



# Cypress Hills

Local Development Corporation

## Annual Report FY'17

*Building Communities.*

*Growing Leaders.*

## Who we are:

Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation provides comprehensive services to more than 10,000 Cypress Hills/East New York residents each year.

Together, our programs strengthen the area's physical and economic infrastructure, provide quality education and social services, and foster local leaders.

Through this programming, we strive to create positive change in Cypress Hills and East New York. Our vision is for a community with neighbors of all backgrounds working together for an affordable, clean, safe and vibrant neighborhood.

We preserve and expand the community's affordable housing stock and strengthen local workforce by partnering with local employers and matching residents with living-wage jobs. We make Cypress Hills a greener, more environmentally sustainable neighborhood and act as a resource to local businesses. We support youth development, and foster leadership and engagement among neighborhood residents so that they can make the changes they want to see in their community.

## Our Mission:

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 education and economic success, secure health and affordable housing, and develop leadership skills to transform their lives and community.

# *Letter from the Director*

Dear Friends,

In 2017 our community stayed strong in the face of multiple challenges: harsh new immigration policies threaten the backbone of our neighborhood – the tens of thousands of residents who made Cypress Hills/East New York their homes after fleeing poverty and political oppression in many Caribbean, Central and South American and Southeast Asian countries; the period of hyper-gentrification sweeping through our City threatens low and moderate income residents and small businesses; and cuts to critical federal funding of safety net services endangers our young and old alike. Our community is facing unprecedented challenges. But through this adversity, I have been truly touched and encouraged by how Cypress Hills/East New York has rallied in support of our neighbors, small businesses and young people. Despite these obstacles, our vision for the neighborhood remains clear: we still strive to build a racially and economically diverse community with empowered local leaders, economic and higher education opportunities for all and supports for the most vulnerable.

We are proud to share our organizational accomplishments from the past year. We are ramping up our tenant organizing work, advocating with houses of worship and other community based agencies on land use and displacement issues/policies and participating in citywide initiatives such as Neighborhood 360, supporting community revitalization and business development, and the East New York Homeowner Help Desk, helping local homeowners maintain their homes and protecting them from falling victim to real estate scams and pressure from speculators.

We are also continuing to help neighborhood residents advance economically, through workforce development and college success programming. We have seen such promising growth in these areas, including an expansion of our college access programming to another high school campus in East New York to reach more of the neighborhood's young people and the continued building of the college pipeline so that young people can achieve their goal of a college degree. We take tremendous pride in watching the next generation of neighborhood leaders emerge from these programs and give back to the community.

Your dedication to Cypress Hills/East New York remain invaluable – thank you for supporting our neighborhood and keeping it strong. I am so proud to be part of this community of formidable and generous people and I look forward to another year of partnership!

