

### Vision Statement

Our vision is for Cypress Hills to be a home for neighbors of all backgrounds working together for an affordable, clean, safe and vibrant neighborhood. Cypress Hills can be a community where children are nurtured and receive an education that stimulates creativity, develops self-esteem and leads to success in college and the workforce. Our community can have affordable, sustainable housing and a thriving commercial strip. We are committed to a Cypress Hills where people find and keep living wage jobs, buy and maintain their homes and invest in building local businesses. All of our neighbors can feel pride in Cypress Hills and join together to build powerful grassroots institutions and movements to achieve this vision.

### Mission Statement

With community residents leading the way, the mission of CHLDC is to build a strong, sustainable Cypress Hills and East New York, where youth and adults achieve educational and economic success, secure affordable housing and develop leadership skills to transform their lives and community.

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**Emily Van Ingen**, Director of Programs

**Noelle Van Der Tuin**, Assistant Division Director of Youth and Family Services

In FY'15, CHLDC was supported by over 100 private and public funding sources. The following funders provided support.

*Alliance for Educational Justice, Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development, Astoria Bank, Bank of America, BNY Mellon, Brooklyn Arts Council, BTMU Foundation, Capital One, Center for New York City Neighborhoods, Change Capital Fund, Citi Foundation, City University of New York, Clark Foundation, Coalition for Educational Justice, College Access: Research and Action, Complete Management Solutions, Deutsche Bank Americas Foundation, Dormitory Authority of the State of New York, ExpanDED Schools, Bernard F. and Alva B. Gimbel Foundation, Grow NYC, Stella and Charles Guttman Foundation, Charles Hayden Foundation, Hearst Foundation, Heckscher Foundation for Children, HSBC, Mary J. Hutchins Foundation, JobsFirst NYC, Levitt Foundation, Local Initiatives Support Corporation, M&T Foundation, Carl Marks Foundation, National Council de la Raza, New York City Department of Youth and Community Development, New York City Department of Education, New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development, New York Community Trust, New York District Council of Carpenters, New York Foundation, New York Mortgage Coalition, New York State Affordable Housing Corporation, New York State Attorney General, New York State Education Department, New York State Department of State, New York State Higher Education Services Corporation, New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, New York State Office of Children and Family Services, Pinkerton Foundation, Ridgewood Savings Bank, Robin Hood Foundation, Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment, Santander Bank, SeedCo, Seth Sprague Educational and Charitable Foundation, TD Charitable Foundation, Tiger Foundation, TJX Foundation, United Way, Urban Youth Collaborative, US Department of Agriculture, and US Department of Education.*

We also received generous support from our Board of Directors and individual donors.

This year, our programming reached over 10,000 community members.

Programs	Residents Served
<b>Youth and Family Services</b>	
Afterschool Programming and Summer Camp	1,300
Middle School Student Success Center	636
Beacon Community Center	1,340
Beacon Family Place	272
<b>Career and Education Programs</b>	
Employment Solutions	837
English for Speakers of Other Languages	260
<b>College Success Programs</b>	1,677
<b>Community Development</b>	
Cypress Hills Verde	1,500
Affordable Housing	554
<b>Housing Counseling</b>	
Foreclosure Prevention	308
Homeownership	383
Financial Literacy	217
<b>Community Organizing</b>	
Tenant Organizing and Counseling	287
Rezone Organizing	100
Youth Organizing	20
Health Insurance Assistance	358

**BUILDING COMMUNITY**

**GROWING LEADERS**



**CONTACT US OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE:**  
**625 Jamaica Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11208**  
[www.cypresshills.org](http://www.cypresshills.org)



Dear Friends,

We've had an eventful and successful year in Cypress Hills with many accomplishments, which I am pleased to share with you in this report.

Our programming continues to change the lives of 10,000 community members a year, and keeps growing! Our College Success Programs now support over 1,600 students a year in their quest for a college degree, through a peer counseling model. Our CHAMPION Network, which offers a new model of workforce development through partnership with local employers and investment in program participants, has also expanded. We are proud of these innovative ways that we're helping residents to earn college degrees and build their careers.

This year, we will continue to prepare the neighborhood for coming change as a rezoning initiative draws closer, advocating for expanded affordable housing for residents and policies to prevent displacement of our neighbors and small businesses. We are adamant that current community members must be able to remain in Cypress Hills and experience the results of their dedicated efforts to make their community the best that it can be. We have made tremendous headway in recent months and our momentum continues to build.

We are looking forward to another exciting and rewarding year. Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,  
Michelle Neugebauer  
Executive Director

We provide services to more than 10,000 Cypress Hills/East New York residents annually. Our programs strengthen the area's physical and economic infrastructure, provide quality educational and social services, and foster local leaders.

