

Annual Report 2016

A Place to Grow

Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement



Who We Are

Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement is a community-based non-profit organization that offers educational, cultural, social and legal services to youth, seniors, immigrants and families throughout Western Queens, New York. The crux of our mission is a comprehensive strategy that addresses the whole person. We provide the resources, opportunities and supports that serve as a *catalyst* for community members to reach their greatest potential and achieve social and economic self-sufficiency.

Founded in 1899, Riis Settlement is named in honor of Jacob Riis, the Danish-American social reformer and photojournalist who advocated for grassroots reforms in New York's poorest communities through the work of settlement houses. Today Riis Settlement serves more than 1,200 participants daily through senior health and wellness programs, English language classes, afterschool activities and college access workshops.



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*Riis Academy Program Director
(PS 171)*

Letters from the Executive Director and Chairman



A Message from the Executive Director

As executive director of a long-standing social services agency, I know firsthand the important role that the non-profit sector plays in leveling the playing field and advancing a more equitable society in which all members have equal opportunity to achieve their goals. From operating after-school programs to senior centers and providing a whole host of essential human services in-between, non-profits serve as conduits through which vital resources flow from government and private entities to the individual or family in need. Ensuring that the sector remains strong and healthy is crucial.

Recognizing this is one of the reasons why Riis Settlement chose to undergo a strategic planning process three years ago and design a five-year plan that would help strengthen our infrastructure and ensure our future sustainability. Fiscal year 2016 marked year two of that plan, and I am happy to report that the implementation of the recommendations set forth for both year two and year one has been a success. We have not only taken steps to increase our administrative capacity but also expanded our services for the large population of disconnected youth in our community through our Cure Violence initiative, 696 Build Queensbridge. This innovative model treats gun violence from an epidemiological perspective and employs “credible messengers” to interrupt transmission of the disease. Because gun violence had plagued the Queensbridge community for many years, making inroads into changing that culture has not been easy. We are pleased that our 696 Build Queensbridge program is successfully tackling this problem head on and that it is also laying the foundation for the development of even more robust programming to meet the comprehensive needs of this specific population.

This year, we also spent more of our time and energy engaging in advocacy and coalition building. As a proud member agency of organizations like United Neighborhood Houses, Human Services Council, Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies, and the Nonprofit Coordinating Committee, we are fortunate to have a number of platforms upon which we can raise our concerns and ensure that our voices are heard. With these groups leading the charge, members of our staff traveled to Albany and to the steps of City Hall on numerous occasions to campaign for fairer policies and adequate funding to meet the needs of our participants. We recognize that the strength of Riis Settlement is predicated on the strength of the sector as a whole and that coming together as one is the most effective way to create change. Therefore, we look forward to continuing these collaborative efforts and thank you for your support and continued partnership along the way.

*Christopher Hanway
Executive Director*



A Letter from our Chairman

This year is an especially poignant time for me, as I near the end of my second and final term as board chair of Riis Settlement and reflect back on what has truly been a remarkable journey. The last twelve years of board service, and, in particular, the last six as board chair have afforded me many wonderful experiences and a deep appreciation for the dedication and grit that characterizes the work of Riis Settlement and so many community-based social service organizations like it. Throughout the years, I have witnessed a deep resilience and a relentless commitment to the mission in spite of numerous challenges. In the face of an economic downturn, a changing philanthropic climate and persistent government underfunding, the organization not only managed to survive, but also flourished.

In my tenure as board chair, the organization has grown from a budget of \$2 million to \$5 million and expanded from 5 sites to 8 sites. Fiscal year 2016 was no exception to this trend of growth. The agency launched a fourth major program, 696 Build Queensbridge, which aims to decrease incidences of gun violence in the Queensbridge community as well as provide support services to the high number of youth in the community who are disconnected from school and work and are most at risk. Still in its nascent stages, the program has already had a significant impact on the community.

Additionally, in 2016 the agency ramped up its civic engagement efforts through its partnership in the Community Votes initiative, which aims to leverage organizations like Riis Settlement to conduct nonpartisan voter mobilization so more underrepresented citizens take an active part in the democratic process. Working hard throughout a very important election year, the agency educated community members on their rights as voters and embarked on a number of activities to encourage all those eligible to not only register but to turn out and have their voices heard at the city, state and federal level.

Although my tenure as board chair is coming to a close, my time as a board member of Riis Settlement is not. I remain committed to the agency and its mission. I look forward to working closely with the incoming board chair, Gordon Mehler, to ensure a successful transition and to continuing to work closely with my fellow board members to ensure that Riis Settlement continues to succeed in all aspects of its work.

