

MAR 2022

# NWSLTR

## HARLEM UNITED ISSUE 15



VOICES OF HARLEM UNITED  
& OUR NEW CENTRAL  
PHONE NUMBER

New Overdose  
Prevention Centers  
Uptown

ADHC Client Art Show

Staff Shout-Out

## Dear Harlem United Family,

Welcome to the March 2022 Edition of the Harlem United Newsletter! Our advocacy has started off strong in the new year, with legislative and budget talks with our local elected officials. After a round of elections this fall, the new State and City governments have taken their seats for the session.

In January, all eyes were on Governor Hochul for her first [State of the State](#) address since taking office last summer. She announced several initiatives that we're excited about at Harlem United:

- **Grow the Healthcare Workforce by 20%:** Governor Hochul proposed a 10 billion dollar multiyear investment to include increases in health and human services wages and increases in capital infrastructure and lab capacity.
- **Expand Access to Health Insurance for Low-Income New Yorkers:** Expansions include eliminating the resource eligibility test and raising the income level to 138% federal poverty level for New Yorkers 65 and up and those with disabilities; enlarging income eligibility for the Essential Plan; and aligning Child Health Plus benefits with Medicaid.
- **100,000 Low-Income Housing Units:** Governor Hochul committed to 100,000 new and preserved affordable housing units and 10,000 new and preserved supportive housing units over the next five years.
- **Jails to Jobs Initiative:** Reforms include passing the Clean Slate Act to allow certain records to be sealed after a period of time; piloting a program to provide transitional housing post-incarceration; and restoring the Tuition Access Program.

We thank Governor Hochul for her leadership and look forward to working with her administration to support and extend these plans.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in orange ink that reads "Jacqui".

Jacqui Kilmers  
CEO





## CEO Editorial

**2**  
*Announcements from Jacqui Kilmer*

## Agencywide News

**4**  
*Upcoming Central Phone Number: (844) GO-HARLEM*

## Community Advocacy

**5**  
*New York's Overdose Prevention Centers*

## Strategic Advancement Updates

**6**  
*Communications and Funding Updates*

## Programming at a Glance

**7**  
*ADHC Client Art Show*

## Staff Highlights and Announcements

**8**  
*Acknowledgments for a Job Well Done*

## Upcoming Days of Interest

**10**  
*March and April 2022 Important Dates*

## **Employee Assistance Program**

Licensed counselors are prepared to take calls from employees or household members who are experiencing fears or anxieties related to COVID-19 and other life stressors. Call: 800-386-7055; visit: [www.ibhworklife.com](http://www.ibhworklife.com)



## Upcoming Central Phone Number: (844) GO-HARLEM

For months, leadership has been hard at work developing a plan to streamline Harlem United's public-facing phone infrastructure. When the new system is launched, a single phone number (1-844-GO-HARLEM) will connect the caller to a comprehensive menu that can connect them to any department, program, facility, or individual in the agency. No more keeping track of a different phone number for each program!

In January, we began the final step in the development of the new system—the Voices of HU contest! All Harlem United staff, peers, and interns were invited to submit short voice recordings in English, Spanish, and/or French, for the chance to be the voice of our new phone system.

Immense thanks to the 18 individuals who submitted their voice recordings to the contest! There were so many exciting, personable, passionate voices to choose from. A panel of staff members from across the agency came together to listen to all entries, without names, to help pick the winners. Congratulations to Nicole Lagare, Elodie Dondasse, and Gregory Malave!

### Meet the Voices of Harlem United



#### Nicole Legare English

*Senior Case Manager, Housing*

**How long have you worked at Harlem United?**

3.5 years

**Best Harlem United memory?**

When my coworkers planned me a surprise baby shower! I wasn't expecting it and I was very grateful they took the time out for me.

**Why do you want to be the voice of Harlem United?**

It is my way to represent the agency I am proud to work for and be apart of.



#### Gregory Malave Spanish

*Director, Business Development*

**How long have you worked at Harlem United?**

9 years

**Best Harlem United memory?**

The day I met my wife, which was my first day on the job. That day I knew I was going to stay at HU for a long time.

