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Health, Homes and Jobs for Homeless New

**E News for:
Friends of
Project
Renewal**

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**New York Times
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Hope" [here](#)**



Spotlight on Holland House

A block from Port Authority, Holland House was once a rat-infested eye-sore where prostitution and drug use was rampant. Today it is a refuge for formerly addicted and homeless residents.

In 1995, Project Renewal transformed the 21-story/307-unit single room occupancy hotel into an efficiency-apartment building, providing permanent, supportive housing. The majority of residents are formerly homeless men and women, many of whom are disabled by substance abuse disorders, mental illness, and/or

HIV/AIDS. The building offers tenants a complete range of services under one roof-- from mental health and addiction treatment to life-skills and employment assistance programs.

Project Renewal was one of the early pioneers of supportive housing in New York City and the award-winning project has proven a success for both tenants and the community. The cycle of homelessness ends here for many tenants – 82% have remained housed for at least a year. All tenants pay rent on a sliding scale according to income, and city funding makes up the difference.

The Urban Justice Center partners with Holland House to provide free legal services to tenants. This summer, volunteers helped clients with Medicaid and Medicaid Managed Care, including issues such as accessing health care benefits, leaving a health plan, understanding the system to access needed care, options when benefits are cut off, and qualifications for health plan enrollment or exemption.



A student works on a mosaic in art class

Building a Community

By Ellis Eisner, MA, LCAT, ATR-BC, Recreation Director

What kinds of activities add interest and dimension to the daily experience of Holland House's tenants? Read on for a sampling:

Holland House is privileged to have Arron, a professional clothing designer, living in the



Tenants taking an art class

building. He secured donations of commercial sewing machines and great fabrics and teaches **sewing classes** on Sundays. Other tenants also pitch in: one is in charge of the tenant computers, another shows movies on weekends, one prints a 'Free Events' pamphlet every week, and another helps run the Food Pantry and film borrowing library.



Students enjoying an art class in Central Park

'Art Studio' is an open studio with supplies for painting, drawing, sculpting, mosaics, mask making, jewelry making and yarn-craft. Instruction is provided to tenants who ask for it. One studio regular, Orlando Ramos, asserts, "It helps me out a lot. It's teaching me to draw like an artist." Cecilia Gomez agrees and adds, "It keeps your mind clear and keeps you busy." Another tenant said, "My creative juices are flowing like never before."

'Social Club' is run as a casual, friendly meeting place. Coffee, tea, snacks, board and card games, and music are included to facilitate an easy socializing atmosphere.

Trips made this summer included: the Queens Museum, drawing in Central Park, The Bronx Zoo, the Museum of Natural History, and two movies: *Star Trek* and *Transformers*.

IMPRINTS Job Training Program Starts at Holland House

Students began an 8-week hands-on technical training class this week in the IMPRINTS office. They learn basic document production, quality control, scanning and become familiar with bindery and finishing equipment. After the class, an internship follows, and after the internship, we help graduates find a job with printing service companies like Kinko's and Staples.



Holland House Employees help friends at Western Asset pack the donated food

Asset who participated!

Holland House Food Drive

Board Member Colleen Cavanaugh and her colleague Jacqueline Siladji organized a food drive at Western Asset Management to benefit the residents of Holland House. Residents of Holland House have access to a pantry, where they may select up to three food items a day, if needed. Western Asset employees donated everything from peanut butter to macaroni! Thank you to everyone at Western

Two Acres of Hope: The New York Times visits Renewal Farm

The men at Renewal Farm had a chance to share their stories with a Times reporter recently. If you missed the story in the August 16 issue of the Times, you can read it [here](#)

Yes, I wish to make a gift and help end homelessness.

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