



Astor News & Updates

Dear Staff:

It has been three months since I assumed the position of CEO and I want to thank you for all of your support.

I have had the opportunity to visit several of our locations in the Hudson Valley (i.e., Head Start in Poughkeepsie, Lincoln Ave. and South Ave.) and Tilden in the Bronx.

I continue to be in awe of the level of care and quality of services you give to the children and families who are in our care. I look forward to visiting you all!

Sincerely,

Yvette



Coronavirus Update

It's no surprise that I am starting this Newsletter with COVID-19. The Medical Director and I have been regularly sending emails to staff in order to ensure that everyone has up-to-date information on COVID-19.



Dr. Da Silva-Siegel and her team, will continue to monitor the situation and communicate with you regarding any updated information.

In addition, because we have many locations throughout numerous regions of the state, I directed every area and program in the agency to have a plan in place, which have been submitted to Dr. Da Silva-Siegel. Your supervisor will communicate the plan that was developed for your area.

As this situation is fluid, we will keep you updated as new information becomes available. The most up-to-date information can be gathered by contacting the **New York State Coronavirus Hotline: (888) 364-3065** . If you have questions, concerns or need guidance, at any time, please call them directly.

March is National Social Work Month

Social Work Month spotlights the positive impact of social workers over generations. This year's theme is "Social Workers: Generations Strong." As we enter a new decade, it is important to look back and honor the powerful, positive impact the



social work profession has had on our society for generations.

We thank all the social workers, who for decades, have impacted lives day in and day out! I would like to specifically thank the 104 social workers who work here at Astor. Know that you are making a major impact on the lives of the children and families we serve and that you are truly appreciated!

Head Start & Early Head Start

This year, Astor's Early Head Start (EHS) program is celebrating 25 years of serving infants and toddlers!

Astor was one of the original grantees to operate an EHS program upon its inception in 1995.

Congratulations and a huge thank you to all of our hardworking EHS teachers and staff!



Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Process

I want to thank the Finance Department for taking the lead in ensuring that our Fiscal Year Budget process is streamlined, inclusive and empowering! I want to also thank all staff who are playing a critical role in this process. This process will ensure that there is input, understanding and buy-in, into the final number. I know it is a lot of hard work for all who are involved in the process, but know the work we are doing on the front end, will help us better understand and make adjustments as we move forward.



Capital Projects

As you may know, our programs and services continue to grow, which dictates that we make adjustments to accommodate. We have a couple of projects on the horizon: Tilden Ave. (Bronx) and New Paltz.

We are working with a firm and a developer to help us re-envision the Tilden Ave. location. This means expanding the footprint to accommodate our programs and services.



In addition, we received a \$1.5-million grant from the Office of Mental Health, to purchase a building in New Paltz to house our services as well as other nonprofits in the community. These are all very exciting, but as you can imagine, it takes a lot of heavy lifting to ensure the projects are fully executed. I want to thank the Agency Operations team, Finance team and New Business Group, who are working diligently with me on these projects in addition to the many other capital improvement projects.

Prevention in the Bronx

I am delighted to announce our Bronx Prevention Services Program received a grant to expand our current services to the Highbridge area of the Bronx. This grant doubles the number of slots we have and as a result we are looking for a new space in Highbridge.



Children and families are referred to our Prevention Services Program after finding a child has been abused, neglected, or if they are identified as “at-risk” for child abuse and neglect.

The goal of the program is to heal the child and to assist the family in creating a nurturing environment. All children need a place to grow safely, feel secure and overcome fears. We work to help keep the family together in order to prevent children from entering the foster care system.

Parents are provided with one-on-one or group counseling, home visits, and referrals to special services that support parental-skills development. Family counseling is aimed towards meeting the child’s development needs and strengthening the affection between all family members.

Everyone can Advocate!

Astor receives the majority of our funding for the work we do on behalf of children and families from government sources – this includes federal, state, local and county. We are actively involved with many coalitions who advocate for the children, families, and agencies that provide behavioral health services -- imploring on them the importance to not cut funding for these needed services and to increase funding given the increase in need in some areas.



It is important for them to know what we think so they know how to shape policies and legislation that affect our daily lives in ways that make us want to vote for them.

The more calls and letters they get the more attention is paid to the issue. AND it's EASY! When you call, the phone is answered by the legislator’s staff. Their job is to find out who you are (by zip code so they know if you are in their voting district), what issue you are calling about and whether you support it or not. So when you call, you say “hello, my name is ... And I live in ... and am calling to support or not support the issue of...” They will thank you and that’s all there is to it! If you feel you have examples or information that backs up your position, please share what you know; either way, use your voice and be heard!