

New Year, Renewed Commitment



Happy 2024! As a new year begins, the Lifting Up Westchester team is looking forward to another year of helping our neighbors in crisis.

Thanks to supporters, like you, our clients receive life-changing services when they need it most. We provide food and shelter; access to a network of community resources; job search and employment opportunities; housing search and stabilization services; and academic support and mentoring for young people.

From all of us – especially those we lift up – **thank you.**

Anahaita Kotval
Chief Executive Officer



2023 Impact

Last year, we were able to provide wraparound services to people as they work tirelessly to regain stability, improve their health, find permanent homes, and advance their careers.

Here's a look back at the extensive support you provided:

Over **3,000** individuals received assistance

Upwards of **17,000** nights of shelter were given

More than **250** people regained or maintained a permanent home

Our kitchens served over **170,000** meals

More than **60** people found gainful employment

Over **500** students were supported

These numbers tell a story, not only about LUW, but about our community. Westchester is a place where you can count on people to reach out a hand and lift up those around them.

Spreading Holiday Cheer

The holidays are a time of great joy, but they can also be a time of stress. For many of the people we support, it can be overbearing. There are worries if the family gathering can be plentiful, or whether there is even a family to gather around. At LUW, we take great pride in our holiday meals and events.

Our volunteers and donors generously offer their time and resources to host two beautiful events. On Thanksgiving Day, 45 volunteers dedicated their time to serve 157 guests in our shelters and Community Kitchen. For the December holidays, 9 volunteers along with staff put on a wonderful event with delicious food and cheerful festivities! Additionally, food bags with turkeys, chickens, and/or hams were distributed to over 500 clients from our various programs.

Last but not least, we all know that magic of receiving (and giving) gifts. The warmth that fills you up as you witness a child's reaction to your present. Because of our amazing community of donors, over 300 toys, gift cards, and stockings were distributed to our clients this holiday season!

Special thanks to all of our volunteers and donors who make this holiday cheer possible!



Please join us at one of our upcoming **JOURNEY HOME** events! This is a one-hour tour to learn more about our mission and impact. Journey Home is an opportunity to reframe conversations in our community about individuals who are experiencing homelessness and hunger.

- Thursday, May 2nd at 9:00 AM – Open Arms Men's Shelter**
- Thursday, July 18th at 10:30 AM – Summer Camp**
- Thursday, October 10th at 9:00 AM – Job Central**

Please sign up online at www.liftingupwestchester.org/thejourneyhome.

Job Central Unveiled

In October, we proudly cut the ribbon on **Job Central**, our new facility in downtown White Plains providing job readiness and placement services for the unemployed. Many generous supporters enabled LUW to bring this initiative to life, showcasing our community's dedication to positive change. We are especially grateful to the KeyBank Foundation for awarding us a \$200,000 grant to create the center.

At the ceremony, our CEO Anahaita Kotval expressed gratitude to everyone who made Job Central a reality, and KeyBank President, John Manginelli, emphasized the foundation's commitment to breaking down employment barriers. We also had the privilege of hearing from Derrick, a client whose life was transformed after our employment specialists successfully placed him in a full-time position – earning a living wage – at Teleworx.

Our team at Job Central guides people as they develop job readiness skills and navigate job searches. Individuals are referred from LUW's shelter, housing, and youth programs. Additionally, partner organizations – like YWCA, Mental Health Association of Westchester, the Department of Social Services, El Centro Hispano, and the Salvation Army – provide referrals.



More than a facility, Job Central is a lifeline for those struggling with unemployment. Your ongoing generosity ensures that we can continue providing comprehensive support to individuals who are building a more secure future for themselves and their families.



Evolving to Meet Growing Needs

To meet the increasing needs of our community, we have launched **Community Central**. An expansion of Grace's Kitchen, Community Central is a vibrant, inclusive, and ever-expanding hub for people who are experiencing homelessness, hunger, and extreme poverty.

With extended hours and community programs, Community Central solidifies our commitment to creating a welcoming space for those going through their toughest moments. In addition to serving hot, nutritious meals, Community Central programming is centered on improving mental and physical health, something that often falls to the wayside in times of crisis. Recently, we held programs including mobile health clinics, health fair events, haircuts, and flu vaccines.

One event we take pride in is "Sip and Solve," a gathering where Community Central guests are reminded that they don't have to face struggles alone. Through guided discussions, attendees collaboratively address shared challenges that are often exacerbated by housing instability. We also offered hot cocoa, coffee, and holiday treats to provide comfort and a sense of normalcy for those who may not have experienced it in a long time.

The growing success of Community Central has resulted in more meals being served in Grace's Kitchen. While we strive to ensure no one is turned away, higher costs of food set a limit for what we can do. Please consider donating in support of Community Central and our neighbors in need.

**A newsletter
exclusively for
compassionate
people who care
about community!**

Let's stay in touch!

**To get involved, make a gift,
or ask questions, please contact us.**

www.liftingupwestchester.org

info@liftingupwestchester.org

Connect with us on social media:

@LiftingUpWestchester



PLEASE SAVE THE DATE FOR LIFTING UP WESTCHESTER'S 2024 GALA!

**Thursday, April 25, 2024
Fogo de Chão**

235 Main Street, White Plains, NY 10601

**We hope that you will join us in celebrating
the determined youth in our community
and our incredible honorees!**

Key Bank

Accepted By: John Manginelli, Market President

Santina Leuci

Chief Executive Editorial Producer, ABC News

Markhoff & Mittman

*Accepted By: Brian Mittman,
Owner & Managing Partner*

