



Message from the CEO

What a busy, wonderful year it's been! We are so grateful for all of the terrific support, our wonderful partners, stand out staff, and our resilient community.

From our inaugural LGBTQIA+ Pride Day event to cutting the ribbon on our new buildings all the way to our Community Partner Awards, 2023 has been a busy time for Federation of Organizations! We are always seeking new growth and opportunities to bring our evidence-based, life-changing services to more members of the community.

This year, we have excitedly expanded with several additional services, including 2 new residential buildings. Notably, we cut the ribbon on Herkimer Gardens, a brand-new 121-apartment, eight-story affordable housing complex in Brooklyn, in September. This beautiful facility marks a significant addition to our Residential Services.

In this newsletter edition, we highlight our new Opioid Overdose Prevention Program (OOPP), which provides multi-pronged services on Long Island and New York City. We also shine a spotlight on Ivan Gonzalez, Division Director of our expanding Safe Options Support (SOS) and Outreach and Engagement Services (OES). It's great hearing from our team!

Federation has many goals for 2024 and we're grateful for all who continue to support our mission and play vital roles in our impact. We know there is still much work to be done and we couldn't do it without our community. We hope you will enjoy reading about some of our recent news and activities. Happy Holidays to all!

Sincerely,
Barbara Faron, Chief Executive Officer



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A Day on the Green

FORE! Did you catch Federation of Organizations out on the green in July? Over 60 golfers and supporters joined us for our 3rd Annual Nine & Dine Golf Outing at Stonebridge Country Club in Smithtown.

Benefiting Federation's programs and services, our event featured nine holes of golf, an amazing BBQ dinner, raffles, prizes, and a special award ceremony. There was also a Hole in One contest with a \$5,000 prize. Nobody won...but we'll keep practicing.

At our awards ceremony, Federation proudly honored Lincoln IT President and CEO Theodore (Teddy) Cillis as well as Executive Vice President and Partner John Antimisiaris. Lincoln IT has been unbeatable as our long-term IT provider and philanthropic supporter. Lincoln IT has been a vital part of Federation's growth, supporting the tech needs of our expanding team, clientele, services, and more.

"When I first toured Federation's residences and met the people they serve, it brought a tear to my eye," says Mr. Antimisiaris. "We do whatever we can in both the IT space and philanthropically to support Federation."

"We want to give back to the community and Federation really touches the community, including some of our friends and family who rely on their services," adds Mr. Cillis.

Thank you to all our generous sponsors and supporters who came out for our golf outing!



Herkimer Gardens is Open!

Federation was thrilled to celebrate the grand opening of Herkimer Gardens in Brooklyn in September! This brand-new 121-apartment, eight-story affordable housing complex marked a significant addition to our Residential Services.

Sixty apartments are designated for New Yorkers ages 62 and older who need assistance to live independently. We provide residents with supportive services that include medication management, health services, case management, life skills training, socialization, wellness activities, and much more.

“Herkimer Gardens allows seniors to remain in the community and have the ability to age in place. It is specifically designed to address the needs of local seniors. We aspire to create a safe haven for our residents to call home, where their quality of life takes precedence and where they receive the essential services required to flourish within their community,” says CEO Barbara Faron.

We were joined by New York State Attorney General Letitia James and many other dignitaries, along with project partners CSD Housing, Urban Architectural Initiatives (UAI), and Mega Contracting Group, LLC as we cut the ribbon on this beautiful building!



Giving Back on Giving Tuesday!

For Giving Tuesday – the annual global day of giving that falls on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving – we knew we wanted to spend the day giving back to our community. In this spirit and honing in on impactful collaboration, we teamed up with our friends over at Baltic Street Wellness Solutions, as well as Assemblymember Stefani Zinerman, to give back to the United Order of Tents. The United Order of Tents has been serving its community for over 150 years. Originally aiding enslaved individuals via the Underground Railroad, the organization has been helping women, children, families, and the elderly since. True agents of change! The United Tents' historic Brooklyn headquarters has fallen into disrepair, and the organization is currently raising funds via GoFundMe to renovate and reopen these quarters.

We stepped forward to help United Tents along with our incredible partners. We sent a team of volunteers, who were assisted by Dulligan's Do It All Landscaping, to clear leaves, do landscaping, clean and beautify the outdoor areas, and decorate the historic building with holiday lights and wreaths for the enjoyment of the community served by United Tents. It was a great day of collaboration and teamwork!



The Barbara Faron Residence Welcomes Its Residents!

Residents have begun moving into the Barbara Faron Residence, our brand new, nine-story, 118-apartment affordable housing development in Far Rockaway, Queens. Our beautiful new residence includes 71 apartments for individuals with disabilities who would otherwise have no permanent place to live. An additional 46 apartments are earmarked for individuals and families who meet the income eligibility. The development also houses a live-in superintendent, offices, and various amenities. Supportive services for residents include life skills training, crisis intervention, and community integration services, as needed. We will introduce the Barbara Faron Residence to the larger community during a Grand Opening Celebration in the spring.

