

MOVING FORWARD



Transitional Housing Newsletter

2012 Spring/Summer Edition Vol. III Issue I

2011- A YEAR TO REMEMBER: 30 YEARS OF HELPING OTHERS



The late 1970's was still a time when the disabled population in this city and country were living in a limited & barrier filled world. A barrier filled life would best sum it up. Then one man's vision reached out to those who needed the most help. Out of Alphabet City on New York's Lower East Side, this visionary man named Paul Feuerstein spearheaded a program called Outward Bound that would lead him towards what would eventually be the creation of a visionary organization known as Barrier Free Living.

Barrier Free Living (BFL) is an organization that assists and empowers disabled individuals to transition their lives and circumstances to become not exclusion, but inclusion with mainstream society, but without significant barriers. It was in 1981 that Paul brought together the resources, time and energy to formulate an organization that didn't just help people who were in one way or another considered disabled. Cont'd on page 3

barrier free living

Mission:

Barrier Free Living empowers individuals with disabilities to live independent, dignified lives free of abuse

"MOVING FORWARD"

This publication represents what we all desire to do, despite mountain-like obstacles while either transitioning ourselves to permanent housing or assisting those who are currently in transition at Barrier Free Living (BFL). We hope to inform, educate, inspire and offer positive direction and encouragement not only to Residents & Staff, but also the Local Lower East Side Community as we work towards fulfilling our individual goals as we continue Moving Forward together at BFL.

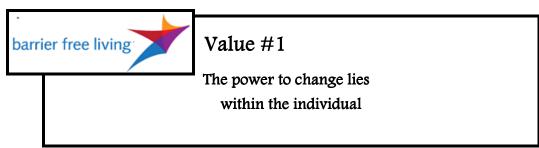
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BARRIER FREE LIVING MOVING FORWARD INTO NEXT ERA OF HELPING OTHERS LAUNCHES NEW & IMPROVED WEBSITE WWW.BFLNYC.ORG

The Barrier Free Living Daily May 2nd was a special evening as BFL launched its new website at the Children's Founding Center. Scott Hess, BFL Organ-**New Visions Blog** izational Manager, who spearheaded the project,, hosted the evening. Music was provided by Jake & John. Special guests included filmmaker Blake Drummond of BlakeD Productions (www.blaked.com). Blake made a video featured on the new website that highlights the new Misbarrier free living sion, Values & Vision of BFL. Website design was done by Chris Ritchie from New York's Coa Design (coadesign. Safe shelter for org). Chris also attended and shared his people with enthusiasm with guests about the building the new website. disabilities Help end hunge Staff, Interns & former

The new website opened up the next chapter in BFL's existence with a new and revised Mission, Vision and set of 10 Values (Highlighted throughout this issue on every page). Also the website got a new complete makeover as the latest way to share with the world BFL's visions through blogging, a daily updated news page and program highlights from the Barrier Free facilities. Also included are photos, media and current use of popular social media communication forms in use around the world. Their new website along with this newsletter also highlights the new logo, representing a multi-facetted and colors of an image in the shape of a flying bird to show that individuals and families do have options in finding freedom and hope from all barriers that life may present. That best sums up what Barrier Free Living endeavors to accomplish and share every day.



residents enjoyed the special evening to celebrate the new & improved website.

2011- A YEAR TO REMEMBER: 30 YEARS OF HELPING OTHERS continued

One Man's Vision Being Fulfilled

He took societies social problems into consideration realizing that drug/alcohol abuse, domestic violence, discrimination and homelessness had no barriers when it came to affecting the general population.

The disabled community needed a voice out the wilderness to speak and act towards helping disabled individuals break the barriers that were in their way to reaching a road of independence, freedom and escape from serious social issues. In doing so, he was also preserving not only the individuals dignity, but also the protection and preservation of their children, families and loved ones.

In 2011, Barrier Free Living celebrated 30 years of service in helping others help themselves.

There were many voices along the way in addition to Mr. Feuerstein's. They were honored in the Fall of 2011 with a "30 Years 30 Voices" celebration. In addition, he acknowledged the hard work of his dedicated staff and all involved in the Barrier Free Living family organizations and it's facilities that in addition to the Transitional Housing location, there is also Secret Garden, a safe haven daily program for victims of domestic violence and abuse. Also there's an emergency shelter called Freedom House which specifically houses and protects the disabled.