**Economic Opportunity** - This year we helped 123 people ages 17-24 gain employment, placing them on the path for professional success. We are committed not just to helping young people get jobs, but to sustaining their employment, and are proud that 82% of our participants have retained their employment for at least three months, compared to the typical 73% rate for similar programs (The Benchmarking Project, 2013 report). Our partnerships with employers enhance our efforts, deepening community ties and giving local businesses a stake in developing the local workforce.

**Affordable Housing** - We completed Cypress Village, which added 29 rental units of sustainable, affordable housing to our community. Over 100 low-income community members now have an affordable, green, attractive place to call home. We also helped 23 families purchase their first home. One of them was Aaisha Kahn. "The process with CHLDC was perfect - super-helpful," Aaisha says. "It is a very satisfying feeling to have a house. It's huge. It's gorgeous. I love the block I live on. I love my home."

**Youth Development** - We help young people from middle school through college to make choices which set them on the path to success. At our Middle School Student Success Center, students at IS 171 help their peers apply to public high schools. Before our MSSSC existed, just 21% of IS 171 students entered high schools with graduation rates of 75% or higher. Last year, that number jumped to 48%. This includes competitive high schools like Bard Early College High School, Brooklyn Tech and the Brooklyn Latin School. Our college access staff and Youth Leaders helped 304 students get into college, and we now serve over 500 students through College Persistence, where college students work as peer counselors supporting other graduates of our College Access programming to stay enrolled in college and succeed, persisting to graduation.

**Community Development** - Our Cypress Hills Verde initiative, which aims to make our neighborhood greener, healthier, and more sustainable, has expanded. We opened the Pitkin-Verde Farmers' Market, and added two new community gardens. Pitkin Verde, along with our Youth Market, and community gardens expand neighborhood access to affordable, healthy food.

Shoppers at Pitkin Verde can buy fresh produce from local farmers at affordable prices.

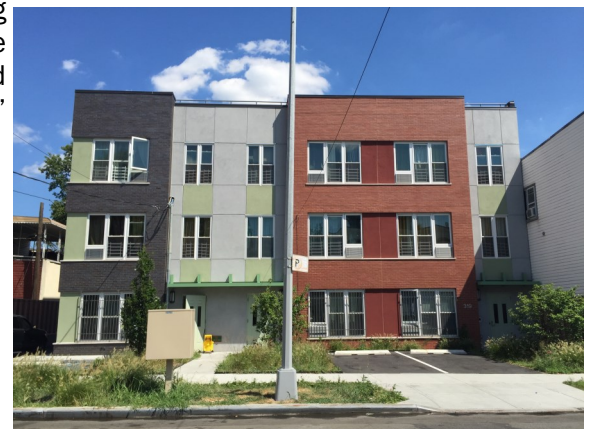


A young Cypress Hills resident rallies for her community in Highland Park.  
Photo credit: Maria Belford

**Leadership**—We help local residents to develop as leaders, invested in the future of their community and working together for positive change. This year, members of Future of Tomorrow, our student organizing group at the Lane High School campus, spoke in front of the City Council about the consequences of harsh disciplinary codes for students, raising awareness around restorative practices in schools. After their day of testimony, the City Council increased their budget for restorative justice programs in schools to \$2.4 million. FOT also hosted workshops with school safety agents and teachers to open a dialogue about how to improve their schools. Partnering with school safety agents is a groundbreaking step in establishing restorative practices and a culture of positive discipline at the Lane campus.

**The Rezone:**

We have mobilized residents to prepare for a city-led rezoning initiative in East New York, which will change regulations around what kind of buildings will be constructed. The rezoning will lead to significant population growth in our area, and may threaten the ability of low-income residents to stay in their homes if housing costs rise. The *Coalition for Community Advancement: Progress for East New York/Cypress Hills* is a group of non-profit organizations, houses of worship, small businesses and residents. We have worked with other coalition members to develop an Alternative Plan, which lays out what our community needs to thrive during and after the rezone and continue to be a neighborhood of opportunity for all of its residents. The Plan calls for more deeply affordable housing, policies to prevent displacement of current residents, local economic development initiatives, and new infrastructure and community resources. We have begun to see the results of our efforts, with the city recently committing to funding 1,200 units of deeply affordable housing in the neighborhood and a new public school. As the rezoning process progresses, we will continue to meet these issues head on and make sure neighborhood residents' voices are heard.



Cypress Village has given over 100 community members a new place to call home.



Isaiah and Shaquine, Building Works Graduates, Class of 2015

"Building Works showed me what the day-to-day life in the carpentry industry would be like. I want to be involved in it." - Isaiah (l.)

"My next step is to join the union." - Shaquine (r.)