Dear Friends,

We are pleased to present our 2013 Annual Report. We hope you are proud of what we accomplished on behalf of the community.

HeartShare was not immune to the events that inspired the headlines of the city last year. Despite all those challenges during the period, HeartShare Human Services of New York continues to provide thousands of New Yorkers a bright light of caring, compassion and hope for a better tomorrow.

Our programs quickly returned to normal operations after Superstorm Sandy. HeartShare’s Youth and Prevention Programs were an integral part of the citywide recovery effort in Coney Island and provided families with access to relief and supportive services. Despite displacement of HeartShare’s Cornerstone program, the program continued offering services at a neighboring public school. Additionally, necessary supplies, such as preschoolers’ testing-kits for the developmentally disabled that were damaged beyond repair, were swiftly replaced thanks to the generosity of a United Way Hurricane Sandy Grant and friends like you.

The threat of significant and widespread NYS government budget cuts ran deep across the developmental disabilities sector, potentially having a devastating impact on voluntary agencies such as HeartShare. A whopping six-percent cut was predicted— translating to millions of dollars for HeartShare which would have reduced funding and prompted program closures. We launched efforts to increase our response to those threats through advocacy and education. Thankfully, the resources remained intact and HeartShare can continue providing essential programs to those that need them most. We would like to reassure you that we are prepared for the years ahead, working diligently to ensure that massive cuts will not impact the people we serve and our valued employees for the foreseeable future.

We opened our newest home, The Tunie-Generet Residence, named in honor of actor, producer, director and philanthropist Tamara Tunie and her husband, jazz vocalist and HeartShare Board Member Gregory V. Generet. Located in Holliswood, Queens, the residence provides a new community-based home to six men with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Each now has a chance to participate more than ever before in community activities. HeartShare shined a light on a whole new life for them.

We particularly are proud of our energy-assistance programs. Through HeartShare’s relationship with National Grid, we were able to help 23,914 families affected by Superstorm Sandy cover the cost of repairing damaged furnaces and boilers so they could return to their homes and have heat and hot water during the winter.

One of the largest human services organization in New York City, we could not accomplish what we do every day without the strong leadership of our Board, dedicated staff, generous donors and loyal volunteers. With support from friends like you, we can ensure that those who need our help are never turned away.

HeartShare is a Beacon of Hope, led by professional and committed staff helping those who need it most. And, thanks to many years of generous support from so many people, including you, next year HeartShare will celebrate 100 years of providing hope, care and compassion to thousands of New Yorkers. On behalf of the many children and adults we assisted over the decades, thank you for helping us reach this milestone and for your continued support of HeartShare Human Services of New York.

Sincerely,

**Paul J. Torre**

*Chairman, Board of Directors*

**William R. Guarinello**

*President and CEO*

**EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES**

*Standing or making a few controlled steps means that children with cerebral palsy can be independent in life.*

Five-year-old Rex is a superhero. Rex can run faster than many children his age. Rex couldn’t always run so fast. In fact, when he first enrolled at **HeartShare’s First Step** **Preschool** in Bensonhurst, Brooklyn, Rex could not walk.

“When Rex was diagnosed with cerebral palsy, we had no idea what to do and how it would go,” said Rex’s parents. “What shall we do if he cannot walk when he is grown? We can carry him when he’s small, but we cannot carry him his whole life. It was very hard.” The staff at HeartShare’s First Step Preschool, one of four HeartShare preschools that provides assistance and educational services to children with developmental delays or disabilities, reassured Rex’s parents that Rex would get the care he needs and ultimately learn how to walk. Like every child who learns at our centers, HeartShare prepared Rex for a successful future. Standing or making a few controlled steps means that children with cerebral palsy can be independent, not just in school, but in life.

