

LENOX HILL NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE

NEWSLETTER



Neighborhood House Helps Distribute Covid-19 Vaccinations to Older New Yorkers

We were proud to serve as a Covid-19 pop-up vaccination site, in partnership with the New York City Department for the Aging, the New York City Housing Authority, NYC Health + Hospitals, the Vaccination Command Center and Rapid Reliable Testing, to distribute vaccinations to hundreds of our older adult clients and vulnerable neighbors and to some of our essential frontline staff. We worked tirelessly to rapidly convert one of our Older Adult Centers into a safe and efficient pop-up location to serve our neighbors. Our Neighborhood House community is so resilient—we remain dedicated to protecting the health and safety of our clients, our staff and our entire East Side community!

Women's Shelter Clients Find Solace in New Walking Group

Our teams continue to provide unique and empowering experiences for our clients that strengthen their physical and mental health. As part of our ongoing Health Promotion Series at our Women's Mental Health Shelter, Nurse Manager Maya Buchhalter introduced "Mondays with Maya...a Walk in the Park." What began as a way for clients to create a safe space to walk and talk outside of our Shelter blossomed into an inspiring and adventurous experience for the group as they explored Bethesda Fountain, danced to live music and enjoyed the beautiful scenery. As Maya shares, "in this group we get to talk to each other on a more personal level, not as a nurse and patient, but person-to-person. We talk about their friends and families—other times we don't talk at all and that's okay. Sometimes simply sharing space with someone and people-watching is a form of therapeutic communication."



IN THIS ISSUE

4 Older Adults Benefit from
Expanded Tech Assistance

6 Staff Spotlights: Ijeoma Okeke
and Anthony Snowden

9 Teaching Kitchen Chefs Present at
the Culinary Institute

Acclaimed Chef Creates Recipe for Our Clients and Spreads Holiday Cheer

It is always such a treat to work with our dear friend and renowned chef, writer and three-time James Beard Award nominee Natasha Pickowicz, the genius pastry chef formerly at New York's acclaimed Café Altro Paradiso and Flora Bar at the Met Breuer. Natasha joined our chefs in our kitchen for a livestream cooking demo of *Springtime Fried Rice*, a special recipe she created just for us and our clients in honor of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. The dish, which Natasha refers to as "the food of my childhood," features leftover whole grains, wilting greens, odds and ends—a fridge-cleaning recipe of which no two iterations taste the same. Not to be outdone, Natasha and our *Teaching Kitchen* Chefs hosted a very special holiday cookie decorating workshop for members of our Older Adult Centers. Together the group used natural dyes made from turmeric, matcha, beets and more, and delicate toppings such as dried orange peels and flower petals, to create intricate and delicious edible works of art. Our thanks to Natasha for her remarkable dedication to our Neighborhood House community!



NYU Partnerships Enhance Children's Learning and Development

Our Early Childhood Center's longstanding partnership with New York University helps us to provide critical services and resources to our low-income children and families. During free on-site dental screenings with NYU College of Dentistry, our young learners were bursting with curiosity on ways to keep their teeth clean, healthy eating habits and the importance of proper dental care. As many of our students are dual language learners, we are proud to continue our work with NYU Steinhardt's Department of Communicative Sciences and Disorders, which provides bilingual speech interns for one-on-one sessions with our students and offers essential classroom supports. We also welcomed student teachers from NYU's Teacher Education program, who immerse themselves in our classrooms by facilitating exciting group activities for our preschoolers. Additionally, NYU's School of Occupational Therapy sends multiple students every year during their pediatric rotations to work with our classrooms and coordinate activities to support the children's fine motor growth. Deputy Director of Early Childhood Center Janette Newman shares that "these NYU partnerships enhance our program tremendously by providing a learning experience for students and teachers. The NYU students bring an eagerness to learn and grow their skills and our staff have the opportunity to teach, supervise and serve as leaders in helping future colleagues grow in the profession. Our children benefit greatly by receiving individualized instruction, support and guidance from additional specialists training in the field."