**What are you planning to do with your prize?**

Take my team out for lunch!



#### Elodie Dondasse French

*Patient Office Assistant*

**How long have you worked at Harlem United?**

3 years

**Best Harlem United memory?**

I have too many to pick just one! But recently, I got to do trivia with several colleagues. It was so fun and we came so close to winning!

**Why do you want to be the voice of Harlem United?**

Several of my colleagues were kind enough to encourage me to submit my voice for the contest.

*And congratulations to the runners-up: Jonell Ferguson, Victor Fraser, and Pierre Obama. Thank you for participating in the Voices of Harlem United contest.*

# New York's Overdose Prevention Centers

## & Legacy of Harm Reduction

On November 30, 2021, New York City made history. The first publicly sanctioned [Overdose Prevention Centers](#) (OPCs) in the U.S. opened in Washington Heights and East Harlem, two neighborhoods with some of the [highest rates of overdose death in the city](#). OPCs, also called supervised consumption sites or facilities, are safe places where people can use substances under medical supervision from trained staff—and get connected to services.

In their first two months, staff at New York's OPCs reversed [114 overdoses](#). That number represents daughters, sons, siblings, parents, grandparents, neighbors, and community members who are with us today, who might have been lost without the OPCs. The NYC Health Department initially estimated that the OPCs would save 130 lives every year—clearly, the OPCs are already outperforming expectations!

More than 100 OPCs have operated for decades around the world and there has never been a single overdose death at an OPC. [A 2011 study](#) of an OPC in Vancouver found that the fatal overdose rate in the area around the facility dropped 35%, compared with only 9% citywide.

But the OPCs are just the latest advancement in New York's decades-long legacy as a national leader in harm reduction, a set of practical strategies that reduce the negative effects of drug use. In fact, New York's OPCs are operated by [New York Harm Reduction Educators](#) and [Washington Height Corner Project](#), which are merging to form OnPoint NYC. These two nonprofits have been serving communities in northern Manhattan for years, providing a range of harm reduction services for individuals who use drugs.

Harm reduction accepts the reality that drug use is a part of our communities. Instead of callously condemning our loved ones who use

drugs, harm reduction strategies offer tools to make drug use safer. Syringe exchange, overdose reversal training, medication-assisted treatment, and OPCs are all examples of harm reduction.

Just like with OPCs, decades of evidence show that harm reduction is not only compassionate—it saves lives:

- » Access to sterile syringes has helped reduce the number of [new HIV cases](#) among injection drug users by 95% in the last 20 years.
- » [Numerous studies](#) have shown that medication-assisted treatment is significantly more effective in helping individuals manage substance use disorder than abstinence-based programs.
- » Organizations that provide Naloxone to community members [reported](#) 26,463 overdose reversals from 1996 to 2014.

These are just a few examples of the undeniable success harm reduction programs have had in promoting the health and safety of whole communities, not just those who use drugs.

Harm reduction has never been more necessary. [Every four hours](#), someone dies of a drug overdose in New York City. The NYC Health Department estimates 65,000 to 75,000 people are suffering from substance use disorder today. Our communities need relief now.

Community based organizations and harm reduction providers have been working in Harlem for over 30 years. Our work has focused on removing barriers to care for all persons, regardless of race, class, housing status, or decision to use drug. As New Yorkers, we must support the lifesaving work of not just OPCs, but all harm reduction services throughout the city.

## Health Home Action Alert!

Health Home is a Medicaid plan benefit that coordinates care for people who have chronic health conditions and need additional support to better manage their care. Harlem United is honored to be a Health Home provider.

There is an urgent need for additional funding for Health Home Care Management in the State budget to address a serious workforce crisis. Agencies are struggling with extremely high turnover and vacancies, with many care managers leaving because funding limits the ability of agencies to provide higher wages and benefits.

### TELL YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS THAT PEOPLE WITH CHRONIC CONDITIONS NEED CARE

Step 1: [Go to this portal](#) to send a pre-written email to your state legislator.