At first, Rex had difficulty getting around the classroom independently. But when Rex was presented with the TheraTog™ body suit, which helps to position his body correctly so that he can move around a lot more easily, the staff turned it into a superman costume, preparing Rex to “leap tall buildings in a single bound.” All of the children in the classroom thought it was exciting that Rex got a special costume. The day Rex first moved independently at home, his family was moved to tears. “I came home in the afternoon and he just walked over

to me. I was speechless. I am so grateful to everyone at HeartShare,” said Rex’s dad.

HeartShare’s four First Step Early Childhood Centers ensure a successful future for our children. In addition to evaluation services and pre-school programs for children with developmental delays or disabilities, HeartShare also offers Universal Pre-Kindergarten for 4-year-old children. An inclusive pre-school program, HeartShare offers those with disabilities special education services in a classroom setting, physical and occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, music therapy, recreational activities, inclass computers and parent education and support. HeartShare helps children reach their potential and get the best possible start in life

**RESIDENTIAL SERVICES**

*HeartShare opened up a whole new life for these young men, allowing them to live in a regular home, learn new skills and become a part of a family.*

Devon, William, George and Phillip love their new home. They live at the newly renovated **Tunie-Generet Residence** in Holliswood, Queens—HeartShare’s 30th residence for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Prior to moving into the Tunie-Generet residence in January 2013, they and two other house mates lived in an institutional facility for the disabled. Like the hundreds of individuals who still live in state-run institutions, each has special challenges that require a high level of care and oversight. HeartShare opened up a whole new life for these young men, allowing them to live in a regular home, learn new skills and become a part of a family.

Supervised by HeartShare’s dedicated and professional staff, 24-hours a day and seven days a week, Devon, William, George and Phillip now have a typical life and participate regularly in community activities. HeartShare’s Residences for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities allow each individual a higher quality of life through the benefit of community integration and individualized choices. Each resident attends one of HeartShare’s Adult Day Programs, where they volunteer in the community and learn life-skills that enable them to

become more independent each day.

Last year, HeartShare provided residential services to 293 adults and children with developmental disabilities through its 30 group homes and 42 supported and independent apartments. Our staff teaches our residents to cook, clean, budget, improve their self-care skills and much more, and support them in attending school, adult day programs or working during the day. Our residents also learn to maintain their homes and participate in recreational and cultural activities in the community, as well as establish good relationships with their neighbors.

HeartShare’s homes and apartments are located throughout Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island and offer individuals greater independence and an inviting, caring and loving environment.

 **ADULT DAY AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS**

*HeartShare offers adults with developmental disabilities a wide range of individualized and carefully planned activities, volunteer and work experiences.*

Fifty-year-old Pedro is Brooklyn’s biggest football fan. His favorite team is the New York Jets and, before this year, Pedro had never been to a Jets game. This year, with help from our friends in the community, the combined staff at **HeartShare’s Aiello Day Habilitation Program** and the Calderhead & DeSola Residence arranged for Pedro to see his favorite team at MetLife Stadium. Upon arrival, a driver in a golf cart picked up Pedro at the entrance of the stadium and drove him to his seat. Pedro was treated like a star! By fulfilling unmet dreams, HeartShare makes life more exciting for the individuals it supports.

HeartShare’s ten Adult Day and Employment Programs offer adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities a wide range of individualized and carefully planned activities, with a focus on community-based volunteer and work experiences. Program participants are involved in volunteer jobs and meaningful community activities that help them take the next step toward paid employment and greater independence.

This year, Aiello Day Hab staff renewed their commitment to supporting the program’s 125 participants to be actively engaged in their community, both as volunteers and community members. An example of this is the program’s new relationship with the 462 Halsey Community Garden in Bedford Stuyvessant. An oasis tucked between brownstones, the garden welcomed our individuals with open arms and gave them access to a four by eight foot plot of land to plant fruits and vegetables. Gardening provides these adults a therapeutic benefit and teaches them the importance of healthy eating. When harvest time comes, not only will our individuals benefit from the fruits of their labors, the surplus will be donated to local food pantries so that low-income families in the community can have access to healthier eating options of locally grown, organic fruits and vegetables.

