2014 ANNUAL REPORT

empowering the homeless improving communities

ACE

ACE

The Association of Community Employment Programs for the Homeless

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EXECUTIVE MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

ACE has helped more than 2,500 homeless New Yorkers find full time employment over the past 23 years. We are very appreciative for your support in making these profound transformations happen. Year after year, we see lives rebuilt, families reunited and steps taken toward independence for the men and women we so proudly serve.

This year was remarkable in so many ways. In 2014, we saw our plaza program flourish beyond all expectations, expanding to 14 public plazas throughout New York City. ACE participants logged over 5,586 work experience hours in these plazas, gaining a unique vocational experience to prepare them for the workforce, and ultimately achieving a record program graduation rate of 77 percent.

Education got a boost at ACE in 2014. Thanks to funding from the eBay Foundation, we were able to expand our classroom capabilities and



introduce the ACE Solutions Lab. With new learning equipment and supplies, ACE participants are well positioned to improve their professional skills for today's workplace.

We also continued to expand our hard-skills training program, introducing a comprehensive 40-hour custodial maintenance certification program to compliment our existing OSHA, Food Protection and Horticultural Apprenticeship offerings, increasing participants' viability in today's job market.

Each year, we are inspired by the people who come through our program, motivated to overcome some of the toughest obstacles imaginable. We are grateful for your contributions toward helping these individuals achieve their goals and build a fuller, more rewarding life.

We thank you for your support, in 2014 and beyond.

Sincerely, Henry Bull Hen Founder

James Martin Executive Director

The Association of Community Employment Programs for the Homeless is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization

OUR MISSION

The Association of Community Employment Programs for the Homeless (**ACE**) provides vocational rehabilitation services for the homeless men and women of New York City, enabling them to find full-time employment and transition into self-sufficiency and economic independence.

Our Story

On a summer morning in 1992, ACE founder Henry Buhl walked out of his SoHo apartment and was approached by a homeless man asking for money. Reflecting on the adage, "Give a man a fish, he eats for a day; teach a man to fish, he eats for a lifetime," he offered the man \$20 for the task of sweeping the sidewalk in front of his building. From this simple exchange, the seeds for ACE were planted. Mr. Buhl rallied the shops in his neighborhood to follow suit. Twenty-three years later, ACE is providing maintenance services in four boroughs of New York City and has grown to accommodate all our participants' needs including education, job coaching, lifetime support and housing.

ACE

OUR PROGRAMS

Program Overview

Each year, more than 400 people participate in ACE programs. ACE provides employment preparation, education and hard skills training through our vocational rehabilitation program, *Project Comeback*, lifetime support services in our unique aftercare program, *Project Stay*, and rental assistance with our housing initiative, *Project Home*.

Project Comeback furnishes individuals with the extensive skills they need to successfully obtain full-time employment. In addition to gaining tangible supported work experience on the ACE maintenance crew, participants receive job readiness training (workplace etiquette; professionalism); adult education (literacy; math; computer training); vocational support services (job search assistance; mock interviews; professional clothing); as well as industry-specific trainings and certifications.

91 participants found full-time, permanent employment in 2014

ACE

Project Stay provides *Project Comeback* graduates with lifelong support services aimed at successfully retaining employment, exploring opportunities for career growth, and continuing to develop life skills, particularly financial literacy and money management. Staff frequently contacts graduates through phone calls, in-office meetings and workplace visits. *Project Stay* offers support groups, financial counseling, as well as workshops covering topics such as communication skills, time management, conflict mediation and work/life balance.

