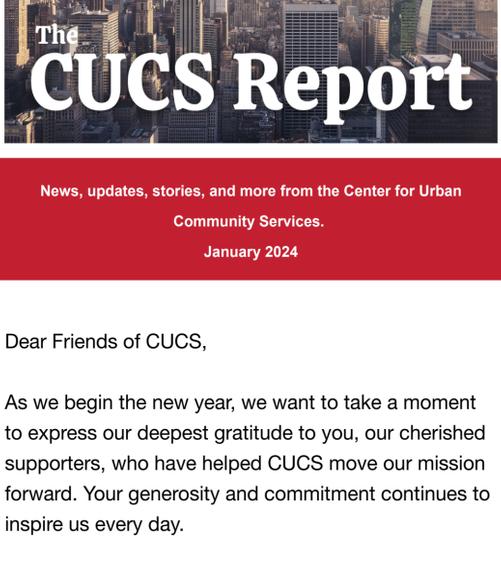


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News, updates, stories, and more from the Center for Urban Community Services.

January 2024

Dear Friends of CUCS,

As we begin the new year, we want to take a moment to express our deepest gratitude to you, our cherished supporters, who have helped CUCS move our mission forward. Your generosity and commitment continues to inspire us every day.

This January, we are reflecting on the lives we touched, the hope restored, and the dreams realized as we collaborate in our work towards an end to homelessness.

This CUCS Report highlights the HOPE Count, a one-evening moment in time where New York City agencies, nonprofits, and volunteers work together to locate, count and support people who are experiencing street homelessness. The data gathered during the HOPE Count helps us understand the funding and services necessary to support and provide for this population.

You will also read about how our staff serves vulnerable New Yorkers and the experience and commitment necessary to bring about life-changing results for our clients.

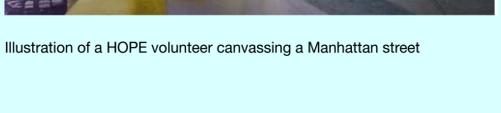
Looking ahead, we are hopeful to do more, to serve more, to support more, and to hope more.

With your continued support, we are confident that we can achieve greater impact and we will keep you informed every step of the way.

With deepest gratitude,

Rise Roth

Chief Development and Communications Officer



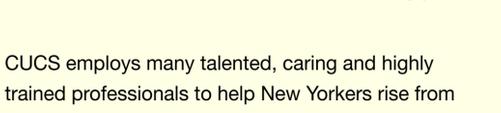
"While the work of CUCS never stops, the end of the year and the upcoming HOPE count provide a good time to take stock of all that was achieved over the past 12 months and to renew our commitment to each other and to our clients for the year ahead. All of us on the board of directors would like to thank every member of the CUCS team for their hard work and dedication, our donors for their continued support of our organization, and our clients for inspiring us and giving purpose to our work.

Happy New Year and best wishes for peace, happiness, and success in 2024!"



Alex Rose

CUCS Chairman, Board of Directors



## The HOPE Count

Each January, thousands of volunteers across the five boroughs participate in NYC's annual Homeless Outreach Population Estimate (HOPE), a citywide effort to canvass streets, subway stations, parks, and other public spaces across the city to identify individuals living unsheltered. Volunteers, equipped with a specialized smartphone app, count street homeless individuals during the late-night canvassing, starting at 10 pm and going as late as 4 am.

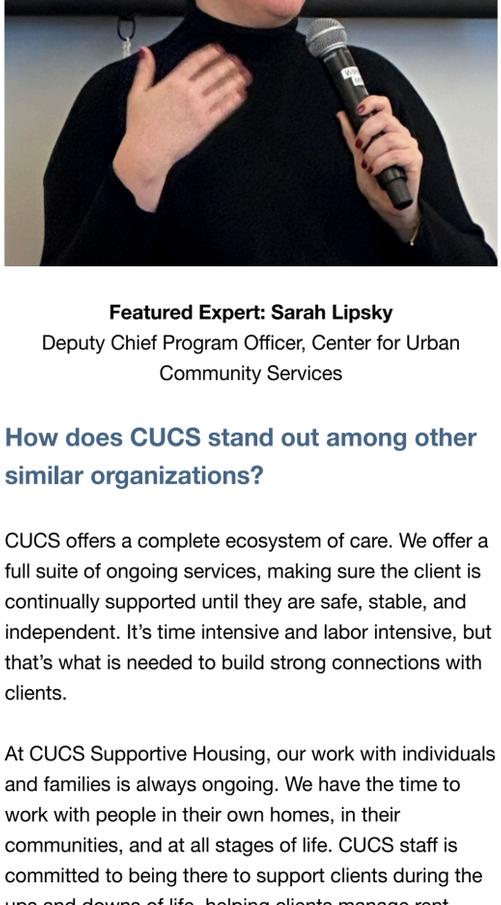
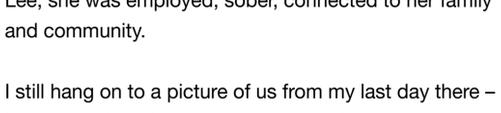


Illustration of a HOPE volunteer canvassing a Manhattan street

In addition to volunteers, CUCS Street Outreach staff also participates in the HOPE count each year, joining the effort to collect this important data. Sometimes, when HOPE participants encounter a homeless person, they request help. In that case, the HOPE team will arrange assistance or transport for the individual.