*Michael Bingold
Chairman, Board of Directors*

A PLACE TO HONOR OUR PAST

Seeds of change planted
over a century ago continue
to inform our mission.



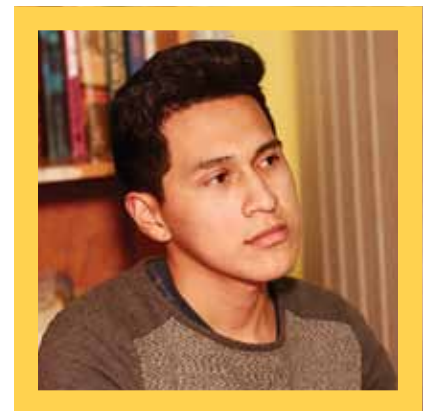
**The Settlement House Movement –
Forging Strong Communities**

Beginning in London in the mid-19th century, the settlement movement aimed to bring the rich and poor closer together in an interdependent community. Due to increasing concerns about urban poverty in England, middle-class volunteers moved to impoverished areas in order to share knowledge, culture and resources with their low-income neighbors.

The movement was quickly adopted by other countries, including the United States, where settlement houses were established to alleviate the effects of poverty in crowded immigrant neighborhoods. By the end of the century, there were more than 100 settlement houses nationwide offering local residents access to educational, recreational and arts programs.

In 1911, American settlement house leaders united to found the National Federation of Settlements and Neighborhood Centers of America. Now known as the Alliance for Strong Families and Communities, the national organization has a membership of 160 settlement houses in 20 states. United Neighborhood Houses (UNH), a member of the Alliance, is the umbrella organization for New York City settlement houses, providing capacity building and maintaining a transcending culture of community engagement.

For more than 100 years, settlement houses have been warm, welcoming places where community residents can find opportunities to improve their lives through education, housing, health care, employment, recreational activities and the arts. Although times have changed, the commitment to the community remains the hallmark of the settlement house.





Jacob A. Riis—A Catalyst for Change

A native of Ribe, Denmark, Jacob A. Riis immigrated to the United States in 1870 and began a career in journalism with the New York News Association. Through his work as a journalist, Riis discovered the squalid conditions of tenement houses in Manhattan's Lower East Side and devoted the rest of his life to social reform. In 1890, he published his seminal work in photojournalism, *How the Other Half Lives*, which documents the squalid living conditions of New York slums. His work created unprecedented public awareness about the reality of urban poverty.

In his role as a social reformer, Riis had a profound effect on the settlement house movement. In 1901, two Lower East Side settlement houses – the New York Tenement House Chapter for the King's Daughters and Sons and the King's Daughters Settlement – consolidated under the

name Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement. During its early years, the settlement house aimed to meet the needs of recently immigrated Europeans in the city's tenement houses.

In 1950, Riis Settlement relocated to the Queensbridge Houses in Western Queens, the largest public housing development in the country, to address the needs of a changing population.

Today, we continue the legacy of the settlement house as not only a place to go, but a place to grow, for the community.

DELIVERING RELEVANT, MEASURABLE RESULTS

Riis Settlement strives to produce enduring, positive change in the communities we serve. Recognizing that the needs of the community are constantly shifting, we employ a 'theory of change' that reveals short, intermediate and long term outcomes for our participants; giving us information in 'real time' that can be used to better serve our youth, seniors, immigrants and families. This strategy uses a clear description of the demographics and baseline characteristics of each individual to help us better evaluate our programming including: how our K-12 continuum affects positive change in youth, the impacts of our activities on the overall well-being of our adult seniors and ways to better integrate civic engagement, advocacy and community organizing within our Immigrant Services department

RIIS ACADEMY: A PLACE TO SET BIG GOALS

We guarantee a bright future for our community when we invest in its youngest members.



Supporting our Youth as They Grow

Riis Academy is the largest of our four programs and serves as the cornerstone of our mission to help the low- to moderate-income individuals and families in western Queens achieve social and economic success. Across seven campuses – 2 based in community centers and five in local public schools – we provide comprehensive after-school and summer programming to over 1,100 youth in grades kindergarten through 12. Our goal is to help our youth increase their academic skills, support their social and emotional development, and provide them with a safe and nurturing environment in which they can learn and grow. This year, we continued to maintain our deep commitment to positive youth development practices, and worked hard to cultivate and leverage partnerships to help us improve outcomes for our participants.

