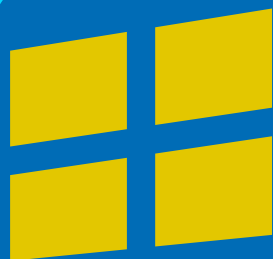




feels like  
home



BROOKLYN COMMUNITY HOUSING & SERVICES


# GALA

**TUESDAY, JUNE 7, 2022**

**BAMcafé**

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# 2022 GALA CELEBRATION

feels like **home**

TUESDAY, JUNE 7, 2022

**BAMcafé** at Brooklyn Academy of Music

## HONORING

### **Alera Group**

Corey Heller, Senior Partner  
2022 Corporate Excellence Award

## SPECIAL PERFORMANCE

### **Bobby Sanabria and his Multiverse Big Band**

7-Time Grammy Nominee

## CELEBRITY EMCEE

### **Kimberley Locke**

TV Personality and Singer/Songwriter

## OPENING PERFORMANCE

### **Joya Bravo**

Multi-Genre Violinist

## GALA CO-CHAIRS

### **Natasha Fishman • Nellie Perera**

Canapés & Cocktails • Silent Auction • BCHS Resident Art Display

Congratulations BCCHS Staff  
for your incredible work this year



and a special congratulations  
to 2022 Honorees  
Corey Heller and Alera Group.

*Riva Horwitz and Josh Easterly*

Tonight's **feels like home** Gala celebrates the idea that everyone thrives when they are part of a safe and welcoming community that feels like home.

**Your contribution helps provide vital financial resources** to enhance and expand BCHS' life-saving supportive housing and homelessness prevention programs.



**CONGRATULATIONS**  
TO BCHS ON YOUR 2022  
“FEELS LIKE HOME” GALA

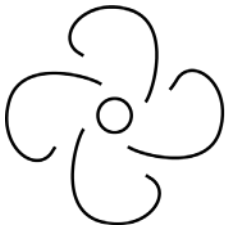
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## *Dear Friends,*

Welcome to our 2022 **feels like home** Gala!

The challenges we face seem to deepen by the day. The persistence of a once in a century pandemic. Bigotry, systemic racism and hate-fueled violence. An uncertain economy.

Yet through it all we have been inspired by the extraordinary outpouring of compassion and support from friends like you, the resolve and heroic efforts of our staff, and the dedication and commitment of our Board. Together we have kept the most vulnerable among us healthy, safe and independent, so that they can live with dignity. And with hope.

Please know that, more than ever, our efforts are only possible because of your tremendous goodwill and support, and we are greatly appreciative.

Tonight we are hosting our first in-person Gala in three years, and we are grateful that we will be able to see old friends and tell you more about BCHS' life-saving and often groundbreaking work. While we understand that this evening may feel different from prior years' events in a number of ways, in the most important ways, tonight will be the same as all



our Galas: a celebration of the power of community; a vivid display of hope; and a fun, entertaining and exciting program.

We are thrilled that Grammy Award-nominee and jazz legend Bobby Sanabria and his band will be providing a dynamic mainstage performance– his exciting and rich music continues to move so many. And we are so pleased that the multi-talented Kimberley Locke will be hosting this evening's activities once more.

We are excited to honor Alera Group and our friend, Senior Partner Corey Heller. Corey and Alera Group have had a tremendous, positive impact on our community and for our agency, and we are grateful for their efforts.

**Thank you** so much for your generous support, for standing with us through these challenging times, and for being part of the effort to end homelessness in Brooklyn. We hope you have a terrific evening!

With appreciation,



Jens Peter Hansen  
Chair, Board of Directors



Jeff Nemetsky  
Executive Director

# CONGRATULATIONS

to BCHS on the occasion of  
your 2022 Gala Celebration



We are pleased to join you  
in celebrating this year's  
esteemed honorees.

**Alera Group**

**Corey Heller**

*Senior Partner*

2022 Corporate

Excellence

Award

Lexy Mayers and David Lesser

## MISSION / VISION



**BCHS is committed to ending homelessness in Brooklyn.** We provide safe and clean supportive housing each year for more than 1,000 formerly homeless and at-risk women, children, and men, and help them learn how to live productively and independently, with dignity and hope.

