



2017 ANNUAL REPORT

REBUILDING
HOPE
FOR FAMILIES



CENTER for NYC
NEIGHBORHOODS

Since our founding in 2008, we have helped over **74,000 homeowners across New York.**

IN 2017

18,000+
HOMEOWNERS SERVED

30
HOUSING AND LEGAL SERVICES
ORGANIZATIONS

90+
EVENTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

300+
SENIORS ASSISTED WITH
INTENSIVE SERVICES

\$2.3 M
IN GRANTS FUNDED

\$19 M
LOANED TO STABILIZE
HOMEOWNERS

FROM 2008 TO THE PRESENT

NEARLY
13,000
HOMES SAVED



\$11,000,000
ANNUAL SAVINGS FOR
HOMEOWNERS



\$51 M
IN LOANS MADE TO
1,700 HOMEOWNERS

HOMEOWNERS SERVED



TWITTER: **699,000** IMPRESSIONS
FACEBOOK: **385,072** IMPRESSIONS



AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOME
OF FAMILIES SERVED:

\$45,000

RACE AND ETHNICITY:



55% African American
16% Hispanic
5% Asian
14% White
10% Other/Not reported

SERVED BY BOROUGH (%):



41.7% Brooklyn
12.4% Bronx
1.5% Manhattan
34.2% Queens
10.2% Staten Island

CHAMPIONS FOR AFFORDABLE HOMEOWNERSHIP

VISION

We envision a New York where middle- and working-class families live in affordable homes and vibrant communities, and where everyone shares in the economic opportunities of a strong city and state.

MISSION

Our mission is to promote and protect affordable homeownership in New York so that middle- and working-class families are able to build strong, thriving communities.

VALUES

Neighborhoods are the heart of New York.

When middle- and working-class families set down roots, they help create vibrant communities.

Affordable homeownership is about equality.

The opportunity to own a home shouldn't be out of reach for middle- and working-class New Yorkers.

Working collaboratively is working strategically.

Partnerships among homeowners, government agencies, community-based organizations, and the private sector create powerful levers for effecting change.

Trust is a must.

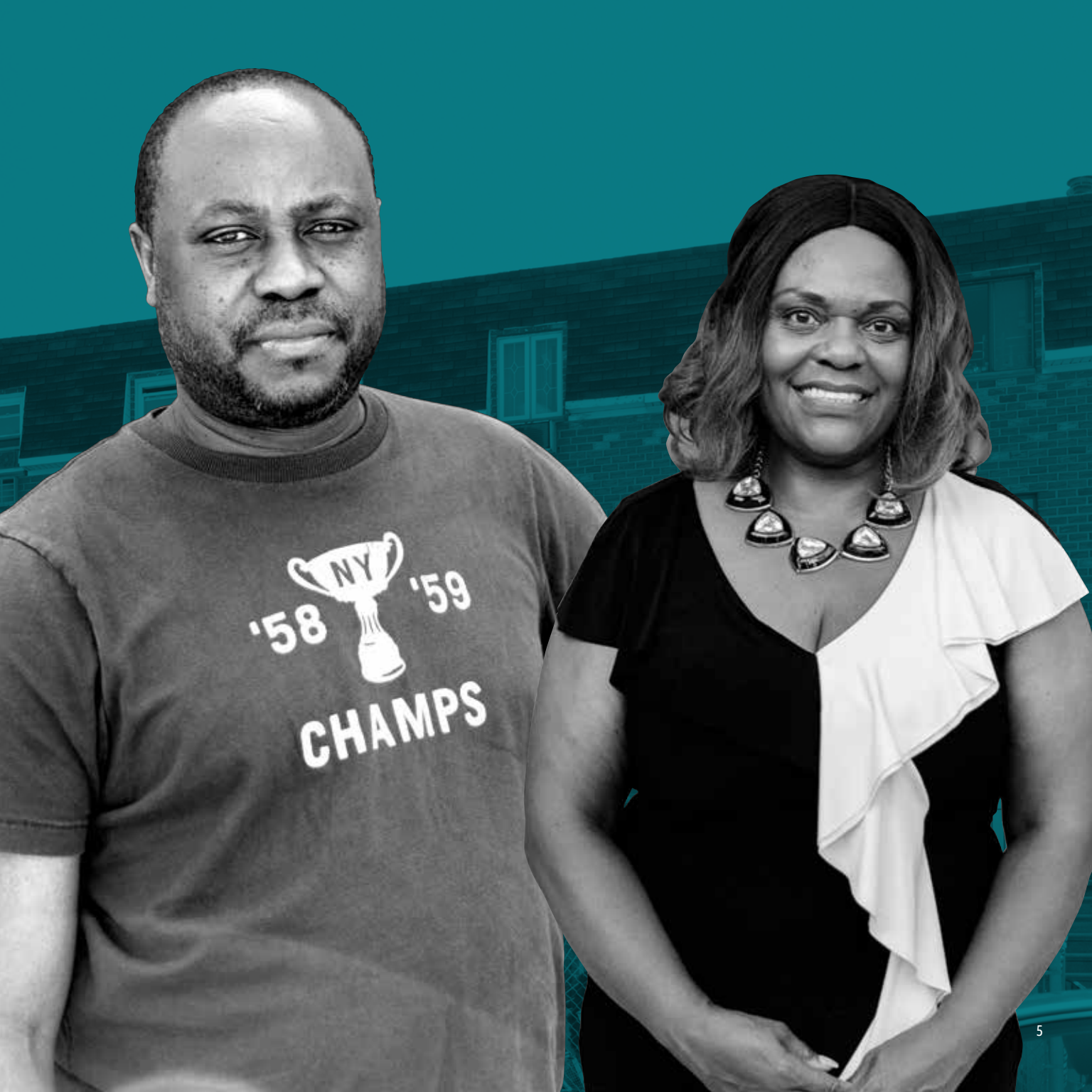
New Yorkers need high quality help they can trust, and we take this responsibility seriously.