Paul is an artist, photographer and he brings a high level of spiritual consciousness to others.

"This is the natural next step in our continuum of care to support people in their quest for barrier free living,"

Paul Feuerstein, President/CEO.
Regarding new South Bronx Supporting Housing Project

Those things allow him to partnership with organizations that promote the arts like Art Connects of NYC and may other groups and organizations not only locally, but worldwide.



In addition, with strong cooperation and support for and with the Human Services Council, NYC Coalition For Domestic Violence, Paul Feuerstein is always a proponent of improving advocacy efforts to fight for rights and also in fighting against current budget and service cuts.

That sad fact exists though, that these projects, goals and BFL's ability to continue to help others needs financial support now more than ever for Paul to continue to help disabled individuals, domestic violence victims and the services and programs they provide.

We can all play a part in fulfilling our part as residents, staff and volunteers if we stay positive and cooperative in our attitude and efforts towards reaching the various goals we have set.

-John Aliseo

Now, in the fourth decade of fulfilling his vision of helping others as Paul Feuerstein gets set to expand his visionary ideas and efforts by having a new 120 unit Supportive Housing development in the South Bronx built.



ADVOCACY & YOU... Be A Part of It Now More







COMING SOON - YOUR
OPPORTUNITY TO
WRITE THE BEST
LETTER OR ESSAY
ABOUT CURRENT
STATE OF BUDGET
CUTBACKS OF
SHELTER & HOUSING
PROGRAMS PRIZES
FOR BEST WRITTEN
MORE DETAILS TO
COME



Value #2

Taking personal responsibility enhances an individual's self esteem.





Words & Thoughts

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Residents & Staff...



John Muhammed Resident

"A Healthy Mind Going Forward: Leave the Past Behind Facing 2012"

Through my experience in living at Barrier Free Living I have learned the value of letting go of my past in which it has molded me into a better person. I am disabled but it does not define who I am as an individual. Each and every day I am learning to deal with whatever obstacle that I am faced with. Barrier Free Living provides a great opportunity for individuals with disabilities to deal with getting past life's trials and tribulations. Living at Barrier Free Living has taught me how to operate an electric wheelchair in which I can be mobile around the community. Also I have acquired various skills through the occupational therapy department that has shaped me as a person. I have become more independent in going through the basic steps of hygiene with minimal efforts. Also I have learned how to dress myself and cook simple meals. I thank God for Barrier Free Living in which I believe it is the best shelter in this city that has these opportunities.

John and Tina share a common goal of seeing the good opportunity BFL offers them in transitioning their lives. They both wish all residents could share the same attitude.



Tina Fauerbach Resident

Group and Meeting Awareness

Since I have been here at Barrier Free Living, I have had an experience unlike any other. I have made some really good friends and I have made some acquaintances as well. I thought this would be like the last shelter I was in but it isn't anything the same.

BFL offers sever al groups through OT and people think they have no benefit to them because they feel they know it all already but what they don't realize is that everything that is being taught are things that will help once we all get our own apartment and are on our own. Some people say, "What do I need to learn how to shop when I need to be shopping for other things?" The point is that many of us do not save money because as soon as we get our

check at the beginning of the month, we are out buying things unnecessarily and then by the middle of the month, we have nothing. Do we really know what ways we can utilize to save money each month? What about our nutrition? We all have issues with our health and even if we don't have certain illnesses, it never hurts to learn of ways to prevent from getting them. Maybe we all should at least try to come to at least one group and even if we don't feel it's something beneficial to us, we can ask how is this going to benefit me when I leave here? We all will find out that it will have some kind of way to benefit us later in life, if it isn't going to benefit us today.

We all want to complain about a lot of things in here so there are community meetings several Thursday mornings in the month but hardly anyone shows up. What is the point of complaining and not coming to the meeting where all these issues can and are addressed? I know we all have appointments and places to go and people to see but maybe we should take the time to come to at least one meeting out of the month to voice our opinions and concerns. What good is it doing us to share our concerns with each other when there is nothing we all can do? We can only voice our concerns to the proper staff and allow them to address the concerns with those who would be able to make things better for us all.