Burmese Health Care Workers Improve Their English Language Skills Virtually



We welcomed a new group of inspiring students living and zooming in from Myanmar! The group of Burmese health care workers, who came to us through one of our longtime ESOL participants, have been loving their new English Conversation Class. Adult Education Coordinator Allison Horwitz shares that the course "provides levity and distraction from the chaos of their everyday lives." Allison engages the group in check-ins, utilizes mood boards and focuses on various aspects of functional English to give the students practical tools to improve their language skills. Together the students focus their efforts on a multitude of topics, such as social media and debate, and discuss the meanings of new words and idiomatic expressions. We are so honored to offer this virtual class to these resilient and heroic students—their stories and dedication to their community continue to inspire us!

Clients Benefit from Eye Clinics with Helen Keller International

We were pleased to partner again with Helen Keller International to host free on-site eye clinics at our Older Adult Centers, Early Childhood Center, Women's Mental Health Shelter and Casa Mutua supportive housing residence. Helen Keller International is a global health organization dedicated to eliminating preventable vision loss, malnutrition and diseases of poverty. Through our partnership, hundreds of our clients received free vision screenings. After their in-depth optometry exams, clients selected frames and then received their new prescription glasses. Individuals with more complex vision needs were linked with community-based referrals for additional vision services.



Northwell Health Highlights Successes at Our Women's Shelter

Our partners Northwell Health and Lenox Hill Hospital, who provide a weekly medical clinic for clients at our Women's Mental Health Shelter, visited for a special filming session to highlight the benefits of this wonderful on-site medical service. In coordination with our medical staff, these providers led by Dr. Soyoun Im, a specialist in Internal Medicine at Northwell Health, visit each week to offer direct primary medical services such as exams, necessary treatment and prescriptions, education, counseling and referrals. Ms. P, who has resided at our shelter since March 2020, shared her experiences being treated by Dr. Im as well as her journey through homelessness and living with mental illness—and the exciting news that she is moving into her own apartment! Clinical Director Rhonda Fuller boasts that “Ms. P’s energetic and warm spirit brings joy and a smile to our team whenever she is here.”



Older Adult Neighbors Benefit from Expanded Technology Assistance

The Covid-19 crisis has magnified the critical need for older adults to utilize technology to assist with their daily lives and remain safe and engaged with the world around them. Adding to our already robust Adult Education programming, we expanded our technology offerings to provide even more free assistance to our older adult community. We ramped up our remote and in-person group technology classes for members of our Older Adult Centers, offering weekly courses in PC and Mac Basics, Tech Skills for Job Searching, Password Management, E-Commerce and more. Our members also benefit from one-on-one sessions with our many technology volunteers to obtain specialized and individualized training. As Volunteer John Yi said, “I wanted to volunteer because technology has become increasingly important for our older adults, especially in staying connected with others and navigating everyday life. I really enjoy being able to help with their various tech-related questions so that they feel more comfortable with their devices.” To learn more or sign up for a scheduled Tech Help session, please contact us at 212-218-0477 or adulded@lenoxhill.org.



Thanksgiving Celebrations Around the Neighborhood

We were thrilled to present two fabulous weeks of Thanksgiving Celebrations for our older adult community. Members enjoyed concerts, cooking workshops, social hours and more, both in-person and through virtual events, to stay connected and kick off the holiday season. Of course, it would not be Thanksgiving without our traditional Lenox Hill Neighborhood House feast! Our talented chefs prepared a delicious farm-to-table dinner with all the fixings, available for pickup at our two Older Adult Centers and delivered to many of our homebound clients. The meals also included personalized artwork and greeting cards created by young artists in our Early Childhood Center and RealArts After School program.

We also distributed turkeys, local produce and desserts, along with recipes from our chefs, to our Early Childhood Center families so that they could prepare and enjoy a special holiday dinner at home. With so many of our clients struggling, providing delicious meals, engaging programming and warm holiday cheer was critical in spreading connection and gratitude in our community.



Casa Mutua Continues to Serve as a Model in Supportive Housing

Tania Cortes, Director of our Casa Mutua supportive housing residence in East Harlem, was a featured panelist in a special presentation hosted by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene for programs serving individuals living with mental illness. Tania shared strategies and challenges with vaccine confidence in the mental health community and highlighted our own successes at Casa Mutua throughout the pandemic. We continue to make significant capital improvements so that our residence is a beautiful and welcoming home for our 54 tenants: we have renovated many apartments, hung new artwork and improved the landscaping in our garden.

