



# HENRY STREET SETTLEMENT

OPPORTUNITY, HEALING, & JOY



# GREETINGS *from the* CEO

Dear Friends,

As I write this note to you, I'm looking back on a week that included a carnival at our Older Adult Center, a community roller disco skating event, a visit to City Hall to discuss reinvigorating our city's economy, a back-to-school backpack giveaway at our Jacob Riis Cornerstone community center, a youth resource fair, an architectural review of a new shelter we are planning to open, a student showcase at our arts camp, a fashion show by our design interns, and the championship game of our summer basketball league.

In spite of all we have been through over the past few years, some of our most ambitious ideas for community engagement are now coming to life, reflected in **the volume and diversity of our work in every corner of the neighborhood and in every corner of the Settlement.** I've been at Henry Street for 21 years and have never experienced this level of activity. I'm struck not only by the robust nature of the work taking place here at our agency, but by the quality, talent, and creativity of our team who are making it happen.

**This level of work is a direct response to an equally deep level of need we see across our community.** As we came

out of the worst of the pandemic, Henry Street identified the areas where our action was needed most: the mental health crisis unfolding locally and nationally, the impact of isolation on youth and older adults, increasing violence and crime in our neighborhood and across the city, and the need for meaningful employment in jobs that pay well for both young people and adults. The stories in this newsletter speak to Henry Street's work in all of these areas and more, as we strive to care for the whole person, the whole family, the whole block, and the whole community.

Henry Street is everywhere on the Lower East Side, and that takes everyone's investment. The work we do is a collaborative effort involving a broad spectrum of stakeholders: our board, donors, and partners (from local small businesses to several hospitals and universities); government agencies and local elected officials; corporate partners and volunteers; and our incredible team who carry out the work on a daily basis, keeping our doors open and forging critical links between Henry Street and our community.

We couldn't do this work without you, and we THANK YOU for supporting Henry Street.



Members of the CONNECT team—from left, Jessica Munoz, Lainey Perez, and Eileen Goris, with David Garza—reached out to neighbors at Henry Street's annual Community Day. Learn more about CONNECT inside!

**Peace. Health. Hope. Gratitude.**

**David Garza**



Calling himself a radical acceptance, unconditional love, positive social worker, Dylan Wilson brings a can-do attitude every day to the gym, afterschool, and summer camp classrooms at Henry Street's Boys & Girls Republic.

## DYLAN WILSON TALKS WITH KIDS ABOUT BIG FEELINGS

Getting to know each young person who enters the building, he says, helps him manage the big emotions and anger that can arise in the facility and in their lives. Some young people in BGR's programs have experienced significant trauma, such as family violence or incarceration. "Kids are good at concealing mental health issues," Dylan says, "but their pain can come out in angry outbursts."



Social Worker Dylan Wilson (left) started an esports club for teens like Michael Vega and Chris Williams at Boys & Girls Republic.

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**No one can replace what Henry Street represents in this community.**

When a kid explodes, he explains, there can be other issues going on—bullying, violence, or family financial insecurity. Whether on the basketball court or playing a video game, he helps young people learn how to win *and* lose with grace.

Dylan, whose position is supported by the Dash Snow Initiative, provides therapy directly to young people assigned through Henry Street's Youth Opportunity Hub. In early 2022, he launched a competitive video gaming club (called "esports") at BGR, because not everyone seeks an athletic setting. "In this space, they can grow their self-esteem and confidence through competition, but in an environment that is more suited to them."

Dylan acknowledges that his participants' lived experiences are vastly different from his own. "What I can offer is I'm a man who understands what it's like to feel that anger is the only emotion you can express. I tell these kids, it's OK to cry and you will not be judged."

"If I'd stumbled into my dream job, this would be it," he adds. "No one can replace what Henry Street represents in this community."



## TWO-GENERATION ESOL PROGRAM EMPOWERS WHOLE FAMILIES

Elaine Pimentel spends long hours cashiering in an upper Manhattan restaurant. But she dreams of owning her own eatery—a healthy place where she can make quinoa bowls, salads, and fruit juices. To reach her goal, the Dominican immigrant knows she first needs to sharpen her English skills.

