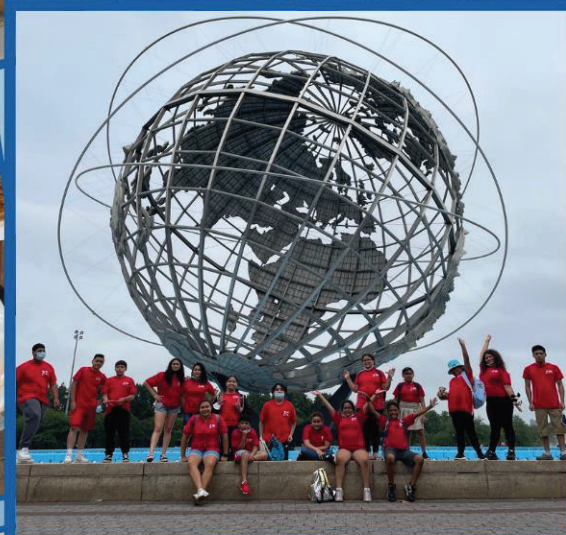


# Hispanic Counseling Center



## 2021 Annual Report









## **HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER**

### **OUR MISSION**

The mission of the Hispanic Counseling Center is to enhance the strengths of Long Island's families and children through bilingual, bicultural counseling, prevention, vocational, and educational services to enrich their lives, foster economic independence, and nurture dreams for the generations to come.

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### **ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE**

The Hispanic Counseling Center (HCC) promotes family and community wellness with a fully bilingual/bicultural staff and a network of interrelated services including licensed behavioral health treatment. HCC supports the recovery of the individual, and the entire family system, in a single point of entry. The agency locations in Hempstead and Bay Shore provide treatment and prevention for chemical dependency, mental health, and youth and family programs and in 2021 served more than 1,850 clients a month. HCC is the only agency in Nassau County licensed by both the New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) and the New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) to provide these services in a fully bilingual, bicultural setting for families and individuals who are working toward a constructive, self-sustaining way of life. Services are available to all, regardless of race, ethnicity, or ability to pay.

HCC was originally established in 1977 by the Nassau County Department of Drug and Alcohol Addiction Services and the Nassau County Youth Board to provide substance abuse treatment services and services for children and adolescents in response to the county's growing Hispanic population. Since its inception, HCC has been a beacon of hope for many immigrants and their families who have come to Long Island seeking to make a better life.

The agency has grown from one program and four staff in a 600 square foot rented office in 1977, to ownership of a 38,000 square foot modern facility with multiple programs and services in 2021. HCC is proactive in developing programs that respond to the most urgent needs of the community and through individual, group, and family counseling, educational workshops, case management, support groups, family activities, after-school tutoring and enrichment, summer camp, crisis intervention, and prevention programs for at-risk youth, clients are able to receive multiple services in one setting.



## HISTORY OF THE HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER INC.

- 1977** The Hispanic Counseling Center established by the Nassau County Department of Drug and Alcohol Addiction to provide substance abuse treatment services to growing Hispanic population in Nassau County
- 1979** Nassau County Youth Board awards funding for prevention, education, and counseling services to limited English speaking youth and families
- 1986** HCC licensed by New York State to become first bilingual, bicultural alcohol and drug rehabilitation clinic in Nassau County
- 1987** Summer Program begins for children ages 7-12
- 1989** After school homework help and tutoring sessions are available to all school age children.
- 1992** HCC awarded license from New York State for mental health outpatient clinic
- 1993** Supported Housing Program inaugurated for mentally ill clients in need of housing
- 1994** English as a Second Language Program available to all HCC clients
- 1995** Respite Program established to provide information, counseling, support, and respite services for families with children having serious emotional problems
- 1996** Domestic Violence Program created to fill a gap in services for victims and perpetrators
- 1998** HCBS Waiver Program established to provide in-home services to developmentally disabled adults and children
- 1998** Literacy Program instituted to teach adults how to read and write in Spanish
- 1998** Early intervention Program created for children ages 0-3 and families to provide social work services at HCC and in the home
- 1999** Medicaid Service Coordination Program begins for developmentally disabled adults and children to provide case management to live at home rather than an institutional setting
- 2001** Ryan White Mental Health Program begins for People with HIV/AIDS



## HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER

- 2003** HCC moves to 344 Fulton Avenue Hempstead, the new building owned by the agency
- 2003** Teen Drop-In Center begins
- 2008** HCC purchases 336 Fulton Ave Hempstead to expand the Mental Health program
- 2011** Kinship program begins to provide support to grandparents/caregivers of children whose parents are incarcerated, deported or hospitalized
- 2012** Project Hope starts after Super Storm Sandy to provide crisis counseling
- 2014** Super Storm Sandy Program provides multiservice support to storm victims
- 2017** Care Coordination to provide case management
- 2017** Mental Health Clinic Crisis Stabilization Services begins, to provide intensive services
- 2017** Empire State After-School Program begins, to provide after school and Saturday academic and counseling support to youth and their parents
- 2017** Partners in Prevention begins, to provide evidence based drug prevention services
- 2018** Community Health Connections Program begins, for residents of the Village of Hempstead
- 2019** Partnerships established with LI Cares Kids Cafe and Hofstra University STEM Program
- 2020** HCC Suffolk County Mental Health Clinic re-opens in Bay Shore
- 2020** Regional Prevention and Support Services in partnership with Northwell Health begins, to provide intensive case management to decrease the risk of HIV infection
- 2020** Project Hope begins, to provide COVID-19 related crisis counseling and referrals
- 2020** Nassau Mental Health Clinic expands services for children affected by domestic violence with funding from Mother Cabrini Health Foundation
- 2021** State Opioid Response (SOR) II Program begins, a multi-year prevention program in partnership with AHN and other agencies and organizations



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Dear Friends of the Hispanic Counseling Center:

I am proud and excited to present the Hispanic Counseling Center (HCC) 2021 Annual Report. The year 2021 started with the same uncertainty that ended the year 2020. Nevertheless, regardless of all the challenges we faced and overcame, we definitely proved what we are made of. We are stronger as an agency and as a community because we unite in the face of tragedy. During 2021 HCC continued to thrive and serve our clients' needs in both counties with no breaks in any of the HCC services.

The only change was that our fearless leader for 40 years, our dear Gladys Serrano, retired and left me with the privilege of continuing her legacy of leadership and perseverance. Despite facing numerous challenges, HCC continued to be a pillar of hope in the community providing outstanding service. We continued to expand and provide much needed services to the Long Island community and served as a vital resource for the children and families who experience difficulties and continually rely on HCC to help improve their lives.

