

# COMMUNITY *notes*

*We're committed to ending homelessness in Brooklyn.*

105 Carlton Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11205 • Phone: (718) 625-4545 • Fax: (718) 625-0635 • [www.BCHandS.org](http://www.BCHandS.org)

## BCHS Celebrates Residents and Supporters at *Talented Brooklyn* Gala

More than 200 guests braved the heavy rain to attend Brooklyn Community Housing and Services' (BCHS) *Talented Brooklyn* Gala on April 30th. Despite the weather, the atmosphere inside the Green Building in Brooklyn was bright and warm.

Friends, donors and honorees gathered for the celebration, which raised more than \$115,000 in crucial funds to support BCHS' work to end homelessness in Brooklyn. BCHS proudly honored Christopher Halligan, Esq., Attorney at Law with Adam Leitman Bailey, P.C., and leading supportive housing experts CSH: Connie Tempel, Diane Louard-Michel, Kristin Miller and Ryan Moser, for the extraordinary and essential services they provide to BCHS and the Brooklyn community.

While enjoying cocktails and hors d'oeuvres (catered by Brooklyn's own Naturally Delicious), guests browsed inspiring artwork from BCHS residents, as well as a series of photos by Brooklyn-based photographer and filmmaker Liz Giamatti celebrating the women of BCHS. Attendees also bid on an exciting assortment of auction items including hand-crafted works from local artists, tickets to a taping of *The Late Show* with David Letterman, reservations at the super-exclusive East Harlem restaurant Rao's, a trip to Rome, an iPad and many other unique opportunities and items.

Throughout the gala, novelist, songwriter and performer Wesley Stace entertained the crowd as special guest emcee. Later in the night, award-winning Brooklyn-based performer Jean Rohe and her band closed out the night with a lively performance of original multi-cultural songs.

We are enormously thankful to all who attended, provided support and helped put this year's gala together. We hope to see you next year! *See page 5 for more Talented Brooklyn.*

Left: Jean Rohe



Above, from left: Board Members Margie Hanssens, Alexandra Bowie and Tom Castelnovo; Honorees Connie Tempel, Diane Louard-Michel, Kristin Miller and Ryan Moser (CSH)

Below, from left: Board Member Richard Greenspan with Nekesha Sawh, Evelyn Correa and Livia Corredor (Forest City Ratner Companies); Board Member Jonathan Jones, photographer/filmmaker Liz Giamatti, and BCHS artist Hilde Freedom



Above: Honoree Christopher Halligan, Esq. (Adam Leitman Bailey, P.C.)

Photos by  
FreedLense Photography



## Message from Executive Director Jeff Nemetsky

*Dear friends,*

Ruth wanted to be an artist since she was 5 years old. Pursuing her dream, she attended NYU with a dual major in creative writing and art and even wrote a column for the school paper.

But soon after graduating, Ruth was mugged at knifepoint and had to fight off her attacker on a darkened street. The incident left her badly shaken. Scared and uncertain, Ruth decided to move back in with her mother and sisters in their small apartment in Chinatown. However things only got worse, as feelings of anxiety and depression began to overwhelm her; when Ruth started hearing voices her family felt they could no longer care for her and, heartbroken, placed her in a psychiatric center in New Jersey.

Fortunately, a worker at the center knew about BCHS' *Scattered-Site Apartment Program* and felt Ruth would be a good fit, eventually making a referral. Once at BCHS, Ruth moved into a beautiful 3-bedroom apartment with recently renovated wood floors. With the help of her case manager, Ruth began to feel more stable and safe, and developed healthy friendships with her two roommates, who were also BCHS clients. Ruth's case manager helped her learn about her mental illness and become comfortable again living in the community.

Ruth began to feel so much better that, with the staff's encouragement, she started participating in BCHS' therapeutic art program and rediscovered her love of art. Today, seven years later, Ruth's work has developed so fully that she displays her paintings at art shows in Brooklyn, Manhattan and Queens, and loves to talk to admirers about her influences. **"My artwork makes me feel whole,"** Ruth says.

I am happy to say that talented BCHS residents just like Ruth were able to display their beautiful paintings, drawings and sculptures at this year's *Talented Brooklyn* Gala. The event featured innovative works in addition to a moving photo exhibit by acclaimed Brooklyn filmmaker Liz Giamatti. I am greatly appreciative for all our generous supporters who helped make the evening such a terrific success.

It was once said that "to plant a garden is to grow a community," and in this issue of Community Notes you will see the work that was done in May to beautify gardens in and around our *Brooklyn Gardens* courtyard. Many thanks to our volunteers, including Goldman Sachs' Community TeamWorks, who helped make this area so lovely and brought smiles to our residents' faces.

Thank you so much for your support, and thank you for being part of the effort to end homelessness in Brooklyn. I hope you have had a wonderful summer!

