# **2015 ANNUAL REPORT**



empowering the homeless improving communities

The Association of Community Employment Programs for the Homeless

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Dear Friends,

Despite improvement in the unemployment rate in New York City, nearly half of all New Yorkers lived at or near the poverty level in 2015. This fact has contributed to the record number of homeless individuals living in shelters and on the streets of our city.

Never before have ACE services been more in demand. With support from the private and public sectors, ACE has been able to enhance and expand our services to meet the needs of New



James Martin with Maceo, who completed ACE's Housing Program in 2015.

York's less fortunate. So many of the men and women we serve all say the same thing at intake: all they want is an opportunity to work. In 2015, ACE continued to provide just that.

With the financial support of the New York City Council, ACE has developed a supported employment program that allows us to offer full-time employment to program participants with limited work histories and extreme barriers to employment. This initiative has created a motivated and vibrant workforce tasked with beautifying city streets and public spaces in Brooklyn, Oueens and Manhattan.

In 2015, ACE connected with new referral partners located throughout New York City and doubled our outreach to existing partners, ensuring that every New Yorker has the opportunity to reclaim their lives by accessing ACE's services.

Our focus remained on our employment training and placement results in 2015, never more critical than in this time of crisis. Of all those who received training and placement services in 2015, 132 have secured full-time employment, with an amazing 60% one-year employment retention rate, proving that when afforded the opportunity to work, ACE participants take full advantage.

In our 23rd year, ACE continued to adapt to the needs of New York City and the population we serve. We thank everyone who stood with us during this difficult time in our city's history, ensuring that the notion of "opportunity" remains alive and well for all New Yorkers, even during the toughest of times.

Sincerely,
Henry Bull

Henry Buhl ACF Founder James Martin
Executive Director



# **OUR MISSION**

The Association of Community Employment Programs for the Homeless (ACE) works with homeless men and women throughout New York City, providing job training, work experience and a lifetime support network to help our program participants achieve their goals and establish economic independence.

#### **Our Story**

On a summer morning in 1992, Henry Buhl was leaving his loft on Greene Street in SoHo when a homeless man asked him for \$20. Figuring, "if you give a man a fish, he eats for a day; teach a man to fish, he eats for a lifetime," Henry offered the man \$20 in exchange for sweeping the sidewalk in front of his building and then rallied the stores in his neighborhood to follow suit.

Within months, word had spread about the new initiative. Homeless men and women were eager to join the sweeping crew and start rebuilding their lives. Henry began to accept referrals from homeless shelters and soon founded the SoHo Partnership, followed by the establishment of other neighborhood-based initiatives in the years to follow.

ACE was created in 2010 as an umbrella organization to unify these local initiatives.

Today, ACE has grown to serve more than 500 people annually, offering vocational rehabilitation, workforce development services, adult education, job readiness, life skills training and industry specific certifications in our vocational program, Project Comeback; lifetime employment retention and support services in our aftercare program, Project Stay; and access to affordable housing through one of our most recent initiatives, Project Home.

Since 1992, we have helped over 2,500 homeless New Yorkers find full-time jobs, reconnect with their families and start new lives.

## **OUR PROGRAMS**

#### **Program Overview**

In 2015, ACE provided vocational rehabilitation and workforce development services to over 500 New Yorkers in need. We take a three-part approach to achieving our mission of helping participants to obtain and maintain employment and transition to economic self-sufficiency:

Project Comeback empowers homeless individuals with the skills they need to successfully obtain full-time employment and achieve economic independence. Program participants gain supported work experience on the ACE maintenance crew, providing street sanitation and horticultural services throughout New York City. They also receive job readiness training (interview etiquette, workplace conduct), adult education (literacy, math, computer proficiency), industry specific certifications (Occupational Safety and Health Administration [OSHA], Food Protection, Custodial Maintenance), and vocational support services (job search assistance, mock interviews, access to professional clothing). Participants attend the program five days per week for an average of four to six months, graduating once they secure full-time employment.

Project Stay is our aftercare/retention program, which provides Project Comeback graduates with lifelong support and enrichment services aimed at helping them to retain employment, explore opportunities for career growth and continue to develop their skills, particularly those pertaining to financial literacy and money management. Project Stay offers regular support groups, one-on-one counseling, industry specific certifications and a variety of workshops geared toward professional advancement.

Project Home assists select Project Comeback graduates by providing them with a declining three-year, or flat one-year, rent subsidy to help meet the financial demands of living in their own homes. In return, participants must pursue education and/or industry specific certifications to increase their earning power and develop their career prospects.



