Dear Friends,

New Yorkers with histories of incarceration face steep barriers to housing, well-being, and reintegration into their communities. In fact, those who have been imprisoned are 10 times more likely to become homeless upon their release.

At Project Renewal, we support justice-involved individuals and help them beat the odds. We want our clients to re-enter their communities safely and successfully, to achieve health and wellness, and to pursue their education and employment goals.

We offer one-of-a-kind programs; from stabilizing services as an alternative to jail or the emergency room for those engaged by the police, to supportive housing for parolees coping with mental health and substance use challenges. We also provide services at the prisons to help prepare individuals for their transition back into the community. In this newsletter, you will see how we are helping New Yorkers move beyond their traumatic pasts, to pathways of renewal.

Thank you for supporting our life-changing work,

Susan Dan,
Senior Vice President, Programs
A New Alternative to Jails and Hospitals

This is a collaborative effort with local precincts and the community to enact long-term, sustainable change, and provide stabilizing services, so that police can take individuals experiencing mental health or substance use crises to this facility, instead of to jail or the hospital.

Currently, the Center is operating at reduced capacity due to COVID, with up to 10 people in residence at a time, who can each stay for up to 5 days. Clients have access to substance use and mental health services, occupational therapy, peer counseling and wellness planning in addition to meals, showers, and laundry. Upon completion of their stay, we encourage individuals to engage in our after-care services, which includes assistance in accessing community services, long-term treatment, and housing.

Over 80% of Center clients who have completed their stay have chosen to use these additional life-renewing services, for a total of 677 visits.

Childhood trauma led Andy down a path of substance use and incarceration. After his release from prison, he lost contact with his daughter, and experienced homelessness for four years. Determined to make a change, Andy began his recovery journey in a residential treatment program, where he spent two and a half years. In early 2021, he was referred to Project Renewal’s Next Step workforce development program to help him secure a job. Though the market was especially challenging due to COVID-19, Andy thrived in our virtual classes, developing his resume, honing his interview skills, and building job readiness. With help from Next Step, he secured a role in maintenance at Project Renewal’s St. Nicholas House, and he has his sights set on becoming a substance use counselor. “Project Renewal gave me an opportunity when I really needed it,” he says, “And it was like a second chance at life.” Job stability has given Andy the chance to reconnect with his daughter, who has been his north star. “I’m really proud because she is a great daughter,” he says. “She’s my motivation to keep going.”

The Support and Connection Center has received more than 30 referrals per month since April.

JOSE’S JOURNEY with the Support and Connection Center

NYPD officers approached Jose on the street when they noticed he was having difficulty walking. The officers were able to bring Jose to the Support and Connection Center instead of to jail or an Emergency Department. In this safe space, Jose opened up to the Project Renewal staff, sharing that he had been using heroin for over 20 years, was living on the street, and needed our help. Our team guided him to Project Renewal’s Mobile Medical Van to assess and treat his chronic leg pain, and helped him replace his lost ID. The Project Renewal team then found Jose a bed at a local shelter, where he is receiving treatment and working toward independence.

“I felt safe and at home at the Support and Connection Center. The staff was so supportive and caring. It made me want to become a better person.”

— ANONYMOUS CLIENT

“A Second Chance at Life”

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW...

Formerly incarcerated individuals are 10 times more likely to be homeless than the general public.

In 2018, over half of people released from New York State prison went directly to New York City shelters.

Nearly half of our workforce development clients have a history of justice involvement.

89% of residents in our Parole Support and Treatment graduate program successfully maintain housing for at least one year.

Our Support and Connection Center, an alternative to jail and hospitalization for individuals experiencing mental health crises, is the first of its kind in NYC.
SNAPSHOTS OF RENEWAL

JOIN US
On Friday, October 1, Project Renewal’s Junior Board invites you to the 14th Annual Fall Ball at The Bowery Hotel where we will gather to support our health, homes, and job programs. All guests must be vaccinated, and the event will follow CDC guidelines regarding capacity. Please email events@projectrenewal.org for tickets.

THE 14TH ANNUAL
FALL BALL

Please join us for an evening to help homeless New Yorkers renew their lives with health, homes, and jobs.

9PM-1AM, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2021
THE BOWERY HOTEL
Second Floor Terrace
335 Bowery, New York, NY 10003

CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION
Our Culinary Arts Training Program prepares low-income and formerly homeless New Yorkers, including those with histories of incarceration, for careers in the culinary field. The program recently celebrated its 100th class of graduates.

“As a member of the Committee on Mental Health, Disabilities, and Addiction, I am thrilled that the City of New York has partnered with Project Renewal to bring its first Support and Connection Center to East Harlem. This transformative model helps people with behavioral health challenges to access vital resources, such as mental health and substance use treatment, while avoiding criminal justice system involvement and unnecessary emergency room visits. I applaud Project Renewal’s frontline team for helping these individuals gain stability and successfully reenter their community.”

—NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL MEMBER DIANA AYALA

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volunteer@projectrenewal.org

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