Annual Report 2016–17
Innovating for Results

St. Nicks Alliance
St. Nicks Alliance (SNA) transforms lives through employment, education, housing and health care by delivering impactful services with measurable outcomes to children, adults, and the elderly. As a civic anchor, we carry out this mission within the context of building a community for all people. As we look back on the last two years, we see that:

**St. Nicks Alliance by the Numbers**

- 17,000 North Brooklyn residents look to SNA annually when they need help
- 5,500 tenants live in affordable housing built or managed by SNA
- 1,500 seniors receive senior center, homecare and/or housing services
- 3,300 children and youth attend SNA afterschool centers and summer camps each year
- 858 adults obtained living wage jobs or made progress educationally
- 2,550 youth completed jobs, internships and apprenticeships

For St. Nicks Alliance, 2016 and 2017 were years of major achievements. We surpassed a major milestone with the new construction or renovation of over 2,200 units of affordable housing in 334 properties, investing $250 million capital. We are equally proud to have graduated our 1,000th trainee in Environmental Remediation, while launching new trainings in the burgeoning construction and IT sectors. Both achievements would have been inconceivable to our founders.

The founders took on the challenge of revitalizing a North Brooklyn neighborhood beset by property abandonment, crime, redlining, and the loss of manufacturing jobs. As the neighborhood stabilized and the economy grew beyond anyone’s expectations, the market forces that brought many positives out new pressures on the most vulnerable residents: children, families and seniors, and the institutions that serve them.

Seeking to leverage new investment in the nonprofit housing sector, St. Nicks Alliance co-founded JOE NYC, a sector-building partnership among CDCs to pool affordable assets, leverage capital and build capacity that will attract new investment and improve efficiency. St. Nicks collaborated with JOE NYC on the purchase of 250 units of affordable housing in 45 buildings, ensuring their permanent affordability.

Despite having built an infrastructure of services and supports throughout North Brooklyn, the neighborhood remained home to very large numbers of families living below the poverty line. Many children struggled in school. Significant numbers of adults could not find work despite a construction boom. There were an alarming escalation of illegal evictions and pushing families into homelessness. New challenges required new solutions and scale.

St. Nicks Alliance launched its NABE 3.0 Initiative in 2014 creating new models to achieve measurable outcomes. NABE 3.0 integrated Education, Workforce, and Housing services producing dramatic results. Hundreds of illegal evictions were prevented. New affordable housing was built while additional units were acquired, refinanced and renovated, ensuring permanent affordability. In NABE 3.0 afterschool centers, students showed truly remarkable improvement in reading and report card grades.

Hundreds of residents were trained and placed in living wage jobs that offered real opportunity.

As a civic anchor, our community celebrated a huge victory in the three-year struggle to preserve the Swinging Sixties Senior Center, Small World Childcare and the neighborhood town hall through the purchase of 211 Ainslie Street. We are grateful to all the seniors, children and parents, elected officials, concerned residents, the Cornell Block Association and Council Member Antonio Reynoso, who was arrested in the attempt to save the building and committed all of his capital allocation to save the center.

This year, St. Nicks Alliance is moving forward with a campaign to build the New School Settlement Community Center in a neighborhood where four schools do not have gyms. It will take the same level of determination and broad community support to achieve a second miracle.

As we begin our 43rd year, we remain ready to take on new challenges.

Joseph K. Robles  
Board Chair

Michael Rochford  
Executive Director
Reinventing Affordable Housing

People should have access to safe, well-maintained affordable housing. St. Nicks Alliance is changing the way affordable housing is financed and developed in New York City.

Developing Affordable Housing
SNA built 162 new units, acquired 248 units and preserved 202 units of affordable housing. An additional 51 units are under construction at 695 Grand Street and will be ready for occupancy in 2018.

Stewarding Affordable Assets
SNA manages 1700 units of affordable housing ensuring they are well-maintained and financially sound. Over 900 seniors live in safe, affordable housing that allows them to remain in their neighborhood.

Housing Special Needs Families
300 formerly homeless families with a member living with HIV/AIDS call SNA Supportive Housing home.

Preventing Homelessness
In 2016, SNA assisted 712 residents at risk of homelessness and prevented 125 illegal evictions that would have left families homeless and forced to leave the neighborhood.

Driving Affordability
SNA co-founded The Joint Operating Entity (JOE NYC), a consortium of 11 CDGs who joined together to leverage new capital, expand scale and improve asset management efficiency. With JOE NYC as a joint venture partner, SNA acquired 248 units of housing from a private owner, permanently preserving their affordability.

Tenants Take a Stand
One day in 2014, Catalina Hidalgo went to work and came home to find her bathroom destroyed and the building structure undermined in a deliberate effort to force her and her fellow tenants out of their 363 Nassau Avenue home.