Sincerely,

Michelle Neugebauer

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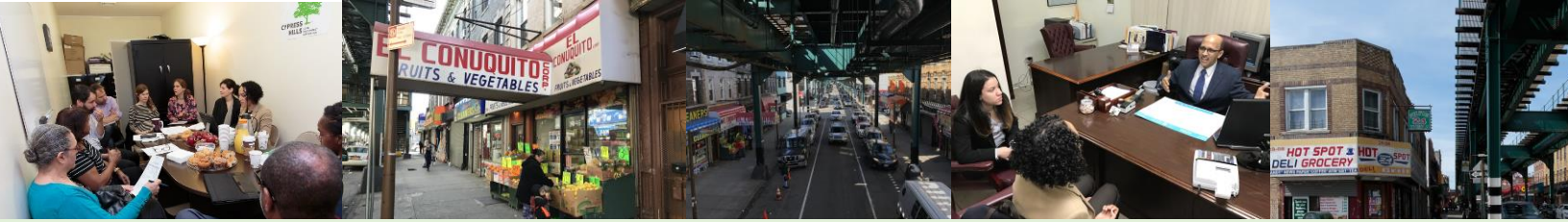
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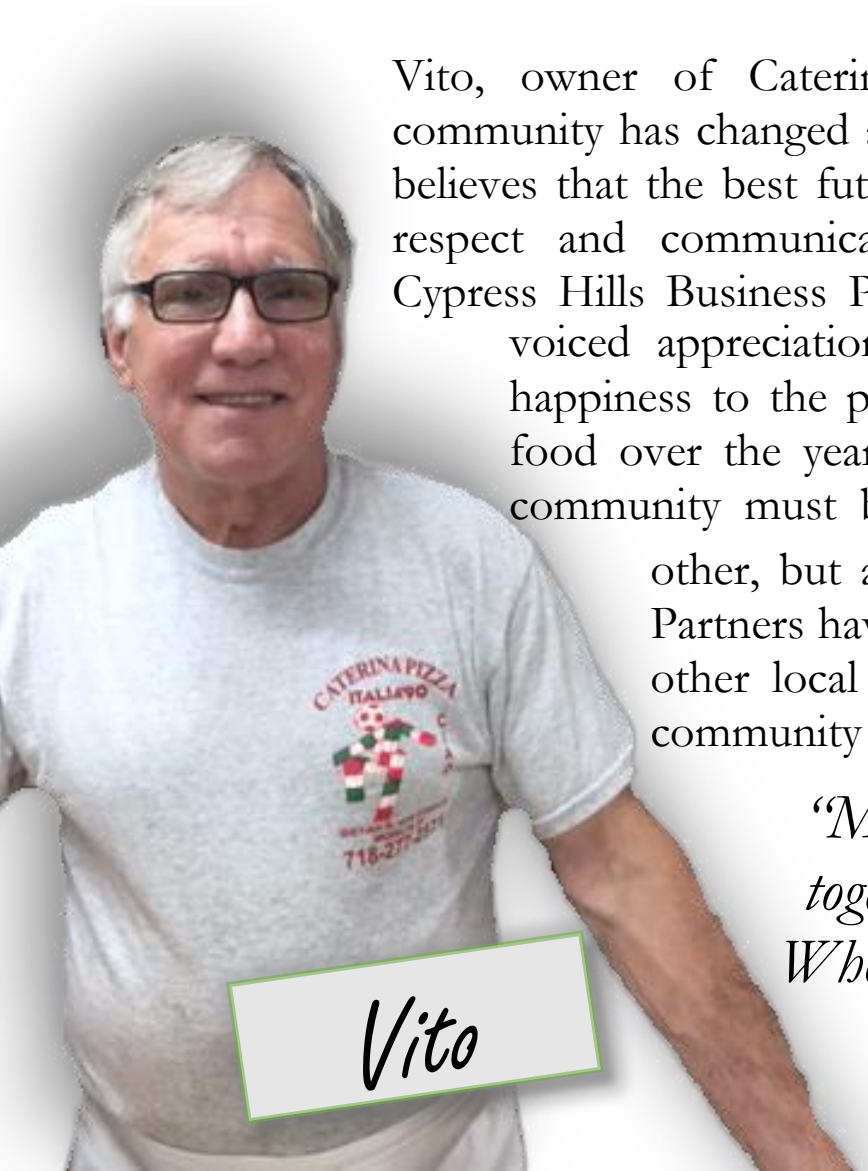


# *Economic Opportunity*



## **Cypress Hills Business Partners Vie for a Slice of the Pie**

Almost fifty local employers have joined the Cypress Hills Business Partners since its creation in 2016. The businesses participate in local hiring to provide employment opportunities for residents, making the local economy stronger. The Business Partners are provided links with business services and city agencies and given access to other opportunities like workshops and grants for the betterment of local business.



Vito, owner of Caterina Pizza, has watched as the community has changed and grown over the years, and he believes that the best future for Cypress Hills is rooted in respect and communication – characteristics that the Cypress Hills Business Partners value and promote. Vito voiced appreciation for his community owing his happiness to the people who have loyally eaten his food over the years. He believes businesses in the community must be involved, not only with each other, but also with residents. The Business Partners have created a platform for Vito and other local businesses to unite, making the community and the economy better.

