



## The Outreach Vision **Winter 2024**

### *The Future is Now*

#### Message from our President



**DEBBIE PANTIN**  
President/CEO

Welcome to the Winter 2024 Issue of the Outreach Visions Newsletter. Typically, this issue is dedicated to previous successes of the past year, but this year we want to set our sights squarely on the “*Future*.”

As mentioned in my remarks at our 2023 Metropolitan Luncheon (see highlights below), I’d like to reiterate that in the coming year with your support, **WE WILL**:

- **Continue** to expand and enrich our programs and services to meet the complex needs of those we serve. This is the basis for all that we do at Outreach. Our approach to treating the whole person involves meeting individuals where they are and engaging personal and community support networks to ensure sustained success in their recovery.
- **Open** the doors to our long-awaited Young Adult Residence in Brentwood Long Island, where young adults from 18-25 years of age will receive intensive residential treatment for substance use disorders coordinated under one roof. In keeping with

Outreach's long history of assisting teenagers, adults, families and women with children, this new facility will combine a supportive living environment for residents with unique services for young adults, a much-overlooked population, helping them to re-establish healthy living, and reunite with their families.

- **Expand** access to care for people living in Queens through a dynamic new partnership facilitated by the **Queens Behavioral Healthcare Network** with Outreach and two other Queens, NY-based prevention, treatment, and recovery providers - *Elmcor and Phoenix House*. This collaboration will ensure that residents in this diverse and vast borough will have access to the resources they need to fight their addiction, including substance use and behavioral health therapies, supports that address their other needs such as housing, employment, clothing and food, and free transportation to and from their appointments, a well-documented barrier to accessing care.

In this issue you will also have an opportunity to meet some of our new staff, find out what's new in our programs, see highlights from past events and hear and see what our clients are up to. I am consistently in awe of the great work being done here at Outreach and even more proud of our amazing staff who make it all possible.

As you can see, we have a very busy year ahead of us, for updates and opportunities to support our work, please visit our website at [www.OPINY.org](http://www.OPINY.org). Outreach's website is just one way we reach people online. We are also active on social media and use it to engage our communities to connect and communicate. Follow us on social media or sign up to receive **email blasts** from Outreach about our treatment services and/or our training opportunities!

Oxford defines Future as: "the time or a period of time following the moment of speaking or writing; time regarded as still to come." And with that I say, stay tuned because there is a very exciting future ahead here at Outreach."

With best wishes for a healthy and prosperous New Year,



*President/CEO*  
*Outreach Development Corporation*

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## Outreach's 42nd Annual Metropolitan Luncheon A Success!

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Photo credit: Blue Pictorial

Outreach's 42nd Annual Metropolitan Luncheon was held on Thursday, November 30, at New York City's iconic Cipriani's 42nd Street with over 700 guests in attendance. To date \$928,000 has been raised in support of the agency's high-quality, evidence-based substance use and mental health treatment and training programs.

"It is because of the hard work of the team at Outreach, and the young people who have the will, desire and strength to live a better life, that I will continue to provide my commitment and support for Outreach and all things purposeful for this organization."

Ralph Bumbaca

An annual tradition since 1981, the Metropolitan Luncheon celebrates the accomplishments of Outreach clients and families and recognizes distinguished members of the New York metropolitan area business, labor, and trade communities who have made a commitment to helping the organization build healthy lives. *"I am extremely grateful to our donors who have consistently stood with us year after year at this special luncheon. It affirms to me that Outreach's mission is vital and valued by you and by our community,"* said Debbie Pantin, President, and CEO.