The 596 adults who attend HeartShare’s Day and Employment Programs receive appropriate job skills training, socialization opportunities and clinical supports so that they can be active participants in their communities.

**FOSTER CARE & ADOPTION SERVICES**

*HeartShare staff works with biological parents and foster and adoptive parents to ensure the best possible loving home for their children.*

HeartShare’s foster parents play an important role in providing temporary, safe and nurturing homes for children when their biological parents cannot care for them. When children go into foster care, it is important to preserve their connections with their brothers and sisters. At HeartShare, keeping siblings together is a top priority.

After difficult beginnings, nine-year-old Alexander, four-year-old Geronimo and two-year-old Romeo are together and safe. Two years ago, they moved in with their foster mother Maria in Queens Village, New York. Maria already raised four successful children of her own, and it was without hesitation that she opened her home and heart to Alexander, Geronimo and Romeo. A testament to her hard work with and dedication to her biological children, Maria’s home is overflowing with trophies and awards. She says she plans to continue to fill-up space with achievement awards earned by the new additions to her family. Maria’s 21-year-old son Joseph was a 2013 Washington Redsktins NFL draft pick. Now Alexander, Geronimo and Romeo all want to someday play professional football too, just like their big brother Joseph.

Believing that every child deserves a loving and stable home and a chance for the future, foster mother Maria and her family passed on the same love and devotion to these three brothers. Maria will adopt Alexander, Geronimo and Romeo, ensuring they all will be successful and always

have a loving home. Ninety-nine years ago one of HeartShare’s first goals was finding jobs and a place to live for young adults newly released from orphanages and other institutional settings.

Today, **HeartShare’s Foster Care & Adoption Services** continues its commitment to providing safe and loving homes to almost 500 children who each year come from troubled homes.

When it is determined that a foster child will not be able to return to his/her biological parents, the child becomes available for adoption and is found a loving and stable home. HeartShare’s Foster Care & Adoption Services staff work with the biological parents and foster and adoptive parents to ensure finding the best possible loving home for

their children.

**INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES**

*HeartShare provides respite and recreation programs for both children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.*

When Camille Harding’s husband passed away in 2005, she focused on caring for sons George and Christopher, ages ten and eight at the time. A stay-at-home mom, Camille’s sons are each diagnosed with developmental disabilities. There was no time to grieve. Camille couldn’t take out the boys much, so if they weren’t in school, George and Christopher were at home playing with each other or family members who happened to be around.

Caring for George and Christopher alone was rewarding, but also challenging. Between cooking, cleaning, homework and medical appointments, there was no time for leisure or recreation for Camille and her boys. In 2007, Camille was approved to receive assistance from HeartShare’s newly developed At Home Respite Program, which is part of the agency’s larger **Family** **Support Services Program** that provides respite and recreation programs for both children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Giving parents and guardians a much-needed break, the Family Support Services Program offers their family members exciting and fun socialization and recreational activities with their peers. Through the program, individuals are encouraged to develop friendships and enjoy a wide variety of activities all over New York City.

“HeartShare is wonderful,” says Camille. “The boys look forward to the days that Richard comes over to take them to the mall, the movies or even the playground. Richard takes them on trips I couldn’t imagine even getting to. I am so happy for my boys.”

Camille gets much needed time to herself too. Currently a full-time student in college, Camille uses the respite days to do her homework, catch up on her studies or read a book. For many families caring for a loved one with a developmental disability, the demands can be great. HeartShare helps those families by providing respite through 10 Respite and Recreation programs, including overnight respite programs for individuals on the Autism Spectrum.

In 2011, HeartShare opened SPAS (Serving People with Autism) Overnight Respite Program on Staten Island. SPA Respite serves individuals with autism and other

intellectual and developmental disabilities who reside at home and are seven years of age or older. SPA Respite has opportunities for week-long stays year-round, ensuring that parents and siblings have ample time to relax, rejuvenate and make time for themselves knowing that their loved one is in competent and caring hands at HeartShare.