Since 2005, this rigorous initiative has set a national standard for estimating unsheltered homelessness. Last year, 4,042 individuals in all five boroughs, were identified, emphasizing the need for increased, robust services and compassionate responses. It's important to remember that the HOPE Count is an estimate, and measures only a single moment in time. However, this annual initiative reveals valuable insights into the needs of the most vulnerable New Yorkers.



## A Story of Hope

I recently had a client who was always anxious and pessimistic about his situation. He had been living on the streets for decades and didn't trust that anyone could help him. Once you're homeless for a while, it can become ingrained in you, and it's hard to see a way out. Homelessness isn't just whether you have a roof over your head, it's also a mindset - how you look at life, how you interact with the world, and what you think is possible.

It took some time, but after many conversations and shared stories, we began to build a positive relationship. He started to trust that we were on his team. His demeanor gradually changed as he began to realize he had a real chance of exiting homelessness and *living* instead of just surviving.

Today, my client lives in permanent supportive housing and is no longer homeless. His perspective has shifted and he seems happier since being housed, and most importantly, he doesn't see himself as homeless anymore. Instead of grumbling or focusing on the negatives, he is focusing on the positives, like connecting with his community, finding a pair of shoes for someone in need, or looking forward to enjoying a bowl of ice cream in his own home.



Carver

Social Worker, CUCS Street Outreach



## Our Front-Line Staff

CUCS employs many talented, caring and highly trained professionals to help New Yorkers rise from poverty, exit homelessness and be healthy. Here are some quick stats about our front-line staff who make an impact in the lives of clients every day:

**243** Case Managers

**210** Social Workers

**30** Nurses

**28** Medical Doctors & Psychiatrists

(The numbers above are based on job titles and are in addition to other critical frontline staff. Totals include full time, part time, and per-diem staff)



## Questions and Answers

### Ask the Experts at CUCS



Featured Expert: Sarah Lipsky

Deputy Chief Program Officer, Center for Urban Community Services

### How does CUCS stand out among other similar organizations?

CUCS offers a complete ecosystem of care. We offer a full suite of ongoing services, making sure the client is continually supported until they are safe, stable, and independent. It's time intensive and labor intensive, but that's what is needed to build strong connections with clients.

At CUCS Supportive Housing, our work with individuals and families is always ongoing. We have the time to work with people in their own homes, in their communities, and at all stages of life. CUCS staff is committed to being there to support clients during the ups and downs of life, helping clients manage rent, child care, and their everyday lives. Over time, the trust we build with those long-term relationships can be truly healing. Our staff really cares about our clients, and that helps make change happen.

### What would you like New Yorkers to know about homelessness?

It is crucial to understand that no one is exempt or immune from homelessness. I have known people experiencing homelessness who previously had very successful careers and stable, well-off lives.

Try thinking of a situation in which you fall down -- literally and figuratively. Think of who might support you during that time of hardship. If you didn't have anyone there to support you, how might that fall turn out differently? Then imagine one fall after another. How might your story look different?

It's important to recognize the humanity in homeless New Yorkers. Empathy is the key to understanding these truths. So, take a moment to appreciate the supportive people in your life who are there to catch you and help you back up when you fall.

### Can you share a client story that made a lasting impression on you?

From 2012 to 2021, I worked at The Lee, a Permanent Supportive Housing site in Manhattan. One of the residents there had many challenges and unfortunate circumstances that led her to becoming homeless. Fortunately, she made her way to The Lee to heal. But the road was still long. It was hard for her to trust. I was fortunate enough to bear witness as she embarked on many stages of her journey and by the time I left the Lee, she was employed, sober, connected to her family and community.

I still hang on to a picture of us from my last day there -- the moment captured us laughing hysterically, which doesn't clue in to what we were laughing at -- when she whispered "remember when I hated you?" She told me, "You never would have thought I would have gotten here would you?" I told her, actually yes!

That picture always reminds me how the relationship is the treatment. The feeling of someone in your corner is healing in itself. There are so many others who are on that journey. The journey doesn't stop, the story continues.

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](mailto:devcom@cucs.org)



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