What has always made BCHS unique in its field is our primary focus on trying to create a sense of community for all of the formerly homeless residents who come to us, and then using this as a concrete programmatic model and clinical approach.

Since our founding in 1978 we have helped thousands in crisis achieve independence, and we are ready to help thousands more in the future — until the day that homelessness no longer exists, and until the day that our local communities are as socially rich, racially just, and economically vital as possible.

# CONGRATULATIONS

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**Congratulations** to BCHS on  
43 years of providing a safe  
and welcoming community that  
feels like **home**.



Thank you to the dedicated and hard-working BCHS staff who carry out the organization's mission every day, and to Jeff Nemetsky for his leadership throughout these extraordinary times.

Nellie Perera and Tony DeAngelis

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with this year's event**



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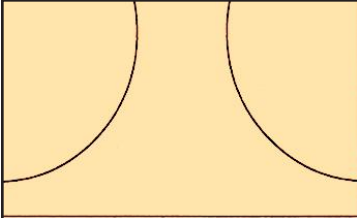
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We appreciate all you do!

- *The BCBS Board of Directors* -

## HONORING



Corey Heller, *Senior Partner*

*BCHS' 2022  
Corporate Excellence  
Award Recipients*



**Alera Group** is an independent, national insurance and financial services firm created in 2017 through a merger of 24 like-minded, high-performing, entrepreneurial companies. Our founding offices worked together to leverage powerful relationships, industry expertise and resources with the goal of elevating the client experience.

**Corey Heller** serves as Senior Partner at Alera Group, where he is responsible for developing strategic initiatives and leading new business opportunities. In 2009, Corey started the employee benefits division of Lamb Insurance Services. He led as President of the division for 12 years, up until 2021, when it was acquired by the Alera Group. For nearly a decade, Corey has worked with BCHS to help the agency support its staff by greatly expanding its employee benefits program. Thanks to Corey's expertise and innovative approach, BCHS has been able to offer high quality health insurance along with dental and vision plans in an affordable way, along with other new and essential benefits. Corey is a passionate advocate for his many nonprofit clients and enjoys giving back to the community by serving on numerous nonprofit boards. Corey received a B.S. in Economics & Finance from Lehigh University and enjoys golf, skiing, and spending time with his family at the beach.

Congratulations to BCHS  
and to 2022 Honorees  
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Corey Heller, Senior Partner

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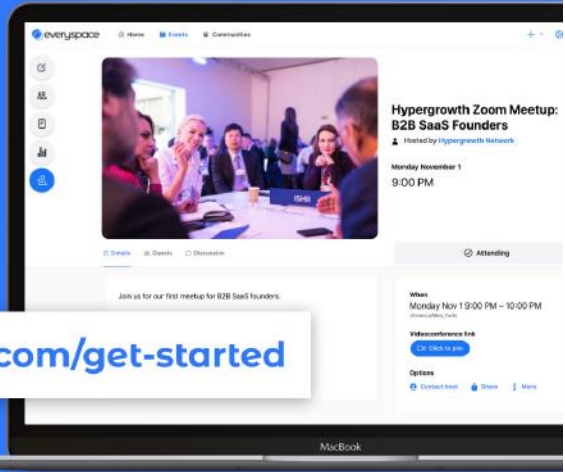
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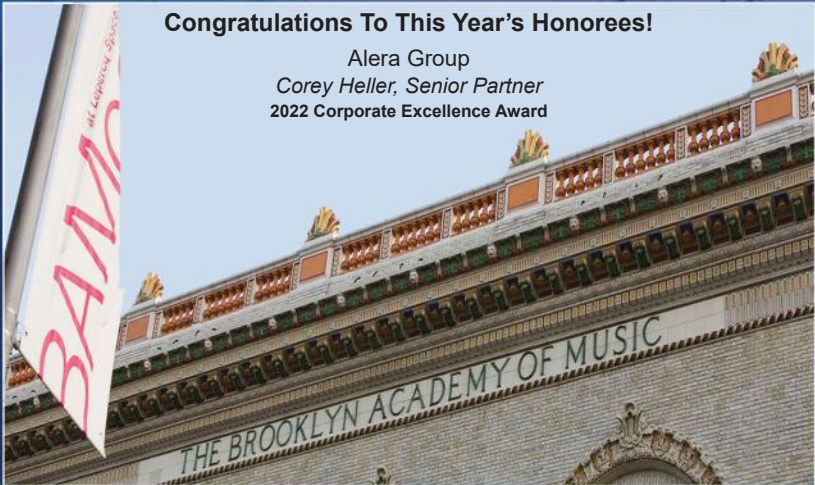
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## CELEBRITY EMCEE: KIMBERLEY LOCKE