## **2015 BY THE NUMBERS**

ACE provides services to New York City's hardest-to-employ men and women. Seventy percent are chronically homeless, and over 95% report at least two consecutive years of unemployment or under-employment.

Much of ACE's success in serving this population can be attributed to the unique structure of its programs: soft and hard skills taught in the classroom are practiced in the field during our work experience component, and the lessons learned in the field are reinforced with real-time individualized counseling. This unique structure, refined and enhanced over 23 years, positions ACE to best serve New Yorkers who are homeless and chronically poor.

# Project Comeback

In 2015, out of 215 participants served, 132 have secured full time employment with an average salary of \$10.11 an hour

2015 Overall



15,737

total number of classroom hours logged



20

secured food protection certification



19

secured janitorial certification

Project Stay



103

secured OSHA10 general industry certification



11

secured OSHA 10 construction safety certification



11

secured OSHA 30 general industry certification



1

secured OSHA 30 construction certification



secured OSHA



3
secured food protection

cerrtification



1

secured boiler maintenance certification





\_

secured culinary certification



forklift certification

15 secured OSHA 10



60%

one-year employment retention rate



of graduates found independent housing



secured CPR certification

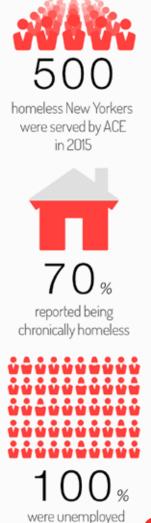
6

graduates were provided with a housing subsidy

# Project Home

general industry certification

Since its launch, Project Home participants have seen an average wage growth of 60% while receiving the housing subsidy.



before enrolling

# LANCE'S STORY: FROM SHELTER TO SUPERVISOR

Lance moved to New York City with his mother and father when he was seven. He had a middle-class upbringing and was never worried about financial insecurity. "My dad made good money as an accountant. I never imagined growing up that I could be homeless."

Lance graduated high school and immediately wanted to start working. He got a job as a bike messenger for a firm on the 86th floor of World Trade Center One. On the morning of September



Lance with Executive Director James Martin at graduation.

11th, 2001, Lance locked up his bike and entered a deli across the street from the World Trade Center. As he put in his usual breakfast order, he was jarred by a series of explosions.

# "Oh my God, a plane hit the World Trade Center."

"I looked out the window and thought, oh my God, a plane hit the World Trade Center. After a while, the deli filled with soot and debris and everyone started to panic. I panicked. I ran out of the deli and headed for the One train. When I got to the station the police were pushing people into the train. Everyone was yelling and crying. It took an hour to get to 34th Street, and that's when they made the announcement that Tower Two had collapsed. I was in a daze. Later that night, when I finally made it home to the Bronx, my parents and my grandparents broke down. They had thought I was gone."



Lance and his father share a hug at graduation.

# "Finding myself homeless was like standing on the track and seeing a freight train coming at me."

Like many thousands of New Yorkers whose companies were devastated, Lance lost his job. He shifted gears and started taking classes at Devry University. For a decade, Lance maintained a series of steady jobs, but in 2013 his life took a tragic turn.

Lance had a good position working at the Department of Commerce, but budget cuts were implemented and he was laid off. At the time, he was living with his mother and



father in a run-down building in the Bronx. His family was forced to vacate the apartment when they refused to pay rent after a bathtub fell through their ceiling. Lance had no income, no home and his family had nowhere to go.

Suddenly, Lance and his parents were homeless. They entered the New York City shelter system, and it was there that things went from bad to



Lance's father is emotional as his son shares about his journey.

worse. After a short time in the shelter, Lance's mother unexpectedly passed away due to a heart attack. Lance was distraught and fell into a depression. Looking back on that time he says, "I took things for granted. Finding myself homeless was like standing on the track and seeing a freight train coming at me."

A counselor at the homeless shelter referred Lance to ACE's vocational program, Project Comeback. At ACE, Lance gained work experience on ACE's sanitation crew and the support he

needed to build his resume and his confidence. After six months with ACE, Lance earned a fulltime position as the crew supervisor for a local sanitation company.

# "Thank you for believing in me."

At the ACE graduation ceremony, Lance touched the audience when he pointed to his father and said, "I just want to make you proud." With tears in their eyes, they embraced.