Telehealth at Mercy Soup Kitchen

In furthering our mission of health equity for all, we have teamed up with Mercy Soup Kitchen in Wyandanch on an innovative venture to make doctor visits more accessible to community members.



Last year, Federation was chosen to help implement a new telehealth system for individuals on Long Island. While telehealth can improve healthcare accessibility by adding convenience, not every member of the community has access to the necessary technology or a private space for doctor visits.

Mercy Soup Kitchen is located in the back of Trinity Lutheran Church, near our Wyandanch Clinic. We worked with Mercy Soup Kitchen to convert a spare room in its facility into a dedicated, private space – complete with comfortable furniture and all necessary technology – where an individual or small group can sit for a telehealth visit with a primary care physician, clinical therapist, or other healthcare provider. Federation assists Mercy Soup Kitchen volunteers with management of the telehealth station, including technology updates and general maintenance.

Program Spotlight: OOPP

Federation’s new, multi-pronged Opioid Overdose Prevention Program (OOPP) is getting naloxone (Narcan) trainings out into the community in both New York City and Long Island!

The Opioid Overdose Prevention Program’s targeted efforts to prevent overdoses also include a new Mobile Substance Use Disorder (SUD) program focused on the LGBTQIA+ population in Nassau and Suffolk County. The SUD treatment team travels to home and community sites to provide at-risk individuals with easy access to treatment and services for substance use disorders and co-occurring mental health disorders. We are also working on a new Mobile Outreach Program on Long Island and a methadone dispensing program!



“We have trained and dispensed to over 2,000 individuals in the Opioid Overdose Prevention Program,” says Carissa J. Romano PA-C, MPAS, DScPAS, Director of Integrated Care for Federation. “We did outreach to high-opioid overdose neighborhoods and began training families and individuals over Facetime if needed as well, and mailed Narcan right to their home or business. There have been no overdoses reported among the people we have served.”

As for more on our impact, Federation’s OOPP team has been an instrumental driver for policy change in the Rockaways.

“We advocated for their community, reaching out directly to their distribution program and the state offices. The Rockaways have such a high overdose rate and their first responders were not provided with the necessary supplies and dosages. We were able to get it to them within a week of reaching out to the state.” Nice work, team!



Showing Our Pride

Equality, healing, safety, and fun were the themes of Federation of Organizations' inaugural LGBTQIA+ Pride Day event! Inclusivity is at the forefront of our services and what better way to celebrate than bringing our beautiful, diverse community together.

On June 24, 106.1 BLI brought the tunes and games, Lindenhurst's Dominick's Pizza & Pasta donated delicious food, and Party City gave the event some sparkle. Pride for Youth joined with an informative presentation about its supportive services for the LGBTQIA+ community. Thursday's Child was on hand to provide free HIV testing and HIV prevention education. And our team provided free naloxone (Narcan) training.

Federation's dedication to supporting and serving the LGBTQIA+ community (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual+) continues to grow. One of our latest programs, our Mobile Support Team, provides convenient, discreet services such as individual therapy, Suboxone (which treats opioid use disorder), medication management, and more.

"We're feeling incredibly grateful over here at Federation. Thank you to our amazing community sponsors, staff, and volunteers," says Colleen Jeffus, LCSW, Associate Director of Clinical Services for Federation, who organized Pride Day. "We are fueled by this momentum and are excited to continue building off of it."



PROS Participants Reach New Heights in Order to Help Others

Peers are incredibly vital in the world of mental health recovery. We're grateful for our hardworking peers who have helped, and continue to help, so many others on their journey, with hearts full of deep understanding and motivation to be agents of change.

Christina, a six-year participant who graduated from the PROS Program in May 2023, is now a Federation Outreach Counselor! Christina began serving as a Companion in Federation's Companion Program two years ago, and over the last year, she has gone through training to learn how to fulfill the Outreach Counselor role.

Christopher began receiving substance use services through the Patchogue PROS Program about five years ago. In addition to working very hard on his own recovery, he decided to help others with substance use issues and gain the tools they need to succeed. He completed the rigorous training and education requirements to become a Credentialed Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counselor (CASAC) and recently secured a paid position as a CASAC.

Christina and Christopher are insightful, supportive, and an inspiration to the people around them. We're incredibly proud of them and look forward to seeing all they do in the future!



Showing Our Colors

At Federation, we proudly wore green in honor of May as Mental Health Awareness Month.



