

**65**  
*Years*  
1953-2018



**ASTOR**  
SERVICES FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

2017-2018  
Annual Report



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# CELEBRATING 65 YEARS OF CHANGING LIVES & INFLUENCING FUTURES



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## WHAT WE DO AND WHO WE IMPACT...

### Our Mission

Astor provides behavioral health and educational services offering children the opportunity to meet life's challenges, pursue their dreams, and reach their full potential.

### Our Vision

Astor will be the preeminent provider of behavioral health and educational services through high quality, comprehensive services to children and families in New York State.

**Astor Services for Children & Families** is a community-based, non-profit organization that provides children's mental health services, child welfare services, and early childhood development programs. Astor serves children and families in New York State's Mid-Hudson Valley region and the Bronx.

Through a wide variety of premier quality education and mental health services, Astor provides support for pre-schoolers, children with behavioral and emotional health problems, children at risk of placement in foster care and families that need assistance in developing the skills necessary to raise their children in an environment filled with increasing challenges. Astor currently serves over 10,000 children each year through its prevention, early childhood, special education, community behavioral health and residential treatment programs.



## THE FUTURE OF OUR COMMUNITIES DEPENDS ON HOW WELL WE SUPPORT THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF OUR MOST PRECIOUS COMMODITY - OUR CHILDREN.



Astor has been building futures for New York State's children for 65 years, with the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul leading in the early decades. We do this work because we have a core belief that all children deserve a childhood; one free from heavy burdens and filled with growth, laughter, education and love.

I have been fortunate to be associated with Astor for almost 35 years. In that time, I have personally witnessed the many ways in which we have grown, how we responded to challenges and how we have become a model for other organizations who do similar, impactful work. I could write extensively about the various recognitions we have received. However, that is not why I have stayed with Astor. I have been here because I have witnessed firsthand the way we help children construct their lives so they are able to become thriving adults, who will use their skills and talents to support their communities. And they come back to tell us as much.

This year, I met Tamara Rodriguez for the first time. As I have with many former clients who come back as adults, I was able to listen to her story and understand the ways in which she has been healed and helped by our organization. Tamara made it clear that she wanted to pay it forward to the children we are currently serving, and asked to be involved in a number of Astor activities. For the most recent renovation, Tamara, along with her son Rafael, was one of the many volunteers working to bring joy to the children. There was not a dry eye in the group (including me) when she described how she worked with her son to renovate the room she lived in while an Astor resident. We are planning an opportunity for her to return again, this time to inspire the girls who are currently living with us.

Caring people come from far away to support our children because they want to build a better tomorrow. One example is our friends from Canada, who learned about Astor because they are fans of actors, Jeffrey Dean Morgan and Hilarie Burton, who passionately support the work we do here at Astor. They became important members of the Astor Family as they made the trip from Canada to Rhinebeck on two different occasions, volunteering

two weeks of their time to help with the renovation of the children's living units.

As appreciative as I am for our volunteers, donors and sponsors, the real foundation for EVERYTHING we do is our dedicated staff. They are over 800 strong and are uncompromising in their commitment to our children and families. There are many who never get recognized, whether it be our foster parents, our therapists in our many locations, the teachers and assistants in our schools, the friendly receptionist who greet our callers with warmth and respect, the nurses who often are asked to make decisions under challenging conditions or our direct care staff who are with our children in residence – 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. They all care deeply about our kids and our mission.

While there are many unsung heroes, one example sticks out: TJ Hessler, a 40-year kitchen staff member at the Residence. TJ walked over three miles during a blizzard, in a state of emergency, to provide the children with breakfast.

TJ was inspired by Steve Holzman, former director of operations, who worked for Astor for over 35 years and passed away in 2018. Our residential program got its passion from Jan Weido, who worked as the director of recreations for over 20 years. I received my passion from my predecessors, including our founder, Sr. Serena Branson or Sr. Rose Logan, who was the last Daughter of Charity to lead the organization. So many caring, passionate and determined members of the Astor community have paved the way for us to support more children and families.