In Lance's words, "Being helped by someone who doesn't know you, who is willing to give you a chance, that feels great. Because of those



Lance is now the Crew Supervisor of a local sanitation crew.

supporters, I am actually now in a position to give to others who want an opportunity. It is incredible."

Lance continues to flourish in his supervisory role. He rents an apartment in Staten Island and is enjoying his new life. He asked us to pass on this message, "Thank you for believing in me."

"I am pleased to be a supporter of the Association of Community Employment Programs for the Homeless or ACE. Because of the ACE program, the commercial corridors in my district are being taken care of by men and women who are transitioning from challenging circumstances to constructive and positive lives.

# SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM FLOURISHES

ACE participants face major barriers to employment, including diagnosed and undiagnosed mental illness, chronic addiction issues, and extensive criminal histories. Overcoming these obstacles takes hard work, dedication and most of all, an opportunity for employment.

Traditionally, supported employment programs have provided vocational services to those with disabilities, including intellectual disabilities, mental health issues, and traumatic brain injuries, among others. In 2015, ACE put a new spin on the supported employment model, adapting it to the needs of our program participants.

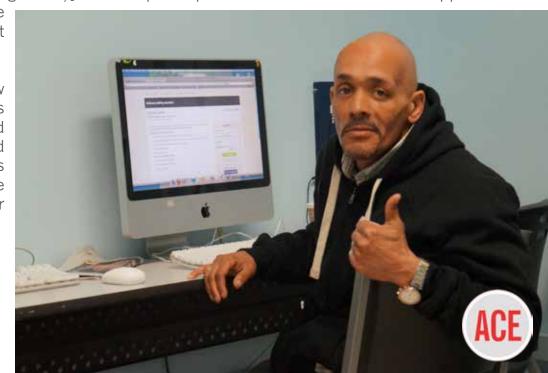


With the financial support of eleven New York City Council Members, via the 'Cleanup NYC' initiative, ACE has developed a supported employment program that offers full-time employment opportunities to the participants with the most extreme barriers to employment.

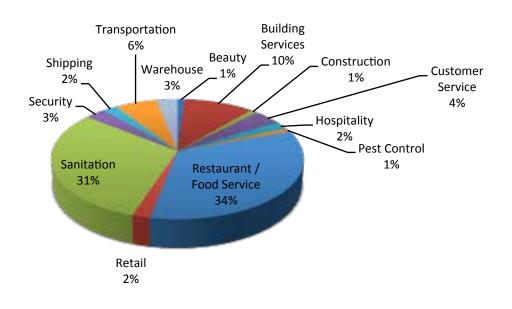
These men and women are hired full-time here at ACE and assigned to our *Contract Services Team*, tasked with providing sanitation and beautification services in City Council Districts located throughout New York City. Team members receive all of the employment retention services that ACE has to offer. They meet on a regular basis with ACE staff, receiving career guidance, financial advice, peer support and, most importantly, industry specific certifications. The results of this new initiative have been outstanding as 78% of those participants who have entered ACE's supported

employment program have remained employed for at least 12 months.

With the support of the New York City Council, ACE has created a motivated and vibrant workforce, dedicated to beautifying city streets while building a stable future for themselves and their families.



# 2015 EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT BY SECTOR



"I have been so pleased with ACE's work. Residents and business owners deserve clean and safe streets and ACE's efforts have helped accomplish this in an area that has historically been difficult to keep clean. I appreciate their great work and their regular updates and checkins, and have recommended their services to other Council Members and BIDs."

- New York City Council Member Antonio Reynoso, District 34





# PARTNERSHIPS GROW WITH CONSORTIUM FOR WORKER EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICE SOCIETY

#### **Consortium for Worker Education**

The Consortium for Worker Education, established in 1985, is a private non-profit that provides workforce development programs with technical assistance and program funding. In 2015, ACE was accepted as a community partner in their 'Jobs to Build On' portfolio.

This incredible honor means that ACE will join other leading workforce development providers in the network, sharing best practices within the industry. We will also receive vital funding to help subsidize the annual cost of Project Comeback.

We are proud to partner with this prestigious workforce development leader and we look forward to working together to change the lives of hundreds of less fortunate New Yorkers.

#### **Community Service Society**

In 2015, for the third consecutive year, ACE was awarded a grant by the Community Service Society as part of the 'New York's Neediest' Campaign. This grant provides ACE graduates with funding for vocational and educational training opportunities. Select ACE graduates who benefit from the grant are featured in The New York Times.

