WE ARE ANDRUS

NEWSLETTER | SUMMER 2022 EDITION

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WHAT'S HAPPENING:

Camp Week:
August 22nd-26th

POP Tennis Courts Ribbon Cutting:
August 25th

First Day of School:
September 7th

Rocky's Retirement Celebration:
September 21st

A Message From Our President & CEO Heath Bloch

This summer has been a busy one, as we continue in our efforts to build a strong foundation for future growth. We are making important changes that align with our strategic plan and the five pillars of the plan that we've determined will be central to achieving our mission to provide behavioral health and social supports to children and their families. In this, and the next four messages from me, we will present one of those pillars, and provide an update on our ongoing efforts to implement them.

First Pillar: Champion equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging (EDIB)

We are in the final stages of securing vendors to independently review our existing practices and procedures to ensure we are promoting EDIB principles in all aspects of our work. We look forward to the challenge these outside experts will bring to Andrus staff, and to the board of directors, as we take a deep dive into understanding what it means for Andrus to become a truly informed and effective champion of EDIB values. There is a sincere commitment to this, our first pillar of the strategic plan, across and at all levels of Andrus staff, leadership, and the board of directors.

Meanwhile, on the Andrus campus, school still goes on for our resident children, but the focus this summer is on outdoor fun and learning, at whatever pace seems appropriate for each child. Summer is a great time for our children and their families and friends to get outside, enjoy a slower pace and build deeper connections.

Wishing everyone a wonderful summer respite!

First Ever Annual Pride Parade

Andrus celebrated Pride Month with our first ever Pride Parade. One hundred and fifty students and staff gathered and marched to honor and celebrate differences as they proceeded past a half-dozen student-manned stations featuring crafts and treats for the crowd.

The parade helped all of our students, regardless of how they identify, feel accepted and embraced by their peers and the Andrus community.

Congratulations to our Orchard School Graduates!

Twenty-five accomplished Andrus students graduated this June, ready to move on to ninth grade. Parents and staff were there to celebrate and recognize the extraordinary achievement it is to overcome the obstacles many of them have faced throughout their young lives.

The energy and excitement of the day was palpable as outgoing board member and keynote speaker, William Mulligan, encouraged students to stay connected—to each other and to Andrus—as they move on to the next stages of their lives.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

The moment I stepped onto the campus I felt a sense of calmness, the environment really makes you take a moment to slow down and embrace your surroundings.

- Congressman Jamaal Bowman

Thank you, Congressman Bowman, for visiting the Andrus campus in Yonkers, NY. We hope you enjoyed engaging with our children and staff members and learning more about the therapeutic services we provide.

Andrus residents performing at the Andrus Hall Showcase: Bridging the Past to the Present event this June

PERFORMING ARTS SHOWCASE

Under the capable leadership and direction of residential clinician, Jana Élise Taylor, Andrus Hall residents and staff treated campus staff, parents, and visitors to a performing arts showcase that wove together beautifully choreographed dance movements, music, spoken word, and video montages.

The showcase honored past and present Black women trailblazers in American culture. The net result for the audience was an emotional and powerful celebration of Black women and the ways historic barriers of gender and race were broken due to their perseverance, strength and resilience. This therapeutic event provided Andrus Hall residents an opportunity to express themselves creatively, and it taught them about teamwork and commitment. As a result of their discipline and hard work, they can stand proud of themselves, their ancestors, and all the women who paved the way for them.

American Flag Retirement Ceremony

Andrus celebrated Flag Day with a ceremony renewing our American flag and honoring those lost during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Three of our staff, who are veterans or active military reserve, volunteered to help our children through the process of retiring our tattered flag, and raising our new one.

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

Thank you to our individual and corporate donors who supported us with generous donations for our fiscal year end, which closed on June 30, 2022.

Thank you to Congressman Bowman, whose bill to support the Andrus Health Equity Access Fund in Yonkers passed the House of Representatives. It awaits Senate confirmation.

Thank you to the State of New York for funding to support our school-based mental health clinics and to create a telehealth hub at the Yonkers Family YMCA, located one block from our 35 Dock Street location.

Thank you to Children's HopeChest for donating school supplies for Andrus children, on campus and at our off-campus centers, as they prepare for the new school year.

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer New York helped us organize a team, from Morgan Stanley in Westchester, that came to our main campus for a day of volunteer work that included building play elements for our beloved goats and planting herbs on the farm.

Nonprofit Westchester

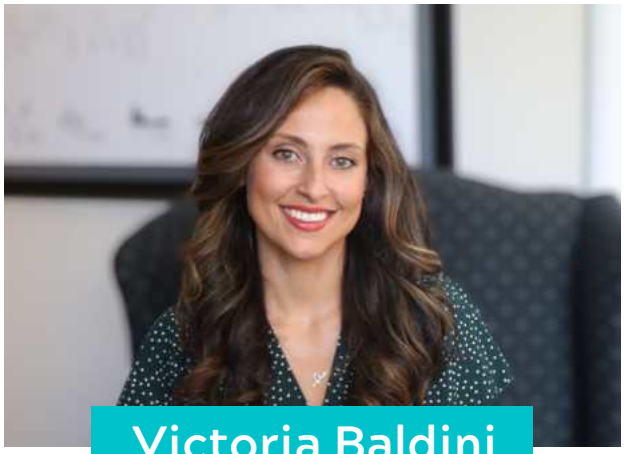
Many Missions. One Voice.

Andrus hosted a roundtable discussion this July for executive directors and CEOs of Westchester nonprofits to:

- Strengthen connections between nonprofit leaders across the county.
- Find new thought partners, cultivate new ideas, and develop new collaborations.
- Learn from our peers.
- Address high-level issues affecting nonprofits.

We look forward to all that this group can accomplish for our community!

STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Victoria Baldini
Manager of Development

The Debra Jeanne Snyder Spirit of Sanctuary Award

Victoria received this award in recognition of her modeling of the Seven Commitments of Sanctuary. The award's namesake, Debra Jeanne Snyder, was an Andrus staff member who was passionate about making Andrus a truly trauma-informed sanctuary.

David Lindsay
Milieu Therapist

Clinton Mills Award

David received this award in honor of his creativity in developing programs for Andrus children. Clinton Mills, a much-beloved Andrus Master Milieu Therapist, was known for creating an environment, a milieu, that nurtured and supported children.

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