



## 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

HousingPlus provides community-based permanent housing and comprehensive services to women, including women with children, to support them in overcoming poverty, homelessness, addiction, trauma, and the effects of incarceration, in order to build lives of stability, and to define and realize goals for themselves and for their families.

### MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

This past year has underscored how a strong foundation can empower women—who have experienced the trauma, discouragement, and displacement of homelessness—to envision a new future for themselves and their families. While our housing-first model helps women access the services they need to start over, a more dynamic reality is at play. Each woman who comes through our doors has an inherent fortitude and resilience, characteristics that once excavated and dusted off, form the basis of the framework needed to forge a new beginning. I thank you for helping us give women a key to their futures, and I'm looking forward to imagining a brighter tomorrow for even more women and children in the year ahead.

Warmly,

Rita Zimmer

Founder and Executive Director

### HOUSING PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

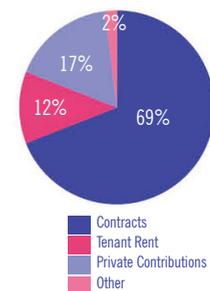
- 151 adults and 96 children live across 150 housing units
- 99 tenants are employed or actively engaged in employment related activity
- 193 women have been diverted from Rikers Island Jail and placed into supportive transitional housing in the community
- 47% of women in our programs are veterans

Cover photo: Quentin Esme Brown

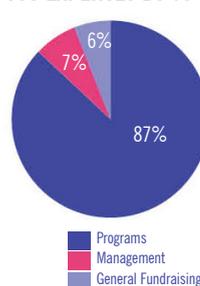
### FY19 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

REVENUE	
FY2019 Unaudited	
Contracts	4,150,358
Tenant Rent	671,245
Private Contributions	1,234,131
Other	17,160
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>6,072,894</b>
EXPENSES	
Programs	5,208,808
Management	412,369
General Fundraising	371,634
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>5,992,811</b>
NET INCOME/LOSS	
	<b>80,083</b>

#### FY19 REVENUE BY %



#### FY19 EXPENSES BY %



### GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
 New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services  
 New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance  
 New York City Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice\*

\*Thanks to the Osborne Association for serving as fiscal administrator

## COMMUNITIES & FINANCIALS



Photo: Maria Montoya Lara

*"To our donors I would say: One small donation goes a long way. We are grateful to have people that are willing to help us even if they don't know us."*

### TA'ZAHNEE'S STORY

Ta'zahnee grew up in New Jersey. Without her father's presence, her mother and grandmother were her closest family. She had a happy but rough childhood, and as happens with many teenagers, she soon became a rebel. "When you are young and having troubles at home, you think you can do everything," she says. A series of bad decisions got her detained at the Rose M. Singer Center on Rikers Island.

At Rikers, Ta'zahnee began to see that she wanted more out of life. She realized the effect her decisions had on her family and decided she needed to be a better role model for her brother and sister. She knew she owed it to herself.

While she was at Rikers she heard about HousingPlus, and after only two weeks, she was able to move into Liberty House, one of four transitional housing programs in the Women's Community Justice Project. This program diverts pre-trial detainees from unnecessary detention and places them in supportive transitional housing in the community, where women begin to thrive. Leaving Rikers Island and being out in the world on her own was terrifying for Ta'zahnee. "I just kept crying," she says. "I was scared." But once she experienced life at HousingPlus, everything started to change. "They welcomed me with open arms. HousingPlus has been patient and understanding . . . I can go out and lock my door, and can come back tired and put my key in the lock and lay down. There is no better feeling."

With the support of her case manager, Briana Barker, Ta'zahnee was able to explore new possibilities and set goals for the future. First, she enrolled in a free course called Reading the Biography at LaGuardia Community College to determine if college or trade school is a better fit for her. Two months in, Ta'zahnee loves the course and is getting ready for her final exams. During this time she also looked for a part-time job to give her some financial independence. After applying for a position at a well-known off-Broadway theater, Ta'zahnee reached out to the HousingPlus staff to help quell her nerves and prepare for her first, then second, interview. With her confidence boosted and skill set sharpened through a mock interview and coaching, she was eventually offered the job, and spends a few days a week helping with the theater's programming for children. For all the women still being detained at Rikers without formal charges, we'll keep doing the necessary work to move them into supportive transitional housing in the community, like Liberty House, because no woman should have to wait to get started on building a new life.

## THANK YOU TO OUR 2019 DONORS

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**Directors:** Katie Brown, Lisa Chaney, Michelle Feldman, Mary Gherty, Andrea Gibbs, Joanne Pawlowski, Alexis Perrotta, Rita Zimmer

Opening doors for women in crisis

## CELEBRATING NEW DEVELOPMENTS



Photo: MHG Architects

Linwood Park Apartments is a 100-unit affordable housing development that is the culmination of a partnership between HousingPlus, Alan Bell and Elisa Barnes of B&B Urban, and L+M Development Partners. Set to open in East New York in spring 2020, HousingPlus will provide social service supports and rental assistance for 30 units that will be reserved for formerly homeless families, made possible with funding from the Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative.

### SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR BENEFIT HONOREES AND EVENT CHAIRS

To help with these new expansions, we'd like to say a special thanks to our 2019 Benefit honorees and event chairs, who helped us raise \$250,000 in support of our programs and new initiatives.

**HONOREES:** Katie Brown, Shadequa Hampton, Vanessa Ratcliff, Sheri Sandler, and Myrta Vida  
**EVENT CHAIRS:** Bonnie Bach, Quentin Esme Brown, Lisa Chaney, Annabel Davis-Goff, Anne Delaney, Sally Franklin, Naomi Marks, Nancy Solomon

## BUILDING STABLE FUTURES FOR VETERANS



Photo: Mark Phillips

Approximately half of the tenants at HousingPlus are veterans. Some come to us with college degrees or other specialized training gained through their military service. Many others, however, only have experience in low-skill jobs that do not translate well to finding employment in civilian life. Women also struggle with the after-effects of their military service, including mental illness, PTSD, or sexual trauma. It is no surprise that so few are able to find employment following their discharge.

We work hard to increase the number of women placed into living wage jobs, and provide an in-house Career Specialist to help women with job-readiness activities as well as access to an onsite Clinical Care Manager to help them process traumas and provide referrals to community mental health services. As a result of the support she received from HousingPlus, Vanessa, pictured above, was able to find a stable job and eventually move into her very own apartment—without a subsidy—with her children. With stable housing as a foundation, she has built the life she always wanted.

## HELPING WOMEN COME HOME



Our work with the Beyond Rosie's campaign contributed to the decision made by the New York City Council in October 2019 to officially close the Rikers Island Jail complex by 2026 and replace it with smaller, borough based facilities. Part of this plan will include a standalone, gender-informed facility for women—an achievement nearly four years in the making led by women with lived experience, and supported by organizational advocates and other allies. Since efforts to reduce the population at Rikers Island first began, the 15,000 maximum capacity complex fell to below 7,000 in 2019.

We have demonstrated through the Women's Community Justice Project that alternatives to detention are possible and preferable for the long-term success of women and for New York City. Our efforts to divert women being unnecessarily detained on Rikers Island have placed approximately 193 individuals in supportive transitional housing in the community. Many have returned to school, found living wage jobs, and reunified with their children. Our continued advocacy will inform programming and services at a facility for women, and when possible, we will attempt to divert women before they even enter detention.



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