**FAMILY SERVICE CENTERS**

*HeartShare’s Family Service Centers are designed to ensure that children are safe in their homes and that families are kept together.*

Twenty-eight-year old Tamisha loves her children. A single mother of three, ages one, four and ten, she works hard every day, ensuring her children are well cared for. Providing for and nurturing three children alone can be overwhelming. Single mothers need support, which often comes in the form of individual counseling, parenting classes or support groups with their peers.

**HeartShare’s Shirely Tannyhill Family Services** provided Tamisha just what she needed. In 2012, Tamisha signed up to attend our Parenting Journey workshop, a 14-week certificate program that provides mothers with the skills needed to juggle parenting, work and life. In fact, when services continued at our site despite the ability to easily access the center due to SuperStorm Sandy, Tamisha continued to attend. Our programs were a significant help

to Tamisha and her girls.

“Before I came to HeartShare, I had no support system, life was stressful and I had no relationship with my mother,” said Tamisha. “Now, our relationship is repaired and I feel more secure. My little girls have a great relationship with their grandma.”

HeartShare’s Family Service Centers are designed to ensure children are safe in their home and to keep families together. Many families face trouble in school, are facing divorce or struggling with substance abuse.

HeartShare’s Family Service Centers provide services to help keep families happy and stable, and provide access to other services that may benefit the family, such as day care providers, employment programs, substance abuse assistance programs, and more. Our professionally trained and caring case planners work with families to develop plans that best meet each individual’s needs, and assist families through those issues to prevent the child or children from being placed in foster care.

Tamisha’s children are happy and healthy. They are all thriving, especially her ten year old daughter Yataeyah, who has excelled greatly in school. This year, Yataeya was the only one in her lowerschool accepted into I.S. 239 Mark Twain School for the Gifted & Talented. The Mark Twain School, located in a far-away corner of Coney Island, is one of the city’s most sought after middle schools and the largest feeder school to Stuyvesant and Brooklyn Tech High Schools. She began in the fall of 2013.

HeartShare helps keep families strong and stable, and helps provide a light of hope for their future.

**YOUTH SERVICES**

*HeartShare’s Youth Programs help participants acquire the skills and attitudes they need to graduate from H.S., succeed in their chosen careers and give back to the community.*

Last year, the New York City Department of Education prepared children and parents for the new state standardized test, called the Common Core. The Common Core is New York State’s effort to ensure that all students are college and career ready no later than the end of high school.

Developed by experts, the new common core standardized test is modeled after successful programs throughout the United States and abroad and is meant to provide teachers and parents with an understanding of what students are expected to learn to excel in college. Experts feel that if the students prepare under the common core curriculum in New York and move to another state, they will end up in schools with the same information being taught, and move ahead, not fall behind.

Nevertheless, the common core test, held during the spring of last year, was a challenge for our children. We knew that the tests would be particularly difficult for children living in low-income areas. Low-income children tend to fare worse because they don’t have access to high-end

academic tutoring programs.

In collaboration with and the support of P.S. 288’s principal, the school in which **HeartShare’s Beacon** **Program** is located, HeartShare staff identified the children at-risk of struggling with the exam and created extra study hours, focusing on practice questions and activities that would help ready each student to excel on exam day. Preparing HeartShare’s youth for the common core was no easy feat. In the end, HeartShare’s Beacon Youth Program students performed exceptionally well on the common core exam. We are so proud of each of them.

Contracted by the New York City Department of Youth and Child Development, HeartShare’s Beacon and Cornerstone Programs are designed to help participants acquire the skills and attitudes they need to graduate from high school, succeed in their chosen careers and give back to the community. These programs are designed to build academic enhancement, life skills and career awareness enhanced by recreation, health and fitness, and arts & culture. Offered to all students age six and up, HeartShare’s Beacon and Cornerstone programs are offered afternoons, evenings, weekends, and during school holidays and vacation periods, including the summer.