The Mental Health Clinic was affected, as many other employers, by "the great resignation", yet prevailed and experienced another growth year with increased referrals from hospitals, collaborating agencies, schools, and courts, among others with a sharp increase in referrals of patients presenting with serious mental health and substance use issues often due to this devastating pandemic.

The Substance Use Disorder Clinic also experienced increased referrals, and clients, despite fears due to the lingering virus, manifested the need to be in person with others to help deal with the struggles they were facing. For this reason we decided to open our doors to the clients once again in both of our outpatient clinics.

The Domestic Violence program continued to provide support to perpetrators of domestic violence with a 26 week evidence based program that, through psychoeducation, teaches participants to understand their role in violence and become more self-aware of behavior. This program, with invaluable funding provided by the Nassau County District Attorney's Office, has been successful and continues to be vital for the Courts of Nassau County.

New initiatives in 2021 included the SOR II Prevention Program which utilizes five evidence based interventions for participants to handle the effects of trauma in an effective way, teaching trauma response strategies as well as psychological skills to recovery.



## HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER

The Youth and Family and the Respite Programs continued to be valuable resources for elementary, middle and high school students who receive services on site or in home. These programs provide a safe haven for the critical after school hours where students do homework and participate in special activities and educational workshops to learn new skills, prevent drug and alcohol use, gang involvement, and other activities that will put them in danger.

In a partnership with the Hempstead School District, the HCC Empire State After School Program supported newly arrived students from Central and South America. New arrival students at Hempstead High School, and their parents, were assisted both academically and emotionally as they find their way, and thrive, in a new culture and a new school system.

Agency collaborations continued to be strengthened and expanded. Through these collaborations we provided much needed services with programs like Ryan White Mental Health and Health Home Care Coordination. We continue to collaborate with multiple agencies, associations, hospitals and school districts such as AHN, United way, Hempstead School District, and the Nassau County and the Village of Hempstead Community Development Agencies.

The Development Department continued to be very active in seeking new opportunities and securing funding to expand HCC's programmatic and organizational reach.

My special thanks to the Board of Directors for all their support and dedication during this time of transition. Thank you for believing in me and for always recognizing all the wonderful things this agency does. Knowing you are there to guide and support is invaluable.

To our many funding sources and marvelous donors, HCC is truly grateful; because of your help and contributions we are able to continue to offer much needed services. Thank you all for helping us uphold our mission and I pray that we can continue to do so for many more years.

In closing, I would like to especially thank my predecessor and mentor Mrs. Gladys Serrano, for her guidance, her patience and her unconditional support and kindness. It would be impossible for me to enumerate all the ways that she has helped me personally and professionally. I would also like to extend special thanks to each and every staff member of the Hispanic Counseling Center for their remarkable dedication and their professionalism and consistent support which is what makes HCC a premier agency on Long island.

Claudia M. Boyle LMHC  
Chief Executive Officer



## HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER



### 2020 Board of Directors

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Nanette Malebranche

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Veronica Lopez

Nadja Searchwell

Yesenia Vazquez

### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dear Friends of HCC:

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and the entire HCC staff, I am pleased to present the 2021 Annual Report. The year 2021 continued to be a challenging year due to the pandemic. I am very proud of the dedication and commitment of the Hispanic Counseling Center (HCC) whose staff remained flexible and found ways to adapt to safely serve clients' needs in Nassau and Suffolk counties.

As we bid farewell to CEO Gladys Serrano and welcomed our new CEO, Claudia Boyle, the staff of HCC persisted through all obstacles to find ways to serve the community. I would like to extend heartfelt appreciation to the many public and private supporters who so generously provided funding for much needed and vital HCC programs and services during 2021. We all look forward to a brighter and healthier 2022 and being able to foster continued partnerships with you, our respected community partners. HCC would not be able to provide the much-needed services we offer without your commitment.

The Board of Directors would like to take this opportunity to applaud the incredible work and recognize the passion of our former CEO, Gladys Serrano. We hold Gladys in the highest regard for her 40 years of dedication to the Hispanic Counseling Center. Her legacy will live on forever.

We would also like to recognize the HCC staff. Our success comes from their commitment to do whatever it takes to serve the HCC clients. We are proud of the many contributions that HCC staff make every day. I also would like to acknowledge the Hispanic Counseling Center's Board of Directors for their commitment of time, leadership, and generous support.

I invite you to learn more about HCC and its programs and services which have so successfully changed lives and improved futures for residents of Long Island since 1977.