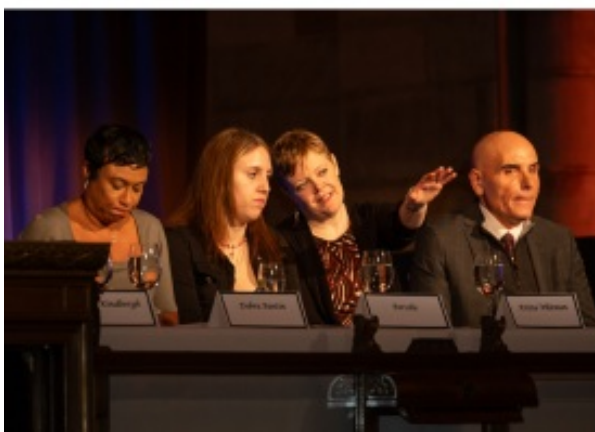


Photo credit: Blue Pictorial

This year's Luncheon honored three distinguished leaders, as Debbie Pantin, CEO noted, *"They are outstanding individuals who have given their time and resources to help Outreach with the critical work of providing assistance to those who are suffering from addiction and their families."* The 2023 honorees included: Michael E. Hellstrom, Jr., Vice President and Eastern Regional Manager, Laborers International Union of North America recipient of the 2023 Labor Leader of the Year Award; Ralph C. Bumbaca, New York City President, TD Bank, who received the 2023 Humanitarian of the Year Award; and Daniel Kindbergh, Executive Vice President, Operations, Brookfield Properties, and the Outreach Project Board Chair received the 2023 Jim Berg Memorial Award.

*"It's been a pleasure and truly amazing watching the Outreach team do what it needs to do to expand its operations and help young people recover from addiction."*

**Daniel Kindbergh**

*"The work that Outreach is doing – saving one life is remarkable but saving hundreds of lives is extraordinary."*

**Michael E. Hellstrom**

The event also featured inspiring speeches by Outreach President and CEO Debra Pantin and Porsche, a graduate of Outreach House II, the agency's adolescent residential facility in Brentwood, Long Island.

*(To read Porsche's remarks about her life changing experience at Outreach, see 'In Her Own Words' below).*

The event was led by Daniel Kindbergh, Chair of the Outreach Project, the agency's fundraising Board, who chaired this year's Metropolitan Luncheon Committee, comprised of over 30 dedicated labor and business leaders who worked tirelessly to ensure the agency raised needed funds. Special thanks to Paul and Eric Vitale, Atlantic Tomorrow's Office, Weeks Lerman, Cipriani's, and the Bradford Exchange for their generosity in providing items for the Luncheon's silent auction. The event was produced by Marsha Radulov, Outreach's Director of Special Events & Fundraising, who has coordinated this annual event seamlessly for the past 18 years.

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IN HER OWN WORDS:

## Porsche, Outreach House II Graduate

I want to give you a little background on how my addiction started, my recovery process and how everything is now. Growing up, I had addiction in my family. My Mom is an addict, and my dad is also an addict, but he was never around. My sisters also fell into addiction. Growing up was relatively hard watching them suffer as much as they did. As I got older, I fell into a deep depression because there was a lot of trauma that came along with watching them in that state. I was wondering what is so great about this, that they were choosing it over me.



I was in so much pain that I gave in and fell into an addiction. It was more painful than it was good. But still I continued to do it because I needed it at that point.

I chose to go to Outreach because I needed to change my ways and change my life. A very wise woman told me that wasn't even rehabilitating for me, it was habilitating. At Outreach I learned how to live. Today, I still go through some of the same struggles with family as I did before my addiction, but my life is manageable now.

To all (Outreach) residents that are here today, if you get clean it doesn't necessarily mean your life will be picture perfect. But it does mean that you will know how to get through it and recovery is possible.

Thank you for letting me share.

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# Karl Telemaque:

## New Director of Outreach's Young Adult Residence - Providing a Continuum of Care for Much Overlooked Population

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In the Spring of 2024, Outreach will open its much anticipated 25-bed Young Adult residence for individuals ages 19-25, who seek a continuum of care during their recovery journey from substance use and co-occurring mental health disorders. Young adults are often an overlooked population in the treatment continuum, and often fall back into substance use when no intensive support is available. Outreach has been developing this new facility for several years now, and we are thrilled to announce that Karl Antoine Telemaque has joined Outreach as the Program Director of the new Young Adult Residence.

Karl is a third-generation Haitian American born in New York City and a Long Island native, raised in Nassau County, where the foundational values of faith and community were instilled in him from an early age. Engaging in numerous food drives and fundraising initiatives for the local parish helped shape his commitment to giving back to the community—a commitment that remains a guiding principle in his professional pursuits today.

Coming from a household that esteemed education as a cornerstone of success, Karl embraced the importance of continuous learning. His educational journey began at Nassau Community College, where he earned an Associate Degree in Social Work. He furthered his academic endeavors at Stony Brook University, graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Social Welfare, before culminating his studies with a Master of Social Work from Adelphi University. These academic milestones not only equipped him with a comprehensive understanding of diverse populations but also led to introspection, uncovering, and addressing his own cultural biases.

