

KENMORE'S NEW LEARNING CENTER: A COMMUNITY EFFORT



HSI's December Open House event at the new state of the art Kenmore Learning Center was attended by over 150 area residents, business leaders and government officials. The center, which was completed in part by a grant from Banco Popular and funds provided by the NYC Department of Homeless Services, will begin offering employment related workshops, resume writing classes and job placement services to Kenmore's 325 formerly homeless residents in February.

Attendees included special guest speaker Maryanne Schretzman, DHS Deputy Commissioner of Policy and Planning, and representatives from SVA, the local precinct, and sister non-profits.

"The opening of this center represents the

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Above: Dawn Carrillo of Banco Popular presents a check for \$10,000 to Larry Oaks, HSI Executive Director.

Left: The Learning Center at Kenmore Hall

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HSI WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The New Year is off to a great start at HSI. We are pleased to announce the addition of Stewart Alpert, Nicole M. Cardiello, Esq., Dawn Carrillo, and Charles Thanhauser to our Board of Directors.

"HSI is honored to have our Board of Directors joined by Mr. Alpert, Ms. Cardiello, Ms. Carrillo, and Mr. Thanhauser, all distinguished leaders in their respective fields," says HSI Executive Director Larry Oaks.

Stewart Alpert is an attorney and principal of Sovereign Servicing System Properties, Inc., a property management, investment analysis, and brokerage services firm in Bronxville, NY. Mr. Alpert is an affordable housing pioneer responsible for the development, in 1976, of two of the first Section 8 rehabilitation projects in New York. Located in the Bronx, these are among thousands of affordable homes built and currently managed by Mr. Alpert.

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TENANT PROFILE: JUANITA OWENS, KENMORE HALL

In 2001, three things happened simultaneously to Juanita Owens: Her mother died from lung cancer. Her landlord died and her building was sold, evicting its former tenants. And she lost her job as a medical biller. At 53, without enough resources or support to fall back on, Ms. Owens was homeless, a situation she – like many of HSI's tenants – never imagined herself in before.

Being homeless did not stop Ms. Owens from living her life, or from giving to those



Ms. Owens at Kenmore Hall

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SVA STUDENTS PAINT KENMORE COMMUNITY CENTER

Students from New York City's premiere art school, School of Visual Arts, located just a few blocks from HSI's Kenmore Hall, volunteered their time recently to brighten the lives of HSI residents. Last summer about 15 students came to Kenmore and painted the community room as part of the Orientation program's Day of Service Project, when over 200 students were sent to work on various service projects around the city. With the help of Tina Crayton and the Student Activities office, SVA organizes volunteers for at least two projects a month to benefit the New York City community.



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next stage in the development of one of New York City's largest supportive housing projects" said HSI Executive Director Lawrence Oaks. "We're excited to now be in a position to offer our residents the educational programming and employment support they deserve."

Attendees enjoyed the unveiling of the Learning Center and it's art exhibit, curated by SVA student Rebecca Raisley, all set to the music of live New Orleans jazz band, The Congelosi Cards.

Thanks to everyone who made this event a success and the culmination of what truly was a community effort.

WINTER DONATIONS WARM HEARTS

A big thanks to all of our year end donors! Guardian Life Insurance supported HSI this year with a \$40,000 Affordable Housing Grant, marking the fifth consecutive year of their partnership with HSI's mission. Other crucial year-end gifts included a grant from the Food Bank, thousands of dollars worth of writing and research guides for the Learning Center from Sara Murphy, and yoga blocks for classes at the Kenmore donated by the Yoga Room in Astoria.