Nanette Malebranche  
President



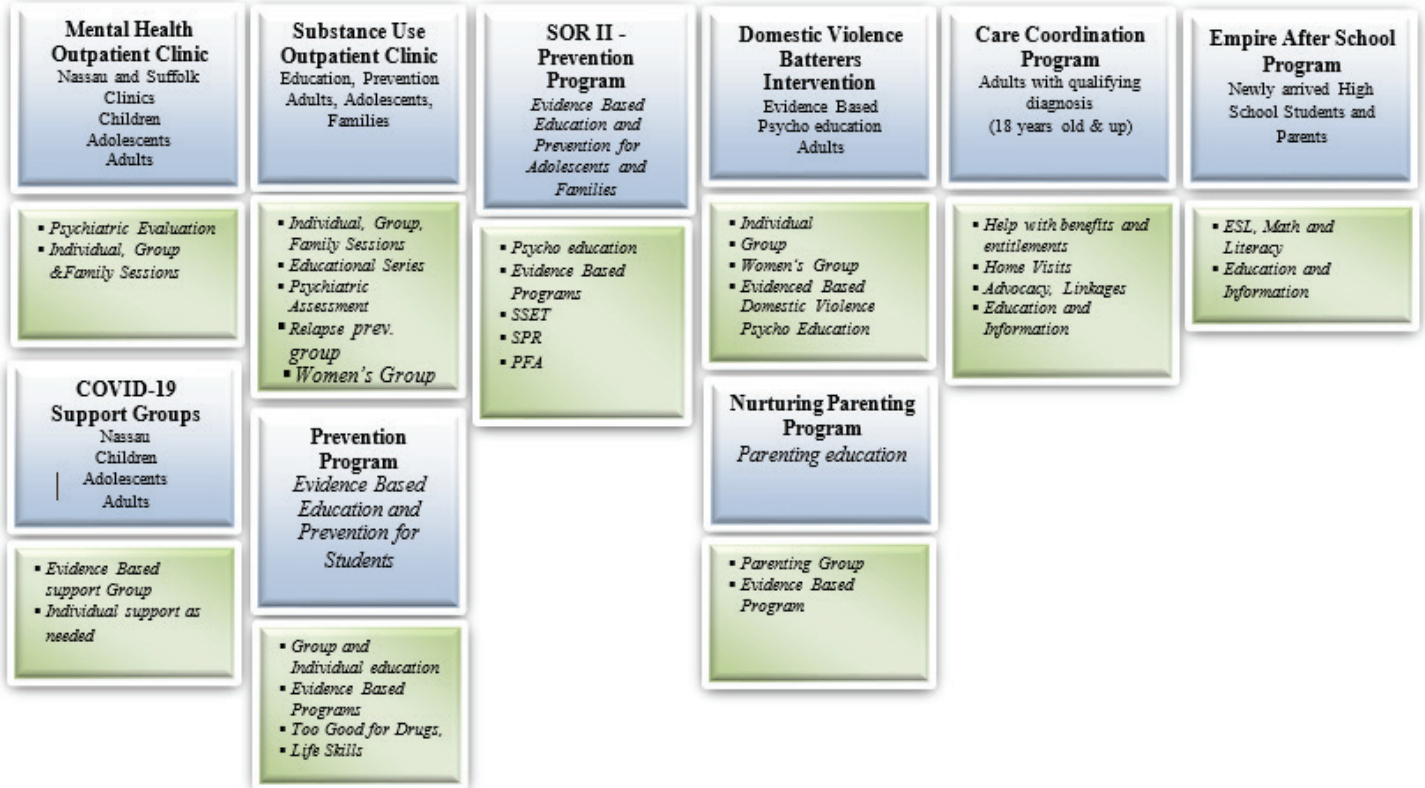






# HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER

## HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER INC. 344 Fulton Avenue, Hempstead NY 11550





# HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER

## HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER, INC. 344 Fulton Avenue, Hempstead NY 11550

### Family & Children Program

Respite  
Family Peer Support

- Individual (Home)
- Group (Agency)
- Parent Advocacy
- Parent Education
- Homework Help
- Socialization Skills
- Supportive Services for Parents

### NYS Project HOPE Crisis Counseling

Crisis Counseling  
Referrals  
Outreach  
COVID Victims

- Information and Education
- Informal Counseling
- Linkage and Referral

### RPSSI Regional Prevention Support Services

18+ at risk of HIV or HIV+

- Help with benefits and entitlements
- Advocacy, Linkage, Education and Information

### Ryan White Part A/MAI Mental Health Services for

- Individual, Group & Family Mental Health Services
- Concrete Services
- Advocacy

### Supportive Housing

Permanent Housing  
18 years and up for the mentally ill (SPMI)

- Permanent Housing
- Home Visits
- Life Skills
- Advocacy

### Youth & Family Program

Children & Families

### Teen Drop-In Center

After School

- Homework Help
- Socialization skills
- Gang Prevention Activities
- Life skills
- Parent Workshops
- School Support
- Mentoring
- Crisis Intervention
- Summer Camp

## Collaborative Systems

Access VR  
Advance Health Network  
Alcohol and Substance Abuse Clinics (Inpatient, Outpatient, Rehab)  
C.K. Post (Inpatient Rehabilitation Center)  
Center for Rapid Recovery  
Circulo de la Hispanidad  
D.M.V. (Department of Motor Vehicles)  
Education and Assistance Corporation  
EOC of Nassau and Suffolk  
Family and Children's  
Five Towns Community Center  
Hempstead District Court  
Hempstead Domestic Violence Court  
Hempstead Drug Court  
Hempstead S.T.E.P. (Court Unit)  
Hispanic Brotherhood  
HRH Community Health Centers  
Integrated Domestic Violence Court (Mineola)  
Kingsborough Addictions Center (Inpatient Rehabilitation Center)  
LGBT Network  
LIISA - Long Island  
Long Island FQHC, Inc.  
Local Government Units  
Local Primary Care Physicians and Pediatricians  
Local State and Private Colleges and Universities  
Long Island Association for AIDS Care (LIAAC)  
Long Island County on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (LICADD)  
Long Island Jewish Women Coalition - Peninsula chapter  
Mental Health Association of Nassau County  
Mineola Felony Court  
MTA and Able Ride  
Nassau and Suffolk CPS/APS  
Nassau and Suffolk County Churches and Places of worship  
Nassau and Suffolk County Department of Social Services  
Nassau and Suffolk County Health Home Case management

Nassau and Suffolk County Hospitals and Shelters  
Nassau and Suffolk County Social Security Administration  
Nassau and Suffolk Foster Care  
Nassau and Suffolk Private Attorneys  
Nassau County Adolescent Diversion Program  
Nassau County and Suffolk County School Districts  
Nassau County Office of Mental Health, Substance Use and Developmental Disabilities  
Nassau County District Attorney's Office  
Nassau County Family Court  
Nassau County Office of Hispanic Affairs  
Nassau County Office of Youth Services  
Nassau County Youth and Safety Coalition  
Nassau County P.I.N.S. (Person in Need of Supervision) Diversion Program  
Nassau County Parole Department  
Nassau County Police Department  
Nassau County Probation Department  
Nassau Suffolk Law Services  
Nassau University Medical Center Detox program  
Nassau University Medical Center  
Neurologists and Private Psychiatrists  
NYS Department of Health  
NYS Office of Mental Health (OMH)  
NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS)  
NYS Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)  
NYS Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS)  
NYS Office of Parks and Recreation  
Options for Community Living  
Personalized Recovery Oriented Services Program (PROS)  
Planned Parenthood  
SEPA Mujer  
SALVA-Domestic violence Program  
Suffolk Project for AIDS Resource Coordination (SPARC)  
The Safe Center of LI





## HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER

### THE IMPACT OF THE HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER EXPRESSED IN THE WORDS OF HCC PROGRAM CLIENTS

#### In the words of 'New Normal' Support Group clients:

"I really liked how the group tackles on serious topics such as handling emotions or peer pressure. What I really liked about this program was how the host of the group was able to let everyone participate and share their experiences. This group has helped me become more prepared for certain situations like peer pressure or handling difficult tasks. There wasn't anything I didn't like about the group. It helped me gain more knowledge about the real world and it taught me to become more hopeful for the future." *(Youth Group)*

"It was very nice to be in this group, it has helped me a lot, and it was a nice experience that I got to share with my peers. I hope they continue doing more programs like these so that Hispanic Counseling Center continues helping many people who need it, it is an excellent program and I recommend it, and thank you." *(Adult Group)*

#### In the words of Substance Use Disorder Outpatient Clinic clients:

"This program has helped me a lot to have a better life. Before, I was always depressed and because of that reason I would be constantly be drinking. However the SUD therapist helped me to find my way. I have recommended Hispanic Counseling Center to a lot of people that I know and have the same problem that I had."

