

Barrier Free Living
270 East Second Street
New York, New York 10009-7815
Telephone: 212-677-6668 (Voice/TDD)
Fax: 212-533-5330
www.bflnyc.org

Barrier Free Living

Annual Report 2009



The Transitional Housing Men's Support Group



Empower

Empowering individuals with disabilities to live independent, dignified lives free of abuse is our mission.

For over 30 years, we have followed a vision of a world free from abuse and bias, where people with disabilities live in a supportive physical environment. In this world, society values all its members; and individuals with disabilities are free of any internal barriers barring them from reaching their fullest potential. View our mission, vision and values at www.bfnyc.org



Art created by Freedom House Emergency Shelter resident.

A Message From the President and Chairman of the Board

July 26, 2010 will mark the 20th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. As we have gathered with other leaders of New York's disability community to plan for that celebration, we came to look at the ADA as one more milestone in a long journey toward inclusiveness. We decided to look back at the whole movement for the rights of people with disabilities in New York City. That movement began in the 1930's when people with disabilities protested over being excluded from Franklin Roosevelt's work programs. We became a part of that movement in the late 1970's when we joined with other people in the disabled community to fight for curb cuts, accessible buses and accessible housing. We look at the 20th Anniversary Celebration as a time to celebrate the battles won and to recommit ourselves to the vision of a barrier free New York.

The Disability Network of New York City's Executive Director Lawrence Carter-Long came up with the theme "We are the D in Diversity." It is a theme that resounds with our experience. We work with people of all ages, races, genders, sexual orientations. No one is immune to becoming disabled, becoming homeless or becoming a victim of domestic violence. That is a scary message that we live with every day. The best way we know to overcome the scariness is to infuse the people with whom we work with hope: to assist them in empowering themselves to develop a new life of independence, dignity and achievement.

Researchers and others who come to know our work "up close and personal" have been impressed that BFL workers walk the talk. No matter what the job is that they do, they understand our mission and the way in which their role, large or small, contributes to it. Your contributions to help us walk the talk are critical as we face an even more challenging economic environment than the years before. We thank you for all of the support we have received for all of the support that has brought us to where we are today.

Paul B. Feuerstein
President/CEO

Vincent Grenier
Chairperson

Board of Directors

Barrier Free Living

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Freedom House Emergency Shelter

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Barrier Free Living has been 'helping people with disabilities help themselves' for nearly three decades.



"Since being at BFL, I've made incredible progress in my life."

Rafael Figueroa at a park near his new apartment.

Dignity

The Barrier Free Living Family Programs

Transitional Housing:

New York City's only program where homeless people requiring the services of a homecare attendant can find shelter. We provide individuals with disabilities shelter, case management, independent living skill training, and a pathway to permanent housing in the community.

Freedom House Emergency Shelter:

A 44-apartment family emergency shelter for domestic violence survivors with disabilities and domestic violence survivors with children with disabilities.

Non Residential Domestic Violence (Secret Garden):

Our award winning program provides case management, individual advocacy and safety planning for individuals with disabilities who have also experienced domestic violence.

Outreach:

Reaching out to physically disabled homeless adults who may also have mental illness and/or chemical addictions, the Outreach Program provides referrals, case management, and housing assistance services.

Independence

Transitional Housing places more severely disabled people in permanent housing than any other program in the state.

Former Transitional Housing resident Rafael Figueroa shares how he went from feeling helpless on the streets to gaining a sense of pride in his life. Rafael was the recipient of the Barbara S. Kleiman award in 2009, recognizing the success of formerly homeless men and women.

"When I got to BFL's Transitional Housing I worked with my case manager, looking at my choices and using the computer room to improve my skills. I also connected with fellow residents like my friend Troy, who encouraged me to stay strong and find permanent housing. Now I have a one-bedroom, wheelchair accessible apartment. I want to move on to job training and school and I also want to get back into playing wheelchair basketball, which I used to do years ago."



Secret Garden offers Individual Counseling, Support Groups, Advocacy and Specialized Case Management and Counseling for Hearing-Impaired or Deaf Consumers.

At left, a deaf consumer at a Secret Garden support group.



“Since coming to BFL I am grateful and I have hope.”

Jose Rivera, at far left, with Angel Caula, Director of BFL’s Outreach Program.

Innovative

BFL’s Secret Garden won the 2009 Mary Byron Award, an honor given to programs considered to be national models for innovative work in breaking the cycle of domestic violence.

Secret Garden was the recipient of the Mary Byron ‘Celebrating Solutions’ Award based on its pioneering work in a variety of areas, including its collaboration with the Brooklyn DA’s Office, and South Brooklyn Legal Services. This unique, unified effort—called Barrier Free Justice—sprung up from a commitment to ensure that the multifaceted needs of survivors with disabilities, from criminal justice assistance to in-depth case management, are fully met.

Given the high rates of abuse among individuals with disabilities, providing both domestic violence and disability-sensitive services within one agency shouldn’t be a radical notion, yet programs such as the Secret Garden are rare.

New Life

Outreach has helped thousands of homeless men and women find housing, jobs and a new approach to life.

BFL’s Outreach Program is the only mobile team that serves homeless, physically disabled individuals with mental health and substance abuse issues in New York City. Established in 1990, the team’s main function is to identify such physically disabled people in the New York shelter system, hospitals, the streets, subways, transit terminals and parks.