Project Home is ACE's housing program, launched in 2012. The program assists select ACE graduates during their transition from homelessness by providing a declining three-year rent subsidy to help meet the financial demands of independent living. In return, each participant must continue to strengthen his or her earning power by achieving education and/or hard-skills training goals. In 2014, the program expanded to include scatter-site housing. This model eases the transition to independence by providing participants with greater latitude in selecting where they would like to reside.

ebay[®] UPGRADE TRANSFORMS OUR CLASSROOM

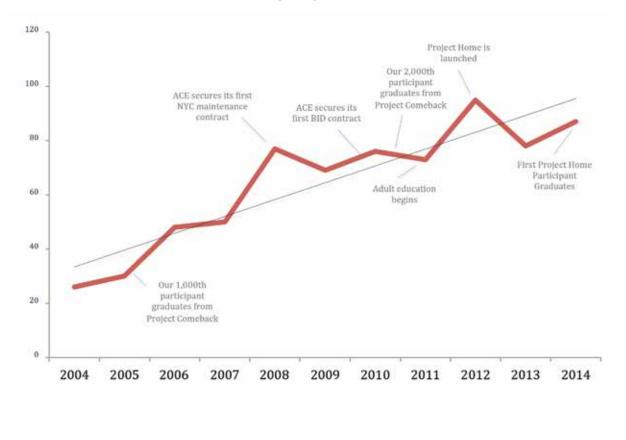
In 2014, the ACE education program was transformed by the creation of the ACE Solutions Lab, made possible with the help of a grant from the eBay Foundation. Now, thanks to the eBay New York GIVE Team, ACE's classroom space has been completely refurbished with the addition of new classroom furniture, new marker boards and a new wireless projector and projector screen. Thanks to our partners at eBay, ACE classrooms just got smarter!



Before

After

Number of Individuals Employed Each Year



4

MACEO'S STORY

In 2002, Maceo's mother passed away. The pain of his loss triggered old habits that took him down a dangerous path of escape through drugs. For five years he was completely immersed in his addiction. He lost his job and spiraled down until he hit rock bottom. "I dragged myself through the mud. I was homeless. It was horrible. I was on the borderline of killing myself or being killed." With a metro card and a few dollars to his name, Maceo decided he had run out of options and it was time get clean.

While in his substance abuse treatment program, Maceo heard someone mention "Project Comeback". The word "comeback" struck Maceo profoundly. Thinking about that moment, he said, "I just knew it was going to take me somewhere." Fortunately, Maceo found his way to ACE and was accepted in to our vocational rehabilitation program, Project Comeback.



ACE



For six months, Maceo clocked in at ACE and felt hissense of purpose and self worth grow. He had a difficult and humbling job of sweeping sidewalks and streets in SoHo, but he loved the freedom he felt from a day of hard work. "Project Comeback changed my life," he says. "I got a strong sense of hope from this program. ACE gave me a chance to live another life, and I took it."

The training at ACE helped Maceo develop interviewing and job search skills. After six months in the program, he found full-time employment as a line cook. He also has the distinction of being ACE's first Project Home candidate, receiving a three-year rent subsidy, in return for agreeing to further his education through formalized training opportunities relevant to his career choice. With continued support from ACE, Maceo found a better paying job at a food court. At the same time, Maceo took numerous trainings, including securing his Food Handlers Certification and learning to speak Spanish. With these educational achievements under his belt his employer promoted him to supervisor, then manager, then on to sous chef. Now Maceo is a General Manager, overseeing more than ten restaurants. His salary has increased nearly 200% from his original earnings.

Maceo became the first ACE Graduate to complete Project Home in March, 2015. Not only does he live on his own completely sober for over 5 years, he is currently leading an initiative to open four new restaurants for his employer.

Today, Maceo enjoys the fruits of his labor. A triumphant journey with reclaimed independence, a renewed relationship with his family and a blossoming career. He remains humble and focused on the future: "Money comes and goes. For me, it's about striving for that sense of accomplishment."