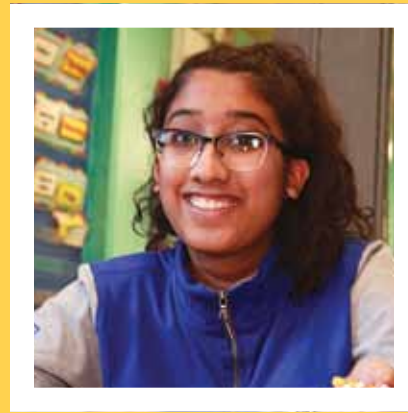
Riis Academy-Queensbridge continued its partnership with New York Cares on initiatives, such as Snackactivities, Urban Adventures, and Culinary Explorers; and the Ravenswood Cornerstone campus expanded its Saturday program to include the Music Explorers program, which teaches youth basic music theory and offers them an introduction to musical instruments. The staff at Ravenswood also partnered with the NYPD Police Service Area 9 during Black History Month for a series of community-building events that brought youth and police officers together to engage in open dialogue and build greater community trust.

Students at Riis Academy-PS 166 and Riis Academy-CS 111 developed their 21st century skills by taking

part in the Partnership for After School Education (PASE) Explorers program, which promotes global learning through local exploration. The youth assessed their community assets, visited other neighborhoods in Queens to examine similarities and differences, designed websites, and presented their findings at the borough-wide Explorers Expo at the Jamaica Performing Arts Center. The team at Riis Academy-PS 171 continued to focus on character building and introduced a Student of the Week award to reward the students' accomplishments and encourage them to reach new heights.

Staff at our Riis Academy-InfoTech program continued to provide relevant college readiness activities to help the students graduate high school and plan for post-secondary success. And, the agency continued to expand its efforts to help the disconnected youth in our community gain valuable job skills and find permanent work through our two job training/internship programs: Opportunity for Youth and the Queens Connect Collaborative.

As we reflect on the year's activities at Riis Academy, we are grateful for the immeasurable support we have received from individual donors, private and government funders, community partners, and staff in helping to make it another year of growth and success.



2016 Key Accomplishments

- Students at Riis Academy-PS 166 showed significant academic improvement in their report cards from their first marking period to their final grade: 42% showed improvement in English language arts, 49% in math, 48% in science, and 45% in social studies.
- The Riis Academy-InfoTech ISY/WIOA program exceeded its rate of participation (ROP) goal of 5,000 hours – ending the year with an overall ROP of 5,261 hours.
- Riis Academy-Queensbridge partnered with the public arts organization Groundswell to create three beautiful murals at the community center with the assistance of local youth. The team also forged a partnership with The Sylvia Center, which provided instructors to help students learn where their food comes from, how it's grown, and how to cook tasty and healthy meals.
- Riis Academy-PS 171 completed a second successful year of providing comprehensive after-school activities to 120 youth in grades K through 12.
- Following the Museum of the City Of New York's successful Jacob Riis exhibition, Revealing "How the Other Half Lives", teens from Riis Academy-InfoTech and Riis Academy-Queensbridge were invited to participate in a six week-long photography workshop with educators from the museum. The project culminated with the exhibition of the teens' original photographs at the Queensbridge community center.

2016 HIGHLIGHT: DEMOCRACY IN "TEEN" ACTION

In 2016, participants from the Ravenswood Cornerstone Teen ACTION (Achieving Change Together in Our Neighborhoods) program took an active role in the year's participatory budgeting cycle for District 26. Participatory Budgeting NYC is a democratic process that allows all residents over the age of 14 to vote on how \$1 million in capital discretionary funding should be spent within their district. First, the youth successfully advocated for renovations to the basketball courts at both Ravenswood and Queensbridge Houses to be included on the ballot. They then made posters to teach the local community about the process and encourage neighbors to come out and vote in support of the two projects. The efforts of the Teen Action youth paid off. When the results were announced, both projects were among the winning projects slated to receive awards from the City Council. The experience showed the youth that each individual has the power to make a difference in their community and, more importantly, offered them a first-hand lesson in the voting process.

IMMIGRANT SERVICES: A PLACE FOR ALL

Building a strong and vibrant community by embracing all of its members.