BFL is a community of many people of different cultures with challenges who are seeking independent housing. I am overjoyed when any of our residents come and say they are "Moving Forward"! - Michelle Britton- Resident Secretary



Value #3

An individual's strengths are the building

blocks to achieving life's goals.

WORDS & WISDOM

FROM A DIAMOND

LIKE SHARP MIND



Moving forward Something to look fareward IN Life it self.

Holidays come and go. Clothiss where out, Bank necounty go up mad down. But, Phillipsophy lasts a Lifethine. Phillipsophy which places a Lifethine. Phillipsophy is stored from white made to happiness, it stores from the life meet consciously with greatier purposes, and fonction how to make the provide of theretical which is stellate once probability, the purpose and to the form the stellate once probability was with them dissented into the two saids and the stellate once probability was with them dissented him to the the dissented and the propriets that tend to degree and the life.



James LeGrand Facility Cook

MOVINGFOR WARD Page 5

Life is too short to permit anyone or anything to bring negativity to your life. Reevaluate your life and decide who you permit to sit in the front row. Not everyone is healthy enough to have a front row seat in our lives. The more you seek quality, respect, growth, peace of mind, love and truth around you, the easier it will become for you to decide who gets to sit in that front row.

I would like to send a very positive message to all agencies. I would like for them to come and see how the residents of Barrier Free Living deal with the way they are living. Even as each one of them has a disability and I would just like for the agencies to see how strong they are.

-James LeGrand

James enjoys writing and enjoys sharing his own positive story of self change and what we can accomplish if we truly put forth a hard determined effort. Always moving forward.





Marcia never stops doing what she enjoys and loves involving others in her unique craft work.



Putting Time & Creative Talent To Good Use

I have been inspired to make baskets out of plastic canvas and yarn. I was inspired by the Day Program at United Methodist Church in Brooklyn. The program is open to everyone. They have a van to pick anyone up that needs to be picked up. The day program is Monday through Friday from 8 am until 3 pm. I have been able to share this information with others. I have met a lot of friends from this program. I miss my program because I have been unable to attend but I have every intention on returning. I enjoy making my baskets because it cheers others up as well as myself. It takes about 2 weeks to complete them. If anyone has any suggestions or if anyone would like to have one, please see me and I will do my best to process your request. Thank you.

Moving Forward & Staying Active



Life is about doing things! What are our accomplishments? How we live and think everyday can become our disability depending on what we are trying to accomplish. We are all at times the teacher, the student, the winner, the looser, the runner up, etc. If anyone is living they will find themselves as any that I mentioned through-out their day. Technology is now a part of everyone's life and we are now very much a part of the scenes of everyday life. It is very important that the staff here move forward into doing everything that they can so we are a part of everyday life. Going to the theatre, concerts, sporting events, movies, etc. Hospital Audience has part of their internet site that gives information about artistic events, etc throughout the 5 boroughs. There are tickets to talk shows that are taped

here in NYC. for free or minimal cost. Get out and find a place to exercise their body as your mind.

Now is the time that we move forward into the future, despite our limitations. This is how everyone should live today and that includes the disabled community! This is very important for everyone! - Ed Jupp Resident, Actor & Member of SAG (Screen Actors Guild)

Ed is a good example that if we are determined to find answers, we put forth a hard effort to find a good solution to our particular problems.



Value #4

People who understand and build the skills and the mind set to become independent are less likely to accept abuse or be abusive

SPOTLIGHT:

OCCUPATIONAL

\mathbf{T} HERAPY



Your TICKET to Moving Forward!!!



Occupational Therapy Services

My name is Camille Cummings and I am an Occupational Therapy (OT) intern here at Barrier Free Living – Transitional Housing Facility. Occupational therapy is a health profession that focuses on helping people achieve independence in all areas of their lives. OT treatment can be provided to every individual along the lifespan, with various needs, improve their cognitive, physical and motor skills and enhance their self-esteem and sense of accomplishment.