We're in this together.

We understand that homeownership is a journey; we're here to help at every step along the way.

WHO WE SERVE





'58 NY '59
CHAMPS

A FATHER BUILDS A RESILIENT FUTURE FOR HIS FAMILY

Like many people, Gerald Fils-Aime didn't realize that his homeowners insurance didn't cover damage caused by flooding.

But now he knows that his home in Canarsie is far from protected from the next storm, and he understands the need to purchase a separate flood insurance policy. "Having information is half the battle," he says.

Gerald gained this knowledge as a participant in the Center's Home Resiliency Audit Program (HRAP), funded by the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery. Since October 2013, when Superstorm Sandy flooded Gerald's home, he's been working to rebuild and to learn how to make his house more resilient.


During Superstorm Sandy, up to five feet of water poured into his basement, where tenants had been living. He found the refrigerator floating upside down; belongings had been ruined by the water. "Everything was completely gutted," Gerald says. When he turned to his insurance broker, he discovered that he didn't have flood insurance coverage for the damage. So Gerald invested \$50,000 of his own money into rebuilding his basement, after tapping into his savings and taking a loan out on his 401K.

Gerald had addressed the immediate problem. But he knew that another storm could come

at any time, so he sought help to make his home less vulnerable to future flooding. That was when, in 2017, he enrolled in the Home Resiliency Audit Program through the Center's FloodHelpNY.org platform. (To learn more about the HRAP, turn to page 24.)

Gerald's house is one of nine connected in a row on a quiet residential street, so the Center's advisors couldn't recommend that he elevate his house to avoid future problems. Instead, they advised him to fill in the basement, add wet flood-proofing, and install flood vents. The boiler and other mechanical equipment could be moved from the basement to the first floor. They also recommended replacing the landscaping with a rain garden or bioswale to absorb stormwater.

But like many low- and moderate-income homeowners in New York City's floodplain, Gerald is still working to fit flood insurance into his home budget — which he acknowledges is the first step to protecting his home and family from future flood damage. "Flood insurance is very important," he says. Because of the Center's expansive network and comprehensive homeowner services, Gerald was recently referred to a community-based organization, Grow Brooklyn, where a housing counselor will work with him to stabilize his home finances.



