

BROOKLYN COMMUNITY HOUSING AND SERVICES

Community Notes



Honoree Nicholas Lembo



Honoree Marolyn Davenport



Executive Director Jeff Nemetsky with
Borough President Marty Markowitz



Mistress of Ceremonies
Najwa Moses

At our most successful Fashion on Fulton and Friends event yet, BCHS honored Nicholas Lembo of Monadnock Construction and the Capsys Corp., and former BCHS Board Members Marolyn Davenport and Maria T. Jones. Presenters included Borough President Marty Markowitz and New York City Council Member Letitia James. The nearly 300 attendees had the event space bursting at the seams!

An array of beautiful fashions by Brooklyn designers was on display. They were presented against a backdrop of photos taken by BCHS residents. The fashion show was preceded by a cocktail reception and auction, where guests had a chance to mingle before the main event.

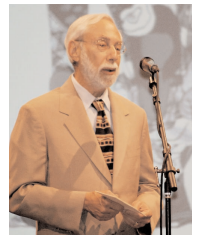
Held at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, all proceeds from the event went to support the award-winning programs at BCHS. Thank you to everybody who made the night such a success. We look forward to seeing you again next year!



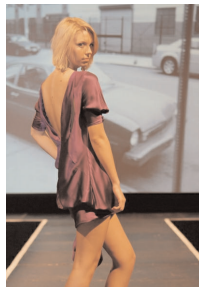
Honoree Maria T. Jones



NY City Council Member Letitia
James enjoying the auction



Award Presenter and
BCHS Board Member
Benjamin Baxt



OUR SIXTH ANNUAL FASHION ON FULTON AND FRIENDS WAS A GREAT SUCCESS!

AWARD WINNING FUSE PROGRAM

Though it is only in its second year, BCHS's FUSE program has received a great deal of positive attention, and in June was presented an award for excellence from the Corporation for Supportive Housing. FUSE stands for Frequent Users Services



The Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) award hangs prominently in Oak Hall's Common Room

Enhancement and focuses on individuals who have cycled back and forth extensively between jail and shelter. In an effort to keep this population out of these systems, BCHS developed an intensive plan that includes providing safe and clean housing in Oak Hall, as well as enhanced services like a forensic case manager with a smaller than average caseload, clinical consultations and support groups. The results have

been astounding: 100% of the program participants successfully maintained their housing during the program's first year, and most have maintained their housing during the second year as well.

The new Program Director at Oak Hall, Allison Moreland, was excited about BCHS for many reasons but FUSE was one program that she was particularly attracted to because of the great sense of community it fosters. She has been impressed with the way that the participants seek each other out for support. Will Nelson, Senior Case Manager at Oak Hall, knows all of the FUSE participants very well and says that they are "a very close-knit group and have a great group dynamic."

Another key to the success of FUSE is the fact that, as Allison says, it is more "proactive than reactive," with an intense evaluation of mental health, maturity and history before participants "graduate" to independent housing. Also, thorough follow-up and support are provided after they gain independent housing to help assure their success.

If I hadn't been in the program, I "would have been in chaos."

Barry McCrea, a FUSE program participant since October 2007, feels the program keeps him from doing the things he knows he shouldn't do. He says that "if I hadn't been in the program, I would have been in chaos." As he stands in his comfortable room in Oak Hall that he takes great pride in keeping clean, he knows that he is safe and has a lot of support. "If I need somebody to talk to, I know I can talk to somebody from the group or on the staff—even the director Allison. I put a lot of trust in them," he says.

Allison and Will are looking forward to continuing the success of the FUSE program and the opportunity to help more amazing people in need like Barry.



Barry McCrea, standing here in his room in Oak Hall, is grateful to be part of the FUSE program.



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we enter into the fall, I am happy to report that summer at BCHS was filled with hard work, significant progress, and also our share of fun and sun. In this issue, you'll see lots of photos of the amazing Fashion on Fulton and Friends gala that took place in June, as well as photos from the annual staff picnic and one of the summer barbeques that took place at Brooklyn Gardens. You'll also learn about the continued planting and landscaping that happened at Brooklyn Gardens, get to meet one of our newer board members, Aricka Westbrooks, and see the well-deserved award that was presented to the staff and residents of Oak Hall's FUSE (Frequent Users Services Enhancement) program.