As OT interns, under the supervision of an occupational therapist, we perform evaluations and administer treatment during a 12 week period. We collaborate with clients and staff to provide the most effective treatment for our residents. We encourage them to be an active participant in a variety of groups that we offer here at the facility and we also provide one on one treatment to our residents to help better assist them and meet them at the point of their need. Groups that we offer are, but not limited to: money management, stress management, fitness/exercise, cooking, housing, relaxation, nutrition, arts and crafts, substance abuse, work skills and many more. Individual sessions comprises of an array of interventions including assistance with dressing, use of adaptive equipment, time management, employment through VESID and lots more as deemed necessary.

Other ways that we help to assist our residents is trough obtaining necessary documents that are essential to their transitioning back into the community in collaboration with their case managers. We help obtain birth certificates, credit reports/scores, MTA applications/reduce fare, assurance phones, etc.

We have been offering these services over the years and residents have enjoyed and benefited significantly from them.

We are a part of a transitional housing team and our residents are our priority. We are dedicated in helping them to become independent, successful and productive members of society.

Our passion and drive is making in the lives of our residents and what better place to continue than here at Barrier Free Living (BFL)?

We are available Monday through Friday from 9 am - 5 pm and our office is located on the first floor.

We can be reached via phone (212-677-6668, ext 171) and e-mail @ transitionalhousingot@bflnyc.org to address any of your concerns/questions regarding OT services.



O.T. Cooking Group





Value #5

Failure is an integral part of growth, which can lead to progress and success.



How can one benefit from the many OT services at Barrier Free Living?

Hello. My name is Maria Mardarewich. I am an OT intern here at Barrier Free Living's Transitional Housing Program. I have been interning here for about a month and I am honored to be a part of such a great community that changes individual's with physical disabilities lives one step at a time. As an OT intern it is my duty to educate the residents here at Barrier Free Living about the endless opportunities they have for improvement of there overall health and well being.

So what is occupational therapy? Occupational therapy is simply the art of healing through doing. So what exactly does this mean? Firstly, this theory is related to individuals that are disabled, injured, have a disease or simply are affected in there daily activities or occupations. An occupation can be anything from work, sleep, education, play, or even leisure. As occupational therapists we access the problem areas of these individuals and work together to create goals to better improve there performance/ participation in their every day life. According to the AOTA, we use approaches that focus around the promotion of health and wellness, including self-management strategies, to enable or enhance performance in everyday life activities. Here at Barrier Free Living we do assessments with the clients to access what it is they need our assistance with. The overarching goal is to be achieved during the individual sessions in which the client is able to work one-on-one with the OT intern to be better able to engage in there occupations.

The groups that we provide here at Barrier Free living help the client achieve life skills that will better prepare them to be more independent for when they attain housing. The skills that are addressed include money management, coping skills, stress management skills, communication skills, etc. The groups that we provide at BFL include Diabetes management, housing group, nutrition group, self-esteem group, leisure, fitness group, stress-less group etc. The groups always based off of a group protocol with an activity planned each time. Residents will be able to voice their opinions, have one-on-one interactions with other residents, be able to do hands-on activities and overall be able to problem solve more effectively with the acquired skill-sets they will attain. Lastly I want to add that I hope that the residents at Barrier Free Living will utilize all the services that are available to them while here. Thank you!!! ©









Maria & Camille played a big part at the Goldman Sach's sponsored Spring Wellness Event



Value #6

Healthy families place a value on children's voices

Message From YOUR Transitional Housing Director

I am pleased to see the renewal and revitalization of the Moving Forward Newsletter. The title of the newsletter comes from the goals our program has for each resident at BFL and that is to Move Forward to permanent housing but it is not limited to that. The goal is to Move Forward to a brighter future, to move forward and build a community where disability is not a barrier, to move forward to a life without restrictions.

We face incredible challenges in reaching those goals. Both staff and residents are partners in those goals and challenges. To reach those goals each of us must be diligent on our efforts of seeking housing and advocating for additional resources for the disabled community.

As we Move Forward through the Spring and Summer we need to realize the power and support of reaching our goals and working *together* in those elforts.



Catherine Gormley Transitional Housing Director

BFL &

YOU!

The Residents

From YOUR CASE MANAGERS ...

Self examination is key to moving forward in life and in finding and maintaining permanent housing. Two questions were asked our case managers about most clients problems as well as offering a solution.