**Kimberley Locke** became a fan favorite on the 2003 *American Idol*® series, eventually placing as second runner up that season. Immediately afterwards, Kimberley signed to Curb Records, where she released three full-length albums, eight Top 20 Adult Contemporary singles, and four #1 Dance hits (Including the international dance hit "Feel the Love").



Following *American Idol*, Kimberley modeled for Lane Bryant and Ford Modeling Agency and co-hosted many of television's top talk shows, including *Good Day L.A.* and *The View*. In 2010, Kimberley participated in VH1's *Celebrity Fit Club* and subsequently became a spokeswoman for Jenny Craig. Most recently, Kimberley is co-host and producer of her very own talk show titled *The Dr. & The Diva* on the newly launched network DABL, a division of CBS.

In 2013 Kimberley created her web-based cooking show, *What's Cooking With Kimberley*, to explore health-conscious and savory recipes. This launched her into a world of celebrity chefs, working with legendary Chef Emeril Lagassé on his series *Emeril Everyday*.

Throughout her expansive career, Kimberley has maintained her passion for helping others. In addition to giving back to the community, she works as a success coach, and in 2011 founded I AM Entertainment, using

## CELEBRITY EMCEE: KIMBERLEY LOCKE

personal experience as motivation to help other artists develop their craft and establish their business.

In winter 2019, Kimberley was invited by Kristin Chenoweth to perform in her one-woman show *For The Girls*, which garnered her first standing ovation on Broadway. In February 2020 Kimberley launched another one-woman show in NY, titled *The Sum of All Parts*. Co-written with her dear friend David Galligan, the show uses storytelling and song to take audiences on an intimate journey down her very own yellow brick road...from growing up bi-racial, to being swept up into a tornado called *American Idol*, to finding herself in the music that flowed throughout her life.

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**2022 “FEELS LIKE HOME” GALA**

*We congratulate this evening's honoree:*

**The Alera Group**  
**Corey Heller, Senior Partner**  
*2022 Corporate Excellence Award*

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**-LESLIE FEDER AND GARRICK LEONARD**

## SPECIAL PERFORMANCE

### BOBBY SANABRIA AND HIS MULTIVERSE BIG BAND



**Bobby Sanabria** is a Grammy-nominated bandleader, drummer, percussionist, composer, arranger, conductor, documentary producer, educator, and activist.

A native son of the South Bronx born to Puerto Rican parents, he has performed and recorded with many major figures in the world of Latin jazz and salsa, from the founder of the Afro-Cuban/Latin jazz movement Mario Bauzá, to Tito Puente, Mongo Santamaría, and Dizzy Gillespie, to Ruben Blades, and Celia Cruz, to jazz luminaries as diverse as Henry Threadgill, Randy Brecker, The Mills Brothers, and others.

Bobby has been named Percussionist of the Year multiple times by DRUM! Magazine and the Jazz Journalists Association. In 2006, he was inducted into the Bronx Walk of Fame, and in 2018 he was given Jazz Education Network (JEN) LeJENS of Jazz Lifetime Achievement Award for his work as a musician and educator.



## **SPECIAL PERFORMANCE**

### **BOBBY SANABRIA AND HIS MULTIVERSE BIG BAND**

All seven of his big band recordings, have been nominated for Grammy Awards. His 2018 recording, 'West Side Story Reimagined,' reached #1 on the national Jazz Week radio charts, was nominated for a 2018 Grammy, and won the prestigious 2019 Record of The Year Award from the Jazz Journalists Association.

His lifelong dedication to spreading the history, culture, of jazz and Latin jazz to the general public as a performer, as well as educating a new generation of players, composers, arrangers, has no parallel. He is the Co-Artistic Director of the Bronx Music Heritage Center and the forthcoming Bronx Music Hall. He is on the faculty of the New School and NYU and was on the faculty of the Manhattan School of Music for 20 years. He is also the on-air host of the Latin Jazz Cruise on WBGO FM and [wbgo.org](http://wbgo.org), the number one jazz station in the nation.