HSI's holiday appeal was also a great success, raising over \$27,000 in contributions from businesses and individuals. Our warmest thanks go out to Apple Bank, Banco Popular, Bank Leumi, Brinkerhoff Environment Service, Inc., Capalino & Co., Cook, Hyde, & Hall, Counsel Abstract, Donald and Lisa Sclare Architects, Gramercy Park Block Association, Municipal Data Services, Inc., Pro Image Photo, Rotavele Elevator, SBS Design, TEK Architects, Jane P. Boutwell, Charles Brass, Howard & Sylvia Kimmel, Christina Mattimore, Janet Moss, Karen Phillips, Ronald Platzman, Sheila Schatzberg, Barbara Silverstein, Eunice Weed, Francis Williams, Mark and Carol Willis, Fred Wistow, Alan and Marilyn Zaretsky, Gail and Edward Tomberg, and our Board of Directors.

WELCOME MATT KANTOR: LEARNING CENTER DIRECTOR

HSI is pleased to welcome Matthew Kantor as the new Learning Center Director and Ed-Voc Case Manager at Kenmore Hall. He formerly worked in Property Management for H.S.I. and left to pursue ambitions in the fields of writing and education. Subsequently, he earned his Master's Degree in Teaching from Fordham University and worked for two years in the New York City Public Schools, in addition to regularly publishing on-line articles. He is thrilled to be a part of the new Education Program at Kenmore Hall.

JUANITA OWENS from p 1

around her. After reading about the high rates of HIV infection among black women in her old Brooklyn neighborhood, Bedford-Stuyvesant, Owens felt called to help. She trained as an HIV Outreach Worker, became certified as a pre/post test counselor, and began working directly with the women of Bed-Stuy. This work became the seed of Shalom2You, the 501(c)(3) that Owens incorporated in 2006, just months after she moved into permanent supportive housing at Kenmore Hall.

Kenmore has served as a solid home base for Ms. Owens, where she can dream and plan and do the work she needs to do to get her non-profit off the ground. "I'm very thankful for my living situation," she says, "it means a lot to me." A regular participant in Kenmore's community meetings and tenant out-

ings, the health-conscious Owens says that what initially "sold" her on Kenmore was it's gym, where she regularly exercises to shed the unhealthy weight from years of "stress eating."

After her diagnosis with breast cancer in 2006, Owens added breast self-examination, free mammograms for women without health insurance, and a nutrition component to Shalom2You's core curriculum of HIV awareness and safe sex education. She is currently studying to be a Certified Substance Abuse Counselor and working with a grant writer for Shalom2You. Ms. Owens was also recently selected to be a voting member of the Mayor's planning council on HIV. Her passion for working with the women in Bed-Stuy guides her life. "These are my sisters," she says. "If I can stop one person from getting HIV or diabetes, that's what I'm supposed to do."

For more about Shalom2You, visit www.shalom2you.org.



*Happy
Holidays
from HSI!*



NEW BOARD MEMBERS from p1

Nicole M. Cardiello, Esq., who joined HSI in August, is a Founding Member and Managing Attorney for her firm's Real Estate and Estate Planning Departments, with a solid reputation within the legal community for her dedication, skill, and integrity. Ms. Cardiello is a member of the NY State Bar Association's Real Property, Trusts and Estates, and Trial Lawyers Section, and is admitted to practice before the Bar of the State of NY, the US Federal Court for the Eastern District of NY, and the US Supreme Court. A member of Rotary International and an International Youth Exchange Advisor, Ms. Cardiello is also a 4th Degree Black Belt and the owner and Master Instructor of North American Kempo Taekwondo Dojo on Long Island.

Dawn M. Carrillo is a Vice President and the NY Metro Marketing Manager for Banco Popular North America. Ms. Carrillo is also responsible for leading the bank's volunteer and community outreach programs. Banco Popular has a strong commitment to grass roots community outreach, and it is through this work that

Ms. Carrillo first became interested in the HSI mission, eventually becoming a corporate sponsor and friend of many years. Ms. Carrillo also works extensively with Food Bank for NYC, and serves on the Blood Services Community Relations Advisory Council for the NY Blood Center and on the Board for the SMEF "Educational Foundation" in Queens.