When Elaine learned about Henry Street's ESOL-Job Readiness program, she was particularly drawn to the program's new two-generation initiative. In 2021, she had observed that her son was falling behind in school. But after a year of trying to find an affordable, in-person Spanish neuropsychological evaluation for him, amid the pandemic, she felt overwhelmed and defeated.

While Elaine took intermediate English classes at Henry Street, Melinda Ho, the two-generation resource coordinator, jumped in to help. Ho spent hours on the phone with the Department of Education. She spoke with several neuropsychologists and ultimately found one who could perform the assessment, leading to a diagnosis of dyslexia—and most important, to Elaine's son receiving services at school.

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**In this country, there is a lot of opportunity for him to develop his mind.** —Elaine Pimentel

In 2022, Ho connected 55 families, including 91 children, with needed resources both in- and outside of Henry Street.

Henry Street's English classes are geared toward helping students in their job searches. But for many parents to feel secure pursuing their own careers, they first need to attend to their children's pressing needs. With generous support from Robin Hood, Henry Street is able to provide them with these resources. Recently, Henry Street connected Elaine to a six-week food-service certificate program at Hot Bread Kitchen, and she plans to return to the organization's small-business training program.

Meanwhile, Elaine's son is starting third grade equipped with a plan for small-group instruction, counseling, and special help for dyslexia. And now, Elaine can focus again on making her restaurant dreams come true.

# Taking the On Ramp to Education & Employment

**Recognizing the challenges facing young adults entering the workforce**, especially after the pandemic's disruptions, Henry Street in 2022 started a new workforce program: On Ramps to Opportunity, known as ORO. This program is part of Job Essentials Training (JET)—Henry Street's job-readiness program begun in 2003 in response to the ongoing unemployment crisis after the September 11 attacks.

ORO targets hard-to-reach 18- to 24-year-olds, making sure participants are equipped with the foundation necessary to build a brighter, stronger future. Program Director Kiana Walbrook describes three tracks young adults can choose to launch their careers. The first track is education, whether that means connections to GED prep or higher education. The next is professional certifications. Members can pursue OSHA certification to ensure a safe work environment, security training, a medical assistant program that prepares people to work in a doctor's office, or other options. The final track is employment, with each member receiving career coaching and tailored support.

"It's good to see the young adults realizing their potential and feeling supported," Walbrook says.

## FINDING WELL-PAYING JOBS IN A NEW ECONOMY

ORO offers topical workshops, job fairs, employer spotlight panels, and corporate mock interviews. It also holds intensive three-day boot camps, covering resume prep, cover letters, and nailing the interview.

Since the program began, ORO has engaged 120 young people, including 40 who have found jobs and 25 who have completed certification or enrolled in other educational programs. Many participants connect with other Henry Street resources, from mental health care to recreation to needed benefits.

**"The most gratifying and worthwhile feeling is to see those who walked into our location unemployed and walk away employed, connected to our network, and feeling excited about their future,"** Walbrook says. "Many leave with a strong sense of purpose and feel equipped for the next steps in their lives."

**ORO has engaged 120 young people, including 40 who have found jobs.**



Jonathan Rivera (left) and Emmy Vega (right), graduates of the Stacks+Joules Building Systems Automation Training program, found jobs at MetroNorth and Tec Systems, respectively.



The second Building Systems Automation class graduated in June 2022; most students have found jobs in the industry.

The 12-week program is taught by the nonprofit organization Stacks+Joules, whose mission is to bridge opportunity gaps in the tech field. (Elnabawy, who had never heard of building automation before he learned about

the program, is a case in point.) One hundred percent of the winter and spring 2022 class participants have secured jobs with companies including Tec Systems, Climatec, RGSB, Dual Fuel, Distinctive Windows, the MTA, and Apple.

The curriculum covers lighting and HVAC controls using the Python coding language, refrigerant handling, and other skills that earn students valuable professional certifications by the time they finish the program.