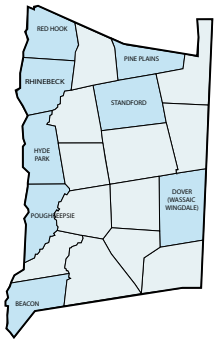
As you read through this report, I welcome you to join the "Astor Family," whether it be as a volunteer, as an attendee at one of our events or as a financial contributor. Together, we can make sure all children experience a childhood we know they deserve.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James McGuirk, Ph.D." The signature is fluid and cursive.

James McGuirk, Ph.D.  
Executive Director/CEO

# OUR IMPACT

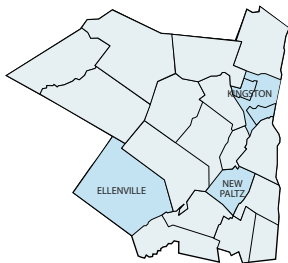
## Astor's Locations And Programs



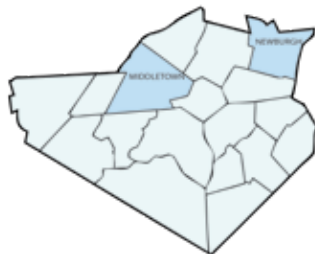
Dutchess County



Bronx County



Ulster County



Orange County



Photo by Laura Sanchez  
BX Cool Vibes Photographer

### Early Childhood

	Total Served
Head Start . . . . .	.448
Early Head Start . . . . .	.290
Universal Pre-Kindergarten (Daycare) . . . . .	.35
1-8-2 . . . . .	.16
Special Class Integrated Setting (SCIS) . . . . .	.42
Therapeutic Preschool (TP) . . . . .	.8
Lawrence F. Hickey Center for Child Development . . . . .	.76
<b>Total</b>	<b>915</b>

Note: Children in the 1-8-2, SCIS and TP programs are also served by Head Start.

### Early Childhood (Statistics)

	HS = Head Start; EHS = Early Head Start	
	HS	EHS
Total # of Children Served . . . . .	448	290
Total # of Families Served . . . . .	426	241
Percentage of Children Completing Medical Exams . . . . .	100%	100%
Percentage of Children Completing Dental Exams* . . . . .	67%	58%
Average Monthly Enrollment . . . . .	359	195
<b>Percent of Capacity . . . . .</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Dental Exam numbers were lower this year due to a change in the process. We are expecting better numbers next year as we are returning to a system previously used by our programs.

### Outpatient

	Total Served
Counseling Programs located in Mid-Hudson Valley . . . . .	3,166
Counseling Programs located in the Bronx . . . . .	2,059
Serving Youth In The Community (SYNC) . . . . .	115
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,340</b>

### Out-of-Home

	Total Served
Residential Treatment Facility (RTF) . . . . .	.26
Residential Treatment Center (RTC) . . . . .	.69
Therapeutic Foster Boarding Home . . . . .	.72
<b>Total</b>	<b>167</b>

# Meet Astor's TJ Hessler

Astor's staff members serve our children and families with care, respect, and the highest degree of professional service. The collection of clinicians, nurses, childcare workers, educators, and all other staff is dedicated to the goal of ensuring that the children of Astor receive the childhood they deserve. We would like to introduce you to one such staff member, TJ Hessler, who goes above and beyond each day.

TJ has been working in the Rhinebeck Residence kitchen for 40 years and doesn't plan on stopping any time soon. His mother, Mary Hessler, started working at Astor in 1970 as a "Group Mother," which led TJ to where he is today.

During the past 40 years, TJ has had perfect attendance. No matter the weather, he has made his way to work. Several years ago a blizzard hit the Hudson Valley and TJ was unable to shovel out his car that morning. He set off for the three-plus-mile hike to Astor on foot, leaving Rhinecliff at 6:30 a.m. He did not arrive to work until 8:30 a.m. TJ explained, "The snow was so high that I could not walk on the sidewalk. I knew the children had to eat, and that Astor's kitchen manager needed my help."

