that has led to the Center's success. Aranow's \$3 million gift enabled the Settlement to create a state-of-the-art facility and continues to sustain its programs.

David Hansell, chief of staff at the New York City Human Resources Administration, attended the dedication. Henry Street Settlement has one of the best records of any partner agency, he says. He calls the WDC in particular a model program: Henry Street's efforts are community based; its "wrap-around" services attack problems from several angles; the WDC has one of the best placement rates of any workforce center; and WDC clients typically have the highest wages and the lowest recidivism.



Ken Wittenburg



Josefina Santelli

The dedication was also an occasion to recognize four outstanding clients with a "Pathway to Self-Sufficiency" award. Ellen Logan, an outreach manager at Brooklyn Outreach Services, said she struggled with addiction for 37 years and repeatedly ended up in prison before she came through the WDC. Marvin Mendez, after graduating from WDC's STRIVE program, entered the NPower New York Technology Service Corps, an IT training program that prepared him for his current full-time Technical Analyst internship at Accenture. And Frandy Rubio, who started in Henry Street's Summer Youth Employment program, worked as a mechanic at Recycle-a-Bicycle, a WDC-run repair shop, where he is currently the webmaster. He earned his GED, was accepted into Americorps and is now researching business colleges. Lucy Li Zhen Liang, a housekeeping attendant for a group of hotels in New York City not present at the dedication, also received the award.

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