## Bridging Gaps in the Tech Field

Ahmed Elnabawy joined Henry Street's Building Systems Automation Training program because he "didn't want to go straight into college after high school, but also didn't want to waste his time." The 19-year-old's time has been well spent: **he is among 33 graduates of this unique program to have secured jobs following the training, 80% of them in this growing, well-paying field.**

For Elnabawy, who is already considering applying to college for engineering, his new job at Tec Systems, is "amazing. The work environment is great. Every day I learn something new. It never stops."

The impetus for the training program, held at Henry Street's Workforce Development Center, was the widespread loss of jobs during the pandemic. It also represented an organizational pivot to more specialized career development in targeted areas of the economy: The building automation industry not only is growing swiftly but seeking workers to fill jobs that can pay up to \$60,000 per year.

**“Every day I learn something new. It never stops.”**



The toll of the pandemic on mental health has been dramatic for many, but particularly for lower-income New Yorkers who lack access to services, and for those with serious mental illness or legal involvement. CONNECT, or Continuous Engagement between Community and Clinic Treatment, is one of the Settlement's newest programs, established to address the pressing need for mental health care.

CONNECT meets clients where they are—in a literal sense. Social workers hold counseling sessions on the street, in the subway, or in a hospital; still, they encourage clients to come to Henry Street's Community Consultation Center for additional services. Program Director Whitney Coulson says that CONNECT has extended the center's capacity, eliminating the waitlist and offering no-cost services to those without insurance. A food

CONNECT has reached more than 300 participants.

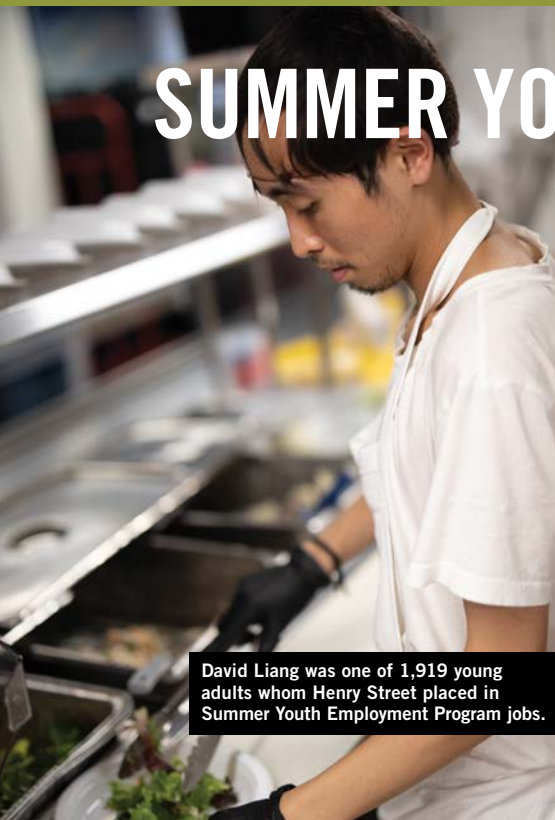
pantry, hot meals, yoga, and meditation classes serve to address health inequities that neighborhood residents face and reduce barriers to entering the program. Since its start in January 2022, CONNECT has reached over 300 clients. With funding from the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, it is one of nine citywide CONNECT programs.

Coulson acknowledges that some community members have had negative, even traumatic, experiences with social workers. Longtime Lower East Side resident Lainey Perez (right), the program's community liaison, is strengthening community trust in mental health services. "I have seen tremendous improvement in our clients' confidence," she says.



# CONNECTING THE NEIGHBORHOOD TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

This summer, Henry Street Settlement partnered with New York City's Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) to empower Lower East Side youth through meaningful work experiences and project-based learning. The 2022 cohort, ages 14 to 24, was one of our largest with 1,919 young adults paired with 281 employers. Of this year's youth employees, 25% were NYCHA residents, a significant number having come through our NYCHA CareerFirst initiative, which served residents of the Baruch Houses on the Lower East Side.



David Liang was one of 1,919 young adults whom Henry Street placed in Summer Youth Employment Program jobs.