"I do not have enough words to all the program staff, but just "appreciation". It was very difficult at the beginning of the program because I did not want to be aware of my 'problem', and also because I was very ashamed about what other people would think about me. But I can say right now that entering this SUD program is one of the most beautiful things that has happened in my life. I just would like to say thank you to all the SUD staff."

#### In the words of Youth and Family Program clients and family:

"Good morning, I want to thank God for the program that my son attends. The director is great and I am grateful for the support she gives me. I thank her a lot because my son has progressed because they support him in the school with workshops and so on. Thank you very much to everyone who makes this program possible because my family- we have benefited. Thanks for the support, God bless you." *Parent of Youth Participant*

"Hello my name is Carlos and I attend the Academy Charter School and I have been coming to the Teen Drop In Center for a while now, maybe a couple of years and I would like to say a big thank you because they really help me a lot either with my homework or emotional support and other things of that sort. I'd also like that they are always thinking of us on special occasions like on Easter or during Christmas and all the gifts they give us. And during our birthdays and they're always celebrating us and thinking of us making us feel special. Thank you for all you do."



# HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER

## Saint Brigid's Parish Outreach

85 Post Avenue, Westbury, NY 11590  
(516) 334-0021



May 27, 2022

Claudia Boyle, LMHC  
Chief Executive Officer  
Hispanic Counseling Center  
344 Fulton Ave.  
Hempstead, NY 11550

Dear Ms. Boyle,

On behalf of Yanira Chacon of our Casa Mary Johanna ministry and all of us here at Saint Brigid's, I am writing to express our sincere thanks for all the efforts of your team, as part of the Project Hope initiative, in service to those whom we serve here at Saint Brigid's. So many have benefited from the workshops and your team's presence at our food pantry.

We would like to acknowledge in particular the following counselors who so generously gave of their time and expertise in service to so many here at Saint Brigid's: Jezebel Lopez, Raul Ivan Garcia Perez, Jennifer Carballo, Melissa Gomez, Alba Andia and Jenny Hernandez.

We are so grateful for all that has been done and look forward to our continued collaboration. Please be assured of our prayers for everyone at Hispanic Counseling Center.

Gratefully,

*Deacon Darrell Buono*  
Deacon Darrell Buono  
Vicar, Parish Outreach Services

### Note to Self

When I am feeling stressed, I can use something I practiced in the SSET group to feel better.

I want to practice positive thinking and calm breathing. I want to stop the feeling of worrying and try to take action.

This note is for a person that helps me calm down. She is special to me and I give a Thank You for helping me calm down when I see her. She is an amazing Doctor for me. She is really nice to me.

Thank you for everything you have done for me.

From: Tiffany  
to: Jessica

5-26-2022

Hello I'm a client of the Housing Program in the Hispanic Counseling Center for more than 15 years in the years that I been there everyone that has been my housing manager has been extremely helpful and understanding if it was not for this program I would probably be Homeless. So now I have Ingrid and I know I can call her for advice and she listen and if she can help she will. So I am Really thankful always treated with respect



## CARE COORDINATION

HCC Care Coordination is a partnership with Northwell Health and has been in operation since 2017. The focus of Care Coordination is to assist individuals in monitoring their health, both behavioral and physical, to ensure that they remain healthy. Each client is assigned a Care Coordinator who assists the client to obtain medical and behavioral health providers in the community of their choice. As necessary, clients are assisted with referrals to appropriate medical providers and community health organizations.

Care Coordination provides services to individuals age 21 or older. Ninety percent of the HCC Care Coordination client base is senior citizen, male and female, and predominantly Hispanic. The program seeks to provide enhanced services to the client and each Care Coordinator develops a six month care plan that identifies strengths and barriers for the client. Interim target dates are set as well as assessments to ensure better quality of health.

In 2021 Care Coordination resumed in person visits, while maintaining COVID-19 safety guidelines through proper use of PPE. In 2021, Care Coordination provided case management support services to a total of 108 clients. Care coordination continued to assist clients with filing for unemployment, DSS SNAP benefits, Metro Cards, food pantries and medical appointments. The Care Coordination team continued to provide services during these challenging times by working closely with other HCC programs and partners at Northwell Health and other organizations.

The mobile Food Pantry through LI Cares provided monthly food distribution for all the programs at HCC and Care Coordination clients regularly relied on this resource. Since the majority of clients are seniors, disabled and without access to transportation, the Care Coordination team ensured that home deliveries of any type were fulfilled by the program.

In 2021, Care Coordination staff also worked with the HCC Teen Drop in Center to arrange for children of mutual clients to receive gifts during the holidays. Care Coordination also continued to refer clients for assistance with naturalization applications and renewals of residency cards and collaborated with the United Way to provide clients with free Metro cards. Care Coordination continued to collaborate with HCC vaccine campaigns to ensure that every client had the opportunity to be vaccinated. In 2021, 90% of Care Coordination clients were fully vaccinated, as part of the HCC vaccine partnership with Northwell.





## **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BATTERERS ACCOUNTABILITY PROGRAM NURTURING PARENTING SKILLS**

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BATTERERS ACCOUNTABILITY PROGRAM (BAP)

This 26 week psycho-educational program is designed to educate individuals who are referred by courts and child welfare agencies due to charges stemming from domestic violence and child abuse. The goal of the program is to offer individuals an opportunity to change learned behaviors through education which will allow them to take control and responsibility for their actions and the impact of their actions on victims, and to reduce the potential for family violence. Referrals come from the Courts, the District Attorney's Office, and Probation, among others. A total of 24 clients registered for the 26 week program and 23 successfully completed. All clients in attendance were from Nassau County.

Participation in the BAP program is court mandated as a consequence of being arrested and charged with domestic violence. Many clients have little or no understanding of the U.S. judicial system and laws and have further challenges due to language barriers and there is often resistance from clients at the outset of the program. Developing a positive dynamic between the counselor and client is paramount to successful completion of the program. Clients respond to the program when this positive communication is established and they understand the program is not one of judgment but one of support.