Fils-Aime is still working to fit flood insurance into his home budget — which he acknowledges is the **first step to protecting his home and family** from future flooding.

A SON FORCED TO CHOOSE BETWEEN HIS MORTGAGE AND HIS MOM

No one should have to choose between burying his mother and keeping his home.

But Larry Whittaker, a lifelong resident of New York's Hudson Valley, found himself in that painful situation.

For Larry, the problems started with a series of illnesses: He suffered an aneurysm, followed by a heart attack. As he was recovering, his mother passed away. Larry was unable to work, and soon had to choose between paying property taxes on his Rosendale home and giving his mother a loving and respectful burial. To Larry, the choice was obvious. "My mother took care of me all my life," he said; now it was his turn to take care of her.

Even though Larry had a generous agreement with his mother's undertaker, he began missing payments on his property taxes, as well as bankruptcy payments that were intended to help.

In 2015, Larry was only three months away from a foreclosure auction when he was referred to RUPCO, a Kingston-based nonprofit that offers housing counseling in the Hudson Valley. His counselor helped him apply for the Center's New York State Mortgage Assistance Program (NYS-MAP), which provides low-interest loans up to \$40,000 to eligible homeowners. In 2017 alone, the program gave out nearly 700 loans and \$19 million to homeowners across the state. With help from his counselor and the Center's lending team, Larry was eventually able to secure a loan of \$10,300 in 2017 — enough for him to pay his debts and keep his home.

These days, Larry can be found enjoying the goldfish pond in his yard or fishing at the creek near his home. "Homeownership feels great," he says. Knowing that he is more financially stable because of help from NYSMAP also brings him relief: "You can shut your door and breathe at night."



Homeownership feels great, you can shut your door and breathe at night."

TEMPORARY HOUSING BRINGS LONG-TERM RELIEF

Six years after Superstorm Sandy, Cornelia Johnson is finally home.

She and her son had to flee their home the night of storm, leaving behind all their belongings. When she returned three days later, she found her house of 24 years had been completely flooded. But even after all the repairs were completed and her home was livable again, it was still at risk of flooding in the next storm.

Cornelia, 67, was connected to Build It Back, a city-run, federally funded reconstruction program that renovates homes damaged by Superstorm Sandy. The program also elevates homes to protect them from future extreme flooding, and program experts recommended rebuilding and raising Cornelia's home. But that meant she had to figure out a temporary housing solution.

That's when the Center — in partnership with New York Disaster Interfaith Services — offered Cornelia assistance from its Temporary Housing Services (THS), which has helped more than 200 residents find places to live while their homes are rebuilt.

It had been more than 20 years since Cornelia had rented an apartment, and times had changed. In the past, she would have gone to an apartment-leasing office. She didn't know how to search for an apartment online. As a senior, it's more difficult: "I don't navigate as well," she says. THS helped Cornelia find an apartment to live in, secure storage for her belongings, and paid her rent until she could return home. Without THS, she says, "I would've been confused and lost."

Build It Back recently finished construction on Cornelia's home, and she moved back in. Her home has been lifted and fortified to be more resilient — and she is excited to start over on more solid ground.



“Without THS
**I would've been
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HOW WE SERVE THEM





SERVICES FOR NEW YORK'S SENIORS

Seniors are the fastest growing demographic in New York City, and many are homeowners living on fixed incomes.

As housing costs have risen, it has become increasingly difficult for seniors to afford aging in place. That's why the Center has been at the forefront of addressing these challenges with its Senior Initiative. Funded by the New York City Council, this initiative brings key partners together to address the needs of this specialized population with services that are created to stabilize older homeowners.

One of these partners is JASA, a nonprofit social services organization that was founded in 1968 with a commitment to serving older adults across the city. JASA provides life-sustaining programs for seniors and peace of mind for their families and friends. JASA also offers legal services for the elderly, helping seniors remain in their communities with autonomy and dignity. JASA serves about 450 homeowners a year.

For Donna Dougherty, who leads the team at JASA that serves senior homeowners, her biggest frustration is seeing clients experience discrimination because of their age. "It's a bias against your client that you can't prevent or control," she says.