## Chopping, Composting, and Camping: SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM BACK IN FULL SWING

Among the highlights this summer was the SYEP Emerging Leaders initiative, which prioritized jobs for youth in foster care or who are homeless/runaway, court-involved, or receiving government assistance. Henry Street placed 830 young people in jobs through this program.

David Liang, 23, spent the summer working as a prep cook in the kitchen at Henry Street's Older Adult Center. It was the first time the Hunter College student had joined the program. Having logged many hours chopping vegetables, crumbling bacon, and seasoning fish, he says that the job was a great learning experience in kitchen essentials.

SYEP connects young adults with employment opportunities that are relevant, accessible, and cater to their needs. Youth worked as summer camp counselors (for Henry Street and other groups), ice cream servers, and laborers at Brooklyn's Compost Power, Brooklyn Ballet, and Steady Buckets. Some SYEP initiatives, such as the Rambler Studio fashion design internship, based at Henry Street, focused on fostering talent. Henry Street applauds the many new employers we welcomed this year.





The Art Show is New York's premier art fair and Henry Street's greatest source of unrestricted funding.



# Attend THE ART SHOW



The Art Show to benefit Henry Street Settlement organized by the Art Dealers Association of America (ADAA) will celebrate its 34th year in 2022, opening with a Benefit Preview on Wednesday, November 2, and running from November 3 to 6 at the historic Park Avenue Armory. The Art Show is New York's premier art fair and Henry Street's greatest source of unrestricted funding, providing vital support to the Settlement's critical social service, arts, and health care programs. All admission proceeds and contributions go to the Settlement, for which the show has raised more than \$35 million over the course of the past three decades. The Art Show brings together the country's top galleries to showcase insightfully curated exhibitions of both historical and contemporary works.



Tickets to the Benefit Preview start at \$175 for 7:30 p.m. entry, and early bird tickets to the subsequent days of the show are \$20 if purchased at least two weeks in advance.



The glamorous VIP Benefit Preview brings together thousands of viewers from the worlds of art and philanthropy, offering them an exclusive first look before the fair opens to the public the following day. Attended by a global audience of collectors and other art lovers, business leaders, and philanthropists, the preview offers a chance not only to see an exciting selection of art all in one place but also to learn about and support Henry Street's life-changing programs.

Tickets are on sale at [theartshow.org](http://theartshow.org). Join us today and experience an unparalleled art experience that supports vital services for over 50,000 New Yorkers each year. **If you cannot attend, please consider making a donation in honor of our mission-driven work.**

Please visit [theartshow.org](http://theartshow.org) to learn more.



# COMMUNITY RESPONSE TEAM DEEPENS YOUTH CONNECTIONS

**Solana Quezada, 18, has been a Henry Streeter for most of her life.** Born on the Lower East Side, she started with dance classes at Abrons Arts Center when she was four and recently completed the Settlement's college access program, Expanded Horizons.

The onset of the pandemic during her sophomore year brought Solana's world to a halt. The social isolation she and other youth experienced was one of many catalysts for Henry Street to create several new programs, including the COVID Community Response Team. Now known as the Community Response Team (CRT), this collective of 20 young adults ages 18 to 24 works to meet the needs of Lower East Side residents.

Solana spent the summers of 2021 and 2022 with the CRT, delivering food, teaching youth sports, and connecting community members to Henry Street programs.

"In my neighborhood I've never *not* felt comfortable, and this job has really helped me connect to people more," says Solana, whose grandmother attends the Older Adult Center "religiously." Her parents both participated at Henry Street—including an ushering

job and art and music classes at Abrons Arts Center for her father. "Getting to help my community is an indescribable feeling." The importance of young people as community messengers has given Solana a deeper sense of purpose. "It's nice to be involved in a group of people who are as motivated, dedicated, and willing to do what needs to get done as the CRT is."

Solana started college at the University of Wisconsin—Madison in fall 2022 on a full-ride scholarship through the Posse Foundation. Her experience with the response team has influenced her to pursue a job in human services, and she looks forward to studying nursing.