*“More people need to get together to communicate. When we’re together, we’re much stronger.”*

*Vito*

# Youth Development

## *New Student Success Center at Jefferson Campus*

Each fall, thousands of New York City high school seniors will apply to college and eagerly await notification of where they have been accepted in the spring. This is a rite of passage for high school seniors but, unfortunately, the playing field is not level for all New York City students, with low-income students of color placed at a disadvantage because of the lack of resources in their schools. That's where CHLDC steps in. We work to bring equity to the process - counseling and exposing students to all of their college options, providing expert guidance on applications and financial aid, supporting them on the transition to higher education and sticking with them until they graduate with their college degree!

SSCs serve as centralized hubs where students and their parents can access the information, mentoring, and support they need to successfully apply to and get into college. The success of the Lane Campus SSC in addition to other centers in New York

*"I wouldn't be  
where I am  
without the  
people at Cypress  
Hills."*



Rakim

Recent high school graduate, Rakim Griffin, has plans to become a psychiatrist and advocate for those with mental illness. Griffin began attending Bard College in the fall of 2017 as a recent selectee of both the United Neighborhood Houses-Viacom scholarship and the Cesiah Torro Mullane Stipend. Through College STEPS, Rakim was able to learn and visit with multiple colleges and receive information about financial aid and other details that he otherwise would not have known about. Numerous staff sat with Rakim as he poured over applications, essays, and scholarships, and for their time, efforts, and patience, Rakim is forever grateful.





City in providing these services has prompted the city to search for new sites of possible centers, vowing to open up at least 100 in New York City over the next few years.

The Thomas Jefferson Campus in East New York, home to four separate schools, was selected as one of the sites for a new SSC. While CHLDC has been present on the campus for a number of years, CHLDC has

partnered with affordable housing real estate development companies L&M Development Partners and Dunn Development Corp. to expand. The new center will provide services on a larger scale with full-time adult College Counselors and Youth Leaders. Similar to the Lane Campus SSC, we will use a peer leadership program. The SSC is already bustling with Jefferson campus students filling out college applications, preparing for the SAT and filling out financial aid applications. Staff and Youth Leaders are very excited for the year ahead and the impact they are going to have.

*“The Jefferson SSC is going to ensure that students attending Jefferson have every option available to them after high school.”*

*-Nasheley Boursiquot, Youth Leader at the Jefferson SSC*

*Nasheley*

**STUDENT SUCCESS  
CENTER**

# *Community Development*

## **Affordable Housing Developments:**

Cypress Hills Senior Housing and Pitkin-Berriman are now close to completion and occupancy. Together, these developments will provide 114 new units of affordable housing to the Cypress Hills community. Senior Housing will provide 54 units of deeply affordable housing for senior citizens. These units are specially designed to meet the specific lifestyle and service needs of its senior residents. Pitkin-Berriman will contain 60 environmentally sustainable units of affordable housing and will include a ground-floor supermarket, further supporting our efforts to increase healthy food access in the neighborhood.

Beyond the construction of these new affordable housing units, we are continuing to meet the community's needs for healthy, safe, affordable housing through our work in tenant organizing and counseling and mortgage foreclosure prevention counseling.

## **SNAP Benefits & Cypress Hills**

Residents of Cypress Hills and East New York face issues of food availability and affordability. By enrolling low-income individuals in the SNAP benefit program, CHLDC hopes to increase the access citizens have to food. Residents can enroll at the two Cypress Hills Farmers' Markets as well as the Community Development Office. Employees at CHLDC intend to make enrollment more accessible for residents without computer literacy or English proficiency. Navigating the SNAP certification system has proven difficult for some individuals and CHLDC hopes to close the gap by offering SNAP enrollment through the Access NYC Portal.

