Grants

DECEMBER 2016 NEWSLETTER

9 ways we’re helping Brooklyn soar for everyone

PAGE 3

A Better BKLYN

SPACE TO DANCE: Nehemiah Spencer, 25, who trained at Juilliard, with Kaleah Gaskin, 10, on the roof of Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Center for Arts and Culture, which we funded.

Want to help your favorite borough? Call Jane Wilton at (212) 686-2563
New Yorkers often ask how The Trust differs from other organizations where they can start funds to help good causes. Our response: expertise and personal touch. Those distinctions are on display at the half-dozen donor briefings we hold every year. If you joined us at any of these gatherings, you were privy to insights from people who shape policy in New York and the country.

Maybe you heard then-Commissioner of Police William Bratton explain how block-by-block data can improve safety. Or Merryl Tisch, the recently retired Chancellor of the New York State Board of Regents, offer suggestions for ways to engage students. Perhaps you joined us for a tour of a long-abandoned school building in East Harlem that our grants helped transform into live-work space for artists.

A few weeks ago, Glenn Martin spoke movingly of his journey from New York State prisons, where he spent six years, to becoming a national leader in criminal justice reform and founder of our grantee JustLeadershipUSA. (It trains the formerly incarcerated to advocate for changes to the prison system.) We’re thrilled by the responses from attendees: “phenomenal,” “amazing,” “loved it!”

The 2017 calendar of briefings will soon be in the mail. Meanwhile, we send our warm wishes for the holidays. In the spirit of year-end giving, perhaps you will start a fund, or add to the one you have.

And join us in the New Year to learn more ways we can all make New York better.

“In college, I worked as an intern in a maximum-security prison, and in the Bronx District Attorney’s office with juvenile delinquents. Your briefing featuring Glenn Martin inspired me to reconnect with this critical issue.” — Deborah Model, Trust donor
A Boost for Our Biggest Borough
9 ways The Trust has Brooklyn covered

Brooklyn is hot, from its record real estate prices and revived waterfront to artisanal foods and must-try restaurants. But not everyone is prospering. Nearly one-fourth of the borough’s 2.6 million residents live in poverty.

The Trust is dedicated to helping Brooklynites who are missing out on the economic boom. And we’re helping in unexpected ways, including connecting small business owners to workers, and giving voice to residents in public housing.

Increasingly, female veterans are coming home with post-traumatic stress disorder; alarming numbers of them experienced sexual trauma while in the military. Their mental health problems make it difficult to find jobs and housing.

If these women have children but don’t have homes, they could lose custody. Housing Solutions is using our $95,000 grant to provide these veterans with mental health care in free family housing in East New York and Bedford-Stuyvesant.

Small food, clothing, and design companies need skilled workers, and residents without college degrees need jobs. Last year we gave $100,000 to the Brooklyn Alliance, the nonprofit arm of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, to work with local businesses to connect them with workers. Our new $120,000 grant will expand this program and start a course in metal fabrication, welding, and finishing.

As luxury condos encroach on historically black and Latino neighborhoods, we’re supporting journalists reporting on the changes and community responses. In 2014, we helped the Brooklyn Movement Center start an online news service to cover gentrification and other topics affecting people of color. Since then, we’ve invested $180,000 in the service, Brooklyn Deep, which trains residents to produce blogs, podcasts, and programs with public radio station WNYC.

Four years after superstorm Sandy, public housing in Red Hook and Gowanus remains damaged. Community centers meant for afterschool programs and senior activities are still shuttered; dangerous mold spreads; and temporary boilers and roofs need replacing. With our $65,000 grant, Fifth Avenue Committee is leading an effort called Turning the Tide to make sure public housing residents have a say in how, when, and where federal funds are used for repairs.

More ways we’re bolstering Brooklyn:

- **Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation** is using $150,000 to provide rehearsal space and a residency program for performing artists at its Center for Arts & Culture. It will use the newly renovated Billie Holiday Theatre and dance rehearsal studios built in an abandoned Duane Reade.

- **The Hope Program** in downtown Brooklyn helps people struggling with addiction, felony convictions, and other setbacks. With $100,000 from us, it will expand job-skills and employment services.

- **In Our Backyards** (known as **joby**) helps New Yorkers leading neighborhood projects find funding and volunteers online. Our grant of $60,000 will help residents nurture urban agriculture projects in Brownsville and other neighborhoods.

NEW NAME NEEDED:
We need a new title for our newsletter because it’s not just about grants anymore. It’s also about the joys of giving, and about how we honor donors’ wishes. Submit suggestions to info@nyct-cfi.org by January 10, 2017.

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Coaches for Kids

How can schools improve literacy in early grades? Start by tapping into the potential of every adult in a school. The Fund for Public Schools is using our grant for its Reading Rescue program, which trains any member of a school’s staff to do one-on-one tutoring for children struggling with literacy. Students in this program tend to accelerate to grade-level literacy by the end of one semester. (Right: A first-grade student excited about his progress through the program.)

49% of NYC students with disabilities aren’t educated with their non-disabled peers.

Research in Action

With $100,000 from The Trust, the Student Success Network will look at how youth development agencies shape the social growth of young people—their ability to work with others, organize thoughts, and communicate.

And with $97,000, the Research Alliance for New York City Schools at New York University will examine special education in New York City. The Alliance will describe how and where students with disabilities are served and whether they succeed academically. The group will also gather evidence to shape better policies and practices for students with disabilities while highlighting areas that need more research.

