



Getting Out and Staying Out

President and CEO Mark Goldsmith

FY20 Budget Forum Testimony

Saturday, March 2, 2019

Getting Out and Staying Out (GOSO) is one of New York City's leading criminal justice organizations working to empower justice-involved young men. We work with more than 2,400 young men on an annual basis to reshape their futures through educational achievement, meaningful employment, and financial independence. At GOSO, we focus on each individual's capacities and strengths, as well as their development needs and emotional well-being. Our aim is to promote personal, professional, and intellectual growth through goal-oriented programming and comprehensive social support services.

GOSO has established itself as one of the most effective reentry programs, working with 16 to 24-year-old, justice-involved men. Only 15% of GOSO participants return to jail, as compared to a national average of 67% for their age group. Over the past fifteen years, we have proven that early intervention within the criminal justice system, along with supportive counseling, educational support, vocational training and workforce development works to reduce recidivism and help out participants become contributing members of their communities. Reentry services save the State millions of dollars a year. For example, GOSO's cost per participant is \$7,500 a year (including a paid internship!) vs. over \$100,000 to incarcerate an individual for a year in upstate prisons, and even more in Rikers.

GOSO has continued to expand our services to serve thousands of young men every year. As our services and number of participants have grown, so to have our costs. We have recently opened a new educational center, to serve as the headquarters for all GOSO educational and vocational programs, which we believe to be the key to success for our participants.

Our educational programs have helped GOSO participants earn degrees and certificates from leading colleges and universities; Columbia University, Queens College, Bronx Community College, Hostos Community College and many more. In collaboration with the Department of

Education (DOE), GOSO has established a high-school-equivalency program at our East Harlem community office, specifically our Education Center. Our Pathways to Graduation (P2G) class makes education more accessible to our participants, and staff members are always available to support our students' efforts. Students receive breakfast, lunch and MetroCards for transportation to and from class. Many participants have earned their high school diplomas or GEDs and are currently enrolled in colleges or vocational programs throughout the city.

GOSO's staff of highly qualified, licensed social workers provide onsite individual and group supportive counseling, as well as family and crisis counseling, and often intervene at critical moments for our participants when bad decision-making can have catastrophic results. In addition to our MSW Career Managers, GOSO recruits at least three Social Work Interns each year from the Columbia University Hunter College and N.Y.U. graduate schools of social work who meet with participants both on Rikers Island and in our East Harlem facility. We also provide psychiatric evaluations and counseling, and referrals to offsite mental health and substance abuse programs.

Our GOSOWorks program has been one of our most successful to date. Over the last few years, we have established partnerships with businesses and institutions that share our commitment to providing a second chance to formerly-incarcerated young men. These partnerships prepare our young men for future jobs in the workforce and encourages them to pursue education, training, and, ultimately, their dreams. Our Internship-to-Employment (I2E) programs subsidizes participants' employment for up to 240 hours, at zero cost to employers.

In our experience, one of the largest obstacles for justice-involved men and women is the lack of access to affordable, permanent housing. We are hoping to expand our Housing Stability Program for Justice-Involved Young People in FY20. 70% of the young people we work with are currently living in unstable housing situations and statistics have shown that the homelessness rate within the formerly incarcerated population is 10 times higher than that of the non-incarcerated population. GOSO works tirelessly to connect our clients to long-term housing because we have seen first-hand the difference it makes in our clients' lives when they have permanent housing. New York is in dire need of an expanded network of services that works with formerly incarcerated people to identify affordable, long-term housing. Increased funding for this crucial program will make a substantial impact on the housing stability of our clients, which is essential for job retention, educational achievement and preventing future involvement with the criminal justice system.

Our Housing Stability Program's services would include assisting our clients in identifying permanent housing and navigating housing placement requirements, connecting clients with supportive or affordable housing and obtaining necessary financial or identification information, and hosting housing seminars to educate clients on tenant rights and eviction prevention.

Additional funding for court-involved young people to access, housing, jobs and education should be a crucial part of the State FY20 budget.

Budget Testimony of Citizens Committee for New York City, Inc.

Submitted to the Manhattan Delegation of the New York State Senate

March 2, 2019

Honorable Senators,

The staff and board of Citizens Committee for New York City (CCNYC) are appreciative for the opportunity to offer budget testimony this snowy afternoon.

We are also grateful to you as well as the State Assembly's Manhattan delegation, who have advocated strongly for CCNYC and have helped make this citywide organization a state budget legislative add for the past two years, and for the first time in our history.

CCNYC's mission is to (a) stimulate civic engagement to improve local quality of life, especially in the most economically challenged communities of New York City and to (b) transform everyday New Yorkers, **primarily low-income tenants**, into powerful neighborhood leaders.

The Importance of Improving Civic Infrastructure and Civic Engagement in the City

CCNYC understands New York City may very well be the most civically engaged and perhaps wealthiest metropolis in the world. Yet, ever since the devastating fiscal crisis of 1975, CCNYC has addressed the need to take on the growing inequity impacting the city from the 1970s to the present day, and the need to further social justice for its most vulnerable residents.

In 2018, CCNYC made more than 500 community and school improvement grants in 130 neighborhoods, awarding \$2.1 million in grants and technical support.

CCNYC's Budget Request Remains Unchanged

For SFY 2019-20, CCNYC respectfully requests **\$300,000 from each House of the State Legislature.**

Kindly note CCNYC appreciates being included in The People's Budget released by New York State Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic, and Asian Caucus for 2018, which stated: *"The Caucus advocates for funding from the Legislature in the amount of \$500,000 for this worthwhile initiative."* (CCNYC has been added to The People's Budget this year as well.)

