



Renewing lives. Reclaiming hope.

# MATTERS

## STOPPING THE SPREAD OF COVID-19



On-site shelter testing teams help ensure our programs are COVID-19 free.

**O**ur team's tireless efforts have kept the number of COVID-19 cases at our shelters and housing programs low,

considering the elevated risk of transmission in congregate settings. From March through August, we have had only 81 confirmed cases among the more than 2,000 clients we served.

When the pandemic began, we immediately took steps to keep our shelter clients and staff safe. We implemented enhanced cleaning and disinfection protocols, staggered mealtimes, scaled back group activities, promptly identified and isolated symptomatic clients and staff,

and launched on-site COVID-19 testing. At the direction of the City of New York, we followed health experts' guidance by relocating more than 600 of our shelter clients to four hotels identified by the City—increasing our shelter facility count to 11. At these hotels, the full staff of our shelter programs have continued to provide clients with a wide range of support services, six daily wellness checks, and three meals a day.

Our work is not done. Outbreaks can still happen. But we have proven that with smart, quick action, we can limit the spread and protect those who are most vulnerable.

### Homeless Services During A Pandemic

Dear Friends,

This year, Project Renewal's services have become more vital than ever, keeping vulnerable New Yorkers safe, healthy, housed, fed, and employed during the global pandemic.

Since the onset, we have been on the front lines of New York City's response to COVID-19. The health crisis and economic fallout have disproportionately impacted groups we serve—New Yorkers experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity; substance use disorder and mental illness; and the insidious effects of structural racism.

I am proud to say that our team has met this moment with unyielding courage, compassion, and professionalism—in spite of the risk of exposure to the virus. In this edition of MATTERS, I invite you to see how our heroic staff has overcome unprecedented challenges and continued fulfilling our mission to renew our clients' lives.

Thank you for supporting this critical work.

ERIC ROSENBAUM,  
President & CEO

## Health Care on the Front Lines

At the height of the pandemic, Project Renewal's health care programs were on the front lines, providing safe, quality care while easing the burden on our city's overwhelmed emergency rooms. Our mobile medical clinic and shelter-based clinic teams provided treatment for COVID-like illness and chronic conditions associated with homelessness. We are safety net providers—we address the health care needs of people who may otherwise have ended up in the emergency room, risking exposure to COVID and using valuable hospital resources.

In addition to supporting patients' physical health, we expanded our telepsychiatry

program to serve clients remotely. Within weeks of COVID's onset, we brought on an additional 13 telehealth providers, bringing the total number to 16. Our uninterrupted support helped to stabilize and treat people with mental health concerns—at an especially challenging time—so they didn't have to go to the hospital for things like medication refills.

We are deeply grateful for our dedicated primary care doctors, nurses, psychiatrists, case managers, and our entire health care team, who stopped at nothing during the worst days of the virus to ensure that vulnerable New Yorkers got the care they needed.



## WORKFORCE PROGRAMS OFFER HOPE IN COVID-19 ECONOMY

As our city continues to reopen, Project Renewal's suite of workforce development programs are providing employment opportunities for New Yorkers in need—and helping our economy get back on track.

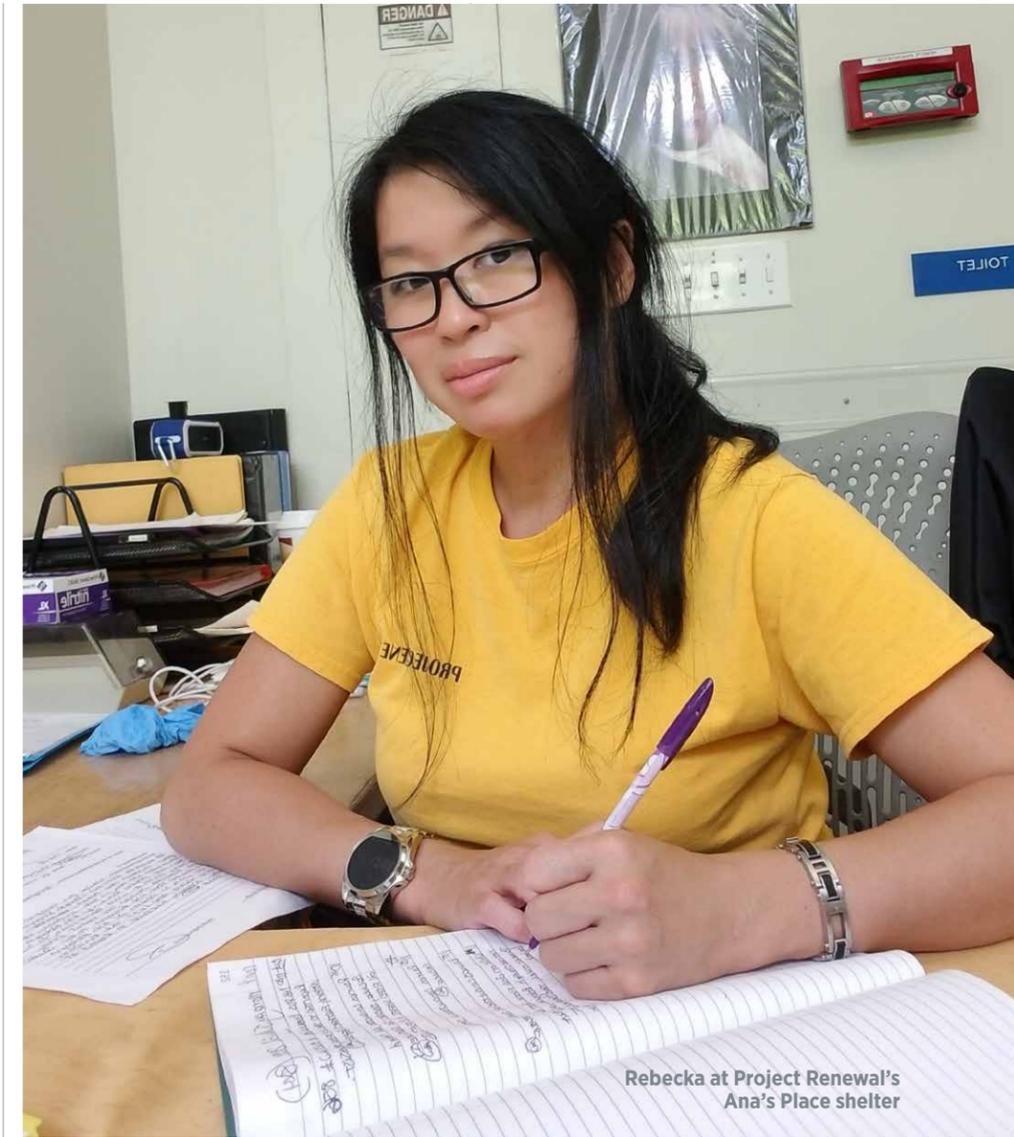
Our workforce programs have placed 190 people in jobs since mid-March, even while shifting to remote support and facing a tough economy. Many of the placements have been essential to keeping our city going, in fields like maintenance, package handling, and food delivery. Participants are eager to support our city and themselves—60% of those who enroll have personally experienced homelessness.