Her team helps seniors bring their mortgages current, refinance their mortgages, modify them, resolve tax liens, dismiss foreclosure actions, and more.

In one recent case, a 67-year-old widower living on a fixed income of \$600 a month was faced with having to repay a reverse mortgage after his wife died. Not knowing what to do, he rented out the two apartments in his building and moved into the basement; however, the tenants stopped paying rent and called the city to report the homeowner for living in an illegal apartment. Forced to vacate his home of more than 30 years, he moved in with a neighbor. But he wasn't going to give up on his home. With JASA's help, he sought to stop a foreclosure sale by the bank. The sale was postponed, the tenants moved out, and the widower was able to return home. JASA continued to work with the homeowner to have the reverse mortgage paid off.

Because foreclosure cases can go on for years, the lawyers at JASA have developed a spirit of resilience and joy when doing their jobs. "You have to have laughter and tenderness," Donna says. "The work is too stressful otherwise."



THE CENTER AND ITS
NETWORK PARTNERS
SERVED OVER
1,000
SENIORS IN 2017

JUST KEEP FIGHTING

The Mutual Housing Association of NY has a well earned reputation for fighting hard on behalf of homeowners to keep them from losing their houses to foreclosure.

"We're very persistent," says Cecilia Joza, the director of the housing counseling program at the organization. "We will try for as long as it takes. We believe in trying one more time, one more time." She continues, "These are actual human beings that are losing their homes. If they lose their home they lose all their life, their savings, they lose everything. So we really try and work together with the homeowners."

That's why MHANY has been one of the Center's key community-based network partners: Their persistence and dedication to homeowners has been inspirational. And homeowners who are fortunate to learn about the organization also testify to MHANY's commitment to resolving even the toughest cases.

In December 2008, Kayon Nash fell behind on her monthly mortgage payments, after they increased by 25%. With her home in foreclosure, she first turned to an organization that charged her fees to get her a mortgage

modification. But she didn't see any results for several months. A coworker referred her to MHANY, which offers its services for free. "That was the best decision I ever made," Kayon wrote in a testimonial. With two mortgages on her home, Kayon said that Cecilia was able to get the first mortgage modified, but the bank that owned the second mortgage had sold it. Soon, Kayon was referred to a debt collector who was willing to settle the loan, but at a cost that was unaffordable for her family.

During this time, Kayon wrote, Cecilia kept working on the case and encouraged her to apply for a loan through the New York Mortgage Assistance Program (NYS-MAP). Finally, Cecilia convinced the debt collector to settle for \$25,000, which Kayon was able to pay after she was approved for a NYS-MAP loan.

"It is rewarding that after you work with individuals for such a long time, you can achieve success," says Cecilia, who has worked for MHANY for 16 years. "I like working with people. I like helping to make a change. I like helping them keep their homes."



**“I like working
with people...
I like helping
them to keep
their homes.”**

PROTECTING HOMES FOR GENERATIONS TO COME

Grow Brooklyn is a longtime defender of homeowners. The community-based organization offers housing and financial counseling for New Yorkers, thanks to funding support from the Center. This is an example of how the Center is able to invest resources through its Network Partners to help improve the lives of New York's families.

"It's rewarding when I am able to help a family navigate difficulties," says Michael Corcoran, an attorney with Grow Brooklyn. One of the programs that he works on is designed to help New Yorkers who have lost a loved one secure their assets, and put a plan in place for their family's financial future.

"A family's home is the bedrock of their economic and emotional security," says Samira Rajan, Grow Brooklyn's executive director. "A legal process that makes securing inheritances problematic, particularly for low-income families, literally erases millions of dollars of community wealth that is built over generations."

The work required can be time-consuming and complex. Charles and Elaine Holmes of Staten Island had been together for 50 years, when Elaine died in September 2016. Elaine was the

only person named on their home's deed, and Charles didn't have authority to sign on her behalf. Even when he tried to make payments, the bank rejected them. Charles sought help and was connected with Grow Brooklyn, where Michael helped him gain authority over the estate. Michael also helped Charles secure a mortgage modification, easing monthly payments.