At the landlord’s urging, the NYC Department of Buildings issued a vacate order due to unsafe conditions, caused by landlord-initiated repairs that included removal of plumbing, undermining of structural supports and the destruction of the water main.

St. Nicks Alliance and Brooklyn Legal Services A supported the tenants and forced the owner to make repairs allowing the tenants to return on July 23, 2017, 31 months after they had been illegally evicted.

Standing for Tenant Safety
SNA co-founded Stand for Tenant Safety, a citywide advocacy group that coined the term “Construction as Harassment” which refers to the use of construction to intimidate residents to leave rent-stabilized apartments, facing homelessness. Stand for Tenant Safety succeeded in pressing the city council to pass legislation banning the practice. Mayor DeBlasio signed the bill into law in 2017.
St. Nicks Alliance has created a new pathway to School Success.

Preparing for Kindergarten
In 2017, SNA and the Conselyea Block Association purchased 211 Ainslie Street preserving it as the permanent home of Small World Early Childhood Center and the Swinging Sixties Senior Center.

Thriving in Afterschool and Summer Camp
3,000 children and their families thrive in SNA afterschool centers and summer camps. In 2016, SNA expanded its NABE 3.0 School Success Approach, dramatically increasing the time children are engaged in reading, arts, and science. More than 5,000 children came aboard the Brooklyn Story Voyager (BKSV), a mobile book distribution vehicle, as it visited SNA afterschool sites, summer camps and community events.

Navigating Middle School
SNA provides middle school students with year-round youth development, academic support and enrichment and support during the transition to high school at five sites: MS 577, JHS 126, Liberty Prep, the Williamsburg Beacon @ Grand Street Campus and the Greenpoint Beacon @ MS 126. In 2017, chronic absenteeism decreased as student performance in Reading and Mathematics rose.

Preparing for College and Career
Career GPS provides college and career services at five local public high schools. More than 1,000 teens are placed in summer jobs and internships each year. 86% of overage and under-credited students who participated in SNA’s Learning to Work at Bushwick Community High School earned their diplomas.

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Learning to Work
James enrolled at Bushwick Community High School, a transfer school, because of poor attendance and in-school altercations at his prior school. He was involved with the criminal justice system as a result of assault charges. If that wasn’t enough, James was about to become a father. He came to St. Nicks Alliance’s Learning to Work (LTW) office and found ways to provide for his new family and earn his diploma.

James already had a job working the night shift at McDonald’s which allowed him to attend school during the day. During his time with LTW, James completed internships at community centers and after school centers and for the administration of Bushwick Community High School. He worked with the SNA Internship and Career Readiness Coordinator on resume writing, mock interviews, public speaking and other career readiness skills. James participated in SNA’s Dress for a Job event where he purchased a shirt, brand pants for future employment interviews.

While working two jobs, James resolved his court issues, learned to care for an infant and was determined to graduate Bushwick Community High School. SNA Transformational Coaches gave James the support necessary to improve his attendance, grades and credit accumulation. He graduated at the age of 20.

James remains a dedicated father committed to caring for his family. James currently works full-time on the administrative team at Salesforce, a major national firm, and attends weekend classes at Borough of Manhattan Community College.
Launched in 2014, the NABE 3.0 Initiative targeted an area of high poverty and low academic achievement with a large number of families threatened with homelessness due to skyrocketing rents. St. Nicks Alliance integrated housing, employment and education services; introduced evidence-based, data-driven practices; and used targeted new investments combined with existing resources to produce dramatic results.

Driving Real Outcomes
Elementary school students showed improvement in their performance in school. Families were protected from homelessness. Illegal evictions were prevented. New affordable housing was built, and existing affordable housing was preserved. Neighborhood residents were trained and placed in living wage jobs with the construction sector leading the way.

Intensive Literacy
In school year 2016–17, 503 students who participated in NABE 3.0 afterschool centers showed documented improvement. The School Success model is reinventing afterschool, combining enrichment; visual, performing and digital arts education; and an interdisciplinary thematic approach developed by a staff of literacy experts.

Transformational Practice
For struggling students identified by school principals and SNA afterschool directors, NABE 3.0 provides afterschool support, and Transformational Coaching in reading and non-cognitive skills. In each school, SNA Transformational Coaches provide crisis intervention and 1:1 intensive counseling with students and their families. Students in NABE 3.0 School Success afterschool centers demonstrate improved literacy and report card grades.

A Completely Different Kid
As a third-grader in a local public school, Johnnie struggled academically and behaviorally. He found it difficult to engage with his classmates and was given to emotional outbursts in the classroom. He was not learning.