Celebrating our Community Partners

Our community partnerships are integral to the success of our many programs and services. During our annual Community Partner Awards in December, we were thrilled to honor two outstanding community leaders for all they do to serve their communities and support our mission. We presented our Exceptional Government & Community Leadership Award to New York State Senator Monica Martinez, who represents the 4th District, and our Outstanding Leadership in Healthcare Award to LaRay Brown, President and CEO of the One Brooklyn Health System and Interfaith Medical Center in Brooklyn. Congratulations to both of these esteemed leaders!

Held at The Wilson in Manhattan, the Community Partner Awards featured great food, cocktails, and raffles and raised funds for our programs and services. A warm thank you to the dozens of Federation supporters and employees who joined us. We are especially grateful to our generous event sponsors.



A VERY BIG THANK YOU TO ALL WHO WERE PART OF OUR COMMUNITY PARTNER AWARDS SPONSORS!



Meet the Team



Ivan Gonzalez is Federation's Division Director of Safe Options Support Program (SOS) and Outreach and Engagement Services Program (OES). We spoke with Ivan about his history with Federation of Organizations, the vast importance of the programs he leads, and a little insight into what he does to help himself when he is not helping others!

Can you give us a brief intro of yourself and your position at Federation?

Sure! I'm Ivan Gonzalez. I was born and raised in Brooklyn and have lived my whole life in the NYC area. I've been at Federation for a little over four years. I started out in Federation's Care Coordination Department as Program Manager and now am the Division Director for the Safe Options Support Program and Outreach and Engagement Services Program.

What inspired you to start working in the non-profit sector? What was your journey leading up to this point?

While I was finishing up my BA in Psychology and Philosophy at St. John's University, I realized I loved the idea of connecting with different people, being out in the field and utilizing my communications skills. I spent about 15 years working at Housing Works and during that time, I received my master's in political science at LIU (I'm a huge fan of politics!) and shortly after, my master's of social work at NYU. In 2019, I began working at Federation for the Care Coordination Department. Once I saw Federation had an opening for the SOS Program, something in my gut knew I had to apply. I had a lot of knowledge about it already through the governor's announcements and knew it would be an amazing experience and a great way to serve my community.

You are leading a new program in Federation, next to the SOS program, OES- Outreach and Engagement Services. Can you tell us a little bit about both of your programs?

SOS is designed to be working directly with individuals on the streets: those living in encampments, in parks, subway stations, those who fall through the cracks in the system, so to speak. In this program, our staff approaches these individuals where they are, in order to provide a safe, trusting experience. We've had this program for over a year and have served so many individuals, some that have been on the streets for over 10 years. OES is a brand new OASAS program, helping individuals with substance abuse issues. We meet with the participants wherever they feel safest. They may not get the support they need from others and this program gives them that shame-free safety to receive treatment. We give them what they need whether that's counseling, detox services, overdose prevention treatment, or a safe space. Both of our programs are all about building and maintaining trust with these individuals when trust is what they feel the least of. Trust and safety.

Can you recount a particularly personal and memorable success story that showcases the impact we've had on the lives of individuals we serve?

Fortunately, we have quite a few memorable success stories! Our SOS team worked with an individual who had a history of chronic substance abuse and was homeless for over 7 years. Shortly after connecting with the SOS team, he was working towards addiction recovery and was placed into his own supportive housing apartment by our team. He's independent and full of hope for his future. We also recently had a young 20-year-old who was very hesitant to be put in a men's shelter.

(continued on page 5)

Meet the Team (cont'd)

Shelters can be threatening. We were able to work with the Institute of Community Living and find him stable, supportive housing. It was a wonderful example of the power of teamwork and what it looks like when we all have a common goal of helping others.

What are some self-care strategies you personally employ to maintain positive mental health daily or at challenging times?

Self-care is important to me and comes to me in many ways! I have always been an avid collector, whether it's comic books, action figures, or baseball cards. I love the hunt! When things start to feel stressful, I can look at my collection and feel grateful, even if it's for 5 minutes. I also find politics to be incredibly engaging (and important!). My interests have always been an outlet of wellness for me and bring me back to my center.

What are some things about you that would surprise people to learn?

I usually keep my personal life pretty private, but I think people would be surprised to learn that I'm an active musician. I'm a bassist and drummer and have been playing live shows in NYC for a while now. That's also another form of self-care for me. Picking up my bass or drum sticks and starting to play.

Federation is a crew of all-stars!

Congratulations to...

1. Barbara Faron, Federation's CEO, for being honored among the Power Women of Brooklyn by Schneps Media
2. Beau Gardon, Federation's Senior Director of Facilities, for receiving Long Island Business News' prestigious Executive Circle Award
3. Hilberto Galarza, Federation's Lead Maintenance Tech, for being honored with Community Care Rx's Direct Support Professional Award
4. Leonard Achan, President and CEO of LiveOnNY and Federation Board Member, and Hossam Maksoud, PharmD and Federation Community Partner, for being named to the Manhattan Power List by Schneps Media



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