

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Mae Lee, Chair, and Debra Jeffries-Glass, Co-Chair  
Community Board 3 Health, CB3 Seniors & Human Services Committee  
**CC:** *CB3 Chair Alysha Coleman, CB3 District Manager Susan Stetzer*

**From:** University Settlement, Chinese-American Planning Council, Grand Street Settlement, Alliance for Positive Health, Henry Street Settlement, and Community Healthcare Network

**Date:** February 3, 2019

**Re:** NY State Attorney General's Office Rivington House Restitution Grants

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In February of 2018, as a result of an investigation of the sale and loss of Rivington House, the New York State Attorney General awarded our Lower East Side non-profit organizations approximately \$1.25 million as part of a larger settlement with the Allure Group. The choice of which groups to award was made solely by the AG's office using these criteria: services provided within the 10002 zip code; with a mission to serve people in vulnerable health situations; and in good standing with the NY State Charities Bureau. Our groups were notified of the potential awards last winter, which we shared with the Community Board and this committee at the time. We were given the opportunity to write descriptions of how we would direct the funds during the summer, and were notified over the recent winter holidays that the payments would be made.

The six groups have designated this funding to support individual projects in each of our organizations that are consistent with the overall goal of ensuring that the Lower East Side community continues to have access to vital health care and social supports services. Our organizations also met as a group, and with elected officials, the AG's office, and others from the Community Board, the Neighbors to Save Rivington House, and other health, elder care and community planning experts to discuss pooling some of these funds for a joint project that will have --- we hope --- a longer term impact on the community, beyond our direct services in the next couple of years.

In light of the surprise December 2018 announcement of an LOI between Slate Property and Mt. Sinai / Beth Israel Hospital regarding the use of 45 Rivington Street, we are considering our options for the best use of any funds we may choose to pool and use together. That decision will need to be shared at a future committee meeting.

This memo describes briefly the separate direct service activities that each organization will undertake using these funds.

**Chinese-American Planning Council, Inc.** proposes to use the allocated funds to assist vulnerable, low-income community members in the Lower East Side by providing them with

services at a newly developed Senior Adult Day Care Center and a mental health services program.

The proposed Senior Adult Day Care will be located in the Chung Pak LDC/Everlasting Pine senior housing building at 125 Walker Street. The program will be open to homebound tenants in the building as well as individuals in the neighborhood. The culturally competent services provided will range from a hot lunch every Wednesday to physically and mentally engaging activities such as Tai Chi, gardening and calligraphy. CPC hopes to serve 74 community members through this program yearly.

The mental health services program will be based out of CPC's Manhattan Community Center at 165 Eldridge Street, which is a mainstay of the Lower East Side community. CPC proposes to provide community members who potentially have anxiety, depression, and other mental health symptoms with screening assistance and follow-up. The program will employ licensed clinician offer treatment options such as therapy or referrals to culturally competent partner organizations. CPC hopes to serve 100 community members through this program yearly.

**Grand Street Settlement** will utilize the Restitution Grant funds to launch start-up services for older adults at the new GSS Lower East Side Essex Crossing intergenerational community center at 175 Delancey Street. The center is located in Site 6 of Essex Crossing and is available to the residents and community members. Services will include weekly Tai Chi, Yoga, chorus classes and health, wellness, social support and recreational activities. The center's program design is informed by a community needs assessment conducted in partnership with the Robert N Butler Columbia Aging Center at Columbia University for seniors services and a forthcoming needs assessment by the Hester Street Collaborative to develop youth afterschool programs.

**Henry Street Settlement** proposes to use the allocated funds from the Attorney General's office to support the organization's multidimensional senior services programs, as well as new initiatives including CASA (the Center for Active and Successful Aging), which is an Article 31 satellite mental health clinic tailored exclusively to older adults. In particular the fund will help to meet the evolving needs of nearly 4000 older adult's clients that Henry Street serves annually, with programs and services meant to promote healthy and active aging, and which ensure that vulnerable seniors living on the Lower East Side (LES) have the necessary support to age in place, in their own homes and communities.

CASA offers individual mental health counseling sessions, mental health and depression screenings, and referrals to specialty treatment and/or additional counseling; all while being specifically geared to the unique needs of an older adult population. As barriers to mental health treatment remain pervasive in our community, particularly for our culturally-diverse older adult clients, the place-based model intrinsic to CASA is crucial to the ability to both increase access to behavioral health treatment and to overcome the stigma associated with it. Indeed, all of the programs and services offered to older adults, from congregate meals to case management to recreation activities, are holistic, place-based, and participant inclusive. Reflective of the diverse community that are served, services are culturally competent, delivered in multiple languages, and attuned to the wide-ranging needs, concerns, and strengths of the community.

**Alliance for Positive Health** plans to use the Attorney General's Restitution Grant to renovate and modernize the Lower East Side Harm Reduction Center (LESHRC) located at 25 Allen Street. This will enable Alliance to deliver a fuller array of integrated services to a larger

population of current users and people seeking to maintain recovery. Through providing low-threshold access to sterile syringes, overdose prevention education, medication assisted treatment, care management, linkages to medical services, HIV/HCV testing, immunization (influenza, hepatitis, hepatitis B), and peer navigation services, Alliance LES Harm Reduction Center services help to prevent drug use (e.g.; overdose, endocarditis, skin infection, and vein damage). Our desire is to expand access to medical and collocated behavioral health services (inclusive of mental health services). This endeavor will position us to fill service gaps on the Lower East Side.

**Community Healthcare Network** will dedicate its grant to the continuing growth in building community partnerships to address the social and economic needs of patients on the Lower East Side. While continuing to grow and improve the integrated care provided in its health centers, CHN will expand its work with the LES community based organizations to secure for its patients the social supports needed to maximize positive health outcomes.

**University Settlement Society of New York** will use the Restitution Grant to fund the services and activities of the HeART (Health, Art, Recreation and Technology) Program at the Houston Street Center. This is a vital resource for over 400 adults age 50+ in the Lower East Side and Chinatown communities has only miniscule public funding support. The majority of participants (81%) are seniors over 60; 53% of participants report an annual household income below \$30,000; and 80% of HeART participants identify as Asian, and 72% speak Cantonese or Mandarin as their primary language.

HeART's programming includes opportunities for physical activity, swimming, creative expression, peer support, community-building and connections to other social service and health supports. The program operates seven days per week, year-long, and hosts up to 40 activities every week, including: aqua aerobics, Pilates, Qi Gong, "drop-in" yoga and recreational swim, volunteering and leadership opportunities, community events, intergenerational activities and health promotion workshops. The program is integrated into University Settlement's campus of senior-serving programs over five local sites, serving over 2,000 seniors a year with a range of services from crisis health and housing services, to home-based and center-based mental health and nutrition support, to creative, recreational and civic engagement activities.