

# **CYPRESS HILLS**

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

**ANNUAL REPORT FY 2019**

**BUILDING COMMUNITY  
GROWING LEADERS**

## who we are



**WITH COMMUNITY RESIDENTS LEADING THE WAY,** the mission of Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation (CHLDC) is to build a strong, equitable East New York, where youth and adults achieve educational and economic success, secure and preserve affordable housing, and develop leadership skills to transform their lives and community. We actively promote policies that advance racial equity.



## our divisions

- career and education • college success
- youth and family services • community organizing
- community development • housing counseling

## a letter from our director michelle neugebauer



### DEAR FRIENDS,

Rapid gentrification in Brooklyn threatens the very fabric of Cypress Hills and East New York, and we are at the forefront of fighting to protect our low- and middle-income residents and small business owners from displacement. Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation (CHLDC) advocates for the livelihoods of our residents on multiple fronts, by developing affordable housing, organizing for new policies to protect the community's most vulnerable, and increasing the economic and educational opportunities in our neighborhood. In this past year, we were as vigilant as ever in achieving our goals, and are proud of our many successes.

We are extremely excited to announce the development of Chestnut Commons, a new project that will provide 274 units of permanent, deeply affordable housing. With spaces for recreation and education and a new arts center, Chestnut Commons will bolster the community for generations to come. Another affordable housing victory secured was the passage of legislation to legalize basement apartments in East New York and the launch of the Basement Apartment Conversion Pilot Program, which CHLDC will be leading on the ground. This will generate income for homeowners as well as increase the affordable rental housing stock in Cypress Hills and East New York.

Simultaneously, CHLDC is continuing to uplift, empower, and support children and their families from pre-K to college. Our students participate in robust after-school programs, summer camps, SAT tutoring, high school and college application assistance, and one-on-one counseling. By investing holistically in our young people and their families, we can ensure a healthy and prosperous community for years to come.

And you know we can't do it all alone. In the coming years, we ask that you continue to stand with CHLDC and our mission of building a thriving and sustainable Cypress Hills/ East New York. We will need focused organizing and advocacy, new policy solutions, major investments and lots and lots of grassroots leadership to fight displacement. Now more than ever, we are so grateful for the generous support we've received from all of our donors, volunteers, and residents. We hope that you enjoy reading about some of our many successes that we've had this year.

### 2019 Board of Directors

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# CHLDC'S 2019: BY THE NUMBERS

385 households received home and building repairs and other necessary services



**40** HOMEOWNERS AVOIDED FORECLOSURE

60 new units of deeply affordable housing @ Pitkin Berriman development



**76 SMALL BUSINESSES ARE NOW ACTIVE IN THE CYPRESS HILLS BUSINESS PARTNERS MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION**



123 young people who received workforce development services secured employment, with **85%** staying employed for at least three months



550 high school students gained admission to college

71% of the 243 students served at our Middle School Student Success Center were matched to high schools with a **75% or better** graduation rate

**844 STUDENTS SUPPORTED THROUGH OUR COLLEGE PERSISTENCE PROGRAM**



over **5,000** young community members served through youth development programming offered in after school, summer camp, our two Beacon Centers, and our College Success programs

## career and education programs

Too often, community members are held back from achieving their goals due to financial reasons. By fostering systems in which residents can gain skills to secure stable employment, CHLDC works to improve the economy of East New York from the inside out.

We enrolled a record 793 youth this year in the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). SYEP provides New York City residents between the ages of 14 and 24 with paid summer employment for up to six weeks. Furthermore, we fostered numerous new partnerships with SYEP employers this year. One that excites us particularly is with BMS Family Health Center, allowing us to expand our options for participants into the field of health care.

This year our COACH program, in which young adults are matched with paid internships, had the most successful placement rate for participants of the program's eight-year history. Our 70 participants were creatively engaged throughout the year with trips to Microsoft and other locations.

In addition to these programs, we work to increase the economic opportunities of community members through job training and placements. We connected 90 adults to industry-recognized credentials such as commercial drivers licenses and food handler's certifications. Placements this year had an average wage of \$15.49/hour.