With that kind of commitment to his work and the children, it's not surprising that when his manager is out, TJ is left in charge of the kitchen, a position of responsibility that he feels honored to hold. More



Astor staff members, TJ Hessler

than that, he enjoys interacting with the children and staff who he considers to be family.

Four decades of dedication to Astor and the people it serves is a long time, but TJ continues to be excited about his future with the organization.

"God willing," he said, "I hope to make it to 50 years." Astor is honored that TJ has chosen to spend those years with us.

## Care Management

	Total Served
Waiver . . . . .	47
Bridges to Health . . . . .	107
Health Homes	
Bronx Accountable Health Care Network . . . . .	10
Health Homes Collaborative for Children & Families . . . . .	740
Health Homes	
Children's Health Home of Upstate New York . . . . .	749
Transitions* . . . . .	226
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,879</b>

\*This includes the clients from both Dept. of Mental Health and Robin Hood Foundation.

## School-Based

	Total Served
Day Treatment Programs located in the Mid-Hudson Valley . . . . .	266
Day Treatments Programs located in the Bronx . . . . .	238
Astor Learning Center . . . . .	136
School Related Contracts . . . . .	1,044
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,684</b>

## Crisis Response

	Total Served
Mobile Crisis . . . . .	88
Home-Based Crisis Intervention . . . . .	60
Partial Hospitalization Program . . . . .	182
<b>Total</b>	<b>330</b>

## Placement Prevention

	Total Served
Prevention . . . . .	80
Early Childhood Coordinated Services Initiative (ECCSI) . . . . .	45
Orange County Diversions . . . . .	81
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>

# Astor's Head Start Program Changes Lives

How Melissa Robinson went from student to teacher.



Melissa Robinson

I remember when I first brought my son in for his intake and how nervous I felt walking through the hallway. And even more clearly, I remember being welcomed warmly by the staff. But what touched my heart was when the center director and receptionist remembered me from my childhood and my time as an Astor Head Start student.

When my son was at Astor I was always encouraged to stay for breakfast, or come early for lunch. With all of the time I spent at Astor volunteering as a parent, it wasn't long before I was encouraged to apply for a substitute position in the center. And while this position seemed a small door into my son's new life, it was a great beginning.

The encouragement and support I received through Astor led to my applying for a more permanent part-time position while I attended college. Astor was a safe home for my son, while I worked on bettering myself.

Support and encouragement was abundant at Astor. Every person I encountered had a genuine interest in the success of the children and their families. Through hard work, continued support and constant encouragement, I was able to graduate from college, and found myself with a career at Astor as a teacher.

*“The true joy in working with Astor isn't just doing something that I love, but knowing how genuinely caring the people around me are. I now share this same passion in my work here.”*

My greatest hope is to continue to uphold the core values that make Astor the extraordinary place that it is.

## Astor's 65 Years

1953



### ASTOR HOME

Four Daughters of Charity and three NYC boys arrive in Rhinebeck to begin the first Residential Treatment Center, 23 boys were in residential treatment and there was a need to expand the facility.

1961



### EXPANSION

Construction began on the new wing containing living quarters, classrooms, a children's library, an infirmary and clinical areas, a chapel of St. Vincent de Paul, built in memory of Vincent Astor and a research wing.

1963



### BRONX

Astor began providing services in the Bronx to assist families of children returning home after successfully completing their treatment in the residential programs in Rhinebeck, NY.

1977



### JOINT COMMISSION

The Astor Home for Children became one of the first psychiatric facilities for children in the nation to be accredited by The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospitals which it has maintained to the present.

# Transitioning with Astor

Fourteen-year-old Omari, who goes by the nickname OC, began receiving services from Astor's Transitions Program in January 2014. The Transitions Program is designed to work with children from low income families who display serious emotional disorders. Upon referral, OC presented with challenges addressing his emotions and behaviors. OC had particular challenges with physical and verbal aggression, disruptive behaviors in school, as well as oppositional behaviors towards authority figures.

