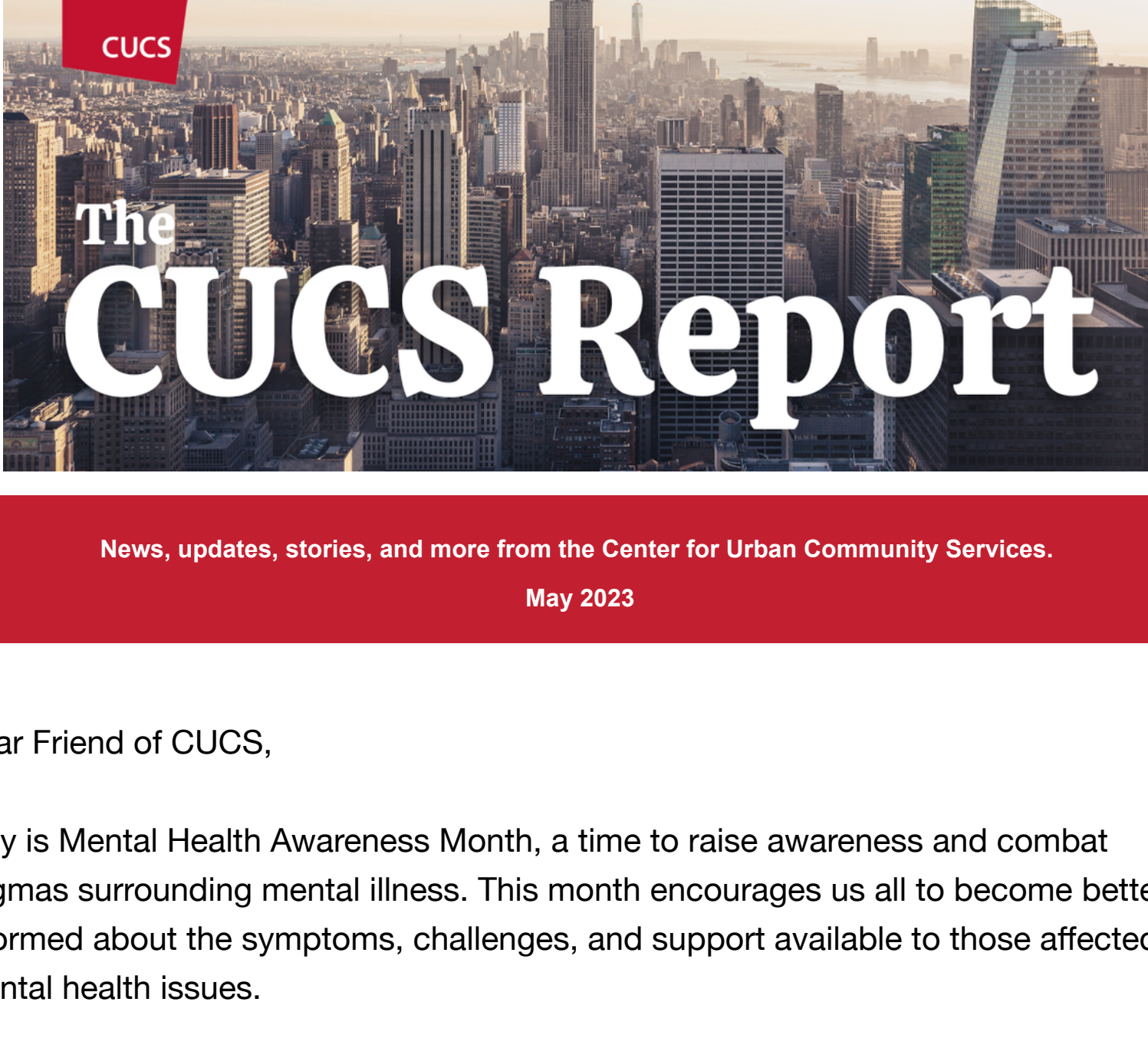


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News, updates, stories, and more from the Center for Urban Community Services.

May 2023

Dear Friend of CUCS,

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, a time to raise awareness and combat stigmas surrounding mental illness. This month encourages us all to become better informed about the symptoms, challenges, and support available to those affected by mental health issues.

Mental health is a complex subject, particularly for the homeless population. Ensuring continuity of care, access to medication support, and engagement in wellness activities are essential for a healthy and meaningful life, but can be challenging to obtain and sustain. At CUCS/Janian Medical Care, our mission is to create these opportunities for our clients whether they are living on the streets, in transitional sites, or in permanent supportive housing.

The CUCS Report aims to inform us as we work towards a solution. We hope this edition will provide insight into the resources available to our clients beyond psychiatric providers, and foster a deeper understanding of the role CUCS/Janian plays in assisting homeless New Yorkers on their journey to a healthy and meaningful life.