Helping a Diverse Community Reach New Heights

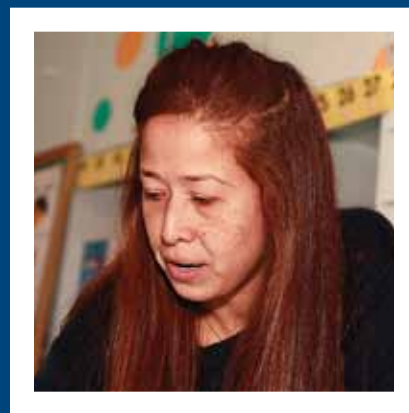
For the last 16 years, our Immigrant Services program has striven to meet the growing needs of a robust and diverse immigrant population in western Queens by offering comprehensive services that promote social and economic success. On an annual basis, we serve over 500 individuals who speak 14 languages and come from 35 different countries. Our services include: beginner to advanced English classes for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL); individual case management; social action opportunities; and immigration legal services.

In 2016, we offered 27 ESOL classes and 3 computer classes throughout the year at the Queensbridge Community Center, Ravenswood Community Center, and at I.S. 126 in Astoria. These classes helped nearly 400 students improve English proficiency in preparation for employment, higher education and community involvement at all levels. Guided by highly-experienced instructors, students learned reading, writing, speaking and listening skills with a focus on family, health, employment, community, transportation, education, safety, civic engagement, and other important issues.

In addition to educational programming, immigrant community members received support navigating essential services, benefits, and institutions here in New York City. With the support of two part-time social work interns, our program's caseworker assisted over 110 participants with accessing health insurance and food stamps benefits, researching education and job training opportunities, acquiring work readiness

and employment skills, and gaining a better understanding of the social and political systems in New York City. Our case management team exceeded our projected goals of enrolling 65 case management participants and obtaining measurable outcomes for 44 of those cases.

Community members also received immigration legal services from our experienced immigration attorney, who assisted participants and their families with citizenship, family petitions, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, adjustment of status, visas, and other cases with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Participants interested in getting involved in civic engagement and advocacy activities were given the opportunity to join our Community Action Group (CAG), a group that helps participants to use the power of community voice to achieve social justice.



2016 Key Accomplishments

- More than 40 students participated in the Community Action Group. They attended weekly meetings, campaigned in support of immigrant communities, rallied at City Hall and Washington DC, and met with 2016 Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton and other key stakeholders to discuss priorities for immigrant communities.
- Nearly 400 students completed ESOL classes and over 70% of those post-tested improved their English proficiency.
- More than 110 participants received support from our case management team.
- 31 individuals received a free legal consultation and 21 applications for immigration benefits were filed by our in-house immigration attorney.

2016 HIGHLIGHT: THE POWER OF ADVOCACY AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

In FY16, students from our ESOL program had the opportunity to participate in rallies and press conferences around issues important to them and their families. This year in particular, our students saw the true power of advocacy when the tireless efforts of the New York City Coalition for Adult Literacy (NYCCAL) led to a well-deserved victory. After numerous rallies that saw hundreds of students and advocates take to the streets to urge Mayor de Blasio to create a comprehensive adult literacy program for the 2.2 million adult New Yorkers lacking English proficiency and/or a high school diploma, the Mayor's FY17 Executive Budget included a \$12M investment in adult literacy — a nearly six fold increase over the previous year! In addition, students from our Community Action Group (CAG) traveled to Washington DC for a rally on the steps of the Supreme Court. The overwhelming number of immigrants in attendance from all across the country reflected the real need for immigration reform and highlighted the importance of the Supreme Court decision to uphold President Obama's executive actions on immigration. One of our very own students, Zaida Verdugo, spoke at the rally on why passing Deferred Action for Parents of Americans (DAPA) would be beneficial to her family and urged the Supreme Court to vote in favor of unfreezing the executive orders. Zaida also had the opportunity to share her story with Hillary Clinton at an event organized by the New York Immigration Coalition (NYIC) and was featured on the Univision news channel.

"English helps me to be part of my children's education. Now I have better communication with their teachers. This way we can work together and help my children take advantage of all the opportunities that the school offers. In the future, I want to be able to advocate for them and help them make the right choices regarding their education and their careers. As a result, they will become successful people in this country" - Zaida Verdugo.

SENIOR SERVICES: A PLACE OF STRENGTH AND VITALITY

Empowering community members of every age to live life to the fullest.



Promoting the Well-Being of Our Seniors

The Riis Settlement Senior Services program has been delivering a wide range of services to the large number of older adults who live in and around the Queensbridge community for the past 25 years. From our senior center in the Queensbridge Houses, we provide daily nutritious meals, health and wellness services, and educational and recreational activities to help promote the physical, mental, social, and emotional well-being of our participants.