Step 2: Send an email to our leadership in Albany. [Download this email template](#) and send an email to each of the following addresses:

The Governor: [legislative.secretary@exec.ny.gov](mailto:legislative.secretary@exec.ny.gov)

The Assembly Speaker: [Speaker@nyassembly.gov](mailto:Speaker@nyassembly.gov)

The Senate Majority Leader: [scousins@nysenate.gov](mailto:scousins@nysenate.gov)

## Strategic Advancement Updates

It's the first staff newsletter of 2022, and we're excited to share an overview of our successes and wins in calendar year 2021!



### Communications

In January, Harlem United released our [2021 Annual Report](#). A culmination of months of work across multiple departments, the Annual Report shares an overview of our victories in the past year alongside our financial reporting in compliance with 501(c)(3) regulations. Thank you to all our colleagues across multiple departments who came together to make this year's report a success!

The Annual Report is a great resource for spreading the word about Harlem United's work! Share it with funders, partners, supporters, job applicants, new hires, family, and friends! We have a limited supply of physical copies for elected officials and funders making site visits. Email [communications@harlemited.org](mailto:communications@harlemited.org) to request a hard copy.



### Program Development

In 2021, Harlem United was again the benefactor of generous funding from different government organizations, private foundations, and corporate donors. Notably, we were awarded \$3,462,500 from the New York City Human Resources Administration (NYC HRA) for our Housing program; \$552,360 from Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) and \$43,398 from the Community Health Care Association of New York State (CHCANYS) toward Health Services; and \$150,000 from the Ira DeCamp Foundation in support of an expansion of program development at HU.

As always, we are so grateful to all our funders and look forward to long, successful relationships which each.



### Individual Giving

We ended 2021 strong! December was our most successful month to date, with \$29,314 raised. And we exceeded our end-of-year fund-raising goal of \$20,000 by more than 75%, with a whopping \$35,083 donated. Additionally, we had several generous in-kind gifts of goods and services, worth a value of \$154,389.

With the return of the TCS NYC Marathon, we exceeded our goal, raising \$24,485 with eight amazing runners.

In 2021 We moved out of our former donor database and into Salesforce, which is the gold standard software to keep track of donors and funders. Our team is now set up for success, with all the information we have about our donors right at our fingertips.

## Join our Mother's Day Fundraiser!

At Harlem United, we serve countless mothers, grandmothers, parents, and caregivers. From our emergency shelters to our food and nutrition services, we're honored to help mothers create healthier futures for themselves and their children.