2014 GRADUATE ACHIEVEMENTS

36% of graduates received employer-sponsored benefits

63% of graduates received a raise within 6 months of being hired

62% of graduates were still employed 12 months after graduation

68% of graduates moved out of shelters and treatment centers into private housing within 6 months of finding employment "During my walks to and from local events and community happenings, I see the Association of Community Employment Programs for the Homeless (ACE) employees working diligently to keep the community clean. The cleaning of the streets clears the way for adults and children to safely traverse through the community. And it creates a beautiful and welcoming environment for residents and visitors. Knowing that this program also provides our fellow New Yorkers with full-time jobs is another great result of this program."

– NYC Council Member, Julissa Ferreras

NYC HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION APPROVAL HERALDS A NEW ERA FOR ACE

In November of 2014, ACE became an approved education and training provider for the New York City Human Resources Administration / Department of Social Services.

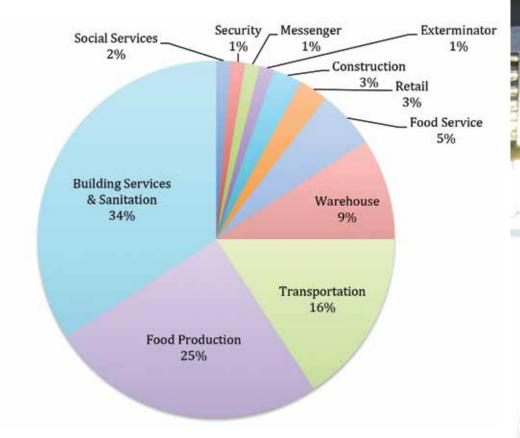
Prior to this important designation, many individuals living in homeless shelters and transitional housing sites could not participate at ACE, as those sites require residents to be engaged in New York City approved training programs.

Now, homeless New Yorkers will not have to choose between their housing sites and achieving self-sufficiency through ACE programs.

Since becoming a New York City approved training provider, referrals from homeless shelters have tripled. Now, ACE can serve even more men and women who are motivated to break the downward spiral of poverty and permanently overcome homelessness.



2014 Employment Placements by Sector



"Five days a week, ACE New York crew members sweep sidewalks, empty waste baskets, and care for the street's trees. They also pay special attention to Kensington Plaza, a small gathering place with benches and granite boulders that now boasts seasonal plantings. The work of ACE New York's reliable and responsive staff not only beautified Church Avenue, but also helped promote a strong sense of community in Kensington." – NYC Council Member, Brad Lander



SKILLS TRAINING EXPANDS

In order to boost earning power among participants, ACE expanded its hard skills training certification offerings in 2014 to include a 40-hour custodial maintenance training through WrightCo. Environmental Solutions, a respected industry leader. We are proud to say that 20 individuals completed this rigorous, hands-on course and earned a custodial maintenance certification. In addition, our program participants completed the following hard-skills trainings:



Fifteen participants completed the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene 15-hour Food Protection course, earning a Food Protection Certificate, required of all supervisors of food service establishments.

Eighty-four participants earned General Industry Certifications issued by the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). The 10-hour course gives an introduction to OSHA, electrical standards, general safety, health provisions, and fall protection, among other safety topics.

Forty-one participants earned a Horticultural Apprenticeship Certification through The Horticultural

Society of New York. The training includes valuable work experience opportunities in the public plazas of New York City through the Neighborhood Plaza Partnership (NPP).

Trainings are ongoing throughout the year and offer vital certifications and skill development that enhances participants' marketability to employers.

"For more than two decades, ACE New York has helped thousands of New Yorkers pursue a path towards economic independence by providing job training and experience." – NYC Council Member, Laurie A. Cumbo

ACE



THE PLAZA PROGRAM IS FLOURISHING

Boasting a 77% program completion rate among participants, ACE's unique plaza work experience program is flourishing. In conjunction with the Horticultural Society of New York and the Neighborhood Plaza Partnership, ACE services expanded to 14 public plazas and provided work experience opportunities for 85 participants.

The work of ACE participants is highly visible to community members, providing 5,586 hours of noticeable improvements to plazas located throughout New York City.