With almost 10 years of dedicated field experience, Karl has diligently absorbed knowledge to serve the communities he deeply cares about. He began his professional journey as a case manager, supporting adults facing persistent mental health challenges and developmental disabilities. Transitioning to working with youth, he assumed the role of therapist in a residential treatment facility, offering vital support to formerly incarcerated adolescents dealing with severe mental health issues, substance abuse, and emotional disturbances.

His passion for aiding young individuals led him to progress within the field, ascending to the role of Assistant Director during his six-year tenure at the residential treatment facility. Prior to joining Outreach, Karl directed a day habilitation program in a high school within a D-75 district, a specialized district within NYC, devoted to providing educational, vocational, and behavioral support programs to students with moderate to severe disabilities. There he found immense fulfillment in guiding youths to comprehend the intersection between their mental health and academic needs.

As he awaits the opening of our new Young Adult Residence, Karl has already begun working at the agency. Currently he is shadowing Catherine Maguire, Director of our Women's Recovery Residence in Brentwood, familiarizing and immersing himself in all things Outreach.

With 14,401 square feet of space, the brand-new state of the art structure will be an addition to our existing programs on the Outreach Brentwood campus which already include: Outreach House II, a residential treatment center for teens and the Women's Recovery Residence. Specialized services for the young adult residential program will include substance abuse treatment, psychiatric evaluation and mental health monitoring, specialized group sessions (anger management, life skills, relapse prevention), recovery planning, family counseling, health education, vocational assessment, and ongoing support services.

Karl aims to empower vulnerable youth and young adults, providing them with opportunities and resources essential for fostering independence and cultivating healthier relationships within their communities while addressing substance-related challenges. We welcome Karl and look forward to the successful launch of this important new program under his leadership.

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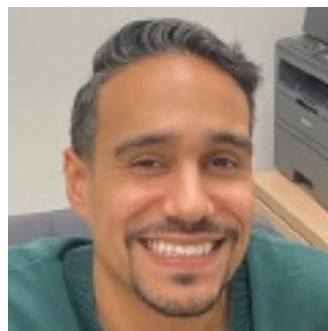
**Stay tuned: More information about the Young Adult Residence will be released on our website ([opiny.org](https://www.opiny.org)) this spring!**

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## Meet our HR Team

In addition to hiring outstanding people like Karl Telemaque profiled above, Outreach's Human Resources team is working tirelessly to ensure that our entire agency has the staffing it needs to fully provide all of its programs and services and make certain that current staff have the tools they need to be successful. Meet our wonderful HR team and learn why they love working at Outreach:





## Lydia McNeil

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### Title

Director of Human Resources

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### Key Responsibilities

Leads and manages HR department

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### Where are you from?

Brooklyn, NY

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### Previous position

HR Manager, Phoenix House Foundation

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### When did you join Outreach?

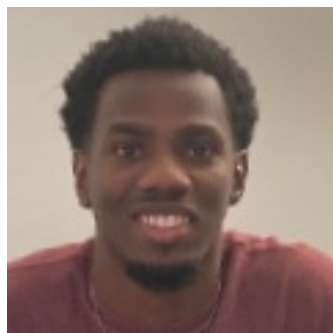
February 2022

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### What do you like most about Outreach?

I like working with people and putting smiles on their faces.

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## Jahson Harvey

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### Title

HR Generalist

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### Key Responsibilities

Onboarding, orientation, evaluations, and responding to general HR inquiries.

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### Where are you from?

Antigua

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## Michael Garcia

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### Title

HR Generalist

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### Key Responsibilities

Onboarding, orientation, tuition reimbursements, and Family & Medical Leave Act needs.

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### Where are you from?

Lower East side of Manhattan

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### Previous position

HR Generalist at Clear MD

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### When did you join Outreach?

September 2023

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### What do you like most about Outreach?

The people.

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## Vanitha Helan Isaac

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### Title

Talent Acquisition Specialist

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### Key Responsibilities

Recruitment

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### Where are you from?

Bayonne, NJ

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### Previous position



Previous position  
HR Recruiter at Harlem Children's Zone

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When did you join Outreach?  
June 2023

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What do you like most about Outreach?  
The People.

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**Cassandra Gordon**

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Title  
HR Associate

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Key Responsibilities  
Employee ID's, employee verification,  
assists with and organizes catering for  
hiring events.