### NURTURING PARENTING SKILLS PROGRAM (NPP)

This 16 week psycho-educational program is designed to build nurturing parenting skills as an alternative to abusive and neglectful parenting and child-rearing practices. The program continued to be conducted via telehealth through 2021 to maintain COVID-19 safety protocols. During 2021, the program saw an increase in referrals for the NPP from the HCC Mental Health Clinic, CPS, Family Court, and other programs and agencies as a result of the urgent need for these services in the community. A total of 37 clients, all from Nassau County, registered for the 16 week program with 35 successful completions.

While the program was originally created for parents who were involved in domestic violence in the presence of children, the Nurturing Parenting program is also offered free to any parent who is interested in improving parenting skills.



### EMPIRE STATE AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

The Empire State After-School Program (ESAP), in partnership with the Hempstead School District, assists newly arrived Hempstead High School students and their families by providing social and academic support. ESAP offers support to children who arrive in the United States from other countries, 'newcomers', who represent a variety of educational and linguistic backgrounds and varying social and emotional needs. The program develops solutions to the challenges faced by newcomer students and encourages collaborative planning to help students succeed. Parents are offered educational workshops and parent support groups. In 2021, the program supported 90 students and families in the Hempstead School District.

In 2021 students continued to experience negative outcomes resulting from COVID-19 and ESAP served as a source of support for students and their families as they adjusted to the challenging circumstances and stressors created by the pandemic. To meet these needs, ESAP conducted the program by offering services in person, online, over the phone, and through other platforms to support students and their families. Assistance was provided in English and in the native language regarding information on vital resources related to COVID-19.

Due to the pandemic physical limitations continued in classroom instruction altering relationships between educators and students were and ESAP relied on technology and virtual learning tools such as smartphones, tablets, laptops, and/or computers. Video conferencing platforms such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams facilitated private and secure communication for students and families as well as a hybrid process. Strategies and guidance were provided to ensure that the school reopening process was successful for students.

The program provided academic support to assist students to assist them in obtaining credits and graduating in 2021. Students participated in structured and supervised educational services after school hours such as tutoring, youth development, and school resources to help meet learning standards and to be successful in school. Program teachers designed effective lesson plans to assist students in academics subjects and English as a New Language and provided students who may have experienced interrupted or inconsistent formal education with reading and writing in the native language.

The program also provided social and emotional support for students and their families and made referrals to the Mental Health Clinic, the Substance Use Disorder program, and other appropriate support services for those who experienced trauma or emotional stress in the country of origin or on the trip to the U.S. or adapting to a new culture and the pandemic. The program referred and provided information to more than 80 students and their families to service providers such as the Nassau County Office of Hispanic Affairs, Island Harvest, the Salvation Army and other agencies.



### **FAMILY PEER SUPPORT SERVICES AND RESPITE PROGRAM**

The intent of the program is to provide respite and family peer support services for families raising a child, ages 6 through 21, who exhibits deficit functioning in one or more of the following areas: self-care, educational achievement, family interactions, socialization, self-control, self-direction, etc. or experiences social, emotional, developmental, and / or behavioral challenges in the home, school, placement, and /or community. The primary objective of the Children and Family Peer Support Services Program is to reduce family stress, reduce the incidence of hospitalization or re-hospitalization, and decrease the risk of child abuse.

In 2021 the program served 54 children, adolescents, and their families as well as 25 additional families through the Family Peer Support Program which provides group activities Monday through Thursday and Fridays as needed. The program works with the New York State Office of Mental Health Long Island Field office on an array of services for children and families which are offered through the program. In 2021 the program had a successful audit and continued to be well reviewed by clients who completed evaluations and surveys concerning program services and ways to improve the program.

During 2021 the Family Peer Support Services and Respite program continued to operate remotely via telehealth by phone or video, serving existing and new clients. The program was adapted for physically distanced outdoor settings such as parks, outdoor malls, and family yards. To maintain COVID-19 safety guidelines when not possible to meet outdoors, the program continued to provide group and individual sessions through applications such as Zoom, WhatsApp video, WhatsApp message, Facetime, and I message.

In 2021 Children and their families were also connected to food and health resources, SSI, DSS, and educational services and self-care through webinars, Zoom meetings, and weekly contacts. Referrals were made to other HCC programs, and as needed the program collaborated with other agencies and organizations.





### **GREENTREE FOUNDATION 'NEW NORMAL' SUPPORT PROGRAM**

The 'New Normal' Support Program, a special initiative funded by the Greentree Foundation, targeted clients in need of COVID-19 relief by providing evidence based educational tools and strategies to address the symptoms many immigrants and community members experienced as a result of the pandemic. The support groups, provided at no cost, were offered to clients in cycles of ten weekly sessions for each of three different age groups: children (8-11 yrs.), youth (12-17 yrs.), and adults (18+). Groups were conducted weekdays and Saturdays with day and evening sessions to meet the needs of the community. The support groups informally promoted mental health education and healthy coping mechanisms, in addition to regularly scheduled HCC Mental Health Clinic sessions. Following COVID safety protocols, 'New Normal' Support Groups were conducted virtually via Zoom and in-person for clients with technical limitations.

Each group successfully offered children, youth and adult clients of the Hispanic Counseling Center a safe space to express their concerns, be heard, and not feel isolated among group members who provided emotional support and advice. At the completion of a 10 week cycle participants were offered the opportunity to continue a second cycle. Evidence based mental health assistance tools were tailored for each age group to help children, youth, and adults express experiences and emotions and create individual solutions through group support. The 'New Normal' Support Groups were of special benefit to community members without medical insurance and as needed, referrals were made for all participants within and outside the agency.

The 'New Normal' Support Group sessions conducted a total of 145 units of service in 2021. Throughout the cycles it was observed that participants were better able to address feelings or symptoms of loneliness, depression, anxiety, grief, negative intrusive thoughts, and stress when it was expressed by participants within a group setting. Overall, the groups exhibited an improved sense of control towards negative feelings within daily living, generating relief and comfort for individual participants.



### MENTAL HEALTH OUTPATIENT CLINIC

The HCC Mental Health Clinic (MHC) is the only fully bilingual, bicultural mental health program in the region licensed by the New York State Office of Mental Health to provide treatment for children, adolescents, adults, and families in a bilingual bicultural setting. The goal of the clinic is to enable individuals who have chronic mental illnesses or who are suffering emotional distress to achieve their highest level of functioning within their families and community. Services provided by the MHC include individual, family, and group therapy, psychiatric services, and medication management as well as crisis intervention for those in need.

The MHC staff includes two bilingual psychiatrists, one of whom specializes in child psychiatry, six full-time therapists and four Fee for Service therapists. MHC therapists participate in ongoing training on risk assessment, co-occurring disorders, evidenced-based practices, HIPPA, sexual harassment and corporate compliance regulations, and other topics.