In 2016, the program added a number of new activities and services to specifically support the physical and mental health of our seniors. With generous support from New York City Council Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer, we engaged a multigenerational dance company, Dances for a Variable Population, to provide weekly workshops that combined dance, theater, music, and song, and transformed the act of exercise from chore to fun. Led by Artistic Director Naomi Goldberg Haas, these classes provided a novel and engaging way for the seniors to maintain movement in their lives. Over the course of the year, the seniors completed 36 sessions and held 2 culminating performances that were open to the public. Moreover, in addition to our general exercise, Tai Chi, low-impact Zumba, and chair yoga classes, we also added karate and Pilates to the roster. In total, 3,225 seniors participated in the various exercise classes over the year.

With the goal of promoting healthier lifestyles and improving health outcomes for both the young and old, we hired a healthy foods coordinator who oversaw a wide range of activities throughout the year.

This included weekly intergenerational food education classes, numerous food demonstrations at community events such as the monthly tenant association meetings and the bi-weekly City Harvest mobile market, as well as presentations and talks at the senior center.

Paying homage to the rich diversity that exists within our community, the senior center hosted over 169 cultural and art events throughout the year. Celebrations were held in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month, Chinese Lunar New Year, Black History Month, St. Patrick's Day, Cinco de Mayo, Ramadan and more. And, thanks to continued support from the DJ McManus Foundation's Eleanor's Outings Program, our seniors once again travelled to the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) to attend Dance Africa, the nation's largest festival dedicated to African dance and culture. They also visited the Creative Outlet Dance Theatre of Brooklyn, and during the holiday season they visited Broadway where they took in the Lion King and a performance at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. They also made multiple trips to Citifield to support their favorite team, the Mets. Lastly, alongside their dedicated Artists-Teachers from the Joan Mitchell Foundation, the seniors visited the Noguchi Museum where they explored the works of renowned sculptor Isamu Noguchi, travelled to the Studio Museum of Harlem to view the abstract works of Stanley Whitney, and celebrated their creation of a collaborative piece of artwork under the direction of esteemed guest artist Emmett Wigglesworth.



2016 Key Accomplishments

- In FY16, the senior center served 24,342 meals to our seniors - an increase of 6% over FY15, and served over 2,791 nutritious take home weekend meals to our most needy participants.
- We provided 2,495 one-way trips for our seniors throughout the year.
- We partnered with Older Adults Technology Services (OATS), who upgraded our computer lab and began offering computer classes to older adults in the community as part of their Senior Planet initiative.
- With the help of our friends at Citibank we broke our previous record of 1,000 and served 1,213 nutritious meals to the community during our 10th annual Fall Family Feast.
- Longtime senior services participant, Ms. Lucille Bromell, received an award from the Queens Interagency Council on the Aging for her volunteer service to the senior center and Queensbridge community.

2016 HIGHLIGHT: ENHANCING OUR NATURALLY OCCURRING RETIREMENT COMMUNITY (NORC) PROGRAM

In 2016, the senior services program took strategic steps to strengthen and enhance its NORC component, which connects the over 1,500 seniors who live in the Queensbridge Houses to vital support services. In addition to support from the New York State Office of the Aging (NYSOFA), we also received targeted support from the New York City Council, which enabled us to make the following enhancements: We hired a part-time geriatric psychologist who provided individual and group counseling to the seniors and training for the staff on a wide range of mental health issues. We hired a certified nutritionist who helped our seniors develop workable health strategies. We provided seven additional assessable nursing hours per week for consultations, and we hired a part-time Mandarin speaking translator to assist us in reaching the growing number of Chinese seniors who now come to the center. Finally, we were also able to continue the services of our community garden consultant who helped our seniors manage our community garden. With the aforementioned services we reached the following additional number of seniors: 150 through the nutritional workshops, 100 through the exercise and gardening classes, 66 through the group and individual counseling sessions, and 20 through our homebound nursing services.

A PLACE TO GIVE AND RECEIVE

We cultivate opportunity
by making every donation count.



