

FALL 2024

HEIGHTS AND HILLS • at home •



LETTER FROM MARVA MARINER, DSW, CASE MANAGEMENT SUPERVISOR

True to its mission, Heights and Hills is committed to delivering compassionate, client-centered care that meets the unique needs of every individual. The agency's success is built on teamwork, continuous education, and effective communication. These core elements ensure that case managers have the support they need to deliver outstanding service, creating a culture where employees and clients thrive.



At H&H, teamwork is not just encouraged; it is the foundation of our operations. Program Directors, Supervisors, and peers collaborate seamlessly, fostering a sense of belonging and shared purpose. This inclusive environment ensures that every client receives the best care possible.

When I joined the agency five years ago, I immediately experienced the value of this team-based approach. Supervisors collaborated with me, offering guidance and reminding me that I was never alone when facing the challenges of the job. As a then-Case Manager, this sense of belonging allowed me to address complex cases confidently. However, while teamwork lays the foundation, continuous education ensures that we continuously improve our quality of care.

Heights and Hills is deeply committed to continuous education, empowering us to seek opportunities that enhance our skills and knowledge. The agency's unwavering support in this endeavor allows us to stay at the forefront of best practices. I have attended domestic and international conferences that significantly expanded my perspective on the populations we serve.

Additionally, the agency regularly informs us about workshops on crucial issues such as Mental Health, Alzheimer's, state benefits, and Health Care Proxy, keeping us updated with the latest developments in our field. For example, a recent presentation on 'How to Qualify for Medicaid using Pooled Trust' provided insights we can directly incorporate into our daily work with clients. This culture of learning not only broadens our expertise but also enhances the effectiveness of our case management strategies, ensuring that clients receive the most informed and up-to-date care available.

Notwithstanding, communication is a core value, not just a practice. Our leadership team actively encourages diverse perspectives and open feedback, creating a culture where ideas and concerns are welcomed and sought out. This approach is modeled at every level of the organization, something which ensure staff feel comfortable sharing our thoughts and experiences without fear of judgment.

Heights and Hills understands that Case Managers must also receive empathy, validation, and support to provide excellent client care. By nurturing us through teamwork, education, and open communication, the agency creates a supportive, thriving environment that empowers employees and delivers exceptional client care, fulfilling its mission. I am proud to contribute to its mission and values.

Marva Mariner, DSW, Case Management Supervisor



THE VOLUNTEER TEAM HAS GROWN!

The Friendly Visiting team welcomes Matthew, Friendly Visiting Program Assistant, who has been helping to service our expanded catchment area. After inheriting over 40 new friendly visiting matches, both Abbie and Matt have been working to make new connections through community outreach while continuing to make wonderful matches and friendships. The volunteer team looks forward to hosting their first annual Friendly Visiting appreciation event where volunteers can bring their match so that they may enjoy their time together and trade stories with their peers.

HEIGHTS AND HILLS 2024 VIRTUAL 5K WALK/RUN

We did it! Thank you so much to our donors and fundraisers for supporting and participating in this year's Virtual 5K Fun Run/Walk. Your donations allow us to support older adults and their caregivers with service enhancements such as our shopping and tech squads.

WE WOULD LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THOSE WHO WALKED OR RAN IN SUPPORT OF OUR WORK:

Betsy Smulyan
Carrie Bloss
Isabelle Emmons
MaryBeth Zeman

MoveRunPlay
Running Group
RK Law, P.C

Sean Thomas
Shannese Sutton
Triva John



AT THE PARK SLOPE CENTER FOR SUCCESSFUL AGING

PSCSA's weekly poetry group with Volunteer Program Assistant Bette comes together to analyze and discuss poems and their meanings. It often facilitates deeper conversations about art, literature, and life and allows members to share meaningful experiences. These groups are vital for the mental well-being of our members.



OUTREACH INITIATIVE

Thanks to generous support from the NY Foundation for Eldercare and the Fan Fox and Leslie R Samuels Foundation, our Caregiver Program has been conducting targeted outreach to those communities we have identified as being underserved. Last year, we hired Charlene Tony, MSW, who works to explain our Caregiver Program through presentations and by tabling at community events. She helps caregivers connect to our program and offers a menu of light touch services that she can provide directly in the underserved communities.

CLIENT STORIES

Ms. J is a 61-year-old woman living in Crown Heights Brooklyn who is raising her granddaughter. When Ms. J came to H&H, she was at risk of losing her SSI benefits as she had missed recertifying for the benefit because she had been dealing with health issues and had recently been hospitalized multiple times. Her Case Manager assisted her with recertifying her benefits ensuring she continued to receive an income. Soon after, the CM learned that Ms. J had also been dealing with the threat of eviction due to rent arrears. When she went to court, the Judge advised the client to apply for a One-Shot Deal (OSD) to address the arrears and prevent eviction. Over the course of several months, her CM collaborated with CAMBA Legal Services to assist the client with the OSD application. The CM recently learned that the OSD application had been approved in the amount of \$8,903.00. **When Ms. J heard this news, she stated, "Praise Jesus, this is the best birthday present I could have asked for. Everything is falling into place."**

A H&H Case Manager helped their client **Ms. C** to apply for a stipend from the St. Georges Society. Ms. C is an 80-year-old woman born in Trinidad. She worked as a dedicated home care attendant for several years until retirement. She resides alone with no family to assist her. She struggles with multiple chronic physical conditions. Ms. C shared with her CM that she was living check to check and had become increasingly worried about her financial situation. Her landlord had been threatening to raise the rent and evict her. Ms. C's CM helped her apply for Medicaid Long Term Care which would allow her to get more home care. The CM also helped her apply for other housing and for a lifetime grant from the St. Georges Society. That subsidy provides financial assistance to older adults of British or Commonwealth heritage in the New York area. Ms. C was awarded \$400 monthly that will go to rent payments freeing up monies in her monthly budget. **The interventions of this CM have significantly eased this client's worries and have enabled her to age successfully in place.**



HEIGHTS AND HILLS

supporting brooklyn's older adults

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A HEIGHTS AND HILLS STAR

The CityMeals STAR awards are given out annually to highlight the work of Case Managers, Home Delivered Meals staff, and volunteers in their service to homebound older adults. This year Case Managers Sarah Marshall and Junior Castor received the award. Sarah, who has been with H&H for 3 years, and Junior, who has been with H&H for over 1 year, have gone above and beyond in meeting the needs of their clients.

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