Staff Spotlights

Ijeoma Okeke, DNP, APN-c, Director of Psychiatric Services

Dr. Ije joined us in 2021 as our inaugural Director of Psychiatric Services at the Women's Mental Health Shelter as we continue to expand vital on-site services for our clients. In her career, Dr. Ije has worked with children, adolescents, adults and older adults providing care and treating behavioral health, substance use and physical health diagnoses in private practice, hospitals and community-based programs. Through her experiences assisting diverse populations, Dr. Ije developed a passion for psychiatry. "Once I had my first psychiatric job working with older adults, I realized this was the field I was supposed to be in all along."

Dr. Ije enjoys working with the women at our shelter as it allows her to utilize the knowledge and skills she has acquired to make a profound difference in the lives of our clients. "I feel honored to be a part of a clinical team that does excellent work with our clients. These are very strong women who work against the odds to continue in their journey to housing." Dr. Ije is dual certified in Adult Health and Psychiatry by the American Nurses Credentialing Center and is a licensed Adult Nurse Practitioner and Licensed Registered Nurse. She is a graduate of Middlesex County College (AS, Respiratory Care), The College of New Jersey (BS, Nursing), University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (MS, Nursing/Adult Health Nurse Practitioner), Chatham University (Doctorate, Nursing Practice) and Rutgers University (Post Masters Certificate, Family Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner).



Anthony Snowden, Volunteer Director



Anthony Snowden has been leading our robust Volunteer program for more than 17 years and has played an integral role in shaping our efforts to meet the needs of our community. The Neighborhood House relies on more than 1,100 volunteers each year to use their unique skills, talents and experiences to enrich our programs for thousands of New Yorkers. Throughout the pandemic, our volunteers have remained committed and continue to uplift our neighbors who depend on us. "I have found that there is an eagerness within the volunteering community, even during this crisis," Anthony shares. "People truly want to help members of their New York community right now!"

Anthony values his ability to work with such a diverse group of volunteers and clients who benefit from our programs. "The most important aspect of my role is helping people in all different phases of their life." Our volunteers range from teenagers who are discovering what they want to do with their futures to older adults exploring new interests and skills. Prior to joining us 17 years ago, Anthony served as Volunteer Director at the New York Botanical Garden and previously worked at Citymeals on Wheels and Catholic Big Brothers. Anthony is a graduate of Tufts University and received his MS in Museum Education from the Bank Street College of Education.



JOIN US FOR AN EVENING OF
MAGNIFICENT DESIGN

*A Garden of
Earthly Delights!*

THE SPRING GALA CELEBRATION TO BENEFIT
LENOX HILL NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE

Honoring Elizabeth P. Munson for Her Remarkable Leadership
and

Presenting the Elizabeth Rohatyn Awards for Community Service to Marian Detelj and Lila Gimbel

THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 2022 | CIPRIANI 42ND STREET
COCKTAILS | DINNER | DANCING
MEDIA SPONSOR: NYC&G

Featuring breathtaking tablescapes from more than 40 renowned designers.

NYC&G
New York Cottages and Gardens
Table designed by Harry Heissmann Inc.
Photograph by Roberto Ricci D'Antonio

For more information visit
LenoxHill.org/SpringGala or call 212-218-0544.



Students Embrace Fall at Annual Harvest Festival

Our Early Childhood Center students and teachers were filled with joy and laughter as they presented our annual Harvest Festival in collaboration with our talented Visual and Performing Arts Department. The children sang original harvest songs to accompany their choreographed dances and took their bows in front of great applause from their schoolmates. In preparation, students crafted hand-made pumpkin necklaces and other festive decorations to celebrate the season. As an added treat, after the performances students discovered a special surprise—their very own pumpkin patch for picking! The Festival not only served as a joyous occasion but also a wonderful learning experience performing in front of others and being respectful audience members.