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Wishing BCCHS much success  
with the "Feels Like Home" Gala!

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*Thank you to the BCHS TEAM.*



*Paul and Iris Fishman*

Wishing BCHS much success on your 2022 “Feels Like Home” Gala!  
Congratulations to Honorees Alera Group and Corey Heller.



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## OPENING PERFORMANCE: JOYA BRAVO



Eclectic powerhouse performer Joya Bravo combines her Jamaican roots, Atlanta upbringing and her native New York style in all of her unique performances. This vocalist, rapper, actress and classically trained violinist has traveled to, and done music work in many countries and states including Brazil, Germany, the UK, Japan, Atlanta, Los Angeles and of course New York City.

From the big stage to the subway, Joya Bravo is putting in the work to create a foundation for global success! Her violin performances consist of timeless classics and today's hit music.

Joya Bravo brings her talents to the public, creating spaces where people of all walks of life can, for a moment, forget the hustle and bustle of New York living, to embrace the connection with people they otherwise would not have. This is Joya Bravo's truest gift and greatest joy.

**Congratulations to BCHS  
on your 2022 Gala!**

**feels like home**

Thank you to Jeff Nemetsky  
and the staff at BCHS  
for all of your incredible work.

*Your friends,  
Ia Andrews and Eliot Merrill*



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Congratulations to Honorees  
Alera Group and  
Corey Heller, Senior Partner

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Thank you to the entire staff at BCHS  
for *all* you do!

*Clifford and Leslie Cohen*

## **BCHS' HISTORY**

BCHS was founded in 1978 as Pastoral & Educational Services (PAES) by a group of clergy and concerned citizens from Downtown Brooklyn, who were alarmed by the growing number of individuals with a mental illness that were sleeping on the street and seeking help from local parishes.

In 1980, BCHS began one of the first Scattered-Site Apartment Programs for homeless mentally ill adults in the country, subsequently embarking upon an ambitious construction project called Brooklyn Gardens (BG), which opened in 1991. Located in Fort Greene, BG is a 180-bed complex serving formerly homeless families, adults with severe psychiatric disorders, and adults with a chronic mental illness. BG not only received national attention for its innovative design and programming, but its attractive presence—along with a community room, events open to the public, and 24/7 staff who reached out regularly to local residents—helped stabilize a neighborhood reeling from years of violence and abandonment.

**Thanks to the BCHS Board Of Directors**  
for doing a great job of fulfilling BCHS'  
mission to end homelessness in Brooklyn.

**Never before has this mission  
been so important.**

Elizabeth Bailey  
*BCHS Board Member, 1998-2011*



## BCHS' HISTORY

Innovation and excellence have been BCHS' hallmarks. The agency was part of a team that opened Navy Green, a 97-bed award-winning supportive housing building on the site of the former Navy jail, and has created innovative programming for low-income households facing eviction, military veterans, formerly homeless seniors, and individuals with histories of incarceration who are returning to the community.

Currently, BCHS provides housing for 412 individuals daily and 1,000 annually.



## BCHS Staff

Kudos for your constant dedication –  
through pandemics, utility shutdowns –  
as well as more normal times.

*We admire all you do.*

Susan and Ben Baxt

ADAM LEITMAN BAILEY, P.C.  
SALUTES

### Brooklyn Community Housing and Services

for their continued dedication & work making  
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We are honored to be able to assist BCHS  
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## BCHS' PROGRAMS

Our programs provide short-term, transitional and permanent housing, homelessness prevention, mental health care, personalized case management, on-site nursing, vocational training, substance abuse counseling, recreational activities, and other vital services.

**Arbor Inn** offers short-term housing for homeless mothers, each with one child up to the age of eight. The program consistently places more than 90% of the homeless families who were deemed housing ready by DHS were placed into permanent housing of their own in the community, with a typical time to placement of eight months.

**Ivy House** is a transitional residence for single adults with a serious mental illness and is often the first step back into community living for people who have experienced long-term institutional care. More than 95% of Ivy House residents maintain their housing successfully or move on to other independent housing.