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of those who enrolled have personally experienced homelessness.

Our Next Step Internship Program (NSIP), which provides on-the-job training in homeless shelter work, has been especially important during the COVID-19 crisis. NSIP connects out-of-work adults to essential jobs and produces well-trained graduates to serve homeless New Yorkers and keep them safe from the virus.

After building a successful career in insurance and IT, Rebecka ended up in an abusive relationship. She began using drugs and served time in prison. Upon her release, she was referred to NSIP—and has thrived ever since.

She interned at our Ana's Place shelter and was quickly offered a job. "Project Renewal made me feel like there was hope again," she recalls. After a year, she secured a new position as a Resident Advisor for young women at a youth shelter.



Rebecka at Project Renewal's Ana's Place shelter

Once the pandemic hit, our team maintained contact with Rebecka to ensure she remained employed. We are also helping her explore online higher education options so she can continue to advance her career in social services.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, Rebecka feels hopeful about her future. "I love my job," she says. "I love supporting young people and making a difference, especially during these tough times."

## CITY BEET KITCHENS EXPANDS TO FEED 5,000 NEW YORKERS A DAY

Project Renewal's social enterprise catering company, City Beet Kitchens, has stepped up to combat food insecurity during this unprecedented time. Since March, City Beet has doubled its reach to New Yorkers in need, increasing from 2,500 to 5,000 daily meals served.

"We've seen an increase in demand from our existing clients, and we've even added three new clients since the pandemic began," says City Beet Kitchens Executive Director Barbara Hughes. "Our team's dedication and hard work has been truly inspiring to me—and crucial to the folks who rely on City Beet for a hot meal."

City Beet delivers to 26 institutions across the five boroughs, including homeless

shelters, hospitals, churches, and other businesses employing essential workers. Staff are staying safe while doing good, following stringent sanitizing procedures and food safety protocols during cooking and delivery.

City Beet Kitchens doesn't just help the New Yorkers they serve. The program provides jobs for graduates of Project Renewal's Culinary Arts Training Program (CATP), which trains formerly



Jamel Woods (left) at the Project Renewal Fall Ball in 2018

homeless New Yorkers for careers in the culinary industry. Jamel Woods, a CATP graduate and the Interim Manager of City Beet Kitchens, is proud to serve those who don't have the resources or skills to prepare

their own meals. "Many New Yorkers are having a hard time putting food on the table, especially during the pandemic," he says. "We're providing more than a meal—we prepare our dishes with love."

**OUR COVID-19 RESPONSE: BY THE NUMBERS**



**5,000 DAILY MEALS SERVED**

to New Yorkers in need by our social enterprise catering company, City Beet Kitchens



**190 PEOPLE PLACED IN JOBS**

since mid-March through our workforce development programs



**20 HOURS OF MENTAL HEALTH SELF-CARE SEMINARS**

held for frontline staff



**FEWER THAN 5% OF OUR SHELTER AND HOUSING PROGRAM**

residents tested positive for COVID-19



**PAID \$1 MILLION IN ADDITIONAL PAY**

to 700 frontline staff members, averaging \$1,300 per person



**ENSURED CONTINUITY OF CARE FOR 2,000+ CLIENTS**

residing in our shelters and supportive housing



**1,134 CLIENTS SEEN**

via tele-health and tele-psychiatry



On a hot summer day, President & CEO Eric Rosenbaum helped move shelter clients into a non-congregate site in order to reduce density and save lives.



“Trinity applauds Project Renewal for its continued efforts to help the most vulnerable New Yorkers during the COVID-19 crisis,” said The Rev. Phillip A. Jackson, Priest-in-charge and Vicar of Trinity Church Wall Street. “As a client of City Beet Kitchens, we are also grateful to the team there, who have provided Trinity’s essential workers with meals throughout the pandemic. We are proud to support the work that Project Renewal does to lift up our neighbors.”



# PROJECT RENEWAL HEROES



Throughout the pandemic, we’ve highlighted our frontline staff on social media, including our Marsha’s House operations team (top); nurse Therese (lower left); and occupational therapists Robin and Margo (lower right).



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