Neighborhood House Commemorates Indigenous People's Day

In celebration of Indigenous Peoples' Day, we centered voices from the Indigenous community for a special virtual community event: *Healing Through Celebration*. We were honored to be joined by Chenaé Bullock, an enrolled Shinnecock Indian Nation Tribal Member and descendant of the Montauk Tribe who is a community leader, water protector, Indigenous perspective historian and founder and owner of Moskehtu Consulting; Charitie Ropati, who is Yup'ik and Samoan and an enrolled member of the Village of Kongiganak, Alaska, and is a climate activist and 2019 Center for Native American Youth Champion for Change; and Charlie Amáyá Scott, a Diné scholar born and raised within the Navajo nation and a doctoral student inspiring the next generation of Queer, Trans and Indigenous students. The panelists stressed the importance of empowering Indigenous children to dream big, building wealth in Indigenous communities and honoring traditions which hold sacred value. The group fostered a conversation on the impact of social change and collective action and created a safe space for reflection. We were so inspired by their message and we will continue to amplify voices of Black, Indigenous and People of Color and to host events to educate, inform and unite our community.



Teaching Kitchen Chefs Present at the Culinary Institute

Chefs Evelyn Garcia and Seema Pai from *The Teaching Kitchen*® at Lenox Hill Neighborhood House were invited by Assistant Professor Dr. Taylor Reid to present to students in the Applied Food Studies Program at the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York—a bachelor's degree program which prepares students to become responsible leaders in food systems, media, sustainability, education and advocacy. Our Chefs described their individual trajectories working in food which ultimately led them to *The Teaching Kitchen*, where they train other nonprofits serving government-funded meals to transition to our farm-to-institution model. There was a lively discussion around the role that current and future chefs can play in changing the way Americans cook and eat; the students were eager to learn about food careers outside of the traditional restaurant world with potential for greater social impact. After the discussion, the group prepared and enjoyed French Toast Casserole with Apple Butter and Black Bean Sweet Potato Chili, both popular recipes served regularly to our clients. The students and future chefs declared it was one of the tastiest meals they have eaten in a long time!



Volunteers Continue to Transform Lives



We are so grateful to our more than 1,100 dedicated volunteers who help us to provide essential services to thousands in need each year! Our Friendly Visiting program is just one example of how our volunteers have stepped up during the pandemic as we have seen an increased need to support isolated older adults in our community. Felicia Ho, a junior at Harvard College, read about the loneliness that older adults were experiencing early in the pandemic and was moved to help. She joined our remote Friendly Visiting program to “help make someone’s day just a bit brighter—to put a smile on their face when smiles are so hard to come by nowadays.” Nearly two years later, Felicia still looks forward to their weekly calls: “At the end of the day, we are simply human beings longing for connections, longing to hear each other’s stories...I am so grateful to my senior friends for going along this journey with me, and hopefully one day I will be able to meet them and have lunch together!” To learn more about our Friendly Visiting program, please contact Lauren Goldman, Deputy Volunteer Director, at lgoldman@lenoxhill.org.

Neighborhood House Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month

Our clients and staff collaborated across our myriad programs to honor and celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month. Students in our RealArts After School studied various dance styles with our guest Teaching Artist Candice Segarra, including salsa, cha-cha, bachata and mambo/rumba, and focused on the specific identity of Spanish/Afro-Latin dance through the lens of people, geography, music and individuality. Our Older Adult Center members engaged in a Song Sharing Circle with Arts and Education Assistant Genevieve DeLeon, where members selected meaningful Latin songs and shared their personal connections to the music. For cuisine, our creative chefs included Latin meals in our client menus, such as Habichuelas Guisadas (stewed pinto beans with sofrito—a favorite dish in Puerto Rico, Cuba and the Dominican Republic) and Chambre de Guandules (a Dominican stew with pork, vegetables, rice and pigeon peas). We are grateful to provide our clients with experiences which honor the Hispanic and Latino/a/x communities, whose cultures, traditions, languages and achievements influence so much of our daily lives.



Neighborhood House Teams Spread the Love



Teams from our Early Childhood Center, Homelessness Prevention Program and Caregiver Program participated in SCAN-Harbor's Love Day, a series of community events created to dismantle barriers that prevent communal connection and peace. Our staff visited the Jackie Robinson Houses, East River Houses and Lehman Village, all located in East Harlem, to bring support and resources directly to those significantly impacted by the public health crisis. We were delighted to speak with prospective individuals and families, meet new community partners and share information about our robust services on the East Side of Manhattan for New Yorkers of all ages.