## BCHS Board Elects New Officers, Welcomes Two New Members

In June, the BCHS Board of Directors chose new officers to lead them through its 2015 fiscal year, beginning July 1, 2014. The officers for the new term are as follows:

- Christine Spadaro is now Chairperson, replacing Ben Baxt, who is staying on as an active Board Member;
- Jens Peter Hansen assumes Ms. Spadaro's previous position as Vice-Chairperson;
- Anthony Trani is moving to the role of Treasurer that was previously held by Thomas Castelnuevo. Mr. Castelnuevo, also a former Chairperson, remains on as an active Board Member; and
- Laura Schnell is taking on the post of Secretary.

The group also welcomed two recently elected members, Ambriel Floyd Bostic and Nadja Pinnaia, who bring the current roster to 18 Board Members.

"We have such a devoted and energetic group on the Board right now," says Chairperson Christine Spadaro. "I'm very excited about the future of BCHS."



**AMBRIEL FLOYD BOSTIC**  
*Artist and Owner*  
*Floyd Home*

"I'm hoping BCHS can generate more awareness about the current work, which speaks for itself, in anticipation of work planned for the future... The more New Yorkers know about the work BCHS does, the more enthusiasm there will be for these ambitious programs. We need this!"



**NADJA PINNAIA**  
*Founder and Managing Partner*  
*WhiteCap Principal Ventures*

"I am looking forward to helping BCHS continue to grow and continue its great work for Brooklyn. I hope to help raise awareness of BCHS in our community and seek partnerships with institutions and individuals in order to achieve that objective as swiftly as possible."



## Navy Green SRO Recognized as Finalist for CSH Supportive Housing 'Project of the Year' Award

The *Navy Green SRO* was honored as a finalist for the Project of the Year award at the CSH Eastern Region Supportive Housing Conference in March. *Navy Green* is an innovative residential project near the Brooklyn Navy Yards that includes market-rate, low-income and supportive housing on a shared site.

The *Navy Green SRO* provides affordable supportive units for adults with histories of chronic homelessness, including veterans and seniors. BCHS coordinates social services and case management for residents, in partnership with the facility's owner and manager, Pratt Area Community Council (PACC).

In addition to the nomination, BCHS Executive Director Jeff Nemetsky was invited to speak at the conference about best practices in supportive housing for older homeless adults.

Pictured, left to right: Jen Trepinski (CSH), Diane Louard-Michel (CSH), Jeff Nemetsky (BCHS), Wendy Junious (BCHS), Deborah Howard (PACC), Guerline Blaise (BCHS), Curdy Edwards (BCHS), Ryan Moser (CSH)



## The 2014 BCHS Board of Directors' Wine Tasting

A Sparkling Opportunity to Toast Recent Accomplishments and New Initiatives

On January 23rd, Former Board Chairperson Benjamin Baxt and his wife Susan graciously hosted BCHS' Annual Wine Tasting event. The Baxts welcomed a group of Board Members and more than 30 guests to enjoy a curated wine selection and delicious hors d'oeuvres.

Executive Director Jeff Nemetsky gave a brief presentation about BCHS' recent accomplishments and the agency's mission to end homelessness in Brooklyn. Board Members mingled with new donors and friends, sharing their enthusiasm for BCHS' work and encouraging those interested to become more involved with BCHS.

Many thanks to Ben and Susan Baxt for welcoming everybody into their beautiful historic home in Brooklyn's Cobble Hill neighborhood. Thanks also to Paradis to Go for the night's delicious catering.

Above left: Mary Dixie Carter and Eliot Merrill

Directly left: Board Member Alexandra Bowie and Steve Kempf

Below left: Nick Covino, Board Member Jens Peter Hansen, James Vota and Albert Vota;

Below right: Susan Baxt, Board Member Anthony Trani and Laura Trani





## 2014 Begins with a Flourish of Activities at BCHS

Throughout the first half of 2014, BCHS offered residents a full schedule of entertaining and educational activities to celebrate holidays, observe historic recognition events and enjoy socializing with fellow residents and BCHS staff members.

- In February, BCHS honored Black History Month at the *Navy Green SRO* with “Famous Firsts,” a game show-style party showcasing the important achievements of African-Americans throughout the country’s history.
- A few weeks later, in March, *Navy Green* hosted a Women’s History Month celebration featuring a tea party, hors d’oeuvres, and presentations about women’s empowerment and the history of the Suffragette movement.
- For Mother’s Day, the women of *Arbor Inn* gathered in the *Brooklyn Gardens* community room for a lunch buffet. While the mothers were together, the BCHS activities team facilitated a discussion about the challenges of motherhood for the formerly homeless residents, and the women shared stories and celebrated their strengths.
- When Father’s Day came around in June, BCHS’ dads enjoyed free haircuts and shaves provided by a local barber from the Fort Greene neighborhood. BCHS staff, along with Board Member Ambriel Floyd Bostic, served chicken and waffles to the residents.
- The Memorial Day Barbecue at *Brooklyn Gardens* was one of the highlights of the year, boosted by beautiful spring weather and delicious food. After eating, residents and staff socialized and danced in the warm and shaded courtyard.