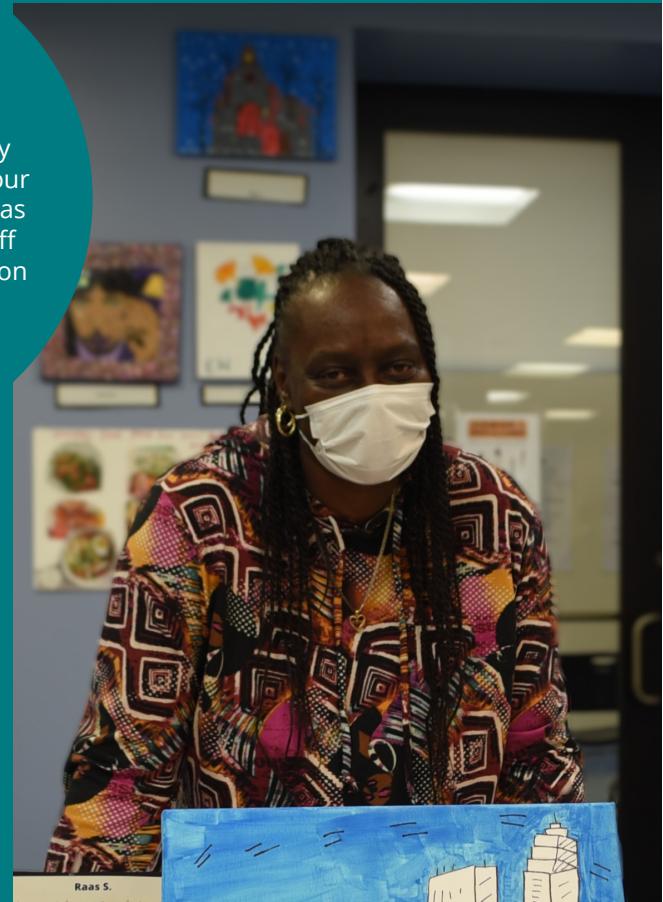
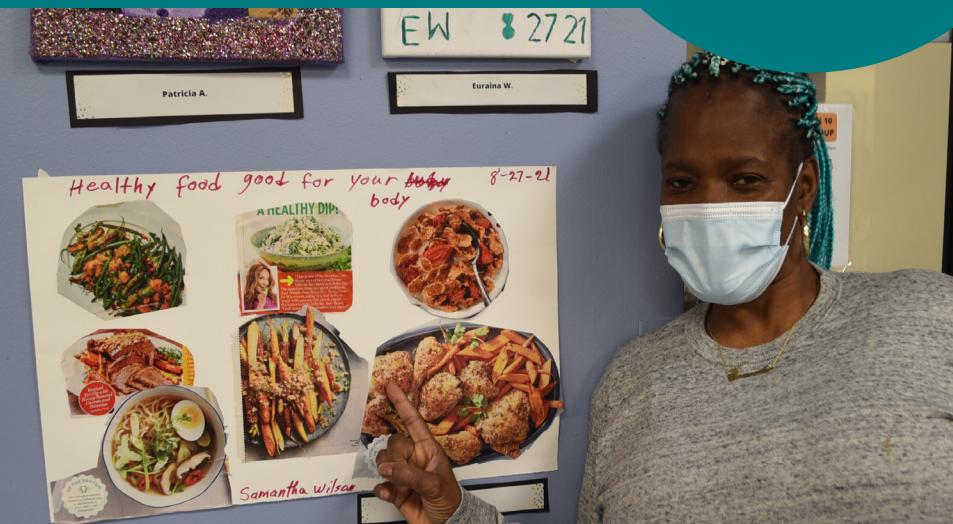
That's why we're asking staff to join us in a Mother's Day fundraising drive! We'll help you set up your own Facebook Fundraising page to raise \$1,000 in the first two weeks of May.

*Email [giving@harlemited.org](mailto:giving@harlemited.org) if you are interested in helping out!*

Every time you talk to family and friends about Harlem United you're spreading our mission and helping to raise critically needed dollars for health equity. Invite your community to protect health care for all!



In December, the Adult Day Health Care program held a client art show at Willis Green Jr. Community Health Center. Artwork from our many talented artist clients was on display, as clients and staff gathered for a festive afternoon of art, community, music, and joy.



# JOB WELL DONE

Congratulations to Em Riveles for completing your LCSW and gaining a promotion to Assistant Clinical Director of the ADHC, and Roberta Jackson for completing the educational and clinical hours for her Credentialed Alcohol and Substance Abuse Credential (CASAC). Way to go!

Health Services' 2022 HRSA Funder Site Visit was extremely successful! The HRSA representatives were extremely pleased with our community health clinics. Special thanks to Tamisha McPherson, Dr. Antonios, Aisha Babilonia, Eduard Bulku, Tamika Burrows, Lielcy Vizcarondo, Danielle Strauss, Nicole Maloney, Jose Santiago, Daniel Del Valle, Kevin Renté, Sareh Afshar, Maya Martin-Udry, Steve Phillips, Shonte Williams, Eddy Canon, Julissa Jose, Mohammad Karim, Alexis Abreu, and Felton Pavitt.

Congrats to Nicole Maselli, Behavioral Health Specialist in Prevention, for earning her LMHC credentials! We all wish you great success for what comes next in your awesome professional journey.

Shout out to the entire ADHC team, including the nursing and dietitian department, for their continued diligence in their documentation and their great chart audit by AIDS Institute in November.

## Welcome to All New Staff



Left to Right: Jhai Monroe, Sarajane Owusu, Youma Nafo, Rashad Harral



Left to Right: Hector Torres, Israel Hernandez, Felton Pavitt, Efrain Sanchez



Left to Right: Ketsia Guerrier, Alfredo Alejo



Left to Right: Jerendy Toribio, Barbara Cruz, Fabian Melendez, William Hart, Alberto Cornett

## Anniversaries

Congratulations to everyone who celebrated anniversaries at Harlem United since our last newsletter in November! We are thankful for all of our staff's long-standing commitment to bring healing and support to our community.