RealArts Students Explore Imagination and Self-Expression

Integrating this year's theme of "Incredible Me," our RealArts After School students have been engaging in activities and lessons which focus on their unique personalities. In Music Class, students explored the bonds between music, imagery and emotions and crafted their own Incredible Me songs to answer personal questions through lyrical expression. The children were encouraged in Drama Class to follow their impulses and be inspired by others in a Character Circle, a space which promotes creativity, individuality, unity and character creation. In Art Class, students practiced a variety of techniques and formed their own art styles as they created a series of self-portraits in 2D and 3D mediums. Culture and tradition have been shining themes in Dance Class, where the children explored Tinkling, one of the oldest Filipino folk dances and the national dance of the Philippines, and learned about Native American storytelling through dance. We are so proud of our students for stepping out of their comfort zones and embracing their individuality!



Shelter Clients Dazzle in Fashion Show

The women in our Mental Health Shelter showcased their fabulous fashion sense in a special *Anything But Clothes* fashion show planned by our Iona College Occupational Therapy Interns to celebrate the culmination of their internship. The women utilized their creativity as they incorporated various household items to construct stylish garments to model for their fellow clients and our staff. The event was a wonderful success as everyone cheered while the fashion models strutted down the runway in their unique curated pieces. Our Iona partnership has allowed us to provide holistic occupational therapy services to our clients to improve their daily quality of living. As Clinical Director Rhonda Fuller affirmed, "the Interns were a true joy to have in the Shelter—they left such a huge impact on both our residents and our staff."



Leave Your Legacy to Ensure a Better Tomorrow for Our Community

Planned giving, or legacy giving, is a wonderful way to support Lenox Hill Neighborhood House and to ensure that future generations benefit from our life-changing programs and talented staff. Those who make a planned gift to Lenox Hill Neighborhood House are recognized as members of the 1894 Society, ensuring that their legacy is forever tied to the history of the Neighborhood House and to the improvement of our community.

"The 1894 Society reflects the wonderful history of Lenox Hill Neighborhood House and our individual commitment to ensuring that the organization will continue to meet the needs of future generations of New Yorkers." – Helene Goldfarb, Member of the Board of Directors

For more information, please contact Derek Samuelson, Director of Advancement, at 212-218-0544 or dsamuelson@lenoxhill.org.

LENOX HILL NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE

NEWSLETTER



**LENOX HILL
NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE**
331 East 70th Street
New York, NY 10021
T: 212 744 5022
www.lenoxhill.org

CASA MUTUA
159-61 East 102nd Street
New York, NY 10029
T: 212 348 0223

**CENTER @ LENOX HILL
NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE**
343 East 70th Street
New York, NY 10021
T: 212 218 0319

**OLDER ADULT CENTER @
SAINT PETER'S CHURCH**
619 Lexington Avenue
New York, NY 10022
T: 212 308 1959

**WOMEN'S MENTAL
HEALTH SHELTER**
Park Avenue Armory
643 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10065
T: 212 218 0500

LENOX HILL NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



HONORARY CHAIR
Sydney Roberts Shuman

CHAIR EMERITI
Thomas J. Edelman
Diana R. Quasha

CHAIR
Juan A. Sabater

MEMBERS
Nancy S. Baker
Mal L. Barasch
Gary A. Beller
Thomas Cordier
Thompson Dean
Richard E. Farley

Helene D. Goldfarb
David J. Greenwald
Audrey B. Gruss
John H. Manice
Elizabeth P. Munson
Weston Quasha
Margery Riker
Guy G. Rutherford, Jr.
Robert C. Schwenkel
Christopher Spitzmiller
Helene H. Tilney
Charles S. Warren
Hedi H. White
Bunny Williams

HONORARY MEMBER
Renée Landegger
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Warren B. Scharf

Follow us on **Facebook**, **Twitter** and **Instagram**
for regular updates from the Neighborhood House.