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Where are you from?  
Savannah, GA now lives in Queens, NY

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Previous position  
Administrative Assistant at Outreach  
REACT

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When did you join Outreach?  
December 2019

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What do you like most about Outreach?  
Community. I love the way the company  
helps their clients as well as their  
employees.

Talent Acquisition Specialist at Fedcap

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When did you join Outreach?  
August 2023

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What do you like most about Outreach?  
I like what we do to help people with  
addiction issues. That's what motivates  
me.

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Meet our HR staff & learn how  
you can become a part of the  
team!

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#### UPCOMING HIRING EVENTS:

Monday, February 14, 2024, from 11:00 am to  
3:00 pm at Outreach's Greenpoint Outpatient  
Clinic, 960 Manhattan Avenue, Brooklyn, NY  
11222.

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For more information about these events,  
open positions, and how to join the  
Outreach staff, please contact Human  
Resources at [HR@opiny.org](mailto:HR@opiny.org) or visit  
[opiny.org/careers](https://opiny.org/careers).

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# After 27 Years at Outreach, Tony Croce Transitions Towards Retirement



**Outreach extends its heartfelt gratitude and congratulations to Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Anthony Croce on his retirement!**

Self-described as the agency's "second generation," for over 27 years, Tony has provided finance and administrative expertise to the agency, overseeing all accounting, IT, property, and equipment, as well as interactions with all contractors and government agencies. His career in accounting and finance has spanned over 40 years.

While at a small accounting firm, Tony began amassing nonprofit experience through his client base, which at the time included Outreach. Former President and CEO Kathleen Riddle recruited him to join the agency as its new CFO in 1996. Since then, he has managed the nonprofit's budget from \$5 million to its current \$30 million in revenue.

During his tenure at Outreach, Tony has guided efforts to build a management information system. Through his leadership, he ensured there was a computer on every desk, upgraded the employee email system, and brought website access across the agency. He has brought videoconferencing capabilities to the headquarters and the programs and was part of the internal team that implemented Outreach's Electronic Health Records system, myAvatar. He has helped build and renovate all the agency's facilities, all while managing its finances and auditing processes.

His expertise and dedication have impacted all staff, and clients alike, who walked through Outreach's doors. The agency is infinitely grateful for everything he has done to help build, sustain, and expand our operations. Over the years he has served as a mentor to many on the team, shared his good humor, kindness, and his delicious BBQ at the annual staff picnic! We will miss seeing him every day at the Richmond Hill offices, but grateful that he will continue on in a consultant role.



Founding Vice President and former Chief Operating Officer Neil Sheehan (left) paid tribute to Tony Croce (right) at Outreach's annual holiday party earlier this month.

## Seasoned Professional Steps in as Outreach's New CFO



As Tony Croce transitions into retirement, Outreach is pleased to welcome Irving Dela Cruz in the role of Chief Financial Officer (CFO) effective February 1, 2024.

Irving comes to Outreach with an extensive background working in the field of behavioral health for over 11 years. He has an impressive financial background in accounting, auditing, and consulting for nonprofit and for-profit agencies. He was the former Chief Financial Officer of START Treatment & Recovery Centers, Inc., a nonprofit organization that provides specialized treatments to adults with opioid

disorders. Prior to START, he served in a similar capacity at VIP Community Services, a nonprofit based in the Bronx that offers comprehensive and integrated medical, behavioral health, housing, and other wraparound services, and at the Asian Americans for Equality, a nonprofit nationally recognized as an innovative housing developer and property manager.

Prior to his involvement in nonprofit finance operations, Irving worked as an audit manager at Marks Paneth LLP (now CBIZ Marks Paneth & MHM), one of the largest accounting firms in the New York region. He is a Certified Public Accountant and has the Certified Internal Auditor® (CIA®) designation, a globally accepted certification for internal auditors. He obtained the Chartered Global Management Accountant (CGMA) designation, which recognizes professionals who have deep understanding of finance and have expanded their business skills through experience as management accountants to help drive better business decisions.

**Welcome Irving!**

## Accolades & Promotions



### Outreach Trains 100 Health Teachers at Adelphi University's 2023 Health Net Conference

In December, Outreach Vice President for Residential Services and New Business Development, John Venza (pictured above with Community Support Specialist Alexis Attardi) partnered with Health Net to train over one hundred health teachers from Long Island, Brooklyn and Queens about youth, cannabis, and mental health.