Statement of Activities with Summarized Financial Information for 2016

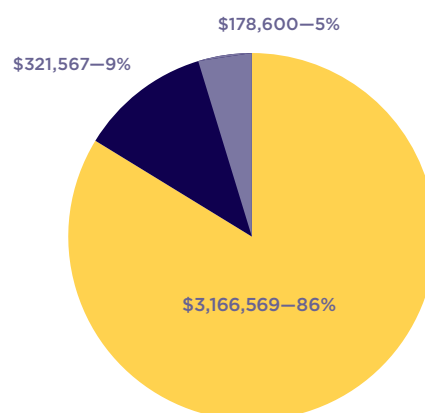
Revenue, Gains, and Other Support	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	2016	2015	2014
Public Support and Revenue					
Government Grants	3,001,246	-	3,001,246	2,265,227	2,177,002
Foundation Contributions	86,941	168,500	255,441	265,833	354,500
Other Contributions	208,333	-	208,333	122,891	117,356
Event Income	33,558	-	33,558	122,135	0
In-Kind Rent	86,822	-	86,822	86,822	86,822
In-Kind Contributions	0	0	0	0	0
Participant Activities	20,191	-	20,191	20,023	18,825
Rental Income	16,350	-	16,350	1,705	1,000
Total Support from the Public	\$3,453,441	\$168,500	\$3,621,941	\$2,884,636	\$2,755,505
Investment income					
Interest and Dividends, Net	7,109	-	7,109	3228	1,940
Realized Gain/(Loss) on Investments	(159)	-	(159)	(109)	4,420
Unrealized Gain/(Loss) on Investments	(3,529)	-	(3,529)	(545)	5,718
Total Investment Income	3,421	-	3,421	2,574	12,078
Net Assets Restriction Transfers	208,640	(208,640)	0	0	0
Total Revenue, Gains, and Other Supports	\$3,665,502	(\$40,140)	\$3,625,362	\$2,887,210	\$2,767,583
Expenses					
Program Services					
Youth Services	2,299,669	-	2,299,669	1,711,816	1,709,553
Adult and Community Services	251,540	-	251,540	217,750	248,767
Senior Services	615,360	-	615,360	570,665	553,877
Total Program Services*	3,166,569	-	3,166,569 (86%)	2,500,231 (83%)	2,512,197 (84%)
Supporting Services					
Management and General	321,567	-	321,567	340,867	340,709
Fundraising	178,600	-	178,600	164,434	138,693
Total Supporting Services**	500,167	-	500,167 (14%)	505,301 (17%)	479,402 (16%)
Total Program and Supporting Services Expenses	\$3,666,736	-	\$3,666,736	\$3,005,532	\$2,991,599
Change in Net Assets	(1,234)	(40,140)	(41,374)	(118,322)	(224,016)
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	(95,451)	744,005	648,554	766,876	990,892
Net Assets, End of Year	(96,685)	703,865	607,180	648,554	766,876

Balance Sheet

Assets	2016	2015	2014
Cash and Cash Equivalents	238,500	270,002	548,158
Pledges and Grants Receivable, Net	483,507	423,139	240,615
Investments, at Fair Value	27,726	28,708	45,174
Fixed Assets, Net	73,516	70,287	34,936
Total Assets	823,249	792,136	868,883
Liabilities and Net Assets			
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	141,100	87,504	19,296
Refundable Advances	74,969	56,078	82,711
Total Liabilities	216,069	143,582	102,007
Commitments and Contingencies			
Net Assets			
Unrestricted	(96,685)	(95,451)	(8,666)
Temporarily Restricted	703,865	744,005	775,542
Total Net Assets	\$607,180	\$648,554	\$766,876
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$823,249	\$792,136	\$868,883

Expenses FY16

- MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL
- PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
- FUNDRAISING



Community Members Served vs. Dollars Raised (in millions)



A Place to Say Thanks

With the support of individuals and the community, Riis Settlement continues to forge a path for change in Western Queens.



Government, Foundation and Corporate Supporters

(July 1, 2015- June 30, 2016)

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New York City Department of Youth and Community Development
New York City Housing Authority
New York Immigration Coalition
New York State Department of Education
New York State Department of State
New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services
New York State Office for the Aging
New York State Office of Children and Family Services
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Individual Donors

(July 1, 2015- June 30, 2016)

\$5,000+

Anonymous
Mr. & Mrs. Michael and Patti Bingold
Ms. Paula Kirby

\$1,000–\$4,499

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Mr. Rutledge Barry, Jr.
Ms. Julie Stein Brockway
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry and Patti Crisci
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Ms. Alison Overseth & Mr. Kenneth DeRegt

\$500–\$999

Ms. Carol George
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\$250–\$499

Mr. John Blaney
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