In 2015, four ACE graduates were profiled in this historic New York publication. ACE is incredibly thankful for the support of the Community Service Society and proud to see the stories of our program graduates inspiring others throughout New York City.





## PROJECT HOME SUCCEEDS AND EXPANDS

Project Home assists select ACE graduates by providing a three-year rent subsidy to help them meet the financial demands of living in their own apartments. In return, participants must pursue educational opportunities or industry specific certifications in order to increase their earning power and develop their career prospects.

Project Home has seen incredible success since its launch in 2012. Each participant has seen significant increases in their earning power, with an average wage growth of 60% while receiving the subsidy.

In 2015, Maceo, Project Home's first participant, completed the housing program. Maceo entered Project Home in 2012, working as a line cook, earning \$12 an hour. Today, Maceo is the general manager of a food court at a well known transportation hub, having seen a total wage growth of nearly 200% over three years.

Late in 2015, ACE introduced Project Home - One Year. This initiative offers a housing subsidy of \$150 per month to those in ACE's supported employment program. In return, those receiving the subsidy must commit to career advancement by pursuing educational goals and industry specific certifications.

We are proud of the men and women who have transformed their lives in Project Home, and we look forward to new achievements for those enrolled in Project Home - One Year.

"For years, ACE has served as a lifeline for small businesses who rely on their services to maintain the cleanliness of our city's streets. I applaud the leadership of ACE and its entire team for their unwavering dedication and exemplary work towards the beautification of the 35th Council District. "

- New York City Council Member Laurie Cumbo, District 35



## **OUR PARTNERS**

On behalf of 500 New Yorkers served at ACE this year, we would like to thank all of our incredible community partners. You make it possible for so many men and women to achieve their potential and rejoin the workforce.



#### **Membership & Affiliations**

**AVRASA** 

Consortium for Worker Education (CWE) / Jobs to Build On

Food Bank for New York City

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

New York City Department of Homeless Services (DHS)

New York City Employment and Training Coalition (NYCETC)

New York City Human Resources

Administration

ProLiteracy

Workforce1

#### **Education & Training**

Metropolitan College of New York (MCNY)

New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene

New York Safety & Training WrightCo Environmental Solutions

#### **Supplementary Services**

Apple Bottomle

**Bottomless Closet** 

Career Gear

Community Service Society (CSS)

Dress for Success

Legal Action Center

Nazareth House / Free Tax

Preparation Clinic

New York Public Library

Popular Community Bank

Project Renewal Next Step

Project Renewal 3rd Street Clinic

St. John's Bread & Life

Strong Self

That Suits You

The Financial Clinic

Valley National Bank

#### **Additional Partners**

Highbridge Community
Development Corporation

John Jay College

Rikers Island GreenHouse Program

Uniform

Basilica of St. Patrick's Old Cathedral

#### **Most Frequent Referral Partners**

ACACIA

ACI Chemical Dependency

Addicts Rehabilitation

Center (ARC)

**ASCNYC** 

Back on My Feet

Black Veterans for Social Justice

**Bowery Mission** 

CAMBA

Canarsie Aware

Casa Esperanza

Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services (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

Kings 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

Peter Young Housing

Phoenix House

Promesa

Rikers Island GreenHouse Program

Samaritan Village

Serendipity

**Turning Point** 

VIP Community Services, Casa

Banome

Volunteers of America Jamaica

**Employment Center** 

#### **Sanitation Services**

Meatpacking Improvement Association (MPIA)

Neighborhood Plaza Partnership

(NPP)

SoHo Broadway Initiative

Councilwoman Chin

Councilman Constantinides

Councilwoman Cumbo

Councilman Dromm

Councilwoman Ferreras

Councilman Greenfield

Councilwoman Koslowitz

Councilman Lander

Councilman Levine

Councilman Menchaca

Councilman Reynoso



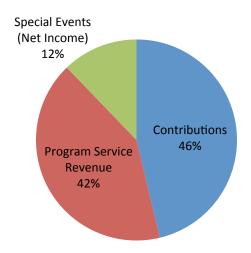
# **FINANCIALS**

#### 2014 Revenue

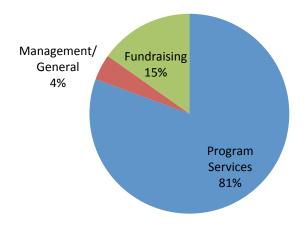
# Special Events (Net Income) 17% Contributions 42% Revenue 41%