Above:  
*Oak Hall/Ivy House*  
Program Director  
Aurora Evans prepares  
a plate of chicken and  
waffles at the Father’s  
Day Brunch



Right: *Arbor Inn* Housing Specialist Laron Greene, Activities Coordinator Tamara Ramsey and *Navy Green SRO* Case Manager Elba Rosado at the Black History Month Event

Left: Sam, a resident at *Oak Hall*, relaxes with a free Father’s Day haircut by a volunteer barber from the Fort Greene neighborhood



Far left: *Navy Green SRO* Case Manager Wilbete Solon dons a festive Springtime hat during the Mother’s Day Luncheon



Left: Board Member Ambriel Floyd Bostic and Activities Specialist Ajanae Lewis prepare waffles at the Father’s Day Brunch



Above: Residents Bella, Lisa and Matthew enjoy the Memorial Day Barbecue in the courtyard at *Brooklyn Gardens*





## HONORING

### CSH

Connie Tempel  
Diane Louard-Michel  
Kristin Miller  
Ryan Moser

### Christopher Halligan, Esq.

Attorney at Law  
Adam Leitman Bailey, P.C.

## SPONSORS

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Baxt Ingui Architects, P.C.  
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Jennifer Kellogg and Tad Sennott  
Anthony and Laura Trani  
Neil and Susan Whoriskey



Above, from left: BCBS Board Members Ben Baxt and Laura Schnell; Tom Potter (New York Distilling Co.), Elise Long (Spoke the Hub) and Venice James

Right: Adam Leitman Bailey, Executive Director  
Jeff Nemetsky, Chris Halligan and Vladimir Mironenko (Adam Leitman Bailey, P.C.)



Left: Special Guest Emcee Wesley Stage  
Top: *Talented Brooklyn* design by Tom Dolle Design  
Background image: Photographs by Liz Giamatti



## 2014 BCBS Resident Art Show and Photographs by Liz Giamatti

### THIS YEAR'S BCBS RESIDENT ARTISTS

Eve Battiste  
Jason Bolen  
Jenny Chan  
Dorian Davis  
Dante Encarnacion  
Hilde Freedom  
Destiny James  
Hee'Ja Kim  
Barry McCrea  
Lindora Slowe



Artists Hilde Freedom and Hee'Ja Kim

Once again, the *Talented Brooklyn* Gala featured an extensive exhibit of beautiful and creative artwork by BCBS residents.

In addition, Brooklyn filmmaker and photographer Liz Giamatti shared her new series of vibrant photos celebrating the women who live and work at BCBS.

We thank all our talented resident artists for sharing their wonderful artwork at *Talented Brooklyn*.

Special thanks to Liz Giamatti for generously sharing her time, talent and photographs with our residents and guests at *Talented Brooklyn*.

Event photos by FreedLense Photography



## \$25,000 - \$99,999

The Oak Foundation

## \$10,000 - \$24,999

The Barker Welfare Foundation/  
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Sean O'Neal and Ambereen Sleemi

## \$5,000 - \$9,999

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Baxt Ingui Architects, P.C.

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Molly K. Heines and Thomas J. Moloney

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Chip Gray

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## \$100 - \$249 (continued)

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YSC, Inc.  
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## Up to \$99

Anonymous (2)  
Mary A. Doll  
Catherine Hanssens  
Shannon and Phillip Mulholland  
Nekesha Sawh  
Michael Taeckens and Linwood Hart  
Carol Ziegler

## Gifts In-Kind

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Selene Angel  
Anonymous  
Baxt Ingui Architects, P.C.  
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Upright Citizens Brigade Theatre  
Walk a Day In My Shoes

## Tributes

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Michael Taeckens and Linwood Hart

#### DIANE LOUARD-MICHEL

Kathryn Croft

#### LEXY MAYERS

Joan Wallstein

#### STACEY SPILMAN

Sarah Mente

#### CONNIE TEMPEL

Joan Wallstein

### IN MEMORY OF

#### TERRY DEFIORE

Sandy Abramson

#### MATTHEW ELI PUCCIO

Carol Ziegler

## We're committed to ending homelessness in Brooklyn.

Each year, BCHS provides safe and clean supportive housing for more than 1,000 formerly homeless women, children and men. We help them learn how to live productively and independently, with dignity and with hope.

To donate, or to learn how you can help, visit [www.BCHandS.org](http://www.BCHandS.org) or contact our Development Office at (718) 852-9322 ext. 2140





105 Carlton Ave  
Brooklyn, NY  
11205

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## Volunteers Help Beautify *Brooklyn Gardens*

On May 17th, a group of volunteers from Goldman Sachs Community TeamWorks spent a picturesque, sunny day helping beautify the *Brooklyn Gardens* grounds. The volunteers donated their time planting flower beds, mulching and revitalizing the gardens at the BCHS property.

For the eighth year, Goldman Sachs participated in BCHS' Gardening Day, working alongside BCHS residents and Board Members. BCHS Director of Contracts Nelson Zuniga (pictured right) organized the day's gardening tasks, such as planting new flowers, cleaning up the paths and pruning bushes and trees.