Michael says the Center's partnership was critical to supporting his work with the Holmes family, and to providing initial funding to help develop new services in response to a pressing community need.

"The Center was the first funder to appreciate the value of estate administration legal service...," says Samira. "Without the Center's support, Grow Brooklyn would not have been able to support Michael's work in the program, nor save around \$20 million in assets on behalf of 70+ New York families we assisted in 2017 alone."

What's next for the Holmes family? They're happy to stay put. "We like Staten Island," says Charles and Elaine's daughter, Eileen Holmes, who lives in the house with her father. "It's quiet, and it gives us a sense of home."



**“It is
rewarding**
when I am
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a family
navigate
difficulties.”

WHAT WE DID





HELPING HOMEOWNERS AT A LARGE SCALE

433
HOMEOWNERS
HELPED

0%
INTEREST
MORTGAGE
LOANS

UP TO
\$40,000
IN MODIFICATION
ASSISTANCE

**We expanded the New York State
Mortgage Assistance Program**

in January 2017 with an infusion of \$80 million in funding, made available through the help of the Office of the New York State Attorney General. In its first year, we helped 443 homeowners with 0% interest mortgage loans up to \$40,000, to help them get a modification, pay off a mortgage or property tax arrears, or settle other debts that could lead to foreclosure.



INNOVATION FOR PERMANENT AFFORDABILITY

We officially launched the Interboro Community Land Trust to create permanently affordable homeownership opportunities across New York City. Interboro CLT is a collaboration between the Center, Habitat for Humanity New York City, the Mutual Housing Association of New York, and the Urban Homesteading Assistance Board.

Made possible with support from our Founding Corporate Partner, Citi Community Development, Enterprise Community Partners, and the NYC Department of Housing Preservation & Development.

**INTERBORO
COMMUNITY
LAND TRUST**



KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

WE SIGNED UP OVER
781
APPLICANTS FOR HOME
RESILIENCY AUDITS

We launched the Home Resiliency Audit, funded through the New York Governor's Office of Storm Recovery, to provide homeowners in coastal communities with accurate information on their flood insurance. This pioneering program brings together surveyors, engineers, master plumbers, and

resiliency counselors to advise homeowners on how to keep their flood insurance costs down. Participants in this free program receive a full technical report on their home's resiliency, one-on-one counseling, and a free elevation certificate, all of which is valued at over \$1,800.

FloodHelpNY.org





#HOMEOWNERSHIPNYC

More than 250 thought leaders, housing experts and homeowners attended our fourth annual **Affordable Homeownership Summit** on October 24, while others joined the [#homeownershipnyc](#) conversation online.

Attendees learned about best practices for using data for advocacy, the link between sustainability and resiliency, homeowner stability beyond foreclosure, financial capability, and much more.





POP-UP HELP

In January 2017, the Center launched the Homeowner Help Desk pilot program in East New York. The HHD assists homeowners at risk of displacement, scams, and other threats to affordability. The HHD includes direct outreach and a series of Help Desk “pop-up” events where homeowners can get advice, assistance, and referrals to help with a variety of issues.

THE HELP DESK
ENGAGED WITH OVER
2,000
HOMEOWNERS



DOCUMENTING HOUSING TRENDS IN EAST NEW YORK



We spent a year investigating housing trends among 1-4 unit homes and the families who live in them in East New York, and the surrounding neighborhoods of Cypress Hills, Brownsville, and Ocean Hill. Among our findings: There are high numbers of financially precarious homeowners; diminished opportunities for home buyers; and that even when East New Yorkers leave the neighborhood seeking affordability, it often comes at a price of higher transportation costs and reduced economic mobility.

cnycn.org/EastNewYork

63%
OF EAST NEW YORK
HOMEOWNERS SURVEYED
REPORTED AN UNMET
HOME REPAIR NEED

SERVING UP HOMEOWNER HELP WITH AUNT RUTH

For the past three years we've worked in partnership with the New York State Attorney General's Office to draw attention to foreclosure-rescue scams and deed thefts in our neighborhoods.