In this unique independent work experience, ACE participants are responsible for the setting up and breaking down of plaza furniture, gardening and providing sanitation services. The ACE plaza crews also serve as community ambassadors, providing assistance to neighborhood residents, giving directions to visitors and providing daily feedback to plaza managers.

"It's very helpful because I never really worked before. I practice how to work, practice how to do things right without anybody looking. It's really helpful because it gets people in the mood of wanting to actually work." – ACE Participant



OUR PARTNERS

On behalf of the nearly 400 homeless men and women we serve each year, we would like to express our gratitude to our generous community partners, who enrich our program by providing a multitude of supplemental services. Our 2014 partners were:



Membership & Affiliations Workforce1 Food Bank for New York City

ProLiteracy

NYC Employment and Training Coalition (NYCETC)

NYC Human Resources Administration / Training Assessment Group (TAG)

Department of Homeless Services (DHS)

New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS)

Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services (CASES)

Association of Vocational Rehabilitation in Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (AVRASA)

Education & Training

Metropolitan College of New York (MCNY)

New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene

New York Safety & Training The Horticultural Society of New York



St. Patrick's Old Cathedral WrightCo Environmental Solutions

Supplementary Services

Career Gear Dress for Success Bottomless Closet That Suits You Community Service Society (CSS) Project Renewal Next Step Project Renewal 3rd Street Clinic Popular Community Bank The Financial Clinic **Financial Planning Association** of New York (FPANY) Nazareth House / Free Tax **Preparation Clinic** Legal Action Center New York Public Library St. John's Bread & Life Strong Self

Additional Partners

Highbridge Community Development Corporation Rikers Island GreenHouse Program John Jay College

Most Frequent Referral Partners

ACACIA ACI Chemical Dependency Treatment Center Addicts Rehabilitation Center (ARC) ASCNYC Back on My Feet Black Veterans for Social Justice, Pamoja House Bowery Mission CAMBA Canarsie Aware Casa Esperanza CASES

Damon House Department of Corrections and Community Supervision Educational Alliance / Pride Site Food Bank for the City of New York Greenhope Services for Women Harlem Justice Center Harlem Park Hotel Help USA King County Hospital Center Lower East Side Service Center NAICA, Bronx Park **Transitional Facility** New York City Relief New York City Rescue Mission North Crown Heights **Outreach Center** NYTC, Inc. Outpatient Programs **Odyssey House** Palladia Phoenix House Promesa **Rikers Island GreenHouse** Program Samaritan Village Serendipity **Turning Point** VIP Community Services, Casa Banome Volunteers of America

Sanitation Services

Atlantic Avenue BID SoHo Broadway Initiative Meatpacking Improvement Association (MPIA)

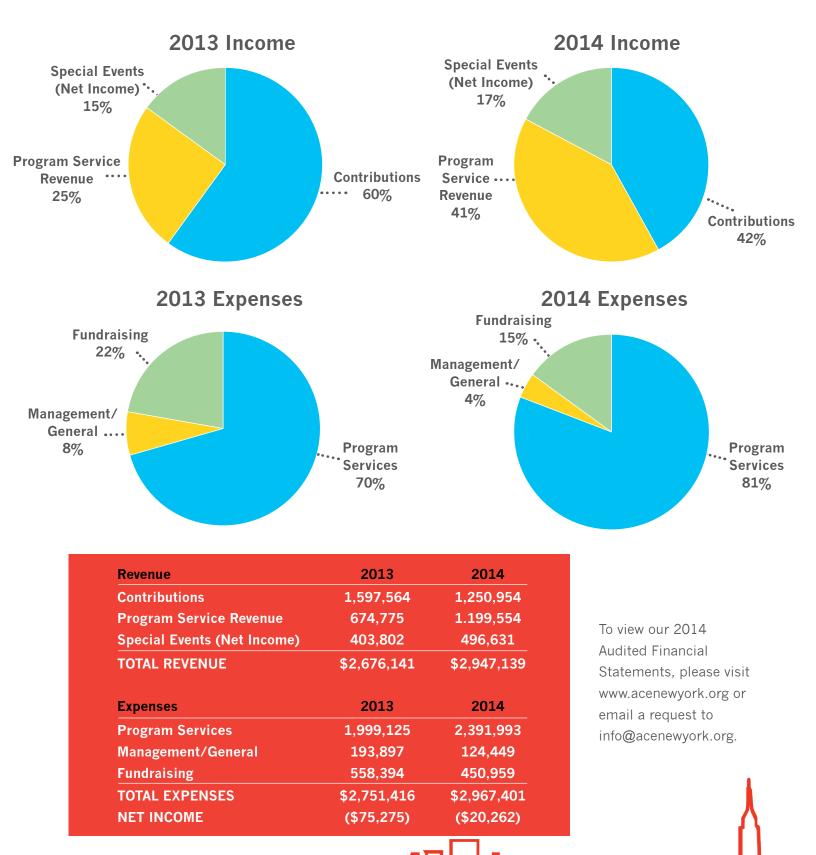
New Harlem East Merchant's Association (NHEMA)

