



neighborhood coalition for shelter

HELPING NEW YORKERS FIND THEIR WAY HOME

Spring Gala 2014 – Marvin's Story



Nellie McKay, singer and satirist, performs at NCS's Spring Gala.

The fabulous Nellie McKay, singer, satirist and activist is a tough act to follow. Accompanying herself on piano and ukulele, Ms. McKay dazzled and delighted over 150 of our Spring Gala friends at Capitale with her quirky hipster vibe. What Ms. McKay didn't realize was that she was "opening" for Marvin—an NCS client.

Natly dressed in suit and tie, Marvin captured the stage and told his story.

Marvin started out as a street vendor in New Jersey, trying to make ends meet

and provide for his family. He had a substance use problem and a wife and stepdaughter who were alcoholics. One night they attacked him with a hammer. He escaped with his life, but not much else. Marvin spent the night in an abandoned building, making his way to the streets of Manhattan the next day.

Marvin went from the streets to the Bellevue Shelter sleeping in a room with eight other men, not knowing if he was going to get mugged, raped or violated. But he stuck it out because he had nowhere else to go—until they helped him get to NCS's supportive housing residence on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. Marvin liked the sense of community that his housemates, staff and many volunteers provided and said, "It felt good being with other people." He began to take advantage of the services offered—financial counseling, computer training, career counseling and housing services.

As Marvin's life started to come together he took on greater roles in the NCS community including singing at the Rock Against Homelessness concert in Central Park, appearing in the 30th anniversary video and mentoring men



Marvin Pressley is congratulated after his remarks.



NCS Board member Brinton Parson gives Marvin two thumbs up after his speech!



Marvin and friend at the reception. See more photos of the Spring Gala on page 3.

and women at Chance for Change, NCS's outpatient substance use program. He helped others because so many, including NCS staff, helped him. He said, "They believed in me before I believed in myself and gave me some valuable tools to help me through my journey."

Marvin's journey led him to a part-time job at Chance for Change. Then, Brinton Parson, an NCS board member, who is the Director of the Park Avenue Methodist Day School, helped him get a job at the school. Marvin has moved out on his own to an apartment in Harlem. But he stays in touch with NCS staff and residents and continues to work with vocational services to improve his career opportunities. We look forward to hearing from Marvin in the future about more positive changes in his life.

Spring Gala - Save the Date

Join NCS as we honor

Stuart Siegel

Elizabeth Peabody and Samuel Peabody

Tuesday, May 12, 2015

The Loeb Boathouse Central Park

For information, please call (212)537-5140



Administrative Office
157 East 86th Street
New York, NY 10028
Phone: (212) 537-5100
Fax: (212) 860-2301
ncs@ncsinc.org
www.ncsinc.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

David A. Oliver
President

Wolcott B. Dunham, Jr.
Stephanie W. Guest
Brinton T. Parson
Vice Presidents

Susan Stevens
Treasurer

Jill W. Lampe
Assistant Treasurer

Josephine N. McFadden
Secretary

Nancy Carr
Barbara Chocky
Anne S. Davidson
Abby Elbaum
Patricia Falk
Alice Greif
Thomas J. Kilkenny
Ann Ross Loeb
Christine Miller Martin
Stephanie Shuman
Christopher W. Solomon
Jill Worth

Ira L. Mandelker, Ph.D.
Executive Director

NCS PROGRAMS

NCS Residence
Louis Nine House
Transitions
OPTIONS
Chance for Change
CHIRP
Research

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 Executive Director



Ira Mandelker

The Commissioner reports: “[T]he homeless man needs no introduction... [O]n the night of January 30... he was here some 26,000 strong... No observing person has walked through our... parks [and] streets, without having at least a passing acquaintance with him.” No, this is not our current Department of Homeless Services

Commissioner reporting on *HOPE 2014, The NYC Street Survey*. This is John Kingsbury, NYC’s Commissioner of Public Charities, and the year is 1915. Kingsbury’s report, *The Men We Lodge*, is like a non-fiction, social services version of *The Knick*, Cinemax’s fictional treatment of Harlem’s Knickerbocker Hospital at the turn of the 20th Century (without the sex and drugs). Like *The Knick*, *The Men We Lodge* tells us what has changed and what remains.

We are clearly more effective in our social work, treatment, housing, and employment services. Surprisingly, many of the myths about homelessness and thought about solutions **have not** changed. We still are responding to some of the same misconceptions debunked by Commissioner Kingsbury, that “the homeless” do not want to work, that they are all mentally ill or addicted, that assistance some-

how “enables” them, and that homelessness is explained by “bad choices,” immoral behavior and character flaws.

The Commissioner might feel at home in the 21st century. The “old ways”—lodging, prison, or work in a “stone yard”—said Kingsbury, were wasteful of men and resources. He is just as strident about the challenges—budget cuts while shelter population grows, needs outpacing social service department resources, and the lack of what we now call “living wage” jobs. His language is dated and not up to current “pc” standards, but Kingsbury’s mission is clear: “We want to make the Municipal Lodging House something more than a mere sleeping quarters for tired, hungry, out-of-work men. We want to make it a great human repair shop, manned and equipped to rebuild the broken lives of those who enter its doors for help.” Homeless people needed individual attention; treatment for the medical and mental health issues that kept them from being “fit” for a job; and “the untrained need to be directed toward... occupation[s] at which they can earn a livelihood and be trained, for self-support...”

We have come a long way since 1915, but if Commissioner Kingsbury were around, he would likely say “not far enough.”

