

## **2023** IN REVIEW

29 years of helping survivors flee domestic violence by connecting them to safe, affordable housing and services

## From the Executive Director

This was an extraordinary year for New Destiny. We housed 1,000% more survivors than in 2022.\* This was thanks to our trailblazing Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) Housing Navigator Program and the continued strong work of our U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Continuum of Care rapid rehousing team. We also developed new positions to provide additional supports and aftercare to survivors and their children, helping them to build back their finances and improve their overall wellness, including increasing access to mental health services.

New Destiny also started construction this year on Lily House, renovating and repurposing a shelter into permanent, supportive housing, and purchased a site in the Bronx where we will build 72 more homes for survivors and other low-income New Yorkers. We continued to make great strides in improving access to housing resources for domestic violence survivors with two significant legislative victories in 2023, and launched the Survivor Voices Project, our speakers bureau that engages survivors by providing media training and support and builds a platform for survivors to share their stories.

Over the next year, we will open our first supportive housing development outside of New York City, in New Rochelle; launch a pilot food security program; and seek local opportunities to recreate the phenomenally successful EHV program.

In gratitude, Nicole Branca

<sup>\*</sup> This report is based on data for the fiscal year July 1, 2022–June 30, 2023.



cover a full social services staff.



In 2023, New Destiny launched the Survivor Voices Project, our first ever Speakers' Bureau for survivors residing in our supportive housing or who have received Housing Access and Stability Services.

#### What We Do

New Destiny Housing helps families fleeing domestic violence find a safe home and services to heal, regain independence and find stability. Our purpose is to end the cycle of abuse and homelessness for as many individuals and families as possible. In 2023, we provided housing solutions to 1,700 survivors and their children, across all five boroughs.

Housing development and

management, advocacy, rapid rehousing, and residential support services are the cornerstones of New Destiny. Support services aim to keep families in their homes and safe from abuse by addressing their needs through safety planning, counseling, legal referrals, benefits assistance, childcare, community-building, educational and vocational services, health/wellness, and financial help.

Living in one of New Destiny's buildings gave life back to me and my children. It activated all our engines to start anew on a different path. It has given us a sense of security to pursue our goals and dreams.

New Destiny FSP tenant

#### **Family Support Program**

The Family Support Program (FSP) provides on-site social services aimed at achieving housing stability and ends domestic violence for survivors and their children.

FSP supportive services are mostly funded through New York State supportive housing contracts and provide case management, counseling, and workshops for survivors. However, older state funded contracts leave a critical gap in funding in our older buildings. Thanks to private partners, we are able to help close some of the gap in funding for services needs.



## **FSP Accomplishments in 2023**

- ◆ 100% of FSP tenants remained stably housed
- ◆ 96% remained free from incidents of domestic violence
- ◆ Mental Health Initative launched

When I first received my keys to my apartment I was filled with joy. The fact that you're able to get to this point with permanent housing and you're safe, it's a relief. It is a new beginning.

New Destiny FSP tenant



#### **Mental Health Initiative**

In 2023, New Destiny launched our in-house mental health care services in response to the growing need demonstrated by our survivors to provide therapeutic and clinical services to our survivors. Reflective of our mission, these services are trauma-informed and strength-based approaches to deliver short-term individual counseling, crisis intervention, and connection to community based services.



As the saying goes, 'after a storm comes a calm,' and blessings have been pouring into my life thanks to all the staff...to all those that believed in me. I feel challenged to give them the best of me every day, and to also share my skills, knowledge, and to keep on going.

New Destiny FSP tenant

#### Housing Access and Stability Services (HASS)

New Destiny continues to lead the way in rapid rehousing services for domestic violence survivors via HASS. In the New York City Continuum of Care 2023 program evaluation, New Destiny's HousingLink program was the highest ranked rapid rehousing program in New York City. Thanks to the hardworking staff of HousingLink, 77 survivors, as well as their children, were connected to housing in 2023.