Aunt Ruth is the new face of our campaign to raise awareness of homeowner scams. Cups featuring Aunt Ruth were distributed by outreach partners to local bodegas, diners, cafes, and food courts, giving us a chance to reach people in a way that conventional advertising cannot.

MORE THAN
20,000
CUPS WERE
DISTRIBUTED
ACROSS NYC



OUR 2017 FUNDERS

The Center is grateful to our funders for helping us reach and serve vulnerable New Yorkers every day. Their commitment to the Center and our work will have a lasting impact on New York's residents and communities.

Altman Foundation

American Red Cross

Bank of America

Bridgehampton National Bank

Burchman Terrio Quist, LLC

Capital One Foundation

Citibank

Community Restoration Fund

Deutsche Bank

Fannie Mae

Freddie Mac

Goldman Sachs

Governor's Office of Storm Recovery

HSBC Bank USA

JPMorgan Chase

M&T Bank

Mizuho USA Foundation

Morgan Stanley

Nationstar Mortgage

NeighborWorks America

New York City Council

New York Community Trust

NYC Department of Housing
Preservation & Development

NYC Housing Recovery Office

New York State Energy Research
& Development (NYSERDA)

New York State Office of the
Attorney General

Ocwen Financial Corporation

Santander Bank

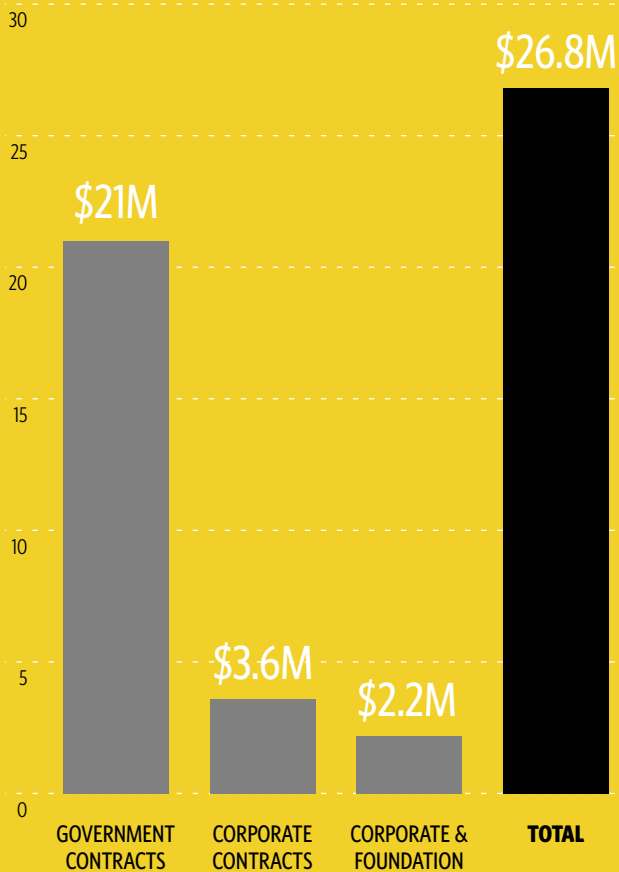
Seth Sprague Educational and
Charitable Foundation