In addition, May is National Nurses Month. In our "Ask the Expert" section, Lorraine Haywood, an Intensive Mobile Treatment (IMT) RN, shares her passion for treating patients "without walls".

Our feature story about Wilfred Bright will inspire you and demonstrate the tremendous impact of the wellness programs offered by CUCS, as well as their crucial role in recovery from mental illness.

Lastly, we are asking you for a gift this month to help support these programs. Please follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#) for more information and to read stories about our life-enriching and life-saving work.

Thank you for reading, and as always, we welcome your feedback and comments.

Best Regards,

Rise Roth

Chief Development and Communications Officer

Wellness in Mind

"Mental and emotional health are the bedrock of wellbeing. They are the building blocks of a thriving body and spirit. Nurturing mental and emotional health requires mindful attention and exertion, and that's difficult. Our lives are full of obligations and distractions that conspire against it. Everyone needs support — *everyone*."

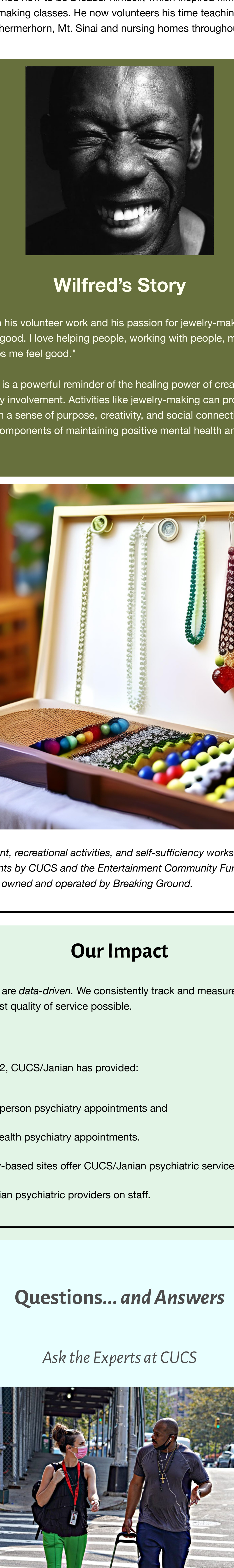
Fortunately, there are multiple sources of support: family and loved ones, colleagues, community, faith. For some, mental health professionals provide invaluable support and care.

As a psychiatrist, I feel fortunate to offer such care, and I feel fortunate to support other psychiatric providers to do so also. At Janian Medical Care, we strive to bring healing to our city to ease some of the traumas of our less fortunate fellow New Yorkers."



— Dr. Van Yu, Chief Medical Officer

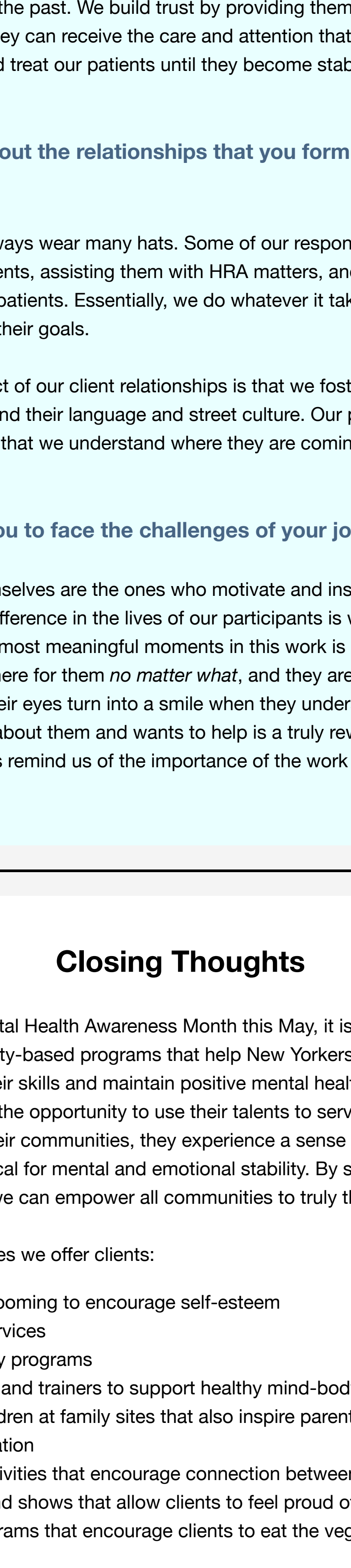
Crafting Wellness: Healing Through Community Involvement



Wilfred Bright is a CUCS client and a 14-year resident of the Schermerhorn—a permanent supportive housing site in Brooklyn. During his time at the Schermerhorn, he has been actively giving back to the community. Most notably, Wilfred leads a jewelry-making class at the Schermerhorn.