Charles Thanhauser is an architect and co-founder of the award-winning firm, TEK Architects. Founded in 1987, TEK has a portfolio of clients which include the Rockefeller Foundation, Hofstra University, Brooklyn College, Nautica, St. Lukes/Roosevelt Hospital, The Martha Graham Dance Company, and numerous others. TEK's designs were also featured in the Light Construction Exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art. HSI and Mr. Thanhauser worked together in collaboration on The Edwin Gould Residence in East Harlem, which is a TEK designed supportive housing residence for young adults aging out of foster care. With a commitment to non-profits, TEK also has developed offices for charities, university buildings, substance abuse treatment centers, and supportive housing.



The Cecil Hotel
206-210 W 118th St
NY, NY 10026-1736

Kenmore Hall
145 E 23rd St
NY, NY 10010-3701

The Narragansett
2508 Broadway
NY, NY 10025-6949

Scattered Site Program
756 E 175th St
Bronx, NY 10457

everyone needs a home

THE WELLNESS INITIATIVE AT CECIL HOTEL: PLEASE DON'T PASS THE BLUBBER BURGER

Most of us know City Harvest from their work in redistributing unused food from cafeterias, grocery stores, and caterers to hungry people all over the city. This year, City Harvest also brought Operation Frontline, a cooking-based nutrition class developed by Share Our Strength, to The Cecil in Harlem. Eleven of HSI's tenants took this 6-week course to learn how to improve their



Cecil residents prepare meals for the graduation day cook-off

lives by cooking healthy, low-cost meals. Beyond providing a creative approach to learning to cook, the class was also a lot of fun.

"Please Pass the Vegetables" is a game that teaches the importance of diet and exercise. Tamara, a volunteer nutrition specialist, introduced her class of Senior Citizens at The Cecil to the game, "When a doctor says 'diet and exercise,' well, what does that mean?" She then raised a small pumpkin above her head and began doing shoulder presses. "You'd be surprised by how little it takes to benefit your health," she said while pumpkin-lifting. "Do you like to watch TV? Set aside half an hour a day for

exercise, whether it's a ten minute walk, three times a day, or lifting pumpkins – but you gotta move!"

City Harvest's Eating Right program also teaches populations like the Cecil's Seniors how to prepare food on a budget. "The 'Eating Right' course is about addressing economic status as well," says Program Director Aliyah Rowe. "Eating well is often less expensive than the alternative."

To illustrate these points, City

Harvest volunteers Chef Crystal Williams, Nutrition Specialist Tamara Duker, and Class Manager Caitlin Salemi seamlessly weaved their areas of expertise into a tailor-made course designed to address the nutritional needs of their class at the Cecil.

Because knowing how to cook is a key component to eating well, Chef Crystal helped the class to prepare one of her favorite recipes, rosemary chicken and potatoes. As she guided the class through the prep, Crystal reminded us to leave the potato skins for their vitamins, and shared pragmatic ideas such as using leftover fruit juice as a meat marinade, or saving the tops of carrots, peppers and other leftover veggies to boil into a stock.

The tips were enlightening to us all, especially for students like Maggie, who took the class to learn how to cook. "I live by myself," she shared, "so usually I cook meals in the microwave."

While the chicken and potatoes finished baking in the oven, Caitlin finished the lessons of the day with a game that was astoundingly creative and educational, if not a bit, well, disgusting. The game was called Blubber Burger.

Caitlin asked everyone to tell the class their favorite fast food meal. One gentleman's favorite meal consisted of fried chicken, potatoes, corn, and pie a la mode. Caitlin checked her fast food dictionary for the fat content of every item on the list. Then she handed him a hamburger bun, a tub of shortening, and a tablespoon. The meal was equal to nine and a half tablespoons of pure fat, and the class watched as he heaped spoonful after spoonful of shortening onto the bun. Everyone thought the game was funny until the time came to make their own Blubber Burger, and Caitlin watched wisely as her students "got the point".



Students, teachers, and program directors celebrate graduation!

After 6-weeks of training, each student received a certification from City Harvest and a wealth of knowledge to use in everyday life. HSI and The Cecil thank City Harvest and Share Our Strength for their willingness to pass along their knowledge to us in a way that was creative and fun.

HSI Board of Directors:

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