



# neighborhood coalition for shelter

*30 Years of Service: 1982–2012*

HELPING NEW YORKERS FIND THEIR WAY HOME

## Faces of Success at the NCS Residence

*There are 65 people living at the NCS Residence. Sixty-five different stories but a common theme: the NCS Residence's affordable housing and on-site services support recovery—from homelessness, from mental illness and from addiction. For some it is a community and a permanent place to call "home;" for others it is a "stepping stone" to greater independence.*

### Gregory

Moving with his family to New York from Alabama, 16-year-old Gregory hit the streets. "You grow up on the outside—in school and on the street—not inside of your house." It didn't take long to get pulled in and incarcerated for armed robbery. A lot of his "growing" took place inside prison.



Gregory walked into prison a 16-year-old youth, and walked out a 30-year-old man in 1990. The world was so different. Alone, frightened, no meaningful relationships—for Gregory, mainstream life looked like the rapids. Unemployable after incarceration, he spent the next eight years on the streets, sleeping in cardboard boxes and in shelters. Recycling cans and pumping gas didn't support him; they supported his cocaine and alcohol habits. "I was mentally and emotionally bankrupt," he said. Eventually Gregory realized, "I no longer want to hurt myself." It took him a few years to get sober and he entered a Bowery Resident Committee (BRC) transitional program. When he was ready, he moved to the NCS Residence at 81st Street.

Prison and the streets take their toll and Gregory seems a lot older than he is. With the help of Program Director, Roe Piccoli, case managers and the staff psychiatrist, he got the care he needed. His medical problems keep him from full-time work, but not from a life with meaning. Gregory speaks at the BRC drug program, hoping to inspire others. Because the Residence is permanent housing, Gregory considers it "home base," where he can enjoy the privacy of his room, meals, movies and other outings, and friends. "You know," Gregory explains, "It's good to have your own after being out there so many years."

### Avi

Avi had problems growing up. His attention drifted in school, he acted out, and he became known as a trouble-maker. Bored, wanting to fit in and looking for action, Avi started drinking at 14, using drugs at 16 and his problems escalated. A few weeks before he was planning to go to Israel for a year, a house



party in his family home spun out of control, he forged a check, and his girlfriend broke up with him. New people and places didn't help. Avi continued drugging in Israel and, when he returned a year later at age 18, his family kicked him out of the house.

For years Avi tried to stay clean, but his drug use eventually escalated. He started dealing and bouncing between his grandmother's home and couch surfing with friends. "I was an out-of-control mess," he said. He put together several years of sobriety after treatment in California, but his life remained unstable—he couldn't keep a job, a place to live, or his sobriety.

When Avi came to NCS, he was sober, but he relapsed and his trip to a California rehab was derailed by a 12-day stay in a Chicago psych ward. Reaching out to NCS Program Director Roe Piccoli, we got him a train ticket back to New York and NCS. This time Avi was ready for the help we offered. He faced up to his drug use, went to AA meetings, and got sober.

Avi is now working at an Upper East Side bookstore and his real estate license is pending. He says about the NCS staff, "They're wonderful—I love them. "Roe, Dr. Lee, Fernando and Yolanda all help." We talk and I go to AA meetings, but they also help with SSI, food stamps, Medicaid and Medicare. They helped me get a retroactive SSI payment, and an air-conditioner and a new fridge for my room, so I'm very comfortable. And, they have a great money management program."

"I recently had a 32nd birthday party," said Avi. It was very different from his 17-year-old house party. "About 20 people came, including my father and stepmother. I've reconciled with my family and I've been nursed back to health. The Residence has been a great stepping stone."



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#### NEIGHBORHOOD COALITION FOR SHELTER

is dedicated to providing housing and support that can transform lives and to working with community partners to reduce, prevent and ultimately end homelessness.

## A Letter from the Editor



Ira Mandelker

There has been much good news at NCS since our last newsletter. You will read about our spring gala and *Rock Against Homelessness II*, but we also had a successful winter homeless shelter season. Eighty-five homeless people stayed at our seasonal shelters at St. Mary's Church and Church of the Ascension and, with the help of our collaborators Goddard Riverside Community Services' Manhattan Outreach Consortium and the West Side Federation for Senior and Supportive Housing, 21 were placed in housing by the end of June.

What better way to recognize our 30th year of service than by starting a new program with some of our original partners! We rolled out *HP-CUES*, our *Hospitality Program Concierge for the Upper East Side*. Our "Concierges" (professional social workers) are a big hit at Upper East Side dinner programs, helping homeless and extremely low-income residents in ways both large and small. Shelter, public assistance, photo IDs, prescription glasses, advocacy for a spouse in a nursing home—these are just

some of the issues we are helping dinner guests cope with. We are providing on-site advice, referrals and assistance where low income people come for meals. They leave well-fed and with local resources, actionable information, or a material benefit.

Our 30th year newsletters have us looking back with long-time friends—this issue it's Board Member Josephine McFadden—but we are also looking ahead, developing new housing and employment ideas, enhanced support services and, of course, a campaign to pay for them. With government spending becoming less discretionary and more scaled-back, NCS, like every nonprofit, needs help from private sources to kick-start new ideas, boost existing programs, and sometimes for sustaining vital services that had once been better funded by government. Throughout the next year you will be hearing more about our plans.



**Have a will  
or estate plan?**

Please remember NCS.