Neighborhood Plaza Partnership (NPP)

Councilwoman Laurie Cumbo Councilwoman Julissa Ferreras Councilman Brad Lander

FINANCIALS

In 2014 ACE saw an increase in program services revenue of \$524,779 (16% of total income) as we continue to diversify our funding sources.



OUR TEAM

STAFF:

Henry Buhl, Founder James Martin. Executive Director Elizabeth McNierney, Director of Program Services Elizabeth Israel, Intake & Case Management Coordinator Emmanuel Fernandez, Job Developer Tawana Jackson, Project Stay Coordinator Diaratou Aney, Program Educator Davika Singh, Project Stay Aftercare Associate Steve Martin, Senior Crew Supervisor John Kaminski, Crew Supervisor Paul Manzi, Water Truck Operator Eugene Torres, Director of Finance & Human Resources Gwendolyn Matos, Database & Office Manager Leo Gil, Quality Control Officer Michele Schuster, Director of Development Jessica Cannold, Membership Manager Travis Tinney, Membership Manager

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Monsignor Donald Sakano, The Basilica of St. Patrick's Old Cathedral



SUPPORTERS

Thank you for your support. Our work would not be possible without the generous contributions of the individuals, foundations, and corporations listed below. This roster represents contributions to ACE between January 1, 2014 and December 31, 2014.

\$100,000 and up

Jay Herman Fund The Buhl Foundation The Charles Evans Foundation Neighborhood Plaza Partnership

\$50,000 - \$99,999

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Caleb C. & Julia W. Dula Educational & Charitable Foundation Irvin Stern Foundation Jason Pomeranc Lexington Partners, Inc. Sorgente Group Foundation for Art and Culture The Cygnet Foundation

\$15,000 - \$24,999

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\$10,000 - \$14,999

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PARTNERING WITH THE COMMUNITY

On a summer morning in 1992, ACE founder, Henry Buhl, walked out of his SoHo apartment and was approached by a homeless man asking him for money. Reflecting on the adage, "Give a man a fish, he eats for a day; teach a man to fish, he eats for a lifetime," he offered the man \$20 for the task of sweeping the sidewalk in front of his building. From this simple exchange, the seeds for ACE were planted. Mr. Buhl rallied the shops in his neighborhood to follow suit. Twenty-three years later, ACE is providing maintenance services in four boroughs of New York City.

Our program participants are at work 362 days each year, making sure our sidewalks, parks and public plazas are clean, tidy and beautiful. While we serve the whole city, we retain extra close-knit relationships with our home community; more than 100 boutiques, restaurants and hotels in our local neighborhood support ACE by purchasing our crew's maintenance services and advertising on our popular SoHo/Nolita Shopping Guide.





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