Both his principal and the SNA afterschool director agreed that Johnnie was in need of intensive intervention. Enter Jessica, SNA’s Transformational Coach who began to work 1:1 with Johnnie to help him manage his behavior. Using a variety of interventions including play therapy and family counseling, Coach Jessica was able to help Johnnie share his struggles with his emotions, and his relationships with peers and his family. These interventions, alongside collaborative work with his teachers and support staff, helped Johnnie be more ready to learn.

Johnnie became better able to create and maintain friendships. His emotional outbursts significantly decreased to the extent that he seemed to his teachers like “a completely different kid.” As a result, he improved academically. During the school year, Johnnie increased four reading levels and his report card grades.

“THERE ARE AN IMPROVEMENT IN JOHNIE AS HE INTERACTS WITH HIS PEERS,” notes his principal. “HE ALSO PARTICIPATES WITH HIS CLASSMATES DURING EDUCATION AND IN CLASS DISCUSSIONS. ONE DAY, HE CAME OVER TO SAY HELLO, SMILED ME A GIVE, AND ENGAGED WITH ME FOR ABOUT FIVE MINUTES. THAT’S SOMETHING THAT NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE. THIS PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN ST. NICKS ALLIANCE, MY SCHOOL AND SCHOOL DISTRICT #14 IS GENUINELY MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF OUR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES.”

St. Nicks Alliance School Success Model

NABE 3.0 Integrated Strategies

Education
503 afterschool students improved in school
Jobs
178 placed in jobs
Housing
125 illegal evictions prevented, 351 units built, preserved or protected

7% Only 7% of third graders were reading at or above grade level at the start of the pilot.
31% After nine months, 31% of third graders in School Success were reading at or above grade level.

Afterschool Member Report Card
Grades are UP!

First Marking Period Report Card
Final Marking Period Report Card

St. Nicks Alliance School Success Model

7% → 31%
St. Nicks Alliance partners with corporate leaders and local businesses to break down the barriers that have kept North Brooklyn residents from accessing employment opportunities that has dominated the region.

From 2016–2017 St. Nicks Alliance enabled 853 people to find a job or progress toward a high school diploma.

Training Leads to Sustainable Jobs
SNA’s Workforce Center at 790 Broadway provides job readiness and industry-recognized Skills Training in Technology, Commercial Driving, Environmental Remediation, and Construction.

Innovating in Construction Sector
SNA partnered with Two Trees, a leading real estate company and the developer of the Domino Sugar Factory Project, and Galaxy, a prominent developer and contractor, to create Skilled Build, an intensive training experience that prepares adults and young adults to obtain industry-recognized certifications that enable them to secure high-paying career track construction jobs. 90% of the first 96 Skilled Build graduates were hired in entry-level construction jobs, achieving an unprecedented 95% placement rate.

Reconnecting Young Adults
In 2017, SNA launched a new initiative to reconnect out-of-school and out-of-work young adults (ages 16–21) to sustainable jobs and careers. In its first year, 39 “disconnected” young adults earned industry-recognized certification in construction, BRT, and CDLs, 27 were placed in jobs.

SNA Business Council
Much of credit for the success of SNA’s Workforce Center and its industry-recognized skills training offerings like Skilled Build goes to our employer partners whose support goes far beyond hiring. Under the leadership of members of SNA’s Board, 15 corporate leaders and employer partners in Hospitality, Construction, Healthcare, Manufacturing and Technology formed a Business Council that will advise SNA on addressing the needs of both job seekers and employers.

Eliminating Barriers to Work
A Dream Comes True
Maria is former hair dresser/stylist. She came to SNA’s Workforce Development Center to improve her English comprehension. After enrolling in an English class, Maria began to pursue her goal of working in transportation. The English instruction gave her the confidence in speaking in English to pursue her goal.

Maria always believed she would excel in transportation, having a strong command of the road, and driving vehicles. Maria enrolled in the Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) Training offered at Workforce. She completed the training and with the support of SNA’s Transformational Coaching staff, she passed the CDL B permit exam and the road test on her very first try.

After receiving her CDL B license, Maria went to work as a School Bus Driver with MV Transportation where she is employed full-time, has earned full union status and earns $17.50 an hour to do what she truly loves. She frequently returns to Workforce to encourage other CDL interns and to share her passion for the field she has chosen.

Re-Building My Old Neighborhood
Jason is a graduate of Skilled Build, SNA’s new, innovative construction laborer training program. After completing 5-weeks of training, Galaxy Construction Co. hired Jason and placed him at SNA’s Grand Street affordable housing project where he continuously improved skills.