## Memories.....

Josephine McFadden played an important role in NCS's work from the very beginning. When Upper East Side faith-based institutions gathered in the early 1980's to combat street homelessness, "Josie" stepped up. She helped serve meals at her church—Madison Avenue Presbyterian—and then escorted guests to the new shelter at Lenox Hill Neighborhood House organized by this new "grass-roots" coalition of faith and civic leaders. From the very beginning, volunteers stayed overnight with the guests. "We opened the shelter just before New Year's Eve [1982]," Josie recalled, "and only three people came."

"Much has changed since," Josie continued. "We were initially concerned with 'bag ladies.' They seemed to suddenly appear on our streets and they didn't have a place to go. Then we sheltered homeless men, as well." Since incorporating in 1982, NCS has changed as well, developing programs that provide housing and support to homeless men and women, and young adults aging out of foster care.

As the need has grown over the last 30 years, so have NCS programs, and so has Josie's and her Church's commitment to the homeless and low-

## Josephine McFadden

income residents of the Upper East Side. The Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church (MAPC) still serves dinner Thursday evenings to over 125 homeless and near-homeless individuals from the neighborhood and beyond. MAPC also runs an overnight shelter, provides NCS space for its outpatient substance abuse treatment program, and the Church is also a NCS financial supporter.



Josie McFadden is a long-time NCS Board Member, our corporate Secretary, and serves on our Executive Committee. She plays an influential role in our fundraising efforts as well, having made a leadership gift to launch our Campaign for Growth, and a bequest to NCS in her will. With her support, NCS is developing a series of events to initiate a planned giving program. "A planned gift is so meaningful," says Josie, "and I encourage all our supporters to remember NCS in their estate plans."

Josie McFadden, and people like her, make a difference every day.

# NCS Celebrates Spring Benefit

On May 22nd, NCS friends and supporters gathered at The Central Park Boathouse to celebrate its 30 years of service. Our honorees Nancy Carr and The Brick Presbyterian Church were with NCS at our very beginning. Ms. Carr is a founding member of the NCS board and has been an Upper East Side community volunteer for more than 40 years. The Brick Presbyterian Church was at the forefront of the interfaith group that collaborated with community and civic leaders to create NCS, and brought much needed homeless services to the Upper East Side.

Benefit co-chairs Dr. Ronald E. Carr, Alice F. Greif, Stephanie W. Guest and Richard Ellis, and The Reverend Michael L. Lindvall brought together almost 200 people to recognize and celebrate our honorees and our 30-year collaboration.

The Central Park Boathouse never looked lovelier. Guests took advantage of the beautiful evening and fantastic lake views, strolling and enjoying a pre-dinner drink on the terrace. Inside, Master of Ceremonies and auctioneer Kathleen Guzman (Heritage Auctions of New York's Managing Director) brought enthusiasm, energy and wit to the party. Later in the program, she led a rousing live auction, NCS's most successful one to date.

NCS also premiered its new video highlighting its beginnings, resident personal stories, and volunteers in action.

The Celine Marcus Community Service Award is always an annual event highlight. Nancy Carr and the Reverend Michael L. Lindvall (for Brick Presbyterian Church) graciously accepted their awards and eloquently expressed appreciation for NCS's work with homeless and formerly homeless people. "We are so fortunate to have such long-standing and loyal community supporters," said NCS Executive Director Ira Mandelker.

Guests heard firsthand the profound impact of NCS services when Anthony Taveras, a young adult residing at NCS's Louis Nine House, shared his story. Scarred by childhood abuse and a traumatic foster care experience, Anthony is determined to overcome his past and help others do the same. Anthony is pursuing a college degree in accounting, he landed a summer internship in Washington D.C., and also works as a State University of New York Youth Ambassador encouraging at-risk youth to attend college.

NCS thanks all of the Benefit Committee members, guests and donors for making the evening a huge success.



**Ira Mandelker, David Oliver and Anthony Taveras.**



**The Rev. Michael L. Lindvall (Brick Church) and Nancy Carr.**



**Nancy Carr with family and friends.**



**Supporters Richard Corey and Henry Barkhorn with board member Stephanie Guest.**



**Brick Volunteers Hamburg Tang and Jeff Eisenstein.**



**Board member Tom Kilkenny with NCS friends Carol Hertling and Frank Nickell.**



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# Rock Against Homelessness II

The Rock Against Homelessness II concert held on Friday night, July 27th, at Central Park's Naumberg Bandshell was great fun and it benefitted NCS's Emporium Online job training program. It was one of those hot summer nights in the park, and it was rockin'!

Big thank you's to concert organizer and host Sandra Small, Global Entertainment's emcee (and vocalist) Deshai Williams, and all our volunteers—the performers, technicians, grips and photographers recruited by Sandra Small—and the NCS program participants and staff who made it all work. And a shout out to the companies who donated raffle prizes.

Concert highlights included Sandra Small and her Smallworld Band's contemporary funk and rock, and a 10-year-old girl (and her younger brother!) who rapped to the delight of the audience. Everyone was moving to the beat—toddlers, old men on roller skates, even dogs. Sandra is a long-time NCS volunteer, and she is already thinking about RAH III—we hope to see you then.



Emcee Deshai Williams and host Sandra Small



Performers



Smallworld Band backs our NCS resident, Marvin P.

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