



Valley Lodge

Acrylic on canvas by Raymond Sands, VL alumnus

WSFSSH Highlights 2009

“We have all known the long loneliness, and we have found that the answer is love and that love comes with community.”

Dorothy Day

Manhattan Valley Golden Age Center at the Red Oak

On Wednesday, December 1, WSFSSH humbly and proudly took over the sponsorship and operation of the Manhattan Valley Golden Age Senior Center. WSFSSH has hosted this senior center at the Red Oak Apartments since 1982. In fact, the senior center space was designed with members of the Golden Age Center whose previous address was the basement of the Grace Methodist Church on 104th Street. Both staff and members were involved in envisioning what the perfect senior center would be. We have enjoyed a wonderful relationship with the Center over these 27 years.



Just one year ago, the beloved Executive Director of the Center, Nery Cox-Ramos, died and, together with the entire Manhattan Valley community, we mourned her death. Nery had always spoken about the day when WSFSSH would assume responsibility for the Center. That day has come.

A feature story in the Spanish language paper, El Especial

We are pleased to announce that the new Center Director is Vidalia (Micki) Navarro, who has been a social worker with WSFSSH since September, 2005, and in fact, was our Housing Specialist at Red Oak for a number of years. When introduced to the members of the Center, Micki received a standing ovation. Her leadership skills, combined with her compassionate heart, will continue the Center's successful delivery of service to hundreds of seniors in the Manhattan Valley neighborhood.

A New Logo for WSFSSH



WSFSSH has a new logo. designed by the graphic design firm of Taylor & Ives. A team composed of staff from across WSFSSH worked with Taylor & Ives to help them understand who we are. The new logo will appear on stationery and other WSFSSH materials, as well as in our buildings

Exciting News at the Westbourne

A one million dollar capital improvement project will soon begin at the Westbourne for the 128 residents who live there. This plan includes upgrades to resident suites, including new kitchens, an elevator upgrade, improved fire system, and a future reconfiguration of the first floor program space.



WSFSSH purchased the Westbourne SRO from a private owner in 1987, part of our mission to preserve low income housing on the Upper West Side. In 1993 we entered a limited partnership with the National Equity Fund in order to enable funding through low income tax credits. Thanks to the work of the staff at the Westbourne, as well as the efforts of staff in Asset Management and Property Management at our central office, we have fulfilled our 15 year commitment and on December 11, 2009, the Westbourne once again returned to full ownership by Westbourne HDFC, a WSFSSH affiliate. This transaction enabled the capital improvement plan, established a healthy operating reserve account, and will insure the future of the Westbourne as a housing resource for low income people.

Supportive Congregate Housing

Approximately seven years ago a group of WSFSSH staff with the assistance of WSFSSH residents envisioned the “ideal” physical and emotional construct to replace adult homes, and called it “Supportive Congregate Housing.” After years of work and advocacy this dream is becoming bricks and mortar reality in the Bronx.

The Claremont will have 100 beds (studios and some one bedrooms) licensed as an assisted living/adult home. There will also be 19 apartments for families from the surrounding Mt. Eden neighborhood.

Construction is well underway. “We are really on our way to creating a model of care that will assure the dignity of persons who will thrive in this life giving environment,” stated Laura Jervis, WSFSSH Executive Director. “We’re planning to open in the spring of 2011!”



The Claremont, December. 2009

WSFSSH Highlights 2009 continued

The West 80s Project to Open

Renovations have been underway on two buildings in the West 80s. Scheduled to open in early January, West 84th Street will have 20 units (studios, one and two bedroom apartments) for pre-existing tenants and others who meet a range of eligibility guidelines. The building on West 87th Street will have eight permanent studio apartments. WFSSSH is also pleased to host the Dorot Homelessness Prevention Program, with nine transitional SRO units in this building.



West 87th St.

Bank of America Grant

In November of 2008, WFSSSH was the recipient of the Neighborhood Excellence Award from the Bank of America. This major grant is given to organizations in recognition of their stability, leadership and excellence. Along with the financial support, two members of the WFSSSH staff were given extensive training opportunities over the past year.

We have focused the resources of this grant on looking toward the future, solidifying our administrative infrastructure and meeting the challenges of the changing economic environment. We are so very grateful to Bank of America for their confidence in WFSSSH and in our leadership in the field of supportive housing!



Bank of America gave us 150 tickets to the Big Apple Circus this year. Our grandparent families enjoyed the performance immensely.

Special Funding

WSFSSH was the recipient of two special funds during 2009. Beyond Shelter is a coalition of synagogues organized in the 1980s to advocate for ways to provide permanent housing to homeless people on the West Side. Recently, the coalition gave its remaining financial assets to WFSSSH for the purpose of setting up a revolving seed money loan program to develop housing for homeless people on the West Side. We are grateful to be stewards of this gift. In recognition of the work and advocacy of Beyond Shelter and of one of its most active members, Anne Meyer, WFSSSH will be dedicating the residential portion of our new building at 44 W. 87 St. in memory of Anne Meyer.

WSFSSH was also the beneficiary of funds honoring the late Doris Traylor. We have set up the Doris Traylor Memorial Fund which will be used to assist our residents at the Marseilles as they age in. It will fulfill their desire to remain in their own homes by adding home care and other services so they can live independently as long as possible.

Just a Sampling of Arts @WSFSSH



By Celestine Young, 129th St.



By Rookmin Jodhan, Kowal House

Preservation

WSFSSH continues to explore ways to preserve affordable housing for low income New Yorkers. A significant focus of these efforts has been identifying "at-risk" senior buildings (HUD 202 buildings) in the Bronx and Manhattan whose original developers have had difficulty meeting HUD standards. We are exploring what interventions might insure that these buildings are safe and affordable housing for years to come.

"We have all known the long loneliness, and we have found that the answer is love and that love comes with community." Dorothy Day

This quote from Dorothy Day captures our modus vivendi at WFSSSH. We have come to understand that experiences of isolation, and their accompanying loneliness, whether caused by homelessness or illness or tragedy can only be soothed and healed through life in community. Throughout WFSSSH, our residents and staff build that community through sharing the challenges of life, knowing one another deeply and daily living together.

We thank you so much for supporting our way of life and wish for you the joy of life in community.

Sheldon Fine

Sincerely,

Laura Jervis