RECENT C&E PROGRAM GRADS



C&E PINNING CEREMONY



we serve **11,000+** east new york community members annually

**131** participants were matched with employment through our programs

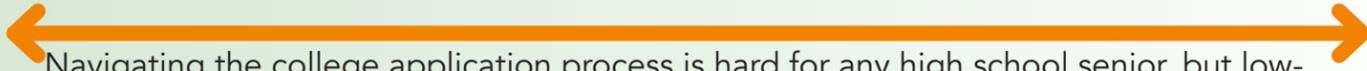
**15** local businesses received custom designed materials

**28** students passed the TASC (high school equivalency) exam





# college success



Navigating the college application process is hard for any high school senior, but low-income and first-generation college students face unique challenges. CHLDC works to support any student in our community with aspirations of attending college.

Our **Student Success Centers** operate out of two local high school campuses, Franklin K. Lane and Thomas Jefferson. There, students receive help with college and financial aid applications and support through both individual and group counseling. We also host **college trips** to regional colleges, such as Columbia University, George Washington University, Hunter College, and Bard, for interested students. Historically, the SAT and other aptitude tests serve as major barriers for low-income students without access to test prep services, so we provide **SAT prep courses** for 11th- and 12th-graders. We also host **alumni panels** at nine high schools each year, allowing current students to ask older students about their college experiences.

The **Community Schools program** includes three schools on the Lane Campus: Cypress Hills Collegiate Prep, Brooklyn Lab, and Multicultural High School. Each is a neighborhood hub where students and their families can receive comprehensive support, operating with the mindset that a student requires a myriad of social, emotional, and physical needs to be met in order to succeed in school. This year, middle school recruitment for our three Community Schools was incredibly successful, with each school receiving over 300 applications. Attendance and graduation rates continue to rise thanks to the hard work of the schools and CHLDC.



HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ON A COLLEGE TOUR



COLLEGE SIGNING DAY AT LANE

Once our students get to college, they will receive year-round support from our **Persistence Program** out of our **College STEPS** office. Students can receive academic, financial, and retention counseling from our staff in order to thrive and graduate. We have 203 students who began their first year in college during 2018-2019. After comparing our six-year graduation rate (44%) with that of the national average of low-income first-generation students (11%), we are proud to say that Cypress Hills students graduate at a higher rate than their peers.

**6** 74 bachelor's degrees earned by students from our first cohort, high school class of 2012, after 6 years

76% graduated seniors enroll in college within 6 months

417 FAFSAs submitted this year



# youth and family services

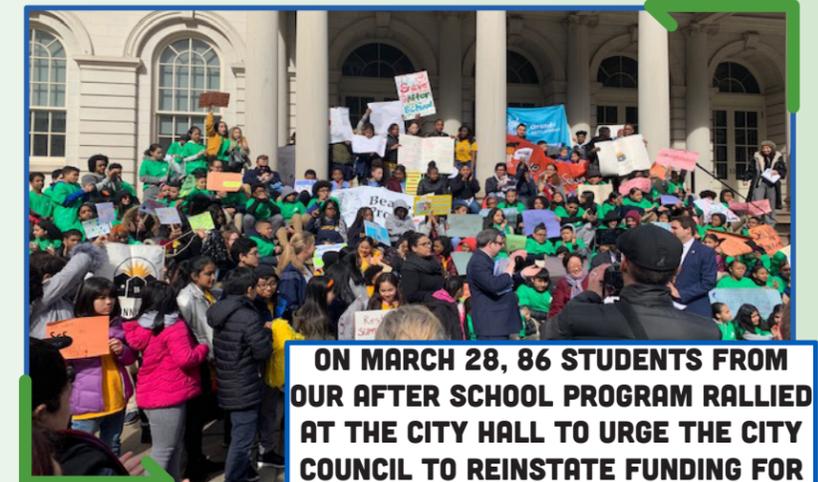


Cypress Hills LDC is dedicated to supporting our students and their families every step of the way. Our **Beacon Family Place**, located at J.H.S. 218, is a supportive, caring environment where families can work together to improve their relationships and their lives. We provided comprehensive family counseling services to an average of 45 families per month this year.

