

# Providence House Heartline

703 Lexington Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11221

[www.providencehouse.org](http://www.providencehouse.org)

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## **KIMBLEE ROBINSON and ROBIN TOYLOY FACILITATE HOUSING and EMPLOYMENT for PROVIDENCE HOUSE RESIDENTS**

**K**imblee Robinson has first-hand experience in dealing with the hurdles faced by the women and children served at Providence House to securing safe and affordable permanent housing. At one point in her life she too was a resident of Providence House and dealing with the same housing issues so many of our residents face on a daily basis. It was during her residency that Ms. Robinson enrolled at the Center for Community Alternatives where she honed her skills in learning to navigate the obstacles of the housing market and subsequently joined the Providence House staff as a Housing Specialist.

The “first order of business” when Ms. Robinson meets to counsel a resident is to make sure that all paperwork is in order. Any error or oversight, however minor, can delay the entire application process.



**Kimblee Robinson**

For example, Ms. Robinson helps clients with mental health and other special needs complete the 2010(e) application process, which is intricate and time consuming. Successful completion of the 2010(e) allows our special needs residents to obtain very scarce permanent supportive housing. Prompt follow-through with appointments and deadlines is critical, and Ms. Robinson ensures that the timetable is kept.

Ms. Robinson has developed relationships with housing providers, landlords and private realtors to facilitate the search for affordable housing for low-income families. She accompanies residents to inspect apartments and negotiate leases thereby preventing at the outset any landlord-tenant misunderstandings and problems.

The joy of her work, says Ms. Robinson, is when after months of hard searching and multiple apartment visits the women and children finally find their own place that they can call HOME!” *CS*

**J**obs are a precious commodity especially in today’s economic environment. Pick up any newspaper and you are sure to find stories on how difficult it is for college graduates to land a job -- any job. “Imagine how doubly hard it is for a homeless mother or a woman on parole to find employment,” says Robin Toyloy who joined Providence House in January 2011.

Ms. Toyloy comes with a wealth of experience in job development and placements. Prior to joining Providence House she was the Coordinator of the East New York Day Program of the Women’s Prison Association where she counseled women on parole.

Her workday at Providence House begins with a big cup of coffee “to provide the fuel for a marathon day of outreach to residents and potential employers,” says Ms. Toyloy. She explains that the competition for entry level jobs is so fierce, there is absolutely no time to waste.

Ms. Toyloy meets individually with the residents to map out employment goals and strategies. She works with them to develop professional cover letters and resumes, conducts mock interviews to polish their interviewing skills, advises them on correct interview attire, and teaches them how to use the internet strategically to find employment. She also maintains her own employment



**Robin Toyloy**

data bank and develops relationships with private sector employers and other non-profits that specialize in career development.

“Persistence” says Ms. Toyloy, “is key when looking for a job, along with encouragement.” This is exactly what she offers to each resident she serves at Providence House. *CS*

## Attorney and Educator Relates Her Volunteer Experience

“My name is Kerin Coughlin, and I am a volunteer academic tutor with Providence House. I first learned about Providence House in Spring 2011 from an announcement in the parish bulletin at St. Charles Borromeo Church in Brooklyn Heights. It stated that our Outreach Committee was collecting Mother’s Day gifts for the women at Providence House and briefly explained what Providence House is. I had never heard of it, and I really liked what I read. I particularly liked the idea of women helping other women to improve their lives and recover from difficult situations. I wanted to find out how I could help.



work through practice tests and brush up on test-taking skills. We hit it off immediately. Stephanie was highly determined to succeed, and she had the intelligence to do so. Her only difficulty was with remembering all of the many dates, names and places. (Who doesn’t have difficulty with that?!) So we decided to focus our preparation on using Stephanie’s

general history knowledge -- which is significant -- and her excellent logic and reasoning skills to figure out the best answers to the questions.

I got in touch with Paula Migliore, Director of Mission Effectiveness, who worked with me to figure out how we could work best together. Given my experience as a teacher (I’m currently an attorney but in my “past life” I taught middle school, and I still teach law school) and my schedule (I have only a few weekday evenings free), we decided I was best suited to tutor adult women.

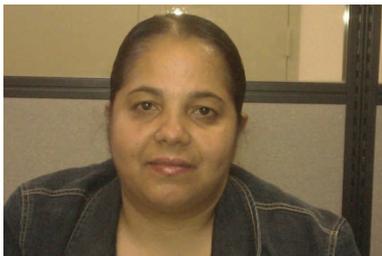
We really enjoyed our visits, sometimes to the point where we had to remind ourselves of our “real” purpose for meeting. In late January, Stephanie took the Regents. When she called me with the results, she was breathless from excitement. She had earned her high school diploma! She was very proud of her accomplishment, and I was equally if not more proud of her.

In November, Paula put me in touch with Stephanie Moore, a resident at Lincoln Road. Stephanie needed help preparing for the U.S. History Regents she would take in January, one of the last hurdles to earning her high school diploma. Stephanie and I began meeting once a week to

Stephanie has now moved on from Providence House but we still keep in touch. She’s applying to college and we’ll continue to work together through that process.

Soon I’ll start working with another resident at Providence House, and I am very excited about that!” *CS*

### Women Speak



Ms. Espinal

My two children and I arrived at Providence House less than one month ago. I never thought I would find myself in this situation. When we arrived all of my fears were put to rest by the warm welcome from the social service

staff at the residence I am staying at. It is my dream to first learn well the English language so that I can find a job to support my children independently in our own home. Ms. Llanes, my case worker, meets with me frequently and is helping me to enroll in an ESL program that I hope to begin within the next couple of weeks. Once I finish this course, I will be better prepared to begin looking for a job. None of this could have been possible without the caring and the encouragement given to me at Providence House. I am very grateful. *CS*

### SAVE THE DATE!!!

We are pleased to extend our invitation to attend the:

#### People of Hope Celebration

*Thursday, June 7, 2012 at 6 P.M.  
The Water Club in New York City*

The People of Hope Celebration raises funds in support of the programs and services at Providence House.

Our honorees are:

- ◇ **H. Craig and Lora Beth Treiber**- People of Hope Award
- ◇ **Nadine Bell** - Foundress Award
- ◇ A special Memorial Award in honor of **Susan Rohan** will be presented to her husband **Vincent**

Visit our website [www.providencehouse](http://www.providencehouse) for more information or call **Jose Ortiz** at 718.455.0197.