The Mental Health Clinic accepts referrals from the Department of Probation, Child Protective Services, schools, hospitals, immigration detention centers, and works in partnership with the Northwell ER Clinic for referrals in need of urgent attention, among others. The Mental Health Clinic and other HCC programs cross refer clients as necessary for optimum client outcomes and as needed clients are referred to community services and resources such as food distribution centers, housing/rental assistance and school services for children. MHC youth and children benefit from the Respite program and the Teen Drop-in Center for academic support and development of socialization skills. In 2021, the Mental Health Clinic also continued to provide clients with education on COVID-19 vaccines.

The Mental Health Clinic also participates as a field placement site for Masters level social workers and mental health counseling students from local colleges and universities including: Adelphi University, LIU, Fordham University, Molloy College, and Stony Brook University. Field placement students receive guidance and supervision from MHC program coordinators and gain skills and experience while providing clinical services and expanding the number of clients HCC is able to serve. These collaborative partnerships between universities and the MHC benefit clients, the community, and field placement students who, after graduation, have the opportunity to be hired as full-time employees at the agency.

Annually the Mental Health Clinic conducts a telephone client satisfaction survey to assess client-perceived outcomes of therapy. A sample of clients is selected at random and is conducted by agency staff other than MHC therapists to increase response rate. Findings from 42 completed surveys indicate that 57% of clients reported gaining control over their presenting psychiatric symptoms and/or depression. Ten percent reported improved family relationships and a decrease in familial domestic violence/disturbances. The rate of re-hospitalization remained low with 10% of the sample being re-hospitalized during the first year of treatment in the MHC.

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## HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER

### *Mental Health Outpatient Client continued*

#### Nassau County:

In 2021, the Nassau Clinic received 1,536 applications and screenings for treatment. The total number of clients served in 2021 was 1,610 individuals. The total number of units of service billed was 20,959. Despite challenges and limitations including limited staff due to significant turnover, the clinic accommodated new referrals, especially a large number of children and adolescents.

Therapists continued in 2021 to provide individual, family and group therapy via telehealth platforms including ZOOM, Doxy.me and telephone to ensure that clients received appropriate treatment in the circumstances presented by the pandemic. Strong engagement skills from the therapy team guided unfamiliar and hesitant clients through telehealth despite technical limitations and/or lack of access to smart phones. Staff developed a reintegration plan to return to in-person individual therapy sessions and psychiatric sessions. Clients were educated on clinic guidelines such as plexi-glass screens, the importance of utilizing PPE, taking temperature, and completing COVID-19 questionnaires before entering the building. As a result of returning to in-person appointments, the number of units of services increased and cancellations decreased.

As a result of a grant from the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation, the Nassau County MHC received funding for a second year to expand services to meet the special mental health needs of children and family members exposed to domestic violence.

#### Suffolk County:

In July 2021 the HCC Suffolk Mental Health Clinic began services in Bay Shore, NY. The Suffolk Clinic has developed and expanded relationships with the community, including the Brentwood School District and the Suffolk County Mental Health Clinic. The Suffolk HCC MHC sees clients in person while maintaining COVID-19 safety protocols (use of plexi-glasses, proper PPE, temperature- taking, answering COVID-19 questions, etc.).

The HCC Suffolk clinic has successfully accommodated all referrals, especially a large number of children and adolescents. In 2021, the HCC Suffolk Clinic received 250 applications and screenings for treatment. The total number of clients served in 2021 was 290 and 645 units of service were billed.





### PROJECT HOPE CRISIS COUNSELING

NY Project Hope: Coping with COVID Crisis Counseling Program is a federally funded, supplemental program administered by the US Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) within the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) works with FEMA through an interagency agreement to provide technical assistance, consultation, grant administration, program oversight and training for state mental health authorities in implementing this program.

NY Project Hope: Coping with COVID is an outreach-based crisis counseling program designed to assist individuals and communities throughout NYS who are directly impacted by COVID-19, COVID-19 survivors, individuals who lost a family member due to COVID-19, and individuals who lost their homes, jobs, and property due to COVID-19. The program supports short-term interventions that assist community members to understand the COVID-19 crisis and manage reaction to the crisis. In addition, the project seeks to mitigate stress, develop coping strategies, provide emotional support, and encourage linkages with other individuals and agencies that help community members in the recovery process.

Program staffing includes a coordinator, two team leaders and twelve crisis counselors. All counselors were initially completed four FEMA approved training sessions. As the program developed, crisis counselors were also required by FEMA to attend fourteen additional training sessions provided through the Center for Practice Innovation (CPI) for further skills to support their work. In addition, crisis counselors participate in a weekly statewide Learning Collaborative conducted by the NYS OMH training team.

A needs assessment was conducted to determine the most productive strategy to reach the target population. Using US census data and the NY State Education Department website, staff identified the towns and villages with the highest Hispanic population in Nassau and Suffolk counties. This information provided the basis for in-person and virtual outreach to inform the community of program services and identify clients.

In 2021, the program served over 1900 community members in individual sessions; and over 800 community members in group sessions. Major challenges included identifying services for undocumented individuals, attempting to stay safe and avoid risk of infection while conducting in person outreach, and staff shortages due to COVID-19 related illnesses. Program accomplishments include establishing partnerships with organizations in the community, establishing trust and rapport with community members, and successfully serving the target population.



## HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER

### **RYAN WHITE PART A/MAI MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH HIV/AIDS**

Ryan White Mental Health Part A/MAI (Ryan White) is a federally funded program which provides care and treatment services to people living with HIV who are uninsured or underinsured. The Minority AIDS Initiative (MAI), a component of Ryan White, addresses the needs of minority communities disproportionately impacted by HIV/AIDS. The program has been in operation since 2001 with the goal to assist the most vulnerable who are ineligible for any entitlements and who reside in Nassau and Suffolk Counties. The HCC Ryan White outpatient comprehensive mental health services program is conducted by bilingual and bicultural staff and specialized mental health services are provided by a psychiatrist and licensed clinical social workers.

During 2021, the Ryan White program served 48 clients and continued to provide a wide range of services including psychosocial evaluation, psychiatric evaluation, individual, family, couples, and group therapy, counseling groups, crisis intervention, home and/or hospital visits, information on other eligible services, and referrals. The Ryan White program continued to provide telehealth mental health treatment utilizing telephone and/or video conferencing. Staff modified schedules and were flexible to accommodate clients who lacked privacy for telehealth visits. One third of program clients contracted the coronavirus. Client challenges in utilizing technology were resolved with staff support and assistance. Clients used the Ryan White Hotline for support communicating with medical providers and others. Additional program services were limited with occasional home visits to secure required signatures and meet new clients.