## Outreach participates with Providers from Across New York State in Annual Residential Summit

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Outreach's President and CEO Debbie Pantin Co-Chaired the 2023 Residential Summit hosted by Therapeutic Communities of America (TCA) and the Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) in Albany, this past December. Community-based and private residential service providers from across the state convened to discuss the Future of Residential Services through a series of fora, workshops, and meetings. Several Outreach staff were in attendance and presented and/or co-led workshops.



Pictured above OASAS Commissioner Dr. Chinazo Cunningham delivered the keynote address at the 2023 TCA/OASAS Residential Summit



## Annual Veterans Conference Chaired by Outreach's Jessica Shuren

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Outreach staff who provide direct service to veterans took part in the Alliance of Substance Abuse Providers (ASAP) 9th Annual Veterans Summit in Saratoga Springs in November 2023. Chaired by Outreach's Senior Director for Outpatient Services, Jessica Shuren, this conference brought together substance use disorder and mental health treatment professionals and veteran services groups from across New York State.

## Debbie Pantin Recognized with Legacy Leadership Award

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On December 11, 2023, the InUnity Alliance (formerly the Coalition for Behavioral Health and the Alliance of Substance Abuse Providers/NY) held their annual Leadership Awards reception. Honorees at the event included New York State Attorney General Letitia James, Rosa Gill, CEO Comunilife, Kimberly Williams, CEO Vibrant Emotional Health, and Drs. Uwedeino Brown, Strong Children Wellness, and Outreach's President and CEO Debra Pantin who were all recognized for their outstanding leadership in the behavioral health field.





## Outreach's Richmond Hill Wellness Center Designated CCBHC by NYS

Outreach's Richmond Hill Wellness Center was awarded the New York State Certified Community Behavioral Center (CCBHC) grant. This grant was awarded to only 13 provider agencies in the State. This grant is in addition to the CCBHC award our Richmond Hill location received from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration in 2022. CCBHC designation allows us to expand our scope of services for the Center's surrounding Queens community and provide comprehensive, integrated substance use and behavioral health treatment services for children, adults, and families.



## PROMOTIONS, TRANSITIONS & NEW HIRES

### PROMOTION

#### David Vizzini

David Vizzini was promoted to Outreach's newly created Vice President of Operations. He has spent nearly all of his 20+ year career here at Outreach – as Assistant Vice President of Residential Services, Senior Director of Residential Services, and



Program Director of Outreach House II, one of the agency's two residential programs for adolescents. Dave has been instrumental in the growth and quality care of the agency's residential programs. In every capacity, he has gained the esteem and trust of clients, organizational partners, and colleagues alike. As the Vice President of Operations, he will work in close collaboration with the COO and the executive team on operational matters as they relate to facilities management, IT services, capital projects, and the agency's new Supportive Crisis Stabilization Center.

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## TRANSITION



### Liliane Drago

Liliane Drago, Assistant Vice President of Outreach Training Institute (OTI), has decided to transition from working full-time to part-time. Fortunately for Outreach, she will continue on as Assistant Vice President and supervise a new OTI Director, who will manage the day-to-day operations of the program. She will also continue to assist the agency with training and staff development on a part-time basis.

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## NEW HIRE



### Christine Selario, LMSW, MPS

Christine Selario, LMSW, MPS joined the Outreach family in August 2023, as Program Director of Men's Community Residence at the Outreach Recovery Center in Brentwood, Long Island. In this role, she oversees the daily operations, manages, and develops staff for the adult male community residence. Ms. Selario has been a social work professional for 25 years; with over 15 years of experience in program development, management, and operations across the nonprofit sector. Christine has been the recipient of multiple awards, including New Business Development Award and Employee of the Year. She earned her MSW and her MPS from State University of New York-Stony Brook.

## Outreach programs **share their holiday joy!**

To bring holiday cheer to their program sites, many staff dressed up, decorated their facilities, and helped with special gatherings, sharing the joy of the season with colleagues and clients alike!





## Annual All Staff Holiday Party!

At Outreach, we love the holidays and celebrate together as a staff each January. We marked the holidays this year at the Terrace on the Park in Queens which provided majestic 360 views of



New York City. We enjoyed delicious food, played games, voted for staff's cutest pets (Vladimir the pet rock took this year's top honors), congratulated colleagues on important career transitions, and recognized several team members for their dedication of service with our annual Longevity Awards given to those who have worked at the agency for five or more years. Below are some pictures of the great fun that was had.







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