

# the Jewish Voice

ותשמע הארץ אמרי פי Deuteronomy 32:1  
MAY THE EARTH HEAR THE WORDS OF MY MOUTH



Over \$1 million was raised at the Visiting Nurse Service of New York benefit at the Pierre Hotel in New York City on Wednesday, November 1st. Over six hundred guests enjoyed cocktails, dinner and dancing, along with the awards program honoring those who have made a difference to the many important initiatives supported by VNSNYC's children and family services.

The Visiting Nurse Service of New York provides direct care and specialized support services to over 8,000 children and their families, making VNSNY one of the largest and most innovative providers of home and

community based services in the New York metropolitan as well as in the United States. The funds raised from the event help provide home health care for children from infancy to 18 years of age, and support programs for first-time, low-income

This very special benefit was hosted by Master of Ceremonies Dr. Max Gomez, while the Lillian D. Wald Award Recipients were Kathy Hirata Chin and Bert E. Brodsky.



"It's great having everyone come out to support the organization; healthcare is a changing environment so it's a challenge, but if we keep up with that, it's also exciting if it succeeds," said VNSNY Board Chair John P. Rafferty.



The evening also celebrated the 150th anniversary of Lillian Wald's birthday and recognized those who have made significant contributions to the health and welfare of others. Over a century since public health pioneer Lillian Wald first provided charitable care for a mother and her baby on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, the organization that she

founded, the Visiting Nurse Service of New York (VNSNY), continues to celebrate Wald's efforts and the work of thousands of nurses and other dedicated VNSNY health professionals who have followed in her caring footsteps through today.

Lillian D. Wald award recipient Kathy Harata Chin said "it's an honor to be receiving this award, we've been doing legal work with them since 1990. They continue to do such amazing work and I'm proud to be a part of it."

"I've been involved professionally doing stories on the VNSNY over the years. The folks and nurses on the front line do a lot of great work for the organization. I think what's really special is the people supporting this and the benefit had a personal connection at some point to the organization," said Dr. Max Gomez, master of ceremonies for the evening.





Current programs include the VNSNY’s Nurse-Family Partnership which with the NYC Department of Health, provides specially trained nurses who closely mentor high-risk, first-time mothers from pregnancy until the child’s second birthday. The Maternity, Newborn and Pediatrics program serves approximately 7,000 children annually in four boroughs of NYC, providing over 35,000 RN visits and 98,000 HHA hours, making it the largest in the country. The program has 22 pediatric nurses, each of whom, on average, have over 15 years of experience. The program serves children younger than 18 years of age (approximately half are less than 1 year old) and new mothers via its two divisions, maternity and newborn and pediatrics.

The organization also provides rehabilitative therapies and health services, including mental health services, to those of all ages.

“We have had over thirty years experience of doing crisis intervention, from 9/11 to the recent stabbing in a Bronx school,” said Neil Pessin, Vice President of Community Mental Health Services.

“We have been providers of DME and Medical Supplies to VNSNY for almost 20 years and are very proud of their work. I have been a patient, my father was a patient and most recently my grandmother

was a patient,” said Jonathan Greenstein, CEO of Mercy Home Care and Medical Supplies, Inc.



Today, this important organization continues to provide skilled professional and paraprofessional services to approximately 3,000 pregnant and postpartum women and their newborns annually. Many mothers served have postpartum complications, including post-cesarean wound care and high-risk ante partum conditions like diabetes, pre-term labor, hypertension and HIV/AIDS. Services include education and full medical assessments on newborn care, growth and development and infant nutrition.

Nurse manager Paula Reynolds-Chambers has been with the organization for almost a decade and said her division of nurses “visit first time mothers and provide support, refer services and serve as a great support system for the mothers. We encourage young mothers to go back to work and school, especially those in high risk neighborhoods.”



The Bronx Fatherhood Program also annually assists young fathers – many of whom are teenagers – to understand the important role a father plays in his child’s life. The programs support community fathers by providing workshops in anger management, domestic violence, co-parenting, and men’s issues.

The proceeds from the event support the many ongoing VNSNY programs which have helped thousands of New Yorkers of all backgrounds stay strong and get back on their feet.

By Julie Sagoskin