

Hamilton-Madison House 2021 Annual Report





Wow, what a year!

At HMH, the COVID experience along with the tense racial events in our midst called up so many emotions.

We felt grief for those lost to us, distress about those who faced financial and other hardships, and outrage about the hate crimes targeted at Asian-Americans and the harsh injustices people of color continue to suffer.

At the same time, though, we've been inspired by the compassion and creativity with which so many met these crises, fueling our determination to ensure that HMH is a vital source for relief and for generating hope and opportunity.

We are so grateful to all our staff and volunteers who transcended personal concerns to extend care to our neighbors - by operating food pantries, delivering meals to the homes of seniors, providing crisis counseling and facilitating COVID vaccinations.

We also greatly appreciate that our teams transitioned so rapidly and effectively to providing services on-line. We operated our early childhood education programs virtually, checked-in daily with hundreds of seniors and their caregivers, provided therapy sessions via Tele-Health and provided music instruction online to youth.

Currently, with caution, we're gradually returning to pre-COVID operations and we'll be very glad to connect more personally with community residents, partners, supporters and friends.

As ever, while we recognize that social inequities persist and the need for services and supports is pressing, we remain optimistic about achieving a city and society in which everyone is afforded access to social and financial capital and the opportunity to realize their highest aspirations.

We thank all our supporters and friends and we look forward to many fruitful collaborations over the next year!

Anthony Giorgio
Board President

Cao K. O
Board Chairperson

Isabel Ching, LMSW
Executive Director



Behavioral Health

Regrettably, the pandemic exacerbated mental health conditions for many and contributed to newly developed mental health concerns for even more of us.

The HMM mental health clinics and addiction services adapted quickly to COVID. NYS government approved Tele-Health as a platform through which government-funded behavioral health services could be provided, and our clinicians converted their practices accordingly while also accepting many new clients experiencing such symptoms as anxiety, depression and isolation. For those requiring injection or facing severe circumstances, we operated a vastly scaled-down and COVID-safe clinic.

While our programs are, of course, open to all, HMM offers a specialty in serving members of the Asian-American population. We provide services in six Asian language and numerous dialects and we bring acute sensitivity to the cultural characteristics of participants in the form of clinics particularly suited for those of Chinese, Korean, Japanese and South East Asian descent. In all, we support approximately 700 people annually through behavioral health programs and we are among the largest providers of services to Asian-Americans in the Northeastern United States.

Following 9/11 and Super Storm Sandy, HMM operated Project Hope, a federal government-funded initiative designed to extend crisis counseling and other short-term supports to those affected by the disasters. The recently reinstated program benefitted those from our neighborhood adversely affected by COVID.



Early Childhood Education

HMH annually serves nearly 400 pre-school children and their family members through programming based in childcare centers and in the homes of licensed providers. The programs take a holistic approach to education with focuses on helping children develop socially and emotionally and preparing them to excel in kindergarten and beyond.

Very quickly following the outbreak of COVID in NYC, all in-person early childhood education programs were discontinued and we shifted nearly immediately to a virtual format. Our staff adapted skillfully and we engaged children along with their parents collectively in creative learning sessions. Come spring, NYC's Department of Education required that we offer an in-person learning option, and we thereafter operated a hybrid model.

In the midst of this challenging experience, we learned that NYC's Department of Education was planning to considerably reduce early childhood education programs in Chinatown and on the Lower East Side, and we formed a coalition of local leaders that advocated for the services to be maintained. Thankfully, new opportunities to acquire funding to operate programs were made available and the large majority of our programming will indeed be sustained.

We believe deeply in the importance of engaging parents in their children's educational experience and extending them the supports they need to themselves flourish educationally and professionally. As such, we have established a Two-Generation initiative, designed to allow parents take part in English for Speakers of Other Languages, receive assistance to gain access to college, gain fluency about financial management and benefit from healthcare and mental health services. Growing this initiative is a major priority for HMH over the next years.



Services To Seniors

Older adults have certainly been among the residents in our community most challenged by COVID. Many live alone and on a modest amount of income and participating in our senior center, Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC) and Social Adult Day Care programs has long afforded them the deeply necessary experiences of socializing, creative expression and partaking of healthy and communal meals.

COVID, of course, compelled us to close all in-person programming for seniors, giving rise to grave concern about their well-being. In response, we quickly pivoted and put in place a practice of daily check-in calls and virtual case management while also providing support remotely to caregivers. Further, we partnered with emerging food relief organizations to provide home-delivered meals and operate pantries in convenient and COVID-safe settings. Once vaccines were available, we facilitated vaccinations for seniors, including by co-hosting a community-based vaccination event with the healthcare organization Northwell Health.

Another crucial focus over the last year was supporting those serving as caregivers to seniors. Given the restrictions and complications of the pandemic, the needs of caregivers were compounded and HMH's services for caregivers grew considerably in Manhattan and citywide. For many families of Asian descent, the complications of COVID were exacerbated by continuing anti-Asian hate crimes, which deterred many from leaving their homes. In response, HMH redoubled efforts to support caregivers emotionally and practically, including by arranging for home-delivered food and household and pharmacy items, helping to keep them safe and comfortable.



Community Organizing

Remaining intricately engaged at the community level is an abiding practice for HMH. In addition to providing services, we believe it is crucial that we are acutely attuned to local conditions and that we serve as agent for enabling our neighbors to bring voice to public issues affecting them.

Within the midst of the pandemic, we found it as necessary as ever to actively organize. This took the form of facilitating census registration, extensively distributing food, enabling seniors and others to receive COVID vaccinations, conducting a Get Out The Vote Campaign in anticipation of NYC elections and to educate voters about NYC's newly instituted Ranked Choice voting system, and supporting the Black Lives Matter movement and efforts to combat anti-Asian hate crimes.

HMH identifies firmly as an anti-racist organization and we are sharply focused on helping to build an equitable and harmonious multi-racial community.



Supporting HMH

Among the challenges posed by COVID was that our ability to hold in-person fundraising events was impeded. Typically, HMH holds numerous such events each year, generating a considerable portion of our philanthropic income.

With creativity, though, we were able to continue actively fundraising.

Last summer, we held an outdoors golf outing at which many HMH friends were thrilled to reconnect for a round of golf and COVID-safe socializing while also competing for many coveted raffle prizes donated by restaurants, sports memorabilia companies, food, wine and other specialty providers.

In November, instead of our annual Gala a small number of Board leaders, masked and socially distanced, led a classic Phone-a-thon, resulting in financial support for HMH's food relief efforts from dozens of New Yorkers.

In place of our annual June Lee Chinatown Banquet, in April we held our first ever virtual fundraising event. Honoring local leaders who stepped forward to address food-insecurity, the event featured a cooking demonstration by noted chef Grace Young, a roundtable discussion about food relief facilitated by WABC-TV News report CeFaan Kim, and a traditional Chinese Lion Dance performance by local youth.

We very much hope COVID conditions will allow all our joyful in-person events to resume over the next year.

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Capital One Foundation
CHSC Peaceful Garden Society

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NYC Department of Education
NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene

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