Wilfred was introduced to the craft of jewelry-making while he was hospitalized and dealing with health issues. During his stay at the hospital, he encountered an organization called "Gifted Hands," which led jewelry-making classes. The experience had a profound impact on him and introduced him to the woman who would become his mentor.

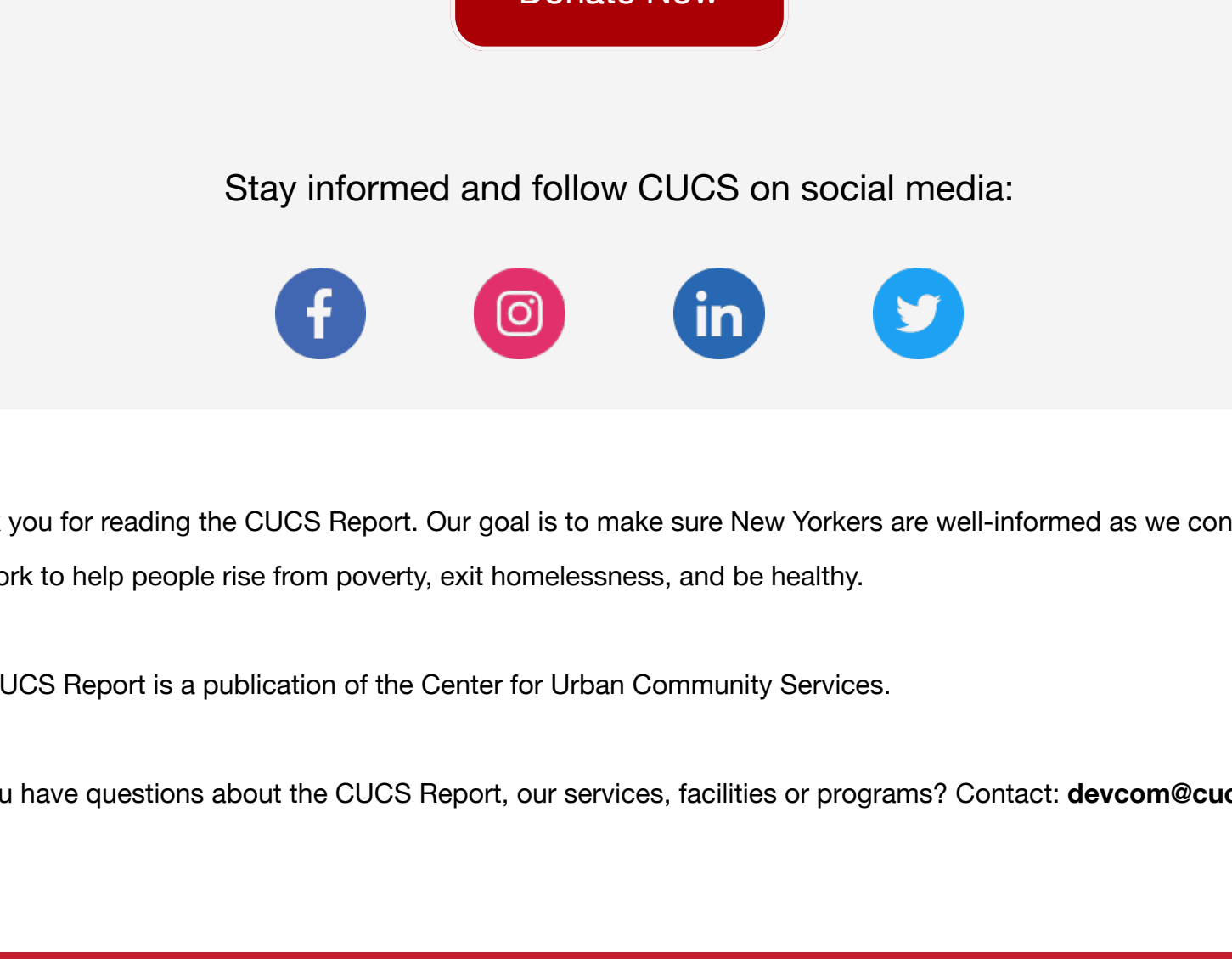
Wilfred credits his mentor with changing his perspective and taking him in a new direction. He learned how to be a leader himself, which inspired him to start leading his own jewelry-making classes. He now volunteers his time teaching the craft to others at The Schermerhorn, Mt. Sinai and nursing homes throughout the city.