As a result of the pandemic many clients experienced severe financial hardship and lost employment or were furloughed for the long term. In 2021 Ryan White clients benefitted from additional support from the CARES Act Emergency Financial Assistance and Food Bank for PPE masks and gloves, and other donations of gift cards for food and cleaning and sanitation items, and assistance for mobile phone services to ensure uninterrupted telehealth treatment.

#### Regional Prevention and Support Services (RPSSI)

In 2021 HCC continued Year 2 of RPSSI, in partnership with Northwell Health and the North Shore University Center for AIDS Research and Treatment (CART). The program provided intensive case management to decrease the risk of new HIV infections in people at risk of contracting HIV, Hepatitis C, and Sexual Transmitted infections and expanded access to and awareness of PEP and PrEP for individuals at risk. HCC is proud to be a partner in this multi-organization effort implemented by hospitals, clinics, and community based organizations in Nassau County such as HCC.

The program goal is to 1) enroll individuals in the program and provide intensive case management to decrease the risk of new HIV infections of people at risk for contracting HIV, Hepatitis C, and sexual transmitted diseases and 2) expand access to and awareness of PEP and PrEP for individuals at risk.



### THE STATE OPIOID RESPONSE (SOR) II PROGRAM

The State Opioid Response (SOR) II program funded by OASAS serves vulnerable youth and families at risk of opioid and substance use. In 2021, a total of 111 clients were served. Program services were initiated in 2021 in a remote format and in summer 2021 prevention counselors began delivering services in person at some locations.

The SOR II program implemented Evidenced Based Practices (EBP) as part of this New York State prevention initiative to reduce opioid consumption and deaths by overdose. Each EBP promotes healthy coping mechanisms and seeks to develop resilience in program participants. As needed, referrals were made for mental health services within the agency. In 2021 SOR II utilized the following Evidence Based Programs with successful outcomes in all settings and for all client groups:

Positive Action: a 12 month curriculum that promotes the philosophy that “*we feel good about ourselves when we do positive actions and there is always a positive way to do everything*”. This program is currently implemented at the Teen Drop Center and delivered in once a week sessions. The program served 29 students from Middle and High school. Students showed a special interest in the program and learned strategies to build a positive identity and self-concept while writing journals, playing games, and practicing self-evaluations.

Support for Students Exposed to Trauma: SSET is a 10-week support group for students ages 12 to 17 who have experienced some type of trauma in their lifetime. In 2021, four support groups were conducted serving 11 students. The SSET in-person group at a FCA shelter for teenagers in Nassau County was successfully received with positive outcomes. The HCC Mental Health Clinic referred clients to three support groups in 2021. Participants learned the common reactions to trauma and learned how to normalize their emotions. Parents identified improvement in their children after completing the sessions.

Psychological First Aid (PFA) and Skills for Psychological Recovery (SPR): These two evidence based programs were offered at three homeless shelters in Nassau County and to all programs in HCC and additional referrals from the Mental Health Clinic. PFA is a brief intervention for people with acute distress symptoms such as anxiety, irritability, emotional ups and downs, poor sleep, poor concentration, etc. SPR is used in combination with PFA to teach clients lifelong skills such as managing reactions, promoting helpful thinking, and problem solving. During 2021 a total of twenty one (21) clients were served via zoom and in-person.

Parenting Wisely Teens and Young Children: These are two- online programs promote effective parenting skills for parents of teens and younger children. With the guidance of a counselor, and through program videos, parents learned important concepts to promote mutual respect, good communication, and unity in the family. Parents were referred by the Mental Health Clinic, and typically children and teens were receiving mental health services at the Clinic. Sessions were conducted via zoom or in-person at the parent’s convenience. During 2021, 50 parents participated via zoom and/ or in-person.





### **SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER (SUD) PROGRAM**

In accordance with NYS OASAS Part 822 regulations issued in August 2021, the HCC Chemical Dependency Outpatient Program was re-named the HCC Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Outpatient Program. The goal of the program continues to assist individuals who abuse substances to achieve sobriety and to live a substance free lifestyle. Families are provided with services designed to meet the individual treatment needs of each family member. In addition to the program's therapeutic services, clients are provided with educational and prevention services to address the cycle of addiction. All services are delivered in an atmosphere of cultural understanding which recognizes the importance of family involvement. The incorporation of a self-help philosophy serves as the basis to maintain abstinence and achieve sobriety.

Program staff is fully bilingual and bicultural and the program is housed within a multi-service agency which allows the program to provide clients with comprehensive treatment and referrals. Program services are designed in a flexible manner and consider time and employment constraints of clients, with sessions available in the morning and in the evening.

Despite challenges that resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Substance Use Disorder Program continued to provide services to men, women and adolescents, predominantly of Hispanic origin, who as a result of their alcohol/drug use have been negatively impacted in all areas of their lives. Clinicians in the SUD Program were versatile and adapted innovative ways and methods to deliver the services via Zoom and Doxy.me for the majority of program services. In person initial intake assessments and some individual psychotherapy sessions began in mid- 2021 with successful outcomes. During 2021, the Substance Use Disorder Program continued to receive referrals from Nassau and Suffolk District Courts, Felony Treatment Drug Court, Family Court, Probation Officers, Social Service agencies and community attorneys. The program continued to receive referrals from the Domestic Violence Courts for individuals struggling with addiction and explosive behavior, and received an increase in referrals from schools, CPS and PINS (Person in Need of Supervision) Diversion regarding adolescents involved in experimentation or full use of substances and/or alcohol.

In 2021 the program delivered nearly 11,000 individual and group counseling sessions, with a marked increase in the number of referrals of women struggling with use of substances. On a weekly basis, the program offered seven Substance Use Disorder groups, one DV/substance use disorder group, one substance use/women's group, one substance use/adolescents group, one relapse group, and three educational series groups. A treatment plan was developed for each client with scheduled weekly group sessions, weekly educational series, and biweekly or weekly (as needed) individual sessions, and if needed, a relapse group. Individual, group and/or psychoeducation were also available for the family or significant other affected by a loved one's abuse of drugs or alcohol.



## **SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROGRAM**

The Supportive Housing Program (SHP) provides permanent housing to eligible adults with a serious mental illness diagnosis and is the only program in Nassau County in which clients reside in individual apartments and have access to secure, safe affordable housing. The goal of the SHP is to help clients maintain housing and assist clients with additional community resources to achieve fully independent lives.

