I am honored to work with staff who care deeply about serving homeless persons and empowering them with the tools to thrive.

Professional care workers are highly-skilled, with the know-how to address challenges in our communities. Our care workers have Master of Social Work degrees, are licensed mental health counselors, have clinical expertise, are trained in alcohol and substance abuse counseling, and/or have extensive experience working with children, families, seniors, and young adults.

However, underfunded government contracts bring many workers perilously close to needing some of the same social services their clients need.

Nonprofits provide the vast majority of housing, care and other services for the City's homeless persons. Homeward NYC works in coalition with other providers to educate officials and influence housing policy to end chronic homelessness.

This includes building new supportive housing (that's affordable housing with support services), increased funding for social workers, and increased rental assistance to help young mothers like Naomi (see page four) transition from our family shelter to a permanent family home.

Thank you for staying informed, getting involved, and for sustaining our services. Your kindness and giving promote the wellbeing of homeless persons—and the wellbeing of our local communities. We are stronger together.

You can stay up to date on resident and staff stories by following us on social media @HomewardNYC and signing up for email news at www.homeward.nyc/updates.

Please know that your generosity is life-changing for homeless young mothers, children, LGBTQ young adults and seniors. Thank you!

All the best,
Jeannette K. Ruffins
Chief Executive Officer

At Homeward NYC, I gained resilience by receiving support from my life skills manager and my clinician. I have dealt with my mental health and substance use. Now I can hold a job and contribute to society. I'm becoming the person I always imagined myself to be. I have never felt so empowered to set and obtain my goals with the support I have received. Goals that seemed impossible to achieve before are now within my reach.

Homeward NYC was honored to be selected by La Roche-Posay, a dermatologist-recommended skin care brand, as a benefitting organization for their June 30 Pride in Dermatology celebration. (Our team was fully vaccinated, and the event took place before the emergence of the delta variant of COVID-19.)

CEO Jeannette Ruffins described our work then read a prepared statement from Oscar—a formerly homeless LGBTQ supportive housing resident—while a supportive crowd cheered. Oscar was excited to share his story but nervous about public speaking and wrote:

"At Homeward NYC, I gained resilience by receiving support from my life skills manager and my clinician. I have dealt with my mental health and substance use. Now I can hold a job and contribute to society. I'm becoming the person I always imagined myself to be. I have never felt so empowered to set and obtain my goals with the support I have received. Goals that seemed impossible to achieve before are now within my reach."
**Homeward NYC (formerly West End Residences)** began in 1989 with a mixed-age residence that is a transitional shelter for homeless mothers and their children and long-term, affordable housing for low-income and homeless seniors.

We recognized a growing need—like the young mothers at our intergenerational residence, LGBTQ youth start young adulthood having experienced gender-based physical and emotional abuse.

In 2011, we adapted our trauma-centered care model to create a first of its kind LGBTQ young adult supportive housing site in West Harlem. In 2015, we opened a second site, this time in the Bronx.

In 2020, we reorganized West End Residences and our True Colors Housing for LGBTQ young adults as Homeward NYC.

At each of our housing sites, we provide support services that include case management, counseling, referrals, community-building activities, and life skills programs.

We tailor our life skills for the communities served, offering the **Women's Empowerment Program** for young mothers and the **True Colors Empowerment Program** for LGBTQ young adults.

**Thank you** for supporting housing and services that empower homeless young families, seniors and LGBTQ young people to live life forward.

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**Green Thumbs in the Bronx**

Homeward Bronx LGBTQ supportive housing tenants and staff tended the grounds at their site. Gardening is great for mental health and wellbeing—it reduces stress, improves mood, and strengthens connections to community.

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**About Us**

**Tyler Steele**, Vice-President for Medical & Media Relations at La Roche-Posay, presented Homeward NYC with a check.

The event was emceed by activist and entertainer **Peppermint** from *RuPaul’s Drag Race*, Tyler Steele, and dermatologist **Dr. Karan Lal**. Music was provided by **DJ Cazwell** and a live performance from **Adam Lambert**.