For working parents, childcare can be a costly burden. We provide elementary and middle school **after school programming** every weekday at 11 school sites, and we continue to enjoy high levels of enrollment and achievement. We have a Ready Readers literacy program at seven elementary schools. Through these programs, students can participate in a multitude of engaging, educational activities, from homework help to science experiments. We also host **summer camps** for middle and elementary schoolers. Our **Beacon Community Centers** provide recreational and educational activities for residents of all ages and operate afternoons, evenings, and Saturdays at two campuses, J.H.S 218 and P.S. 214. J.H.S. 218's evening program, where participants can do karate, dance ballet, and hang out at the teen center, averaged 160 students a night this year.



STUDENTS AT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT SUCCESS CENTER AT IS 171



ON MARCH 28, 86 STUDENTS FROM OUR AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM RALLIED AT THE CITY HALL TO URGE THE CITY COUNCIL TO REINSTATE FUNDING FOR SUMMER PROGRAMMING

Our **Middle School Success Center** aids middle schoolers in the complicated application procedure of New York's public high schools. Eighty-three percent of 8th graders who applied were matched with one of their top three high schools, and 71% of students were matched with schools with a 75% or higher graduation rate. Several of our students will be attending very selective or specialized high schools.

111 children provided with foster-care prevention services and counseling

21% increase in students' ability to comprehend silent reading after one year of Ready Readers

1000+ students attended free summer camp



# community organizing

A big part of our work is empowering residents to mobilize against injustice, act as leaders, and organize around community and citywide policy issues. In FY 2019, our organizing efforts were particularly impactful. One major success came earlier this year as we advocated with the Coalition for Community Advancement and the Basement Apartments Safe for Everyone Coalition to see the passage of legislation in the NYC Council for a pilot program that legalizes basement apartments in East New York. The **Basement Apartment Conversion Pilot Program (BACPP)** connects lower- and middle-class households to low- or no-cost loans so they can convert their basement into a safe, legal, and rentable apartment. Another successful campaign was launched by our Cypress Hills Business Partners to fight unfair **awning and signage laws** that disproportionately fined small businesses. In January, the City Council passed a moratorium on the fines.

As a founding member in the **Coalition for Community Advancement**, we worked to keep the community updated on the rezoning plan, raising awareness about displacement threats and the upcoming city plans to redevelop the Broadway Junction, and advocated for a **Flip Tax** in the New York State legislature. During a town hall in May, residents voiced opinions about the city's progress with the East New York Rezone after three years and its impact on the community. We continue to be a part of the conversation on the future of **Broadway Junction** and are committed to making sure tenants, homeowners, and small businesses will not be displaced by new developments. We will fight for transit equity and concrete benefits for all residents!



**COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND STAFF AT A RALLY FOR BASE**

In the coming months, CHLDC is redoubling its efforts for a **Cease and Desist order** to protect local homeowners from predatory "house-flipping" speculators. Stand with us in this key campaign in the fight against gentrification in our community!



**FUTURE OF TOMORROW**

## FUTURE OF TOMORROW

Our youth organizing program, **Future of Tomorrow (FOT)** works towards making public schools a more equitable and safe place. FOT students lobby, rally, and protest for restorative justice practices in schools. This June, FOT secured a major victory! The Mayor committed to restorative justice every middle and high school in the city, including a limit to school suspensions from 180 days to 20 days, and new policy language that limits the use of arrests for minor infractions in our schools.

# community development

As rapid and rampant gentrification displaces low- and middle-income families and small businesses around New York, it is more important now than ever to preserve affordable housing in our community. We are especially excited to celebrate **Chestnut Commons**, a multi-development project that will provide 274 units of housing affordable to formerly homeless, low-, and middle-income households. The facility will have a community center, with spaces for arts, culinary, and financial education programming and will be adjacent to a new K-8 public school expected to enroll 1,000 students. We expect over 3,000 people will benefit from this development, which will be completed in 2022!

Our sustainability initiative **Cypress Hills Verde** continues to grow. In the past quarter, we assisted 121 people apply for SNAP benefits. We hosted **nutrition education programs** at Pitkin Verde and Cypress Hills Youth Farmers Markets that reached 2,921 people this year. Programming included informal charlas about healthy eating, supermarket tours, and cooking demonstrations. These programs educate and empower our residents to make smart choices for their families.