"Hold the Line" this Budget Season

Our mantra to you today: Please hold the line for New York City's progressive volunteer groups who do not need \$10,000, \$50,000, or \$100,000 to improve local quality of life and civic infrastructure and are living and working in the most economically distressed sections of the city. **What these collectives of New Yorkers need is \$500, \$750, \$1,000, and \$2500 to get the job done**, many times amounts that are difficult to raise and well below the minimum request amount for many funders, both public and private. CCNYC knows, in fact, these volunteer groups are doing extraordinary things and improving the city from the bottom-up and without much fanfare, other than occasional mentions in neighborhood weeklies.

Manhattan Grassroots Organizations and Volunteer Groups Help the City from the Bottom-Up

What do WE ACT for Environmental Justice, Chinese American Planning Council, Concrete Safaris, East 86th Street Merchants and Resident Association, Fred Samuel Houses, Grant Houses, Jews for Racial and Economic Justice (JFREJ), Harlem Grown, the Manhattan Land Trust, the New York Harbor School's Billion Oyster Project, have in common? **These local and citywide groups have all been recipients of CCNYC financial and technical support through hyper-local grants and community organizing and planning expertise.**

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What do The Lower East Side Ecology Center and Green Guerillas have in common? **In the 1980s, CCNYC grants were their first grants ever.**

Gaining Complete Trust in the Most Underserved Communities

Two impactful programs, which are simple and proven, help carry out the CCNYC mission. They are:

- **Neighborhood Grants** – Grants up to \$3,000 for any type of grassroots-driven community or public school improvement project that addresses quality of life issues such as but not limited to the following: public safety, access to healthy food, environmental stewardship, public health, arts and culture, beautification of public spaces, and youth-related community-based and after-school programs.
- **Neighborhood Leadership Institute** – A no-cost workshop series open to all New Yorkers that transfers significant and up-to-date knowledge about:
 - Basics of Community Organizing
 - Grassroots Fundraising
 - Navigating City Government
 - Creating Group Structure, By-Laws, Roles and Responsibilities
 - Getting Local Media Involved with Your Community Improvement Efforts!

CCNYC Remains a Strong Advocate for Progressive Causes in 2019

In addition, CCNYC has educated tenants across the city about common sense, practical legislation such as:

- 1) Dramatically reducing single-use bag consumption by initiating cotton canvas tote bag giveaways (over 10,000 given away) in the most economically challenged communities and public housing developments of New York City and **transforming low-income tenants into hyper-local, and promoting community-driven environmental stewardship across Manhattan.**
- 2) Supporting grassroots organizations, Title I public schools, public housing resident associations, neighborhood associations and resident-led volunteer groups **who self-determine and address issues important to them**, including several significant pieces of legislation that have broad support among lawmakers in both houses of the state legislature, and are included in the governor's agenda every year, that are likely to be signed into law in 2019.

Thank you for your attention. I welcome any questions you may have and can be easily reached at sshah@citizensnyc.org and at (917) 664-1428.

Thank you for advocating for and fighting for CCNYC!

Respectfully,

Saleen Talaxi Shah
Director of Communications and Public Affairs
Citizens Committee for New York City

Dear Esteemed Members of the New York State Senate,

My name is Graham Ciraulo and I am speaking today on behalf of the Northern Manhattan Community Land Trust (NMCLT). Founded in 2017, our purpose is to advance community-controlled affordable housing and anchor working-class people, immigrants, and people of color against displacement.

As the controversy over Amazon illustrates, a fast growing number of New Yorkers are demanding our representatives cease their overreliance on private corporations to address community needs, including housing. It is time for the State of New York to take a bold new approach to address our housing affordability crisis. It is time to fund the creation of Community Land Trusts.

A CLT structures ownership in several distinctive ways:

- Land is treated as a common heritage, not as an individual possession. Title to multiple parcels is held by a single nonprofit owner that manages these lands on behalf of a particular community, present and future.
- Land is removed permanently from the market, never resold by the nonprofit owner. Land is put to use, however, by leasing out individual parcels for the construction of housing, the development of commercial enterprises, or the promotion of other activities that support individual livelihood or community life.
- All structural improvements are owned separately from the land, with title to these buildings held by individual homeowners, business owners, housing cooperatives, or the owners of any other buildings located on leased land.
- A 99-year ground lease that establishes resale restrictions and other affordability provisions gives the owners of these structural improvements the exclusive use of the land beneath their buildings, securing their individual interests while protecting the interests of the larger community.¹ In addition to ensuring security of tenure and permanent affordability for CLT lessees, the 99 year lease term prevents public subsidy from being lost to the market over time.

We are asking the legislature to support the NYS Community Equity Agenda by allocating \$25 Million in funding for the New York State Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (CDFI) for FY 2020. This funding will support community-led, equitable development projects, including CLTs.²

We ask that the Senate pass Bill S1824 to increase the NYS Affordable Housing Corporation subsidy for permanently affordable homeownership properties from \$40,000 to \$75,000 per unit. We also ask that the Senate pass Bill S3469 concerning tax exemptions for CLTs statewide.

Thank you for your consideration.

Northern Manhattan Community Land Trust

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¹ White, Kirby, The CLT Technical Manual, *National Community Land Trust Network* 2011, Pg. 4

² New Economy Project, Letter to the Honorable Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Feb 15, 2019