HeartShare’s camp programs offer children a safe place to go during the summer where they play sports and games, do arts and crafts and take trips throughout New York City. HeartShare helps children develop their own interests, make friends and grow into young adults.

One of the greatest worries facing parents who work outside their homes is where their children will go after school. HeartShare’s four after-school programs provide relief to the parents and a safe haven for the children when the school day ends.

**YOUTH SERVICES**

*HeartShare helps individuals with HIV/AIDS and their families identify their strengths, while providing needed support.*

Eleven years ago, sixty-year-old Thurman was treated for many health issues, including hyper-thyroidism, hernia and a cyst in his liver. However, his doctors grew very concerned when he began to lose a lot of weight and soon discovered that Thurman was HIV positive.

After the diagnosis, Thurman became depressed and overwhelmed. Already living in substandard housing, he could not manage his illness. Thurman’s health deteriorated because he wasn’t aware of the services available to him or how to access them.

By 2005, Thurman had full-blown AIDS. At his doctor’s urging, Thurman contacted New York City’s HIV/AIDS Services Administration (HASA) Service Line, the single entry point for information, referral and services. HASA referred him to HeartShare for support and for access to comfortable living arrangements that best meet his needs.

**HeartShare’s HIV/AIDS Residential Services** helps individuals with HIV/AIDS to understand the options available to them and assists each person with day-today living situations. Once a person’s housing situation is in place, his/her health will stabilize. Believing that everyone needs a safe and affordable home and support from peers, HeartShare eliminates this stress factor. HeartShare’s Residential Housing Program provides 40 safe and well maintained homes for persons with HIV/ AIDs. The program also helps individuals with HIV and their families to access vital services, such as advocacy and support groups.

Since Thuman moved into a HeartShare apartment for persons with HIV/AIDS, he is strong and happy. His health has stabilized and he is no longer isolated. Seventyone- year old Thurman loves to attend support groups offered by HeartShare. He also attends the recreational

trips HeartShare provides and loves to spend time with his peers. “If it wasn’t for HeartShare, I don’t know where my life would be.”

HeartShare helps individuals with HIV/AIDS and their families identify their strengths, while providing needed supports.

**THE HEARTSHARE SCHOOL**

*The HeartShare School provides instruction in a structured and caring environment so children with autism reach their learning potential.*

Ana was an active and healthy two-year-old. However, her parents grew concerned because she didn’t seem to be doing the same things that other children could do at the same age. She wasn’t talking yet, wasn’t using words to communicate, and threw tantrums when her normal routine had the smallest change.

When Ana was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, her parents found early intervention services for Ana. When Ana reached school age, she was referred to The **HeartShare School**. Her parents have comfort in knowing that Ana is learning at a school that will provide her the best chance to grow, learn and develop as an individual.

The HeartShare School provides compassion, caring and hope to families of children ages 5-21 with autism. Opened in April 2007, The HeartShare School was created by HeartShare at the urging of parents seeking a school program in Brooklyn for children with autism spectrum disorders. At that time, there were no schools in the borough specifically structured to meet the needs of children and adolescents with autism. HeartShare recognizes that children with autism spectrum disorders require different forms of special education and services depending upon the degree and severity of the disorder. Children with autism require a structured and caring environment, and The HeartShare School provides instruction at various teaching levels so children reach their learning potential.

Funded by the New York State Education Department and the New York City Department of Education, The HeartShare School occupies a two-story wing of a large and spacious former private school in Bensonhurst. The HeartShare School currently serves 71 students with autism from all over New York City, but mostly from Brooklyn.

The school offers a comprehensive educational curriculum that includes science, language arts, math, world history, geography, visual arts and music. Each classroom has adapted computers that use the special Tech4Everyone learning system that allows each child to learn at his or her own pace. Additionally, interactive SmartBoards are used to engage students in visual, auditory and tactile learning. Adjoining the school are two group residences for children

diagnosed with autism, who also attend The HeartShare School.