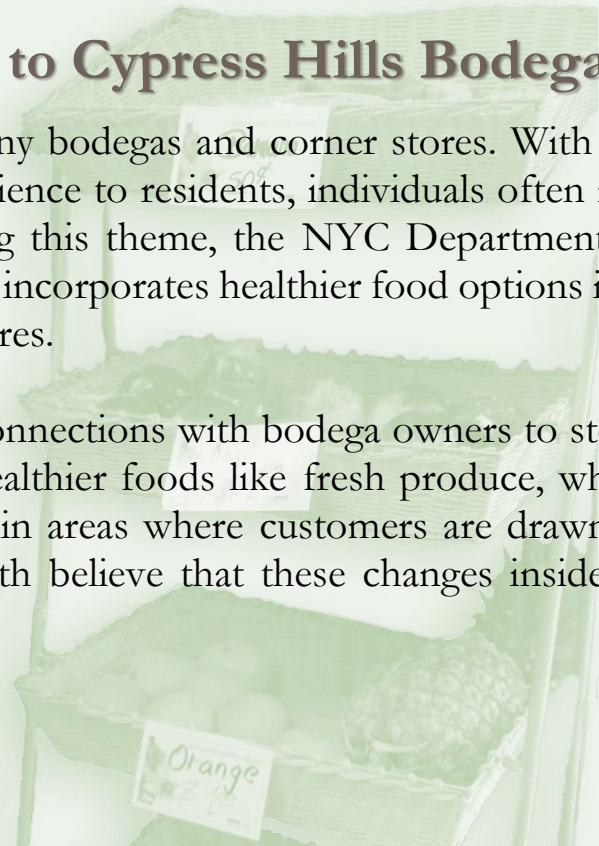




## Shop Healthy Brings Produce to Cypress Hills Bodegas

The Cypress Hills community is home to many bodegas and corner stores. With the high number of these stores and their convenience to residents, individuals often rely upon them to buy most of their food. Seeing this theme, the NYC Department of Health created the Shop Healthy Program that incorporates healthier food options into the normal offering of bodegas and corner stores.

CHLDC has dedicated itself to creating the connections with bodega owners to stock and market healthier items in their stores. Healthier foods like fresh produce, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products are placed in areas where customers are drawn to them. CHLDC and the Department of Health believe that these changes inside of bodegas will help promote healthier choices.



*“What I love the most is serving the kids that come in each day. I want to give them the best thing possible.”*

Tareq opened Shahboob Deli and Grocery Corp in 2015. Located next to P.S. 65 in Cypress Hills, most of his patrons are students, parents, and teachers. The Shop Healthy Initiative has given Tareq the ability to alter the stock in his store and provide healthy options for his customers. He has started to serve freshly-made salads and juices in his stores and hopes to provide even more options in the future. Tareq believes that everyone deserves to be able to make healthier choices.



Tareq

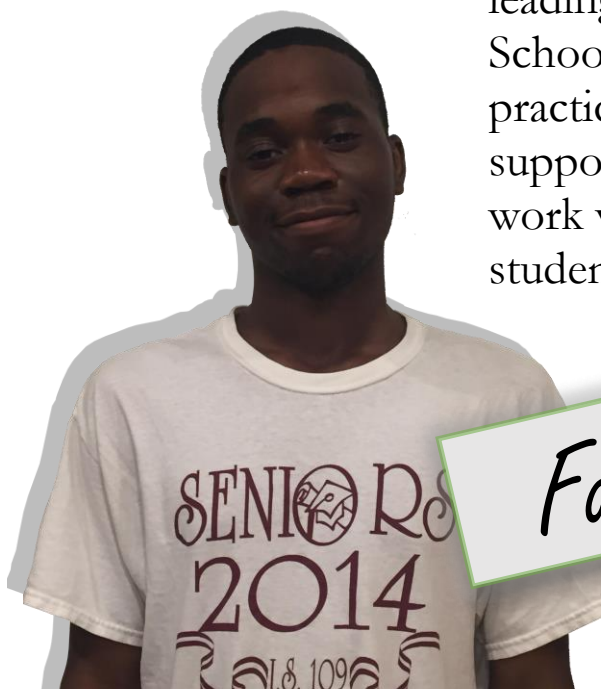




*“FOT gives you a voice and sets you up for the future.”*

Fawaz is a high school senior at the Academy of Innovative Technology in Cypress Hills who wants to start his own business someday. He is also a student activist with Future of Tomorrow, CHLDC’s youth organizing group that works with high school students to make positive changes in their schools. FOT students develop an awareness of community issues, learn how to advocate for causes they care about and grow as leaders. Right now they are leading a campaign at the Franklin K. Lane High School campus to implement restorative justice practices at the school and create a positive, supportive atmosphere for students. Through his work with FOT, Fawaz has grown into his role as a student leader and organizer. He credits his

experiences with FOT in helping him become self- confident and open to other people, and in standing up for what’s right and creating positive change.