In 2021, the Supportive Housing Program served 30 clients, 19 females and 11 males; 18 of whom are 55 years of age or older. The population is diverse with one Iranian, seven Caucasians, six African Americans, and 16 Hispanic clients.

In 2021, all clients continued to receive COVID-19 vaccine education and awareness, as well as information on testing and vaccine sites. Vaccine appointment scheduling was facilitated and scheduled for clients willing to receive the vaccine. All SHP clients were referred for the vaccine and assistance was provided scheduling via the OMH O-LOV system, Nassau County FQHC, Walgreens Pharmacy, PCP, and NUMC. By December 2021, a total of 21 clients were vaccinated. Non-vaccinated clients continued to receive education on the benefits of the COVID-19 vaccine. Completion of the OMH survey related to vaccine compliance of staff and service recipients in the program took place every Friday.

The SHP continued to provide clients with services needed to maintain fully independent lives including services from HCC Care Coordination and the Mental Health Clinic. Clients benefited from food deliveries and food pantry referrals, including food donations facilitated by the agency via Long Island Harvest. Landlord-tenant issues were resolved in a timely matter to avoid any conflict and to help maintain housing.

In 2021 the SHP collaborated with the following external agencies/organizations for assistance to help clients become more independent in the community while coping with the pandemic: Pilgrim Psychiatric Center; Walgreens, FQHC, and NUMC for COVID-19 vaccine for 14 clients; HCC Care Coordination for medical-related assistance to ten clients, Nassau Mental Health Association for financial management and guidance to six clients, Federation of Organizations, Sail, and Central Nassau Guidance via the MRS Teams for additional support/respite housing and/or medication management for four clients. APS provided elder abuse intervention for one client and Long Island Cares and Long Island Para Cristo Church donated food throughout the year for 30 clients.

The Supportive Housing Coordinator completed various trainings in 2021 to further enhance the knowledge and skills needed to deliver the highest level of service to SHP clients. Training included: Nassau County COVID-19 Conversations; OMH O-LOV COVID-19 Program; OMH Vaccine Education for Consumers and Staff; LI Fair Housing Guidance to Federal Financial Recipients regarding limited English Proficient Persons; The Safe Center Elder Abuse; and Hands Across Long Island Bi-County Empowerment Conference.

Clients reported positive feedback regarding all aspects of typical and special COVID-19-related support, especially food pantries, testing sites, CDC guidelines, and vaccine education.



### YOUTH AND FAMILY PROGRAM

The Youth and Family Program supports newly arrived families with limited English skills to become integrated members of the community. The Teen Drop In Center (TDIC) program provides a safe haven for students in the Hempstead school district to keep them safe during the vulnerable after school hours. The program also helps students build their self-esteem, helps prevent school dropout and provides students with the foundation to become future leaders for tomorrow.

In September 2021 in-person programming was resumed following CDC protocols and guidelines. Services were provided to 200 families. On average, 19 students participated in after school programming ranging from tutoring to STEM Jr. coding workshops and evidence based prevention workshops conducted by HCC prevention staff. Prevention workshops followed a grade-based curriculum to teach the negative effects of substance and alcohol. The HCC SOR II program also conducted a weekly prevention workshop using the evidence based “Positive Action” program. These workshops and the entire TDIC program are especially important for TDIC students whose parents may work more than one job and may not be home to supervise youth during the after school hours.

In 2021 collaboration was continued with the Hempstead School District and with other CBO’s through participation at monthly meetings led by the Hempstead HS school social worker and the Hempstead High School Team Center. These meetings are an important vehicle for the Youth and Family Program to keep informed about the Hempstead School District and the Hempstead community.

In December 2021, HCC hosted the annual Children’s’ Holiday Party which has been an HCC tradition for many years for all children served by the agency and for children of clients of the agency. Two hundred families received holiday gifts that were donated to HCC and all children had a picture with Santa and Mrs. Claus. The Holiday Party is always important and was especially significant in 2021 for the many families who struggled financially due to the pandemic. For many of the children, the HCC Holiday Party gifts may be the only ones they receive at the holiday season and HCC makes every effort to secure substantial donations to fulfill each child’s “wish list”.

The Summer Camp program was conducted in person during July and August 2021. Camp offered parents the opportunity to enroll their children in a budget friendly summer camp and due to COVID-19 restrictions the number of participants was limited to 15 children. The program included fun and educational field trips, STEM workshops/2D Game development facilitated by Springboard, and STEM science workshops facilitated by Cornell Cooperative Extension. The summer camp program was a success and highly rated by both parents and children.





# HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER

## OUR SUPPORTERS

In 2021 in addition to additional funding support from the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), HCC continued several innovative programs. The partnership with Northwell Health to conduct Year 2 of RPSSI continued to expand HIV/AIDS prevention and education. FEMA Project Hopewas continued to provide much needed COVID-19 related counseling and referrals. The Mother Cabrini Health Foundation supported Year 2 to expand mental health services for children affected by domestic violence.

In 2021 HCC began a collaborative partnership grant with the Advanced Health Network (AHN) and other agencies in a multi-year project to increase awareness of the opioid and substance abuse problem on Long Island.

The Hispanic Counseling Center is grateful to these funders and to all others for supporting these and all other agency-wide programs and services during 2021:

### PUBLIC SUPPORT

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources Services Administration
- United States Small Business Administration
- NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports
- NYS Office of Children and Family Services
- NYS Department of Health
- NYS Office of Mental Health
- NYS Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene
- Nassau County Community Development Agency
- Nassau County Department of Human Services
- Nassau County District Attorney's Office
- Nassau County Office of Youth Services
- Village of Hempstead Community Development Agency
- Hempstead Union Free School District

### CORPORATE AND FOUNDATION SUPPORTERS

- FedEx Express
- Greentree Foundation
- Henry Schein Inc.
- Hispanic Federation
- Hofstra University
- Mother Cabrini Health Foundation
- Newsday Charities
- Northwell Health
- People's United Bank
- United Way of Long Island



# HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER

The Hispanic Counseling Center Inc. is licensed by: NYS Office of  
Addiction Services and Supports, NYS Office of Children and Family  
Services, and  
NYS Office of Mental Health

The Hispanic Counseling Center Inc. is tax-exempt under section 501(c) (3)  
of the Internal Revenue Code. All donations are tax-deductible to the full  
extent allowed by the law.



*Celebrating 45 years of opening doors to the future  
for Long Island children and families*