What are the most common problems clients are dealing with?

"Credit issues and lack of motivation, even after being informed what is the best solution" Also, "Not enough use of independent thinking"- Andre' Rodriquez

"Non-compliance, denial and disrespect along with a lack of gratitude" Also, "Lacking a sense of entitlement"- Conchita Morales

What is the best solution?

"Limit use of credit cards, pay off debt and use cash responsibly" Also "Use the opportunity you have now to save your money" In addition "See yourself as not being disabled, begin a consistent routine of doing and thinking things independently"

Andre' agrees that attitude could be your gateway out of the shelter system or a road to nowhere if we have the right attitude- "Six months or six years", "Prosperity and happiness, success and better health can be achieved by perseverance and determination or be they can be hampered if we don't have a positive attitude"

Conchita recommends "Clients need to seek the help they are being offered" Also, "Get a plan for yourself, set a time frame (example 90 days- What can I accomplish?), make it happen"

Conchita concludes "Have hope and faith, be encouraged and stay positive"



Value #7

Information is empowerment.

Sharing knowledge helps everyone

ICS – HERE TO HELP YOU

Independence Care System (ICS) operates a non-profit Medicaid managed long-term care plan in New York City whose motto is: "Adults with Physical Disabilities Welcome Here." Here at BFL residents have a personal ICS Social Worker, LeShon A. Gawlmon, MSW to assist in your health service needs as during your transitional living arrangements. ICS presently serves Manhatten, Brooklyn and the Bronx. LeShon is available on sight Monday thru Friday on the main floor or you may call him at



212-614-2474 for an appointment. For more information about ICS, you may visit www.ICSNY.

LeShon A. Gawlmon, MSW



OUTREACH DEPARTMENT

REACHING OUT TO HELP YOU

The Outreach Team helps homeless disabled New Yorkers, guiding individuals with disabilities toward solutions involving housing, benefits and rehabilitation. The Outreach team is headed by Angel Coula.

Angel is available by appointment to offer one on one counseling on a wide variety of topics and issues specializing in helping people with disabilities from substance abuse, mental & physical challenges as you transition towards becoming more independent and a better person.



Please see your case manager or call x154 to speak with Angel if you have any need to discuss things that you may need special help with during your residency here at BFL or after you leave BFL.

Angel Coula Outreach Department Coordinator

YOUR Transitional Housing Exit Strategic Solutions are...

- Be Prepared—Always have your documents current & up to date.
- Be Pro-active—Do what you can to search for housing opportunities & be flexible.
- Make a plan—Then follow through with it.
- Never become complacent, rather be determined to get things done.
- Work on YOU and what can make YOU a better person and focus on what would make YOU a good tenant.
- Make sure you understand your options & the process needed to fulfil those options.
- Ask for the help you need
- Avoid things and activities that could negatively affect your ability to show you are a responsible individual.

barrier free living

Value #8

Trusting relationships are built on a foundation of confidentiality

THINGS TO KNOW, DO & PLACES TO GO!

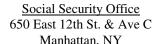
What are some things that are available to you in your community?

- **⇒ Hamilton Fish Park**
- **⇒ Tompkins Square Park**
- **⇒ 6th St Community Center**
 - **⇒** East River Park

Be a TV Audience Member

You can get discount tickets to off broadway shows on first avenue at http://www. theaterforthenewcity.net/. Also, are you interested in seeing Dr. Oz, David Lettermen or even Jerry Springer? You can get tickets to these shows at http://nytix.com/index. html. Another great website to utilize is abledata.com provides objective information about assistive technology products and rehabilitation equipment. Lastly if you are interested in doing something other then just staying at BFL there is a website that allows you to search places to go such as museums/ plays/zoos etc at http://hainyc.org/ accessguide/list.php. – Ed Jupp

Tompkins Square Station Post Office 244 E 3rd St.



Pharmacies

Loisaida Pharmacy

(212) 254-7307 273 East 3rd Street (between Ave C and D) Weekday: 9am-6pm Saturday: 9am-5pm

Duane Reade Pharmacy

(212) 375-9000 194 East 2nd St. & Ave B Monday-Saturday: 9am-10pm Sunday: 10am-8pm

ICS

257 Park Avenue South 212-584-2500



Laundry Room Use

Tips

Please Remember 48 Residents Share The Machines

Be Considerate & Helpful At All Times

Time Your Washing & Drying Load & Stay Available

Don't Over Dry or Re-wash Same Items.