Through the Transitions Program, OC was successfully referred to mentorship programs, summer camps, and outpatient clinics. OC was also referred to the SYNC Program, which is dedicated to keeping children in their current communities and schools and out of more restrictive home and/or educational environments. The program aided in decreasing his behavioral difficulties.

Currently, OC is thriving as evidenced by his transfer from a special education school setting and is now a freshman in a public high school. OC has been able to show increasing control with maintaining positive emotional and behavioral stability.



Omari at his graduation

## Astor's 65 Years

1987



### EXCELLENCE

The New York State Education Department selected The Astor Learning Center as a Model School to receive an Award of Excellence in the State's first annual recognition of elementary schools.

1988



### LEARNING CENTER

The Astor Learning Center of The Astor Home for Children was selected by the United States Department of Education as an Exemplary Elementary School, one of three private special education schools recognized nationwide.

1991



### HICKEY CENTER

The Lawrence F. Hickey Center for Child Development opened with 17 children in four classrooms. Also known as "The Little Red Schoolhouse," the center is named after Lawrence F. Hickey. Mr. Hickey was a board member and a dedicated supporter of Astor.

1992



### AWARD

The American Association of Psychiatric Services for Children recognized Astor's outstanding contributions to the provision of children's mental health services. The Bronx Programs received the William A. Charet Award from the NYC Dept. of Mental Hygiene.



Dr. James McGuirk with Tamara

# An Astor Journey

When Tamara Marquez-Rodriguez entered the halls of the Astor “Home” (Astor’s Residential Program in Rhinebeck) back in the early 1980’s, she was a frightened eight-year-old child who was emotionless and untrusting of anything and everyone. She was diagnosed as emotionally disturbed with behavioral problems and found it very hard to connect and relate to those around her because she was coming from an abusive environment. That was a huge burden for a small child to bear and on that very day that she entered the residence up in Rhinebeck, she could

have never imagined how her life was about to change. All she knew was that she was far from her home and family in the Bronx but also saw it as an opportunity to be herself without anyone being able to judge her, since no one there knew her. As she said,

“Astor gave me a new chance at being a child.”

While it took Tamara a few days to get acclimated to her new surroundings, she soon got into the swing of things; and for the first time in as long as she could remember, she felt safe and protected. Tamara was not trusting of people prior to coming to Astor due to the trauma she experienced. She had difficulties understanding and processing how someone that was supposed to love and protect her could make her feel so unworthy and helpless at the same time.

During her time at Astor, Tamara fully integrated herself into routines that included chores and other tasks that she said taught her responsibility as well as skills that she still uses today. Being told that she was doing a good job helped her self-esteem and she began to open up and make friends. “The staff was firm but fair which I appreciated because it taught me not only boundaries but also discipline,” said Tamara. These are all qualities that most young children take for granted but Tamara made sure to take advantage of every life lesson being presented to her. For example, she made

## Astor’s 65 Years

1994



### HEAD START

Astor started the Early Head Start Program servicing low-income families. The program provides a unique set of services for pre-schoolers, meeting the special needs of infants, toddlers and their parents.

1999



### DEDICATION

The Branson Wing of the Astor Learning Center was dedicated on in honor of Sister Serena Branson, D.C., the first Executive Director of The Astor Home for Children.

2002



### ACHIEVEMENT

The Daughters of Charity concluded their work at Astor. They received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the New York State Office of Mental Health for their significant contributions to the field of children’s mental health.

2004



### PUBLIC POLICY

In partnership with the Poughkeepsie Area Chamber of Commerce Astor held its first annual Public Policy Breakfast. The breakfast was attended by over 100 elected officials and community leaders.



it a habit of helping out around the residence whether it was helping in the kitchen, doing laundry or even participating as an altar server in the masses held there. The “normalcy” she experienced allowed her to develop not only socially but also personally.

During a recent conversation, Tamara expressed how grateful she was to the staff for making her feel like she was part of a larger family. Although they were not her “real” family, they made her feel protected and taught her the importance of being true to herself.

A lot has happened in Tamara’s life since she left the halls of Astor more than 35 years ago. She has faced obstacles along the way but has come out ahead. Tamara recently reached out to Astor to reconnect with a piece of her childhood that she rarely shared with anyone, including her family.