*Fawaz*

# *Our Reach in the Community*

## **Youth and Family Services**

1,731 students in afterschool and summer camp programming  
268 students applied to high school with the help of the Middle School Student Success Center  
1,052 people participated in free recreational and educational programming at the Cypress Hills/East New York Beacon Center  
240 people counseled through Beacon Family Place

## **Career and Education Services**

296 people advanced through Employment Solutions, meeting their professional and educational goals  
350 English-language learners improved their English fluency through our ESOL classes  
897 young people got work experience through the Summer Youth Employment Program and Work, Learn, Grow

## **College Success Programs**

3,359 young people prepared for college and pursued a degree through College Success Programs

## **Community Development**

554 families resided in our green, affordable housing in Cypress Hills  
1,400 neighborhood residents participated in healthy eating and cooking workshops at our fresh food markets and other neighborhood events  
296 households received SNAP benefits with our help, expanding their access to affordable, healthy food

## **Housing Counseling**

135 local homeowners received foreclosure prevention counseling services  
41 local residents received financial literacy counseling and education

## **Community Organizing**

120 tenants received tenant counseling services and 223 organized to improve quality of life in their buildings  
198 community members participated in neighborhood organizing efforts around the rezone  
93 young people participated in our student organizing group, Future of Tomorrow



# *Corporate, Foundation, and Government Support*

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In FY'17, CHLDC was supported by over one hundred private and public funding sources. The following are sources of corporate and foundation support:

Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development | Astoria Bank  
Bank of America | Bernard and Alva B. Gimbel Foundation | BNY Mellon  
BankUnited | Brooklyn Community Foundation | Capital One  
Carl Marks Foundation | Center for New York City Neighborhoods  
NYC Change Capital Fund | Charles Hayden Foundation | Citi Foundation  
Clark Foundation | College Access: Research and Action | Con Edison  
Deutsche Bank Americas Foundation  
Dunn Development Corp. and L&M Development Partners | ExpandedED School  
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Graduate NYC and the College Completion Innovation Fund | Henry Street Settlement  
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Tiger Foundation | TJX Foundation | Unidos US | University Settlement  
Urban Youth Collaborative | Valley National Bank

The following are sources of government support:

NYC Administration for Children's Services | NYC Department of Education  
NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene  
NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development  
NYC Department of Small Business Services  
NYC Department of Youth and Community Development  
Dormitory Authority of the State of New York | NYS Affordable Housing Corporation  
NYS Commission on National and Community Service | NYS Department of State  
NYS Education Department | NYS Energy Research and Development Authority  
NYS Higher Education Services Corporation | NYS Homes and Community Renewal  
NYS Office of Children and Family Services | US Department of Agriculture  
US Department of Education

## *Donor Support*

We also received generous support from our Board of Directors and individual donors. Here are some of the year's most generous supporters:

Judith and Alan Appelbaum | Lynn Appelbaum  
 Emily Blank and Alec Appelbaum | Jason Brown | Joseph Brown III  
 Richard Burton III | Bonnie and Steven Caley | Central Soup Society  
 James Davis | Emily Estevez | Framework Architecture  
 William Friedman | Thomas Kahn | Michael and Jessica Lawes  
 Patricia Mullane | Lynn Neugebauer | Michelle Neugebauer  
 Michelle Petropoulos | Roy Pingel | Marisol Quiñones  
 Ryan Reich and Cynthia Reich | Betsy Maclean and Eric Miles  
 Amory and Alexis Sanchez | Wendy and Stephen Shalen  
 James and Alicia Weinstein



Mildred Keel-Williams (left), our former Director of Economic Development who passed away last year - she will live on in our hearts and memories and in all the small businesses and job seekers she helped in our community.