### 5+ Years

Darlene Bennett-Thomas, Patient Office Assistant  
Tirsa Santana, Outreach Specialist  
Barry Cornelius, Senior Janitor  
Roberta Jackson, Director of Operations  
Derrell Gibbons, Assistant Maintenance Supervisor  
Dennis Sockwell, IT Support Technician  
Mario Altenor, Administrative Coordinator  
Thomas Yared, Psychiatrist  
Gregory Malave, Director of Business Development  
Jessica Ziemba Malave, Director of Medical Affairs  
Stephanie Fischman, Registered Nurse  
Lisa Bailey, Managing Director of HRA

### 10+ Years

Dajaline Cherry, Recreation Specialist  
Jerome Lawrence, Managing Director of Veterans Housing  
Sabrina Warren, Care Manager  
Altagracia Tolentino, Recreation Specialist  
Tamisha McPherson, Chief External Affairs & Development Officer / Executive Director of URAM  
Rachel Bernard, Director of Scattered Site and Residence Management  
Vera Antonios, Part-Time Medical Director  
Laura Grund, Senior Vice President, Programs  
Danielle Strauss, Associate Vice President of Evaluation  
Karen Lyken, Managing Director of NY NY- III & STH  
Gale Greene, Front Desk Receptionist / Program Aide

### 15+ Years

Manuel Felton, Weekend Group Facilitator  
Tamika Burrows, Senior Director of Administration  
Kevin Renté, Senior Vice President  
Jaenean Rivers, Administrative Assistant  
Danita Johnson, Licensed Practical Nurse

### 20+ Years

Darrin Mack, Senior Residence Manager  
Mark Cole, Maintenance Worker  
Eve Blake, Director of Finance

## Upcoming Events - March/April 2022



**Mar**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	01	02	03	04	05	
06	07	08	09	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

**Apr**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	03	04	05	06	07	08
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

## Upcoming Events

### March is... Women's History Month

**March 6<sup>th</sup>**  
[National Dentist Day](#)

**March 10<sup>th</sup>**  
[National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day](#)

**March 16<sup>th</sup>**  
[Purim](#)

**March 20<sup>th</sup>**  
[2022 United Airlines Half Marathon](#)  
[National Native American HIV/AIDS Awareness Day](#)

**March 21<sup>st</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>**  
[LGBT Health Awareness Week](#)

**March 30<sup>th</sup>**  
[National Doctors Day](#)

**March 31<sup>st</sup>**  
[Trans Day of Visibility](#)

**April is... National Minority Health Month**

**April 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
[Start of Ramadan](#)

**April 4<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup>**  
[National Public Health Week](#)

**April 10<sup>th</sup>**  
[National Youth HIV/AIDS Awareness Day](#)

**April 11<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup>**  
[Black Maternal Health Week](#)  
[NYC Immigrant Heritage Week](#)

**April 15<sup>th</sup>**  
[Good Friday](#)  
[Start of Passover](#)  
Harlem United Closed

**April 17<sup>th</sup>**  
[Easter](#)  
**April 18<sup>th</sup>**  
[National Transgender HIV Testing Day](#)

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Survey

The Compliance Department is conducting an agency-wide survey to help develop and evaluate DEI initiatives and trainings at Harlem United. The survey is hosted externally so your responses are strictly anonymous.

[Fill out the survey today!](#) The deadline is 3:00 pm on April 4, 2022.

You can submit any questions anonymously online, or email [Shaneequa Parker](mailto:Shaneequa.Parker@harleumited.org), Compliance Director.

## Run the 2022 United Airlines Half Marathon

There's still time to run the race with team Harlem United! Not only can you run the Half Marathon on March 20th, we'll also give you a guaranteed spot on Harlem United's team for the NYC Marathon in November.

Hurry! The deadline to register is March 11<sup>th</sup>. Email [giving@harleumited.org](mailto:giving@harleumited.org) to learn more.