Ask Home Attendants For Assistance When Needed



Value #9

A holistic perspective embraces he individual's self-determination, culture, religion and values.

Hamilton Fish Park Branch

Hamilton Fish Park Library

415 East Houston Street (near Avenue D) New York, NY 10002-1197 (212) 673-2290

> Monday: 10am – 6pm Tuesday: 10am - 7pm Wednesday: 10am – 6pm Thursday: 10am - 7pm Friday: 10am - 5pm Saturday: 10am - 5pm Sunday: CLOSED

Hamilton Fish Recreation Center

128 Pitt Street New York, NY 10002

NYC Department of Homeless Services 33 Beaver Street New York, NY 10004-2736

COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

www.coalitionforthehomeless.org 129 Fulton Street New York, NY 10038 Telephone: 212-776-2000

Be Smart Be Safe

Report Any Unsafe Condition



If You Use A Powerchair – SLOW IS THE WAY TO GO INDOORS

Turn Off When You Are Stopped Near Curbs, Stairs or Any Place Your Chair Can't Go

Keep Your Corner Clean In Your Room

No Glass Items & Containers NOT Allowed In Shelter

Smoke Outside in Designated Areas

BFL's Best Friend Is Now A BEST ASSISTANT

She began as the "Pet Therapy" star attraction in 2010, but now she has gone further in her role as a BFL four legged volunteer. Her name is Nina, she is the faithful & loving pet of Patricia Motus Occupational Therapy Program Manager at Barrier Free Living.

Nina is a two year old French Bulldog .She recently successfully completed training as a Certified Animal Assistant through Bide-a-wee Pet Partner's Program.

Nina has become our official BFL "Therapy Dog". Through A Fair Shake For Youth, an organization that uses the therapeutic power of dogs to help children that live in poverty and have related factors such as abuse, neglect, inadequate healthcare, and poor schools and even housing.

These dogs have been proven successful in helping these children develop the empathy, responsibility and self-esteem they need to succeed. Nina is a therapy dog in which she participates in weekly sessions one-on-one with children doing tricks that further teach skills that will further benefit them in the future.

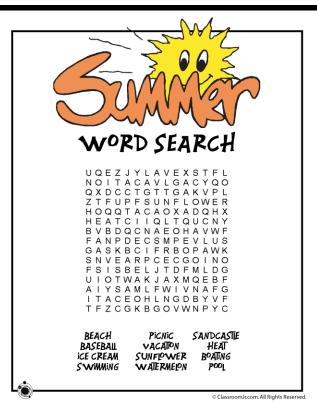
Volunteer teams commit for the length of the program to give the youth the chance to build a relationship with an individual dog. Each session has a specific activity or goal — leash walking, teaching a trick like "crawl" or "spin," or perhaps, recreating dog cognition experiments to gain insight into how dogs think and to help them develop their own observation abilities.





Through all these interactions, the youth experience a range of emotions. As they work toward success, they may feel the pull between frustration and patience. They learn about and practice positive reinforcement. They see that they can succeed.

Please support the Pet Therapy groups and try to embrace the warm love Nina offers as she conveys her own unique four legged efforts to provide support through her trained efforts and example that we can all learn to feel better and be benefited from!





Value #10

The goals of staff and consumers are best achieved through teamwork.



Vision:





Barrier Free Living is our vision. We strive for

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.



Alphabet Ci neighborhood for the past 30 Years.

Your opportunity to stand out in the community and to be a positive part of it happens everyday. Make everyday count here in Alphabet City in the L.E.S. Always continue to be a good neighbor.

MOVING FORWARD

Transitional Living Newsletter



Please Support Barrier Free Living www.bflnyc.org

BE A PART OF THE NEXT ISSUE!
SEE THE OCCUPATIONAL DEPT.
FOR MORE INFORMATION
THANKS FOR READING!
-John Aliseo
Editor
Questions or Comments?

Questions or Comments? john.movingforward@gmail.com