Alicka Ampry-Samuel, HUD Regional Administrator, Cecile Noel, former Commissioner of the New York City Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence, and EHV program staff at New Destiny's April 2023 annual benefit.

Domestic violence and homelessness can feel very embarrassing, and it just sometimes makes you feel like giving up. But, with the support from Ms. Kimberly, it definitely made me know that everything would be okay, and that my current situation would not be my final destination.

– HASS client

In response to the COVID-19 economic crisis the Biden administration created the Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) program, and, through the Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence, New Destiny was responsible for administering these vouchers specifically for homeless domestic violence survivors in NYC. New Destiny managed one of the largest EHV Housing Navigation teams in the country and successfully assisted almost 1,000 survivor-headed households in private market housing that is safe, affordable, and managed by reputable landlords.

## A New Department: Advocacy and Communications

New Destiny's advocacy and communications staff were merged into one department in December 2022. The team, comprised of the Director of Policy and Communications and the Strategic Communications Officer, is responsible for increasing New Destiny's visibility and spearheading efforts to expand housing resources for domestic violence survivors.

On Advocacy, the department

develops and implements policy priorities, manages government relations, and engages peer organizations in coalition-building. On Communications, it produces internal and external communication tools, manages the organization's social media, and handles press requests. The team also provides support to staff for speaking engagements, develops materials



as needed, and, in collaboration with program colleagues, oversees the Survivor Voices Project.

## Two Advocacy Victories for Domestic Violence Survivors

After years of tireless work by our Advocacy team and partner organizations, in July 2022, the City Council passed legislation that requires the city to capture the true scope of homelessness by producing a comprehensive monthly census count of all five shelter systems, including survivors residing in domestic violence shelters. For decades, limited public disclosure of the numbers of individuals in the city's specialized shelters had obscured the full scale of homelessness, which contributed to survivors, youth, and others being excluded from policy discussions and critical housing resources. New Destiny's advocacy to create one homeless shelter census has benefited survivors and other New Yorkers by helping ensure they are visible and that their needs are heard.

In October 2022, after New Destiny's efforts to increase investment in homelessness prevention, the Council passed a bill that created the first flexible funding program for survivors throughout the city. The program, overseen by the Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence (ENDGBV), provides lowbarrier microgrants to survivors and connects them to supportive services with the goal of helping them remain housed. For some survivors, an immediate, but otherwise manageable, financial or health crisis can quickly snowball into a catastrophe causing homelessness. New Destiny then joined forces with peer organizations in early 2023 to advocate for the program to be funded at \$6 million.

Thanks to ongoing support from Trinity Wall Street, the Advocacy

team is able to continue fighting for more resources to end the cycles of abuse and homelessness for domestic violence survivors.

New Destiny's state level advocacy was formalized in 2023 as we released our first New York State policy platform. The platform underscored four priorities for Governor Hochul and the State leadership to help unlock a sustainable path for survivors to break the cycle of homelessness and abuse:

- Protect Survivors in New York State Supportive Housing Program Sites
- Increase the Empire State
   Supportive Housing Initiative
- Increase Cash Assistance and Shelter Allowance
- Pass HAVP and CityFHEPS Legislation



## **New Destiny's Survivor Voices Project**

In April 2023, New Destiny launched the Survivor Voices Project (SVP), our first ever Speakers' Bureau for survivors residing in our supportive housing or who have received Housing Access and Stability Services. Through SVP, members engaged in a series of trainings to hone their communication skills and policy knowledge. SVP has significantly increased opportunities for survivors to inform New Destiny's advocacy priorities and share their personal stories as spokespersons at conferences, with the press, and decision makers.

## **Our Buildings**

As the only organization solely dedicated to permanent housing solutions for domestic violence survivors, New Destiny continues to build. Our first project outside of New York City, Highgarden Towers in Westchester, provides 219 affordable units with 77 set aside for survivors.

In the Bronx, we are beginning work on 234 new affordable units with 140 units set aside for survivors with two projects in pre-development.

We also began the rehabilitation of another project in the Bronx which will provide 30 supportive housing units for survivors.