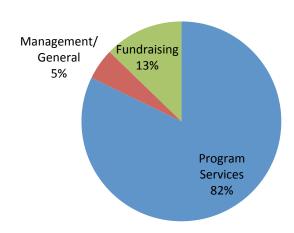
2014 Expenses





2015 Expenses





Revenue	2014	2015
Contributions	\$1,250,954	\$1,639,062
Program Service Revenue	1,199,554	1,470,919
Special Events (Net)	496,631	432,054
TOTAL REVENUE	\$2,947,139	\$3,542,035
Expenses	2014	2015
Program Services	\$2,391,993	\$2,724,891
Management/General	124,449	186,946
Fundraising	450,959	423,230
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,967,401	\$3,335,067
NET INCOME	(-\$20,262)	\$206,968

To view our 2015 audited financial statement please visit www.acenewyork.org or send a request to info@acenewyork.org.

## **OUR TEAM**

#### Staff:

Henry Buhl, Founder
James Martin, Executive Director
Elizabeth McNierney, Director of Program
Services

**Eugene Torres**, Director of Finance & Human Resources

**Sandra Sanches**, Director of Public Relations and Major Gifts

**Travis Tinney**, Director of Development **Jessica Cannold**, Development Manager **Rachel Cohen**, Admissions and Vocational Coordinator

Emmanuel Fernandez, Job Developer
Tawana Jackson, Project Stay Coordinator
Davika Singh, Project Stay Associate
Djaratou Aney, Education Coordinator
Jacqulyn Kroez, Education Associate
Steve Martin, Senior Crew Supervisor
John Kaminski, Crew Supervisor
Paul Manzi, Water Truck Operator
Leo Gil, Quality Control Officer
Gwendolyn Matos, Database & Office Manager

## **SUPPORTERS**

Thank you so much for your support. Our work would not be possible without the generous support of the individuals, businesses, and foundations listed below. These gifts were made between 1/1/2015 and 12/31/2015.

#### \$100,000 and up

The Association of Charles Evans Housing Foundation

The Buhl Foundation

#### \$50,000 - \$99,999

Paulson Family Foundation

The Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Foundation. Inc.

#### \$25,000 - \$49,999

Bloomberg Philanthropies
Carlos G. Morrison
Irvin Stern Foundation
Red Apple Group
Robert Gruendel
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#### \$15,000 - \$24,999

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Denise Rich
Douglas Elliman
Fiduciary Trust International
General Property Management
The Cygnet Foundation
The J.M. Kaplan Fund
The Leyli Foundation

#### \$10.000 - \$14.999

291 Foundation

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10 Bleecker Street Owners Corp. 109 Prince St. Condo Association

114 Green LLC

119 Greene Street

131 Prince Street Cooperative,

151 Spring Realty LLC

156 Franklin Co-Operative, Corp.

176 Duane Street, LLC 180 Duane Street, LLC 19-21 Leonard Street Condo

2 Prince Condominium 200 Varick Street Associates,

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376 West Broadway Enterprises 382 West Broadway

39 Vestry Street Condominium

436 Realty, LLC

465 West Broadway Cooperative, Inc.

48 Walker Street 560 Associates, LLC 568 Broadway Property, LLC.

57 Reade Street Condominium

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Sourab Choudhury Spring Street Natural

Restaurant

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Tanja Dreiding Wallace

Taschen

Ted Baker London The Barnert Temple

Congregation B'Nai Jeshurun

The Dutch

The Eddie and Jo Allison Smith Family Foundation The Emily Hall Tremaine

Foundation

The Fanwood Foundation The George A. Long Foundation

The Hubert Street Condominium

The Joshua Mailman Foundation

The Mercer Hotel The Rock Foundation The Samuel J. & Ethel Lefrak

Charitable Trust The Stephen P. Hanson Family

Foundation, Inc. The Sugar Loaf Condominium

The Webster Thompson Chemists &

Cosmetics Tory Brewer

Tribeca Court Condominium Tribeca North Condominium

Trump Soho

USM U. Schaerer Sons. Inc. Weeden Foundation

William Crudup William G. Gahagan

Wolverine

Wooster Realty, Ltd.

"I will always be grateful to ACE because they gave me a stepping stone to my new life. They put the opportunity in front of me – all I had to do was grab it. They helped me find hope and a new perspective on life. I feel blessed to have such positive and loving people in my life – ACE is like my family."

- Lillian, ACE graduate



We thank each individual donor, business owner, charitable foundation, elected official and program partner that works with ACE to makes these life-changing services possible.

Together, we are putting New Yorkers back to work.



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