



MATTERS



“It’s rewarding to work here and help people who are experiencing some of the same challenges that I’ve faced.”

JOB TRAINING HELPS JOYCE OVERCOME HOMELESSNESS

Joyce was excelling in her UPS job and pursuing a social psychology degree — until she was struck by an SUV and badly injured.

The accident left her unable to work. With bills and rent piling up, she was forced to drop her classes and she became homeless. Joyce was fiercely determined to get her life back. She learned about Project Renewal’s Next Step Internship Program (NSIP) and saw it as a path to a career and stability. NSIP provides unemployed New Yorkers with classroom and on-the-job training in homeless services work.

As an NSIP intern at our Ana’s Place shelter, Joyce thrived. When COVID hit she volunteered for extra shifts. Joyce’s coworkers admired her work ethic, and she was hired as a full-time Residential Aide. “My colleagues at Ana’s Place are so supportive,” she says. “It’s

rewarding to work here and help people who are experiencing some of the same challenges that I’ve faced.”

During the pandemic, with unemployment surging, NSIP has created job opportunities for New Yorkers who need them the most. And the program continues to provide shelters with a vital source of well-trained frontline workers.

Joyce has achieved many of her goals. She secured a job, paid off her credit card and medical bills, and saved money. As a result of her stable employment, she recently moved into her own studio apartment.

More than anything, she is proud to be able to support her adult daughter for the first time in several years. “It feels so good,” she says.

Workforce Development During a Pandemic

Dear Friends,

Obtaining employment is a difficult but critical step toward independence for many of the people Project Renewal serves. It’s even harder amid COVID, as unemployment soars. Yet, since the pandemic began, we have adapted our workforce development services to place more than 300 New Yorkers with histories of homelessness, substance use disorder, serious mental illness, criminal justice involvement — and limited access to technology — into jobs.

COVID’s shadow over our city’s economy will persist for years. Sectors that reliably employed our clients, like food service and hospitality, may take even longer to recover. Whatever the future brings, we will adapt as we always have, to create innovative training programs that support our clients and respond to the evolving job market and employers’ needs. And we will remain steadfast in a commitment that sets Project Renewal apart: we don’t turn anyone away or give up on a client, no matter their life history.

Thank you for your support.

Allison Messina
Vice President,
Workforce Development

GOOD NEIGHBORS, GOOD WORK

Joseph's Job



Joseph is making the most of his opportunity in the Project Renewal Good Neighbors Program. He worked in food service, which helped him maintain his sobriety, but he lost his job when COVID hit. Living at The Lucerne, he was eager to find new work. The pandemic limited his job options, but when we started Good Neighbors in November, he was the first to sign up—and he has been an exemplary employee ever since.

"I'm grateful for this job because it keeps me busy and keeps my mind occupied," says Joseph, who is also working with one of our vocational counselors to find long-term employment. "It makes me feel like a better person and it has helped me stabilize myself and find purpose."

At the direction of the City of New York, we have temporarily moved many of our clients from congregate shelters to hotel rooms to limit the coronavirus' spread. We brought our comprehensive support services to these settings and, at one hotel, we created a brand-new program that is benefiting both the men we serve and the neighborhood.

Project Renewal's Good Neighbors Program, launched in partnership with fellow nonprofit Goddard Riverside at The Lucerne Hotel, is a new way to engage clients in meaningful

activities and contribute positively to the Upper West Side community. Clients receive paid on-the-job sanitation training—sweeping sidewalks, bagging litter, and removing

filled trash bags from corner receptacles. We proudly pay participants the full \$15 minimum wage and provide vocational counseling toward permanent job placement.

So far, we have enrolled 25 clients with a waitlist of 14 who are eager to join. The program is a hit with our neighbors too. Several local groups, including block associations, have asked us to expand our services.



Joseph does sanitation work on the Upper West Side.

"I love seeing their happy faces when we serve our food. And when they're happy, I'm happy"



CATHY'S JOURNEY FROM PRISON TO A NEW PASSION

Cathy spent over ten years in prison. When she returned home, she felt isolated and out-of-touch with the world.

Unable to keep a job, she began partying and drinking heavily to fit in. A DWI charge in 2015 was a wake-up call. She knew she couldn't let herself go down the same road again. She entered Project Renewal's Culinary Arts Training Program, which helps

homeless and at-risk adults—including many with justice histories—find careers in the culinary industry.

"I changed my life the minute I came to Project Renewal," Cathy says. Her newfound love of cooking helped her stay away from drugs and alcohol—and gave her purpose. After completing our training program, Cathy was hired by Project Renewal's social enterprise catering company, City Beet

Kitchens, and began to work her way up the ranks. Now a kitchen supervisor at our Third Street Men's Shelter, Cathy has been working hard throughout the pandemic to ensure our guests get nutritious, great-tasting food on time.

"A warm, hearty meal goes a long way for the folks we serve, especially now," Cathy says. "I love seeing their happy faces when we serve our food. And when they're happy, I'm happy."



Our Culinary Arts Training Program recently started its 100th class and has placed New Yorkers in over 1,400 jobs since 1996.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DURING COVID BY THE NUMBERS



500 ENROLLED
Over 500 new clients have enrolled in our workforce programs since the start of the pandemic.



396 JOB PLACEMENTS
396 new job placements have been secured by workforce participants since March 2020.



25 GRADUATES
Our Next Step Internship Program just completed its largest training class yet, with 25 people with histories of homelessness, substance use, and justice involvement.



15 AGENCIES
In 2020, 15 social service agencies hired our Next Step Internship Program graduates.

SNAPSHOTS OF RENEWAL

VACCINES We are grateful that our frontline staff, who have selflessly showed up to serve New Yorkers in need during the pandemic, began to receive COVID vaccines in January.



MAKING MEALS Our City Beet Kitchens chefs continue working tirelessly to provide 7,300 meals a day to New Yorkers in need.

DONATIONS Sole Purpose donated hundreds of "Purpose Packs," with sneakers and socks, to our employment program participants and shelter residents



VOLUNTEERS Volunteers from First Republic Bank, Blackstone, and PDT conducted virtual mock interviews with our workforce development clients. Participants expressed more confidence heading into job interviews.



SAVE THE DATE

Renewal *for* New York

A PROJECT RENEWAL SPECIAL EVENT

A Virtual Celebration of Frontline Service
for Homeless New Yorkers

DATE

Wednesday, June 9, 2021

HONORING

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Mitch Arkin

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