There are also some very exciting things that didn't make it into this issue. We've been dreaming of building a playground for the children of Arbor Inn for years and it's finally happening! Special rubberized flooring and colorful murals painted by PublicColor make this playground, slated to open in September, a safe and beautiful place for Arbor Inn's children to play. Keep an eye out for the next issue of Community Notes to see photos of this astounding transformation.

Looking ahead, we are continuing to modernize the historic Brooklyn Gardens facility, which will include a renovation of our Community Room and the Oak Hall lobby, are establishing on-site nursing services for the first time in years, and are providing a record level of recreational and educational services for the residents of our Scattered-Site Apartment Programs.

A special thanks to all of you who supported our Fashion on Fulton and Friends gala—your generosity provides the vital funds necessary to help BCHS move people from crisis to community everyday. Thank you for your support, and thank you for being a part of the effort to end homelessness in Brooklyn.

For questions, or to make a contribution to Brooklyn Community Housing and Services in support of our wonderful programs, please call (718) 222-1808 ext 2140 or send an email to development@bchands.org.

BROOKLYN ENTREPRENEUR AND BCHS BOARD MEMBER ARICKA WESTBROOKS

BCHS was thrilled when President and CEO of Jive Turkey, Aricka Westbrook, joined the board last year. Ms. Westbrook became familiar with BCHS when she was approached about donating a whole turkey from her restaurant to the Fashion on Fulton and Friends auction. She did so for several years when BCHS Executive Director Jeff Nemetsky asked her about becoming more involved with the organization. Once she felt that she had enough time to dedicate to the task, Ms. Westbrook joined the board. Her knowledge of the Brooklyn community and incredible entrepreneurial skills make her a valuable addition.



Ms. Westbrook earned a B.A. in Journalism from Howard University in 1992 and an M.S. in Mass Communication from Iowa State University. She worked in public relations in the fashion industry before establishing Jive Turkey, which specializes in whole fried turkey, packaged food and catering.

Since her business storefront is on Myrtle Avenue in Fort Greene, just a few blocks from BCHS, Ms. Westbrook feels even more strongly about the organization. "BCHS provides essential services for the neighborhood" she says.

With a background in the fashion industry, Ms. Westbrook was excited to be part of the planning for the recent 6th Annual Fashion on Fulton and Friends. At the event, she loved seeing the culmination of months of effort. She particularly enjoyed chatting with New York Council Member Letitia James, who sat next to her during the fashion show.

According to BCHS Executive Director Jeff Nemetsky, "We are so fortunate to have Aricka Westbrook on the Board. Jive Turkey is so well respected, and Aricka's creativity, leadership, and commitment are a great addition to the Agency."

SUMMER FUN!



BBQ at Brooklyn Gardens

Despite the threat of rain, the staff at BCHS put up festive decorations and fired up the grills for a classic summer BBQ in the Brooklyn Gardens courtyard. Residents and staff enjoyed chatting over some delicious food and fun music.



BCHS Staff Picnic at Prospect Park

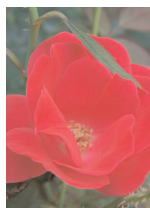
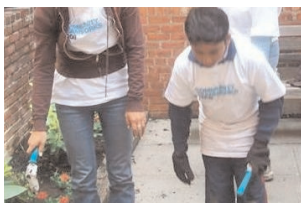
On a beautiful summer day, the BCHS staff gathered at Prospect Park for some great food, exciting activities and a chance to relax together. Jeff Nemetsky gave Employee Recognition Awards to Dawn Johnson and Jackie Crisp, pictured below, and to Kimesha Nelson. What a great way to end the BCHS fiscal year and recognize staff efforts!



GARDENING DAY IN THE BROOKLYN GARDENS COURTYARD



Lush greenery and colorful flowers now fill the Brooklyn Gardens courtyard, thanks to our friends from Goldman Sachs Community TeamWorks. Volunteers spent several days pulling weeds, tilling soil and planting in the various plots throughout the courtyard. Their hard work was greatly appreciated by all of the staff and residents of Brooklyn Gardens, particularly when the vegetable garden began producing delicious tomatoes, squash and more!



Inside this issue of *Community Notes*: see photos of our sixth annual Fashion on Fulton and Friends, learn about our award-winning FUSE program and meet Board Member Aricka Westbrooks.



Brooklyn Community Housing and Services

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www.bchands.org

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