**ENERGY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS**

*In conjunction with National Grid, HeartShare was able to help over 23,914 families start the recovery process after Sandy.*

This year was a significant year for **HeartShare’s Energy** **and Community Development Programs**. Thousands of families in our community faced many hardships through the devastation left by Superstorm Sandy. In conjunction with National Grid, HeartShare was able to help over 23,914 families start the recovery process after the storm.

Facilitated through HeartShare, National Grid’s Energy and Community Development Program provided relief and hope to families, helping many get back on their feet. After the storm, many households received a warning tag and their gas was shut off. They needed to pay for plumbing inspections that certified that their gas equipment was in working order. This was an unexpected expense for many families throughout the boroughs. To offer relief, HeartShare managed the program to provide hundreds of families with a $150 credit to their National Grid bills to help defray the cost of this plumbing inspection.

HeartShare also processed National Grid Recovery Grants. These funds were made available to qualifying Sandy victims to help fix or replace National Grid customers’ gas equipment. In February of 2013, National Grid expanded the Recovery Grant to include all customers. One-thousand dollars was provided to National Grid’s residential customers who sustained physical damage and lost natural gas service as a result of Sandy.

HeartShare works with elected officials and social service providers to establish intake centers throughout New York City. The applications are forwarded to HeartShare staff who review the documents and determine the person’s eligibility based on income and size of the household; many qualify for grants of up to $200.

Thanks to grants funded through contributions by ConEdison, Entergy, National Grid, foundations, corporations and generous individuals, HeartShare can help our neighbors stay warm in the winter and cool in the summer. One-hundred percent of the money collected is awarded to those in need through grants made directly to the utility companies.

**HEARTSHARE WELLNESS, LTD.**

*Dedicated and professional staff members are the heart of HeartShare Wellness, Ltd.*

Obtaining high-quality health care for people with disabilities can be a challenge. And, too often, individuals with disabilities and their families and caregivers have had to make time-consuming multiple trips to various locations to obtain needed health care. HeartShare Wellness, Ltd. eliminated those barriers by offering coordinated professional care at one location.

Since opening in June 2000, HeartShare Wellness, Ltd. has provided high quality health care to thousands of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Located in a beautiful, state-of-the-art facility in Downtown Brooklyn, HeartShare Wellness is a diagnostic and treatment center that offers its patients medical, specialty, rehabilitative, counseling, and evaluation services in one convenient location.

Dedicated and professional staff members are the heart of **HeartShare Wellness, Ltd.** A diagnostic and treatment center designed to provide high-quality health care to children and adults with disabilities, HeartShare Wellness is looking to further expand in 2014 when it opens a greatly needed dental clinic.

In 2013, over 1,900 patients received health care services from HeartShare Wellness’ clinic. Expert staff provides the care and attention that fits the individual’s total needs, no matter the level of cognitive or physical disability. Our physicians and clinicians keep the lines of communication open with the family, school and other care providers to ensure the patient’s overall well-being.

HeartShare Wellness’ Article 28 Clinic offers internal medicine, pediatric, adolescent and adult psychiatry, podiatry, neurology, optometry, gynecology, and restorative speech, occupational and physical therapies. The Article 16 Clinic offers ongoing speech, occupational and physical therapies, individual and group counseling, psychological and psychosocial evaluations, and sexuality assessments.

In another exciting development this past year, HeartShare Wellness has taken on the responsibility of coordinating health care and other services for hundreds of Medicaid individuals who are either HIV-positive or have two or more chronic health conditions. HeartShare’s Health Home Program, now under the auspices of HeartShare Wellness, ensures better access to ongoing health care services while providing the follow-up and support that people with chronic health conditions so greatly need.

HeartShare Wellness, affiliated with HeartShare Human Services of New York, complements HeartShare’s comprehensive network of services enabling a holistic approach to health and wellness for thousands of children, adults and families in New York City annually.