“Astor has been my secret for years and not because I was ashamed, but because I didn’t want to share my happy place. I did not want anyone’s negativity to ruin the happiest memories of my life.”

As a mother of three grown men and a grandmother to two, Tamara is currently pursuing her Bachelor’s degree at Monroe College and decided that it was time to share her story. She wants to use her journey to inspire others battling with the same feelings and fears she faced, to demonstrate that you can come out on the other side stronger and braver than ever. She wants to instill the belief that “if you ever feel like giving up, feel alone, unworthy, or as if you don’t matter, you have to believe in the power of YOU! Don’t be afraid to seek help and remember you are not in this alone.”

Just this past year, Tamara returned to Astor and participated in the renovation of her old living unit. She said, “The minute I walked through the doors of Founder’s Hall (the former Chapel), I felt like I was home. All the wonderful memories came flooding back to me.”

She has made it her mission to pay her experiences forward so that our current residents can see that Astor is just the beginning of their journey to heal; and that anything is possible if you believe in yourself and invest in being the best you can be.

She said the best part about her return was that she was able to share the experience with her 19-year-old son, Rafael. She was proud to show him where she found her strength and sense of self at such a young age.

What better testament to her journey than to come back to where it all started. On behalf of all the children and families we have served during our last 65 years, we’d like to say WELCOME BACK Tamara!



Tamara (seated far left) during her time at Astor in 1984.



Tamara and her son Rafael volunteering at our Setonites Mini-Renovation in November 2018.



Tamara speaking at Astor’s Spring Cocktail Reception this year.



Tamara spoke at this year’s Ghost Stories Reception and met Jeffrey Dean Morgan & Hilarie Burton.

# Kate Kortbus shares why she got involved with Astor

The Families for Astor committee was conceived out of a desire to integrate a family-focused community effort in helping to raise awareness and funds for Astor Services for Children and Families.

Children are our greatest investment at every level and having the opportunity to aid such an incredible resource like Astor, in our own backyard is hugely rewarding.

As an active volunteer and a donor, I see our contribution make a direct impact on the lives of the residents as well as the thousands of children who benefit from Astor Services.

I have incredible experiences interacting directly with the children and am reminded instantly that it is our societal responsibility to foster a healing environment for them.

We are humbled by the mission of Astor Services and consider ourselves blessed to be a part of the Astor Family.



Kate Kortbus, Board Chair  
The Children's Foundation of Astor

“I don’t think there is anything more important that we could be doing as a community than serving these children.”

Hear more about why Kate got involved with Astor at <http://bit.ly/2Kf7sGY>

## Astor’s 65 Years

2005



### FOUNDATION

Children’s Fund of the Astor Home for Children, Inc. is renamed to The Astor Home for Children Foundation, Inc.

2009



### ASTOR SERVICES

Astor’s Board of Directors approved changing the name of the agency to Astor Services for Children & Families. Astor received the first Stefan de Schill Award presented by the American Mental Health Foundation.

2010



### OPEN ACCESS

Open Access was instituted in Astor’s clinics. Walk-in clients can now get same day, immediate access to our services.

2012



### SCREENING

The Early Childhood Advisory Council selected Astor’s Developmental Screening Program in Dutchess County to be one of seven programs across the state considered to be a prototype for screening.

# The Gift of Fostering

“Foster care has given me the gift of sharing. The ability to give. Not to give material things or share my cake, but to give a young person an opportunity they otherwise may not have had.”

Being a foster parent has allowed me to provide a child in need, a chance to learn that they can be better than what they may have been taught by their family, or society that they were worth.

It means I am responsible for changing someone's life in a way that could change the world one kind gesture at a time.

Some people believe their children are their legacy, and as a person with no biological children, I believe foster care means being the best Mentor I can be, by teaching life skills through experiences, stability, and consistency. Fulfilling a purpose that I never thought would be mine until now.

- Tara

FOSTER PARENT  
TO ANNACHRISTINE



Annachristine with her foster mother, Tara.