#### THE CORDEN

**BRONX, NEW YORK** 

**SUBMITTED BY:** 

MAGNUSSON ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING

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## MERIT AWARD



The American Institute of Architects (AIA) New York State selected The Corden, in the Bronx, for a 2022 Merit Award. Named in honor of our former executive director, Carol Corden, this beautiful building was designed by Magnusson Architecture and Planning PC and built by D.P. Group General Contractors. It has 62 apartments with 37 units reserved for households headed by homeless domestic violence survivors.

## **Building Homes, Building Hope Benefit**

Thanks to all of you who were able to join us at our Annual Cocktail Benefit: Building Homes, Building Hope on Thursday, April 20, 2023. We were elated to honor our Highgarden Development Partners: Georgica Green Ventures, RXR, and West 20th





Construction LLC; celebrate the Emergency Housing Voucher Program, which helped hundreds of domestic violence survivors find safe, permanent housing; and acknowledge our 2023 Resilience Award Recipient, Diane Mullins, for her incredible

strength and courage.

Featured speakers of the night included Alicka Ampry-Samuel, HUD Regional Administrator for New York and New Jersey, Jessica Katz, New York City Chief Housing Officer, and Commissioner Cecile Noel, ENDGBV.



## **FY 2023 FINANCIALS**



New Destiny's operating budget has tripled in the past three years. In 2023, 89% of the revenue was spent on programs and 11% on fundraising and general expenses/management costs. Unrestricted donations allow us to stabilize during this period of extraordinary growth.



#### **Program Expenses**

 Social Services
 \$ 8,435,000

 Housing
 \$ 567,000

 Management & General Expenses
 \$ 772,000

 Fundraising costs
 \$ 345,000

**Total Revenue** \$10,168,000

## **FY 2023 SUPPORTERS**

Our 2023 Benefit Diamond Sponsors:



**West 20th Construction LLC** 



#### \$50,000 and above

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**Government and Elected Officials** 

New York City Council Member Adams

New York City Council Member Restler

New York City Council Member Sanchez

New York City Council Domestic Violence and Empowerment (DoVE) Initiative

New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development / NYCHA

New York City Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence / HRA

New York State Homes and Community Renewal

New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

United States Department of Housing and Urban Development



89% of DV survivors experiencing homelessness are Black or Latinx, and 96% are women or women-led households. In addition to our mission to serve this population through permanent housing solutions, New Destiny is committed to having a diverse board and staff at every level, conducting demographic surveys to ensure we're succeeding.

#### Staff Development and DEI Training

In 2023, New Destiny launched a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training series for all staff to deepen our understanding of trauma-informed care through an equity lens, increase cultural sensitivity and awareness, and create a better understanding and support of decisions management has and will continue to make with a commitment to DEI. In the next year we will be looking to bring DEI training to our board and continue providing trainings for staff.

## **Expansion of Aftercare Services**

The provision of aftercare services for survivors in our Emergency housing Voucher Housing Navigator Program was made possible through The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust. Along with expanding services and access to mental healthcare, New Destiny launched financial and health & wellness coaching for our survivors. In addition to our experience providing aftercare services, the negative impacts of domestic violence, homelessness, and poverty on physical, mental, and financial health is well documented. These services focused on reversing these impacts by working with clients to identify personal financial and wellness goals and take the necessary action steps to advance these goals. Aftercare support personnel focus on overall wellbeing and work directly with survivors to identify and advance their personal goals.



In addition to the extreme housing demand, 94% of survivors experience financial isolation and abuse and at least 50% experience PTSD and depression. It takes a team of social services staff, housing navigators and coaches to stabilize survivors in housing.

#### **Mission Statement**

New Destiny's mission is to end the cycle of domestic violence and homelessness for low-income families and individuals by developing and connecting them to safe, permanent housing and services.

To achieve its mission, New Destiny builds and manages housing with on-site services; offers innovative programs that assist survivors in finding and retaining affordable housing; and expands access to permanent housing resources for survivors.



# **new destiny** housing

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