Tyler Steele was familiar with our work providing LGBTQ young adult supportive housing and introduced us to La Roche-Posay. Steele noted both he and the company were interested in issues of equity, access, mentorship, and visibility for LGBTQ folks and persons of color as both providers and users of dermatology care.

**Thank you**, **La Roche-Posay**, for including us in your Pride Month celebration and for your generous donation to our LGBTQ young adult supportive housing!
I find it particularly rewarding that the talent and voices of young people would be used to support young adults in crisis and to give back to the elders in our community,” said CEO Jeannette Ruffins, who went on to address the young artists, “Kudos to all the young people who submitted work. It takes courage to share your work with others, especially for review, and you are very brave.”

Thank you to Soror Andrene Denniston, President of Downtown NYC Zetas, for including us. Thank you to Mark Jennings, Associate Executive Director at Project FIND, for his organizing efforts. And thank you to everyone for participating, for spreading the word, and for making gifts in support of homeless seniors and young adults.

Meet Chief Program Officer Kimberly Marshall

Kimberly Marshall is our Chief Program Officer. She joined the team in 2011 as program director for the West Harlem LGBTQ supportive housing site.

Now she oversees program development, implementation, and contract compliance for all programs including our transitional family shelter, older adult affordable housing, and LGBTQ young adult supportive housing.

She has a Master of Public Administration from John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Her criminal justice studies inform her professional experiences working in shelter services and affordable housing—formerly incarcerated individuals experience higher rates of homelessness.

Kimberly is passionate about reforming the criminal justice system as a matter of fairness and equity for marginalized communities. Her hobbies? Listening to music, gardening, and reading about and working on social justice issues.

She is deeply committed to the professional growth of the teams she supervises. She considers it one of the most rewarding parts of her work. But, she adds, “The greatest reward is knowing I assisted in providing housing for individuals in need.”

Thank you, Kimberly, for all that you do for the residents and staff of Homeward NYC!

Juneteenth Contest Showcases Youth Voices

The Downtown NYC Zetas, a historically African American sorority, reached out to Homeward NYC and senior-services provider Project FIND to showcase youth talent and support homelessness prevention programs.

The Downtown NYC Zetas hosted a contest in honor of the Juneteenth holiday where youth performed an original rap, song, or spoken word on the themes of the freedom, liberation, and resiliency of the Black community.

Youth performers competed for a cash prize. The contest’s fundraising efforts were shared evenly between Project FIND and Homeward NYC.

Thank you and congratulations to the Juneteenth Creative Expression Contest winners! Quadiar Dunn, age 11, recited his poem Brave Dragon. Alyssa Fowler, age 15, recited her poem 2:45. Aviya Boyce, age 16, provided lyrics, vocals and piano for her song Juneteenth Song. You can watch the video of these talented young artists at homeward.nyc/juneteenth-contest.

“…"I find it particularly rewarding that the talent and voices of young people would be used to support young adults in crisis and to give back to the elders in our community," said CEO Jeannette Ruffins, who went on to address the young artists, “Kudos to all the young people who submitted work. It takes courage to share your work with others, especially for review, and you are very brave.”

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Resident Stories: An Update from Naomi

In our last issue, we shared the story of Naomi, a Black Latina and the young mother of two boys.

During the pandemic, Naomi completed home health aide training, guided her four-year-old through virtual learning, applied for jobs nonstop, and worked shoveling snow for the sanitation department.

She’s committed to being a positive role model for her two sons. Her resiliency is remarkable—but it shouldn’t be this hard.

Naomi is in the process of obtaining a voucher for permanent housing that will allow her family to transition out of our Upper West Side family shelter. She and her two sons are doing well.

She works in housekeeping at a hotel, while another young mother resident babysits the boys. Naomi is enrolling her sons in 3-K and kindergarten. She looks forward to working as a home health aide once her sons are in school.

You can empower homeless youth, families and seniors to live life forward.

Give today at homeward.nyc/donate

You can even sign up for monthly giving!

Stay up to date on resident stories and how you are making a difference

Sign up at homeward.nyc/updates for email updates

Follow us @HomewardNYC for Twitter, Instagram and Facebook