State Bank of India

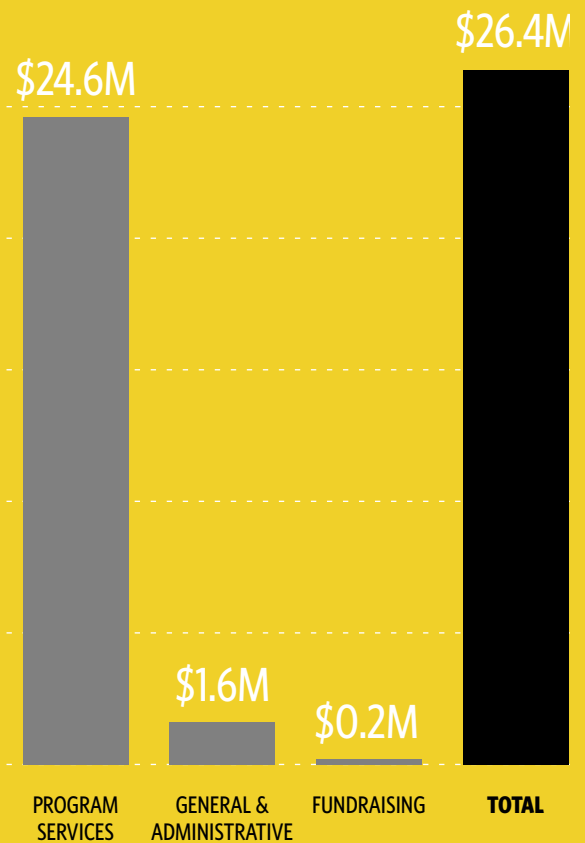
Wells Fargo

OUR 2017 FINANCIALS

INCOME



FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES



OUR 2017 NETWORK

30 PARTNERS

(18 Housing Counseling Providers, 14 Legal Services Providers)

Bridge Street Development Corporation
Brooklyn Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Project
Brooklyn Legal Services
Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A
Brooklyn Neighborhood Services
Bronx Legal Services
The Bronx Neighborhood Housing Services
CAMBA
Chhaya CDC (no foreclosure prevention counseling)
City Bar Justice Center
Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation
Greater Sheepshead Bay Development Corporation
Grow Brooklyn
Housing & Family Services of Greater New York

IMPACCT Brooklyn
JASA: Legal Services for the Elderly in Queens
The Legal Aid Society
Margert Community Corporation
MHANY Management
Mobilization for Justice (fka MFY Legal Services)
Neighbors Helping Neighbors (an Affiliate of Fifth Avenue Committee)
Neighborhood Housing Services of Brooklyn
Neighborhood Housing Services of Jamaica
Neighborhood Housing Services of New York City
Neighborhood Housing Services of Queens
Neighborhood Housing Services of Staten Island
Northfield Community Local Development Corporation
New York Legal Assistance Group
Queens Legal Services

Queens Volunteer Lawyers Project
Staten Island Legal Services

BRONX

Bronx Legal Services
The Bronx Neighborhood Housing Services
City Bar Justice Center
Housing & Family Services of Greater New York
The Legal Aid Society
MHANY Management
Neighborhood Housing Services of New York City
New York Legal Assistance Group

BROOKLYN

Bridge Street Development Corporation
Brooklyn Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Project
Brooklyn Legal Services
Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A
Brooklyn Neighborhood Services
CAMBA
City Bar Justice Center

Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation
Greater Sheepshead Bay Development Corporation

Grow Brooklyn
Housing & Family Services of Greater New York
IMPACCT Brooklyn
MHANY Management
Mobilization for Justice (fka MFY Legal Services)
Neighbors Helping Neighbors (an affiliate of Fifth Avenue Committee)

Neighborhood Housing Services of Brooklyn
New York Legal Assistance Group

MANHATTAN

City Bar Justice Center
Mobilization for Justice (fka MFY Legal Services)
New York Legal Assistance Group

QUEENS

Chhaya CDC (no foreclosure prevention counseling)
Grow Brooklyn

Housing & Family Services of Greater New York

JASA: Legal Services for the Elderly in Queens

The Legal Aid Society

Margert Community Corporation

MHANY Management

Neighborhood Housing Services of Jamaica

Neighborhood Housing Services of Queens

New York Legal Assistance Group

Queens Legal Services

Queens Volunteer Lawyers Project

STATEN ISLAND

Housing and Family Services of Greater NY

MHANY Management

Mobilization for Justice (fka MFY Legal Services)

Neighborhood Housing Services of Staten Island

Northfield Community Local Development Corporation

NYLAG

Staten Island Legal Services

OUR STAFF

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Herbert Sturz

Ex Officio:

Donovan Richards

Maria Torres-Springer

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Christie Peale

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Deputy Director of Lending

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Deputy Director of Lending

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William Fairhurst

*Deputy Director in Homeowner Services,
Housing Recovery*





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MADE IN
NYC LOGO

UNION LOGO