**Oak Hall** is a permanent housing, single-room-occupancy (SRO) facility serving men and women with a mental illness who have been homeless or are at high risk of homelessness. More than 95% of Oak Hall residents successfully maintain their housing with the agency or move on to other independent housing.



## BCHS' PROGRAMS



**The Scattered-Site Apartment Programs** places 135 adults with serious mental illnesses into private apartments throughout Brooklyn. Staff then travel to the apartments to help residents learn how to live independently. More than 95% of the residents successfully maintain their housing with the agency or move on to greater independence each year.

**Healthy Aging and Re-entry Housing—The “Model SRO”** Through the “Model SRO” initiative, BCHS provides a range of specialized services at our Oak Hall SRO to two growing client populations that face particularly daunting challenges in trying to sustain their independence—formerly homeless seniors, and individuals with significant histories of incarceration who are returning to the community. Remarkably, the “Model SRO” program achieves a success rate of more than 90% each year, as nearly all of the participating residents are able to maintain their housing successfully or move on to other appropriate housing.

## BCHS' PROGRAMS

**Navy Green** is permanent supportive housing for formerly homeless men and women with a mental illness and a history of substance abuse, and for low-income working adults from the community. More than 95% of Navy Green residents typically maintain their housing with the agency or move on to other independent housing.

**Moving On** identifies the agency's most stable residents and helps them graduate from BCHS housing and live independently in the community. Since the program began four years ago, approximately 50 residents have transitioned from BCHS to their own independent housing.

**Vocational Assistance** provides training and education, job readiness preparation, computer training, and a free computer lab to its residents, as well as to low-income Brooklyn residents from throughout the borough. In an average year, over 600 residents from BCHS and throughout Brooklyn utilize our Vocational Assistance.

**The Veterans Initiative** offers comprehensive assistance to at-risk Veterans in Brooklyn. Programming focuses on housing stability, social supports, and health and wellness issues, and more than 200 veterans have been helped since we started the initiative in 2017.



## BCHS' PROGRAMS

**Fresh Start** was started by BCHS three years ago to address the growing incidence of domestic violence and mental health and related emotional disorders experienced by mothers and families who have become homeless. Through the Fresh Start initiative, BCHS seeks to provide enhanced mental health services and supports for homeless families in its Arbor Inn program who have mental health or related issues such as trauma and PTSD.

Thanks to Fresh Start, BCHS hired a highly experienced Family Clinician who works with families on their full range issues, while providing in-house clinical trainings and staff development - this effort has been extremely effective and is urgently needed, especially during the pandemic. Last year, the Fresh Start initiative expanded to create an Aftercare program for families graduating from Arbor Inn onto their own housing.

Through the **Fresh Start Aftercare** program, an Aftercare Case Manager works with each family who has graduated from Arbor Inn, and who has been placed into their own permanent apartment in the community. The families are provided with a brand new laptop to ensure their children can utilize it for schoolwork or that the moms have the ability to engage in remote work, if necessary; the Case Manager then provides hands-on housing support for up to a year, including regular home visits, to ensure housing stability. With a 24/7 Crisis Hotline for emergency assistance, along with training and on-site support groups, the Aftercare program helps its participants maintain their stability and independence, and avoid ever returning to the shelter system.

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## RESIDENT SUCCESS STORY

### JANICE AND JADEN



Janice was only 20 years old when she gave birth to her son, Jaden, in December of 2020. Having grown up in foster care from the age of 12, Janice knew that her time with her foster family was running out, and that she was about to age out of the system.

After being referred to BCHS through another city agency, Janice arrived at Arbor Inn—our short-term housing program for homeless families—motivated to move on to greater independence.

With the help of staff Janice immediately began a job search. Having worked since she was 14, she landed multiple interviews and had two offers by the next week.

However, finding a job is just one step that homeless mothers need to take to get back on their feet. With support from her case manager, Janice began to feel more confident and opened up about her experience in foster care; staff then helped Janice secure safe childcare for Jaden, create a bank account, and begin to save her money.

We are happy to say that Janice did so well that she graduated from Arbor Inn in October and moved into her own independent apartment in the community. She and Jaden have been thriving ever since.

Best wishes to BCHS  
for a very successful  
“Feels Like Home” Gala.

Special recognition to our  
friend Riva Horwitz for your  
dedication to helping BCHS  
end homelessness in Brooklyn.