## housing counseling

In FY 2019, we continued to provide high-quality housing counseling for residents at risk of displacement. We work with community members to prevent apartment evictions, avert foreclosure judgment/auction sales, manage mortgages, and apply for subsidized housing. This year, we provided services to 110 new clients through our **foreclosure prevention counseling** program and facilitated 22 workout agreements between owners and mortgagees. Our counselors helped 58 seniors apply for subsidized housing. Cypress Hills and East New York homeowners can also utilize our **Homeowner Help-Desk** to receive assistance with refinance assessment, housing/building code violation fines, repairs, applications for property tax exemptions, and more. This year 85 households utilized the help-desk. We also provide **financial literacy** counseling and education for community members who need help managing budgeting, student loans, mortgages, retirement savings, addressing credit reports, and related debt issues, and much more.



**COMMUNITY MEMBERS CAN PARTICIPATE IN WORKSHOPS ON PROPERTY TAXES OR HEALTHY EATING!**



**OUR ED SHOWS OFF A MODEL OF CHESTNUT COMMONS**

Cypress Hills LDC received generous support from over **50 foundations and corporations** this year.  
Thank you — we couldn't have done it without you.

- American Eagle Outfitters Foundation • Bank of America • Bank of New York Mellon • Bank United • Benchmark Title Agency, LLC • BKD LLP • Capital One • Carl Marks Foundation • Center for New York City Neighborhoods • Central Soup Society • Change Capital Fund • Charles Hayden Foundation • Citi Foundation • Clark Foundation • Con Edison • Concrete Solutions Lab • Dunn Development Corporation/L&M Development Partners • Corporate Synergies Group, LLC • CTA Architects P.C. • Duvernay + Brooks LLC • ExpandedED • Federated National Land, LLC • Hercules Corporation • Hirschen Singer & Epstein LLP • HSBC • Joy of Giving Something Foundation • JP Morgan Chase • Kahn Brothers Advisors LLC • Lee Home Incorporated • Lettire Construction Corp. • Lily Auchincloss Foundation • Local Initiatives Support Coalition • M&T Bank • Mary J. Hutchins Foundation • New York Community Trust • North Star Fund • Paycom • Peck's Office Plus/Legacy Office Solutions • Phipps Houses • Ridgewood Savings Bank • Robin Hood Foundation • Santander Bank • Shinda Management Corporation • Signature Bank • State Farm • T.U.C. Management Company, Inc. • Tiger Baron Foundation • Tiger Foundation • Unidos US • United Community Centers, Inc • Valley National Bank • YMCA of North Brooklyn

**government support**

- NYC Department of Education • NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development • NYC Department of Small Business Services • NYC Department of Youth and Community Development • NYC District Council of Carpenters • NYS Affordable Housing Corporation • NYS Attorney General • NY Department of State • NYS Dormitory Authority • NYS Education Department • NYS Homes & Community Renewal • NYS Office of Children & Family Services • US Department of Education • US Commission on National and Community Service • US Department of Housing and Urban Development

**220** residents participated in financial literacy education

**100%** occupancy in our senior housing development

**1798** registered participants at our 2 Beacon family sites

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

- Alexis Sanchez • Alan Appelbaum • Andrea Soonachan • Andrew Brown • Anthony Rossabi • Betsy MacLean • Bobby Giurintano • Bonnie Caley • Carmen Izquierdo • Courtney Smith • Danny Klock • Dylan Salmons • Emily Blank • Emily Estevez • Eugene Schneur • Gerardo Struni • Gladys DeSantiago • Jacqueline Cordero • James Garrison • James Driscoll • James Rinzler • Janet Rivkin • Jason Brown • Jean Lince • John Van Ingen • Joseph Gallo • Ken Markinson • Kevin Stump • Kimberly Coca • Linda Kahn • Lynn Appelbaum • Manuel Burgos • Marisol Quiñones • Michael Lawes • Michelle Neugebauer • Mike Mullane • Mirian Rodriguez • Nicholas Russo • Patricia Mullane • RD & Sara Gentzler • Roy Pingel • Sheila Maguire • Teghvir Sethi • Tyrone Sellers • Vivian Cedeno



**SENIORS WHO LIVE IN OUR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**



**STUDENTS AT PS 377**



**A READY READERS PARTICIPANT SHOWS OFF HIS NEW BOOK**



**AMERICORPS VOLUNTEERS**



# CYPRESS HILLS

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## get involved

We'd love your volunteer time and/or financial support!

<https://www.cypresshills.org/>

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