Foster care has taught me a lot. I have learned to harness and use the skills I have learned throughout my treatment. I am learning to love myself which I never did before. Now I recognize and appreciate what I can do for myself. I have more freedom to make decisions and in some cases mistakes, and how to fix them.

I am very grateful that I got to be part of this foster care agency because I have met a bunch of people who I will always remember.

They have had such a positive impact on my progress and my life. I am very happy that I found a good home and foster parent.

- Annachristine

FOSTER CHILD IN ASTOR'S  
THERAPEUTIC FOSTER CARE PROGRAM

## Astor's 65 Years

2014



### VAL-KILL MEDAL

Astor Services is honored as a recipient of The Eleanor Roosevelt Val-Kill Medal Award which recognizes and honors individuals who make a significant contribution to society in the arts, education, citizenship, philanthropy, community services, and humanitarian concerns.

2016



### GHOST STORIES

The first "Ghost Stories" event developed by our Families for Astor and was held at Bard College with local celebrities Hilarie Burton and Jeffrey Dean Morgan. Proceeds from the event went towards improving the living space for the kids in the RTC program.

2017



### PLAYGROUND

Thanks to the generosity of KaBOOM!, The Walt Disney Company, and partners like Catholic Charities of NY, the children and families of Astor's Lawrence F. Hickey Center were given the gift of play with a new therapeutic, age-appropriate playground in October of 2017.

2018



### JOINT COMMISSION

Astor Services was accredited with The Gold Seal of Approval by the Joint Commission's, an independent, not-for-profit that accredits and certifies health care organizations. Astor has been accredited by The Joint Commission since 1974.

We are deeply grateful to the individuals, businesses, corporations, foundations, and agencies that help Astor Services for Children & Families fulfill its mission.

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**100 Who Care Inc.**

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Mrs. Stephanie Ford

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We do our best to ensure that all who so generously donate to us are acknowledged.  
If we inadvertently omitted anyone, please contact us at smoorhead@astorservices.org, (845) 871-1117.

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We thank them for all the work they do on behalf of our children and families!

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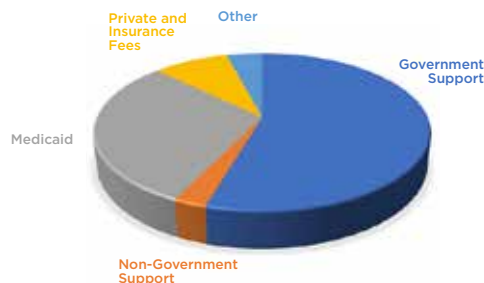
**Leslie Vosburgh**  
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT & SECRETARY FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

# FINANCIALS

## Financial Highlights 2017 - 2018

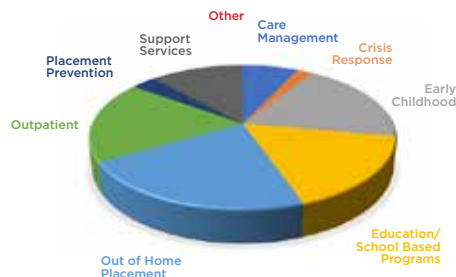
Astor Services for Children & Families and The Children's Foundation of Astor

Combined Income



Combined Income 2017-2018	Amount	%
Government Support	34,770,226	54.6%
Non-Government Support	1,707,741	2.7%
Medicaid	19,122,202	30.0%
Private and Insurance Fees	5,531,195	8.7%
Other	2,604,140	4.1%
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>63,735,504</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Combined Expenses



Combined Expenses 2017-2018	Amount	%
Care Management	4,408,098	7.0%
Crisis Response	1,198,647	1.9%
Early Childhood	11,873,280	18.9%
Education/School-Based Programs	10,552,308	16.8%
Out of Home Placement	13,752,276	21.9%
Outpatient	11,592,631	18.5%
Placement Prevention	1,928,640	3.1%
Other	66,014	0.1%
Support Services	7,360,125	11.7%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>62,732,019</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



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