We’ve got a problem: Two-thirds of the City’s third-graders can’t read at grade level. Teaching anything to a classroom of 30 young children is a challenge, but teaching literacy is a science. “Good reading instruction requires knowledge, research, planning, and thinking quickly on your feet to help students learn new vocabulary and understand words on a page,” says Shawn Morehead, our program director for education and human justice (and a former teacher).

She adds that many of the City’s teachers came through fast-track certification programs and haven’t received much training in reading instruction.

Educational initiatives are crucial to improving literacy rates and ensuring that all students have the tools they need to succeed academically.
We’re working to make sure teachers are up to speed at the City’s 1,000 elementary schools. This work gets a boost from our Brooke Astor Fund for New York City Education. In 2016 alone, the fund provided more than $8 million in grants to improve City kids’ reading skills in the early grades.

This year’s largest grant, $2.28 million, will allow Teaching Matters to work with teachers in 25 Bronx schools to share reading instruction research, monitor students’ progress, and make course corrections when necessary. The money will also allow the group to share templates for lesson plans, assessment strategies, and videos on effective teaching methods.

The Article-A-Day initiative, run by Readworks, encourages students in Harlem to read—or listen to—one nonfiction article each day. The students then write down things they’ve learned, which expands vocabulary and gives context to words and ideas. With a grant of $803,000, the group will expand the program to all five boroughs and create audio and digital books for students with disabilities and those learning English.

The Fund for Public Schools, a group supporting the City’s Department of Education, received $1.175 million from The Trust to improve reading in largely black and Latino neighborhoods. This will pay for more one-on-one tutors in...
Examining Factors Beyond the Clinic
Calculating impact of race, wages, and food on health

When you think of your health, what comes to mind: A morning multivitamin . . . a flu shot . . . a routine check-up? Chances are, your first thoughts didn’t include housing, salary, or education. But all three affect health.

We’re funding two groups that improve the well-being of New Yorkers by taking into account these so-called “social determinants of health.” New York State’s health system is changing from a fee-for-service model to a system that rewards health improvements in patients. Health providers for New York’s neediest must figure out ways to factor social determinants into how they offer services and get reimbursed.

The Community Health Care Association of New York State serves 2 million patients in the State. With our grant of $300,000, it will help community health centers collect data on social and economic factors that influence patients’ health, then use the information to create payment models. Our grant of $80,000 will boost the efforts of God’s Love We Deliver (a non-sectarian group) to push for Medicaid coverage of medically tailored meals for chronically ill New Yorkers.

What Affects Our Well-Being?
Good health care involves understanding the whole patient, taking into account “social determinants of health,” including:

HOUSING
EDUCATION
FAMILY
EMPLOYMENT
FOOD
GENDER
RACE
ENVIRONMENT
LANGUAGE
EDUCATION

NUTRITION DELIVERED: When Kareen got sick from lymphoma, she could no longer cook for herself or her three children. Chemotherapy and radiation left her weak and exhausted, while neuropathy in her limbs makes it difficult for her to walk or use her hands. With the help of the nutritious meals God’s Love We Deliver provides her family, Kareen reports she is getting back some of her strength. Photo by Nicola Bailey
This year, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration banned 19 chemicals used in antibacterial soaps because of potential health risks. But that’s just a minuscule start. Of the more than 80,000 chemicals used in the United States today, fewer than 300 have been tested for their effects on humans.

Let’s repeat that: Fewer than 300 of 80,000 have even been tested.

Chemical policy is health policy. We’re supporting three nonprofits that work to reduce the toxicity of products we buy, consume, or are exposed to. With our grant of $100,000, Kitchen Table Campaigns will help with enforcement of a new law that regulates toxic chemicals in the marketplace. The group will meet with companies and scientists to change how products are made and shape new federal regulations.

Sometimes when a toxic chemical is phased out in consumer products, the substitute is just as bad. To stop this, we are granting $150,000 to the Healthier Products Coalition to reduce the use of three classes of harmful chemicals found in household products: flame retardants, highly fluorinated chemicals, and antimicrobials.

Toxic products are a problem beyond our borders: At least 126 countries still use lead paint in homes, schools, and other public places. Two of our biggest trading partners, China and Mexico, allow the use of lead pigments in school supplies, toys, and other products.

Because our Henry Phillip Kraft Memorial Fund was created in part to improve the global environment, we’re giving $200,000 to IPEN, a group working to eliminate the manufacture and sale of lead paint around the world by 2020.

The Kraft family cared about the environment, and left a bequest to protect our planet. We’re working to expand wild animals’ endangered habitats, curb climate change, and reduce the use of toxic chemicals that threaten all of us.
FROM A DONOR | Marcy Brownson

I’ve traveled the world but wouldn’t want to live anywhere except New York.

“I want to help New Yorkers, especially those who just need that extra boost. A few years ago, I mentioned this to Bill Evarts, my late husband’s law partner. Bill told me about The New York Community Trust.

I love going to donor briefings, being part of the community of donors. This year I made a gift to The Trust’s Annual Fund. They combined my gift with others to fix a broken bail system that keeps too many untried people behind bars while others plead guilty just to get out of jail.

I also put The Trust in my will, to receive a bequest to help young people learn music. The Trust is a beacon for those who believe in New York, and I’m one of them.”

She loves New York. So she gives.

MARCY BROWNSON, a Trust donor, recently retired from a career in finance and education. She lives on Manhattan’s East Side.