Working on SNA’s Grand Street project has made Jason feel that he has come full circle, contributing to re-building his old neighborhood. As he puts it, “Every day I am grateful for the opportunity they gave me to learn skills and contribute to my neighborhood.”
Ensuring a Brighter, Safer, Fuller Life for Seniors

St. Nicks Alliance ElderCare provides 1,500 seniors with affordable housing, in-home care, assisted living and a vibrant senior center that allows seniors to enjoy their golden years in the neighborhood they call home.

Senior Center
The Swinging Sixties Senior Center is a hub of social and recreational activity for neighborhood seniors as well as a good place for a home-cooked meal, stimulating activities, and good friends.

Care at Home
For 800 seniors who need some assistance with their daily activities, SNA home attendants help with grooming, cooking, feeding, medication reminders and escorting.

Affordable Housing
For 500 seniors who need housing, SNA offers safe, affordable apartments at Jennings Hall, Monsignor Vetro Apartments, Metropolitan Houses, CABS Senior Housing and Ellery Court.

Assisted Living
For seniors who need help with their daily activities but still want an apartment of their own, SNA provides assisted living services in a safe, secure environment at Jennings Hall.

Caring for Seniors

Homecare Superstars
Frances, 71, became bedridden. She was immobile, nonverbal and increasingly withdrawn due to late-stage Alzheimer’s disease. Her husband, Jack, searched for someone who would care with St. Nicks Alliance ElderCare and Denise Diggs.

After 30 years as a home attendant, Denise knew just how to bring the light back into Frances’s life. To keep her company, Denise presented Frances with a doll. The doll and Frances are inseparable. Frances’s two other attendants, Evelyn Baptiste and Denise Lewis, sing and dance with Frances to lift her spirits.

Jack has seen an amazing transformation in his wife which he attributes to “Frances’s Homecare Superstars.” “Because of St. Nicks Alliance, Frances is much happier. And so am I!”

Living at Jennings Hall
Manny came to live at Jennings Hall when “What I did for a living caught up with me.” Manny worked as a “Demolition Guy” on construction projects. He takes pride in having cared for his family. Today, he suffers from debilitating illnesses that have robbed him of his independence.

Through St. Nicks Alliance ElderCare, Manny has “a nice place to live” in a neighborhood he calls his second home. “I was born and raised on the Lower East Side, but I always came to Williamsburg to hang out.”

Anna is Manny’s Home Care Worker, helping him with activities of daily living, housekeeping, cooking, laundry, reminders for medications, shopping and escorting.

“Anna encourages me to get out of my apartment, to participate in activities at Jennings Hall and to walk the neighborhood. She never lets me use my illness as an excuse!”

Image: Dancing with the Stars at Swinging Sixties
St. Nicks Alliance remains dedicated to preserving vital institutions, addressing environmental concerns and building a more vibrant community for all residents.

**The Miracle on Ainslie Street**

St. Nicks Alliance joined together with the Conselyea Street Block Association and community residents to end a three-year battle with the owner of 211 Ainslie Street who had sought to evict the Swinging Sixties Senior Center and the Small World Child Care from what has been their home since 1975.

With SNA leading the way, the community purchased the 211 Ainslie Street facility. It will remain the permanent home of the Swinging Sixties Senior Center and the Small World Child Care and continue as the town hall of Williamsburg. SNA is grateful to all elected officials, especially Borough President Eric Adams and Councilmember Antonio Reynoso, neighborhood leaders, seniors, parents, residents and all those who showed up at every rally and court appearance and made their voices heard.

**A New School Settlement Community Center**

Generations of North Brooklyn children have called School Settlement their after school and summertime home. Entire families learned to become citizens at the 120 Jackson Street. St. Nicks Alliance, School Settlement Association, Conselyea Block Association, and elected officials have launched a campaign to build a New School Settlement Community Center on the existing 120 Jackson Street property.

### Financials

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The word “Alliance” in our name is very intentional. St. Nicks Alliance is connected, affiliated or partnered with local organizations at work in North Brooklyn.

**Affiliates**
- Conselyea Block Association
- School Settlement Association

**Strategic Partners**
- Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation-A
- Consumer Action Program of Bed-Stuy (CABS) Corp.
- Evergreen
- Grand Street Business Improvement District
- Social Action Committee of the Lutheran Church of St. John the Evangelist
- Southside United HDRC – Los Sures®
- The People’s Firehouse, Inc.
- Trinity Human Services Corporation

**Voluntary Organizations**
- Greenpoint Renaissance Enterprise Corporation (GREC)
- Organisations United for Trash Reduction and Garbage Equity (OUT RAGE)
- United Neighbors Organization (UNO)
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To learn more about St. Nicks Alliance or to make a donation to support our work, please visit our website or contact:

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