Wilfred's Story

In reflecting on his volunteer work and his passion for jewelry-making, Wilfred shared, "I feel good. I love helping people, working with people, making people happy. It makes me feel good."

Wilfred's story is a powerful reminder of the healing power of creative expression and community involvement. Activities like jewelry-making can provide individuals with a sense of purpose, creativity, and social connection, all of which are essential components of maintaining positive mental health and overall wellbeing.



Case management, recreational activities, and self-sufficiency workshops are provided to tenants by CUCS and the Entertainment Community Fund. The Schermerhorn is owned and operated by Breaking Ground.

Our Impact

CUCS programs are *data-driven*. We consistently track and measure our impact to ensure the highest quality of service possible.

As of July 1, 2022, CUCS/Janian has provided:

10,371 in-person psychiatry appointments and

2,728 telehealth psychiatry appointments.

65 community-based sites offer CUCS/Janian psychiatric services.

29 CUCS/Janian psychiatric providers on staff.

Questions... and Answers

Ask the Experts at CUCS

Pictured above is Natalie Nokes, IMT Program Director pictured in 2021 with Leo, an IMT client. Photo courtesy of AM New York.

Topic: IMT Nurse Program

Expert: Lorraine Haywood

Registered Nurse - Intensive Mobile Treatment

As an IMT nurse, what sets your work apart from that of a non-IMT nurse?

IMT stands for Intensive Mobile Treatment, which means that **we provide care wherever our patients are located**, instead of working in an office every day. One of the most challenging aspects of this work occurs when a patient has no address — in those cases, we must search the community to find them. This can involve looking in all sorts of places, such as streets, tunnels, hospitals, jails, and even rooftops. We travel to all these places to provide hands-on nursing care, help them achieve their goals, or just listen. Our clients are individuals who have "fallen through the cracks" and need assistance on a one-to-one basis.

Can you explain what it means when a patient has "fallen through the cracks"?

"Fallen through the cracks," means a patient is in an unsafe situation that has negative impacts on their physical, mental, and social well-being. These individuals often feel like they have nowhere to turn, and they may have experienced rejection and abandonment in the past. We build trust by providing them a safe and supportive environment where they can receive the care and attention that they need. We continue to follow and treat our patients until they become stable, or they no longer require our services.

What is unique about the relationships that you form with your patients?

As an IMT nurse, I always wear many hats. Some of our responsibilities include going to court with our patients, assisting them with HRA matters, and searching the community to locate patients. Essentially, we do whatever it takes to support our patients in achieving their goals.

Another unique aspect of our client relationships is that we foster close bonds because we understand their language and street culture. Our patients feel comfortable knowing that we understand where they are coming from, which allows us to establish trust.

What motivates you to face the challenges of your job each day?

The participants themselves are the ones who motivate and inspire me. Knowing that I am truly making a difference in the lives of our participants is what motivates me each day. One of the most meaningful moments in this work is when a patient realizes that we are there for them *no matter what*, and they are not being judged. Seeing the tears in their eyes turn into a smile when they understand that they have someone who cares about them and wants to help is a truly rewarding experience. These small moments remind us of the importance of the work that we do as IMT nurses.

Closing Thoughts

As we recognize Mental Health Awareness Month this May, it is crucial to recognize the value of community-based programs that help New Yorkers discover their passions, develop their skills and maintain positive mental health. When individuals like Wilfred are given the opportunity to use their talents to serve others and make a positive impact on their communities, they experience a sense of purpose and belonging that is critical for mental and emotional stability. By supporting wellness programs like these we can empower all communities to truly thrive.

At CUCS program sites we offer clients:

- Haircuts and grooming to encourage self-esteem
- Employment services
- Financial literacy programs
- Physical fitness and trainers to support healthy mind-body connection
- Tutoring for children at family sites that also inspire parents to connect with their children's education
- Inspirational activities that encourage connection between clients
- Art programs and shows that allow clients to feel proud of their work
- Gardening programs that encourage clients to eat the vegetables and fruits they grow
- Peer support programs that allow clients to process life experiences
- Personal goal setting activities



We all want to lead a meaningful and productive life. We all want to connect with others and feel cared for. We all want to live each day with health and hope.

When you make a gift to CUCS you support all these activities and more. Please consider a donation to CUCS to show our clients and staff you understand that these programs play a vital role in their lives.

[Donate Now](#)

Stay informed and follow CUCS on social media:

Thank you for reading the CUCS Report. Our goal is to make sure New Yorkers are well-informed as we continue our work to help people rise from poverty, exit homelessness, and be healthy.

The CUCS Report is a publication of the Center for Urban Community Services.

Do you have questions about the CUCS Report, our services, facilities or programs? Contact: devcom@cucs.org

The CUCS Report | May 2023

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