Jose Rivera shares how he connected with the Outreach Program. “I hooked up with Outreach when I was in great need of help. The staff was there for me in so many ways. They helped me find housing through Project Renewal. I am very grateful and now have hope for my future.”



“Since coming to Freedom House with my children and working with my counselor I can now say I am no longer a victim. I am a survivor.”

Resident of Freedom House
Emergency Shelter



Failure is an integral part of growth, which can lead to progress and success. From BFL’s Value Statements

At left, a resident of the Transitional Housing program attends the gardening group.

Family

Freedom House’s Family Counseling Service unifies families who have survived trauma.

Named NY 1 *NYer of the Week*, BFL’s Freedom House Emergency Shelter boasts a dynamic interdisciplinary staff of social workers, creative arts therapists, case managers, occupational therapists and recreation aides who are dedicated to creating a safe and accessible facility. A recent addition is the Family Counseling Service.

Cynthia Amodeo, Ed.M., M.A., Coordinator, Generations of Freedom, relates one of the counseling service’s many success stories.

“One mother in our shelter was convinced her children knew nothing about her abuse. During our first session, the children spoke about how happy they were to be at Freedom House and away from the violence. They shared in great detail about the abuse they witnessed. The mother was relieved that we were there to help guide her family through this.”

Achievements

New York Nonprofit Press named BFL Agency of the Month, December 2009.

Secret Garden won 2009 Mary Byron Project ‘Celebrating Solutions’ Award for innovative and outstanding work in breaking the cycle of domestic violence.

Filmmaker Allon Schemool completed a short film about the Barrier Free Family of Programs (youtube, barrier free living).

Transitional Housing placed 51 people in permanent housing in 2009, up 24% from last year’s placements.

Freedom House Emergency Shelter began a ‘Drumming Circle’ for residents to promote healing, empowerment and leadership skills. The circle was designed by Kim Nimoy, who overcame domestic violence in her own life and received the Governor’s Freedom Justice and Courage Award.

Financials

Donors

2009

Balance Sheet June 30, 2009

ASSETS	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$1,015,378
Contracts and grants receivable	776,801
Other accounts receivable	17,715
Prepaid expenses	152,152
Other assets	500
Property & equipment (less depreciation and amortization of \$4,243,044)	7,413,028
TOTAL ASSETS	\$9,375,574
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	
Current portion of loans payable	143,710
Current portion of notes payable	316,398
Accounts payable & accrued expenses	556,824
Accrued salary & vacation payable	216,090
Funding advances	217,090
Loans payable	378,947
Notes payable	7,077,159
TOTAL LIABILITIES	8,906,218
NET ASSETS	
Unrestricted	469,356
Total net assets	469,356
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$9,375,574

Statement of Activities and Changes in Net Assets Year Ended June 30, 2009

REVENUES	
Government contracts & grants	\$5,406,935
Contributions	1,312,323
Rental income	128,810
Interest income	23,481
Residence fees	12,000
Miscellaneous	16,905
TOTAL REVENUES	\$6,900,454
EXPENSES	
Program services	4,971,896
Supporting services	1,741,590
TOTAL EXPENSES	6,713,486
Change in net assets	186,968
NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	
	282,388
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	
	469,356

Aetna Foundation
Assurant Foundation
Charles Schwab Foundation
Gannett Foundation
Goldman Sachs & Co.
J P Morgan Chase
New York University
The Philanthropic
Verizon Foundation

Alfred and Joan Goldfield
Angus and Isa McDonald
Anthony and Pat Smith
Bette Deveney
Bill and Pat Mears
Bill Pfeiffer
Blake and Martha Middleton
Carole Wind Mitchell
Christopher Robert
Claudine Mossberg
Dawn Reed
Dermont Frengley
Donald Grenier
Doreen Roasario
Dudley and Jacqueline Stone
Earnest Wellener Carter III
Elinore Robey
Ellen Grumet
Ethel Elman
Frank and Betty Birney
Galit Sklar
George and Linnea Wrage
Gennady and Kelly Gorel

Gerald Francese
Gideon Y. Schein
Harry Schumacher
Heather Broome
James Thomas
James Wistman & Sharon Fong
Janet O. Lanphier
Jean Lambert
Jean Streit
Jeffrey D. Topf
Jerrold Hirschberg

Jerry and Clare Thomas
John and Anne Fritts
Joseph Dohnert
Judith Kahan
Kate Lundin
Katharine Wolpe
Laurence Pagnoni
Loree True
Malcolm Wattman
Margaret Hale
Margaret T. Kaplan
Marie Martinez
Marian Goldberg
Martin and Joyce Miller
Maureen Testa
Maty Ed Porter
Mary Lambert
Melanie Hill
Melissa Kanes
Mishell Galarza
Mr. and Mrs. Martin Miller
Myta Cuadra-Lash
Nathan Schreier

Neil Robbins
Nina and Theodore Liebman
Pamela Bloodworth
Patricia Bettin-Smith
Patricia Zeno
Dr. Paul and Elaine Hartstein
Paul and Rebecca Feuerstein
Rachel Sokol
Ranesha Pitt
Ricardo Valera
Richard & Katherine Schumacher
Rick and Jacqueline Serafino
Richard Schumacher
Robert and Karoline Krupka
Robert and Maureen
Robert Gee and Catherine Chin
Stacy Frank
Steven and Christine Knight
Susannah Chandler
Timothy Weiss
Thomas Wilson Sr.
van Ameringen Foundation
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William Stivale
Warren and Zehava Sklar