"I think the Lower East Side is so blessed to have an organization like Henry Street for the people. Whenever you walk around, you see people in red Henry Street shirts; it's this surreal experience that now I'm also wearing the Henry Street shirt, and can say, 'Yeah, I'm a part of this too!'"

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## CITY TREKKERS SPARKS JOY AND CURIOSITY

**Exposing 450 children to what New York City has to offer**



**In June 2022, Henry Street Settlement received a generous gift from Trinity Church Wall Street to carry out the City Trekkers summer initiative in collaboration with New York City School District 1, spearheaded by Superintendent Carry Chan.** With 450 rising first through eighth grade participants, City Trekkers' mission was to immerse children in the city's cultural environment through field trips four days a week.

Following the long pandemic shutdowns, this program made up for lost time—and more—in bringing a sense of joy to students while exposing them to what New York City has to offer from artistic, cultural, and recreational perspectives.

"At a time when both adults and children have been affected by local and global stressors, **City Trekkers has been celebrating our city and getting children out into environments that are new, educational, and fun,**" says Matthew Phifer, Henry Street vice president for education and employment.

The urban adventurers—who included participants in Henry Street's pre-existing summer camps as well as many new campers—took trips to Broadway shows (*Harry Potter*, *The Lion King*, *Aladdin*), professional sports games (Yankees, Mets), museums and landmarks (American Museum of Natural History, One World Observatory), and other recreational spots (Rye Playland, Chelsea Piers, Dave and Busters). After seeing *The Lion King*, 11-year-old Caleb Dickerson said, "The songs were my favorite. They made everything move."

Most important, "These activities have nurtured their curiosity and exposed them to opportunities and even careers that will help build their visions for the future," says Program Coordinator Nanette Rodriguez.



# HOW TO HELP:

## Donate

Financial gifts of any amount directly support life-changing services for our community. Donate online at [henrystreet.org/donate](http://henrystreet.org/donate).

## Volunteer

Henry Street offers a variety of volunteer initiatives for corporations and individuals. Read about current opportunities at [henrystreet.org/volunteer](http://henrystreet.org/volunteer).

## Spread the Word

Let your friends and family know about Henry Street Settlement's work. Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, and share our platforms with your networks.

## Why we need your support

The daily challenges that our participants faced were palpable before the pandemic, and the crisis of the past three years has only exacerbated these issues. Henry Street is needed now more than ever. Your support directly translates into sustaining our life-affirming continuum of human services and arts programs while helping Henry Street stay agile and creative to meet the evolving needs of our neighbors.



**Henry Street Settlement's Urban Family Center**—the nation's first apartment-style transitional shelter with onsite social services for families—turns 50 this year. Since 1972, UFC has helped more than 6,000 families find permanent homes.

Today, 82 families in residence work closely with social workers to find permanent housing while accessing the Settlement's programs, from employment to mental health care, to arts classes.

When Henry Street started the center, it was a bold experiment to address rising family homelessness at a time when the city's response to the housing crisis was to put up families in "welfare hotels." These were notoriously cramped, dirty, and unsafe quarters that did little to help children thrive. Developed by former Henry Street Executive Director Danny Kronenfeld, the Urban Family Center would consist of individual apartments—with kitchens and bathrooms—and offer onsite services to help families get back on their feet.

## URBAN FAMILY CENTER CELEBRATES 50 YEARS

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We pride ourselves on treating the people we serve with respect and dignity.”



Maria G., a filmmaker, and her children lived at UFC before finding a permanent home.

UFC has continued to serve as a national model and a place that nurtures families' strengths with a full complement of social services. Always innovating, today it provides extensive employment support, the Crespi-Robert Connectivity Lounge for job and housing searches; support for survivors of interpersonal violence, and an aftercare program for former residents. Its onsite, live-in workers conduct intakes 24 hours a day, ensuring that families suddenly displaced do not have to wait in dingy, bureaucratic holding areas.

“UFC was the model,” says Geniria Armstrong, former vice president of Transitional & Supportive Housing. “We pride ourselves on treating the people we serve with respect and dignity and providing crisis services in the moment.”