*Laurie and Jonathon Soler*

## RESIDENT SUCCESS STORY



Having survived an abusive childhood, Kendra treasured being able to provide a loving home for her own 5 year-old son, Anthony. But in December 2019 she lost her job at a restaurant when it closed, and she quickly used up her savings and was evicted from her apartment. With winter arriving, she was frightened – and heartbroken. “Are we going to have to sleep on the street? How will I tell my son?”

Just months later the pandemic struck. Fortunately, by then Kendra and Anthony had found their way to Arbor Inn, BCHS’ short-term program for homeless families.

BCHS staff kept Kendra and Anthony safe throughout the Spring of 2020. Case managers provided on-site and remote counseling, helping Kendra keep her spirits up, while also arranging for fun games and online art classes for Anthony. When September came, BCHS provided a computer so that Anthony could attend remote school, and as the economy improved, staff helped Kendra find a new job in sales and learn to budget her money. Finally, with a steady paycheck, Kendra was able to get an apartment for herself and Anthony in a newly opened affordable housing complex nearby.

We are happy to say that it has been more than a year since Kendra and Anthony moved out on their own, and both are thriving, thanks to their resilience and hard work and the support they received from BCHS’ dedicated Arbor Inn team. They even came by for our recent Memorial Day barbeque to say hello and see some friendly faces!

**“When we were desperate and alone, BCHS saved our lives. We started our new chapter at BCHS.”**

*Congratulations to BCBS on more than 40 years of incredible service to the Brooklyn community.*

*Thank you to Jeff Nemetsky and the dedicated staff at BCBS for all of your amazing work.*

*Your friends,*

*Christine Spadaro and Rick Lodewick*

## **DeLaCour Ferrara & Church Architects**

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**Brooklyn Community Housing Services  
and their 2022 Honorees**

**Alera Group**

**Corey Heller, Senior Partner**

**Thanks to**

**Monadnock Construction Inc.  
for underwriting this event**

**Thank you to the Gala Co-Chairs  
Natasha Fishman & Nellie Perera**



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# BCHS' NEW INITIATIVES

## Kingsbrook Estates

BCHS was part of a team that won a New York State RFP in December 2019 to help transform Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center into apartment buildings with health, wellness, employment and support services. Working with partners Monadnock Development and Construction and CB-Emmanuel Realty LLC, Kingsbrook Estates will offer central Brooklyn 320 new units of housing in three buildings with affordable units for a range of income levels as well as supportive housing for formerly homeless seniors and Veterans. On-site amenities will include a therapeutic garden, outdoor exercise equipment, walkways, children's play areas, outdoor kitchens and grills as well as an indoor teaching kitchen.



# BCHS' NEW INITIATIVES

## Pacific Street Housing

BCHS is working to create new housing in the East New York neighborhood of Brooklyn, as part of a team with Love Fellowship Church and Alembic Community Development. This new development will include 243 units of affordable housing, with 71 units set aside for formerly homeless families where the head of household has a mental illness, and 71 units set aside for single adults who had been homeless. A wide range of wellness, health, and mental health services will be available, as well as vocational training and creative arts therapies.



# BCHS' NEW INITIATIVES

## Brooklyn Gardens Renovation

BCHS is planning the substantial renovation of its historic Brooklyn Gardens facility at 105 Carlton Avenue. Originally built as tenement housing in 1919, and rehabilitated by BCHS in 1991, Brooklyn Gardens was one of the first supportive housing buildings of its kind in the country, housing a diverse mix of at-risk families and single adults. It is anticipated that renovation work will begin in 2023.



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Congratulations to  
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Thanks for all that you do!

*From your friends Bob Buckholz and Lizanne Fontaine*



**CONGRATULATIONS**  
**BCHS** for MORE THAN  
**40 YEARS** of SERVING THE HOMELESS

## SPECIAL THANKS

**Afsana Begum**

*BCHS Fiscal Department*

**Joya Bravo**

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**Valerie Visconti**

*Fly on the Wall Productions*

**Marilyn Williams**

*BCHS Administration*

**Nelson Zuniga**

*BCHS Fiscal Department*

**And all of tonight's volunteers!**

And a special thanks to the extraordinary BCHS staff, who work night and day to help Brooklyn's most fragile individuals move from crisis to community.

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