Meet our Newest Board Member

Jill Worth is a congregant at Brick Presbyterian Church, our long-time partner in the community. A veteran volunteer at Brick’s Friday Night Dinner Program, Jill helps prepare and serve meals for clients living at the NCS Residence on East 81st Street. Jill is deeply involved in the community. In addition to serving on the Brick Church Board of Deacons and their Women’s Association, she also volunteers at The Children’s Storefront and the New York Common Pantry.



A New Jersey native, Jill’s professional career includes stints in marketing and administration at Prudential Securities and Oppenheimer. Currently devoting her time to family and community service, Jill also enjoys hot yoga, reading, and The New York City Ballet in her spare time.

We are pleased to welcome Jill to the NCS board, where she joins a dedicated group whose guidance, commitment, and support make our work possible.



JOIN NCS

on March 10th, 2015
for a haunting spine-chiller—
The Nether
at the Lucille Lortel Theatre
Visit www.ncsinc.org for tickets

facebook

Like NCS on
Facebook!



www.facebook.com/NeighborhoodCoalitionforShelter

Country House Theater Event



Actress Kate Jennings Grant talks with Tihirah Johnson (right) a resident of our program in the Bronx for homeless young adults, and her friend, a theater student, at the evening's reception.



NCS Board President David Oliver introducing Manhattan Theatre Club Teaching Artist Kel Haney who led the Q&A.

Gallery Night at Theatre 80



NCS's Gallery Night at Theatre 80 was a highly entertaining night of original music, poetry and art inspired by the personal stories of Louis Nine's tenants. Here, performer Shanice Armstrong reads her poem.



Gallery night performers with friends and family.

NCS Happenings

Chance for Change Program



Comedian Damon Rozier with clients and staff after his performance at NCS' Chance for Change program, which provides treatment for individuals who have substance use issues.

Louis Nine House Thanksgiving



Louis Nine House residents acknowledge their blessings on their Giving Tree during last year's Thanksgiving celebration.



NCS staff members serve turkey with all the fixings to residents at NCS' Louis Nine House on Thanksgiving Day 2014.

NCS Residence Talent Show



On December 17th, the NCS Residence held their annual talent show! Flutist Luther Perry performed a winning medley.



From left to right: NCS Resident and performer Peggy Spinner, guest judge Ben Fitts, NCS Executive Director Ira Mandelker, resident and emcee Pamela Benn, guest judges Kathryn Creech and Nikki Hobson.

NCS Spring Gala



Leadership Council member Sam Peabody and NCS Executive Director Ira Mandelker at our Spring Benefit.



Tom Kilkenney, NCS Board member, and Frank Nickell, supporter (center) share a joke while Scott Frosch and Carol Hertling look on.



Volunteer Highlight: David Mitchell

“Volunteering with NCS has given me the opportunity to have an impact on the lives of young men and women who have aged out of foster care,” says David Mitchell, a graphic designer volunteering at NCS’s Louis Nine House. David is one of four young people who signed on with Hope for New York as NCS volunteers. Hope for New York provides volunteers and other assistance to nonprofits helping New Yorkers in need. Since partnering with NCS in 2012, over two hundred Hope for New York volunteers have organized “high teas,” bingo nights, holiday meals and myriad other activities at our Manhattan and Bronx residences.



David (second from left) and other Hope for New York volunteers had a great time carving pumpkins this past Halloween with residents at Louis Nine House.

David’s volunteer work with homeless people began as a North Carolina State University student. David and his wife Kathryn are new New Yorkers. When they moved to New York City he connected with Hope for New York and jumped at the opportunity to work with our young people living at Louis Nine House. All 46 Louis Nine House residents were homeless, or aged-out of foster care with no place else to go. David organizes and participates in activities that offer our residents new experiences, or opportunities just to have some fun - like attending Yankees games, visiting the Brooklyn Grange Rooftop Farm, carving pumpkins, or baking pies.

“This is really rewarding,” David continues. “Being just a just a few years older helps break down a lot of walls and makes it so easy for them to relate to us.” David has developed an informal mentoring relationship with one young man at the residence, connecting with him weekly. Whether offering practical advice on life’s challenges or encouraging higher education, “they feel so comfortable and can just talk to us directly.”

Our residents really look forward to the time they get to spend with volunteers. Many of them missed having this kind of supportive relationship in their life. If you want to join the more than 300 individuals and groups volunteering at NCS each year, call us. While our volunteer opportunities differ, they all have one thing in common: everyone says “I get back much more than I can ever give.”

Bank of America 

Bank of America Grant Supports CHIRP

For the second consecutive year, a Bank of America Charitable Foundation grant will be supporting NCS’s Community Human Services Information and Referral Program (CHIRP). Bank of America Foundation giving targets programs that preserve neighborhoods, educate the workforce for 21st century jobs, and address basic human needs. CHIRP “fills the bill” for hundreds of men and women who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

CHIRP provides on the spot, accurate, and actionable information, referral, and crisis intervention services at five Manhattan free meal programs. There (and at other services sites in the community) staff also distributes “Street Sheets,” a pocket-sized listing of neighborhood and city programs for people who are hungry or homeless. At each meal, CHIRP staff is on-site with information about housing, shelter, food, clothing, medical, legal and other crucial services. Many meal program guests have serious and multiple problems that they have not been able to address elsewhere, and they feel lost with no place to turn. From July 2013 through December 2014, CHIRP professionals distributed over 7,000 “Street Sheets” and had over 11,000 client requests for information.

Thanks to the Bank of America Foundation, NCS will be expanding to new locations in New York City.



Have a will or estate plan?

Please remember NCS.