

ROBIN HOOD RESPONDS



**THE HEROES
EDITION**

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New York City Needs Heroes

Every year for the past 20 years, Robin Hood has honored individuals who exemplify the common heroic nature of the poverty-fighting groups we support. In the following pages, you'll read the stories of Laura, Halana and Linda, three remarkable New Yorkers who overcame incredible challenges with the help of Robin Hood-funded organizations. Their success stories are made possible by your generosity. But much more work remains to be done.

In 2009, strategic allocations and a rigorous focus on outcomes enabled us to hold steady or even increase our commitments in key areas related to the recession. However, Robin Hood is rising to the challenge of a recession that will continue destroying jobs and opportunities for poor New Yorkers, well after economists proclaim that it's over. Make no mistake. This is a true crisis, not just for the 1.9 million New Yorkers below the poverty line, but for the entire city.

- >> 55 percent of babies in New York City are born into poverty.
- >> Over 40 percent of African-American males are not currently working.
- >> 120,000 New Yorkers—including nearly 44,000 children—slept in homeless shelters this year.
- >> 1.3 million New Yorkers, including an increasing number of women and children, rely on emergency food.

Your commitment at this critical moment will make a huge difference. During previous hard times, government offered a far more comprehensive safety net than it does today. Private generosity is more urgent



In 2009, 93 percent of the city's emergency food sites saw a surge of first-time visitors. Over half saw an increase of 25 percent or more.

than ever. And with Robin Hood, your philanthropy goes further. We apply metrics to ensure that each dollar is spent wisely. The average \$1 spent by Robin Hood returns \$18 in lifetime income to a poor New Yorker.

In 2009, thanks to your generosity, we invested over \$130 million in more than 200 programs and schools throughout the city's poorest neighborhoods, reaching 430,000 of our neighbors. For example, Single Stop, operating at 70 locations throughout the five boroughs, served nearly 100,000 people who received about \$190 million in overall benefits and services. That's a healthy return on a \$10.7 million investment.

Other 2009 highlights you made possible include:

- >> Robin Hood's housing programs kept over 4,000 families from becoming homeless.
- >> Our food groups provided more than 45 million meals to hungry New Yorkers.
- >> In May, standardized test results revealed that charter schools supported by Robin Hood outperformed their districts by an average of 17 percentage points in reading and math.
- >> Nearly 5,000 individuals landed jobs paying, on average, \$22,000 annually.

For a fuller picture of what you achieved in the past year for New York City's poor, please visit www.robinhood.org/2009.

Your support is deeply appreciated, and **I hope you will take advantage of a challenge grant from George Soros and Robin Hood's board to match each gift 1:1, up to \$100 million. As always, the board pays all our administrative expenses.** Never has your support mattered more than now. Thank you in advance for your continued partnership.

David Saltzman,
Executive Director

The Committee for NYC 2009-2010

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The Robin Hood Responds committee unites philanthropists to ensure that New York City thrives. Together, we can protect and empower our neighbors and prevent an entire generation from slipping through the cracks. Let's pool resources to feed, shelter, teach, train and heal more New Yorkers than ever before.

Be Robin Hood. Respond to a city in crisis:

>> Ensure that good schools in poor neighborhoods can continue to educate more than 23,000 students.

>> Launch a proposed Worker-Training Academy to provide marketable job skills to welfare enrollees and place them immediately in jobs.

>> Add Single Stop sites across the city to connect more New Yorkers to public benefits, medical treatment and more.

For information on how you can join the Committee for NYC, please contact Amy Sonnenborn at sonnenborn@robinhood.org.

The 20th Annual Robin Hood Heroes Awards

ROBIN HOOD FEEDS



In 2008, 47 percent of New York City's soup kitchens and food pantries had to turn people away due to lack of food. And this year, over half saw a 25 percent surge in new visitors. Robin Hood is the largest private funder of emergency food in New York City. In 2009, more than 45 million meals were served to hungry New Yorkers by Robin Hood-funded groups.

PHOTO: DAVID MCNAMARA

Yorkville Common Pantry (Y.C.P.), located in East Harlem, is in its 29th year of service. Y.C.P. operates one of the largest food pantries in New York City and caters to families experiencing a food emergency. Despite a challenging year, Y.C.P. managed to meet demand and not turn anyone away. In 2009, the number of meals Y.C.P. served increased by 19 percent, reaching more than 6,200 families and surpassing the two-million-meal mark for the first time. Y.C.P. also provides employment assistance, help enrolling for public benefits, and medical and psychiatric care. Five hundred clients enrolled for food stamps at Y.C.P. this past year.

Halana Richardson served four years in the military before taking a job as a school aide. Her husband was an employed construction worker, and they were both members of their children's school P.T.A. They were raising their children in Harlem and thriving. Then tragedy struck. On his way home from work one day, Halana's husband was robbed, shot and killed in a random act of violence.

Halana went into a tailspin. To make matters worse, just months later Halana was laid off from her job due to budget cuts. She did every kind of job she could think of to get by: she became a maid, she peddled scarves that she made by hand, she braided hair. And she still just barely got by.

Last year, she ran into another parent from the P.T.A. who told her about Yorkville Common Pantry. There she was able to get food from the pantry program, and clothes and school supplies for her kids. Y.C.P. also told her she was eligible for food stamps and Medicaid and enrolled her. **Halana remembers the first time she got home from Y.C.P. with a bag from the pantry. She and her children gathered in the kitchen around the bag as if they were opening a Christmas present. Now she had enough to feed herself and her family.**

At first, her children didn't know their food came from a pantry. She used to take the food Y.C.P. gave her and put it in Fairway bags, so when she came home the kids would think she'd just been out grocery shopping. She recalls, "I finally sat them down and told them, 'Look, I have to go to a pantry so we can eat.' I wanted them to know that if you're in trouble and you need help, it's okay to ask for it."

She still hasn't found a steady job, but she continues on as a maid and a babysitter. In February 2010 she will begin attending the City College teacher's assistant program. She hopes to get a job working with children again.



In spite of recent gains, more than 40 percent of New York City public school students don't graduate on time.

ROBIN HOOD TEACHES

Despite recent gains, more than 40 percent of New York City public school students don't graduate on time. In 2009, Robin Hood funded schools in poor neighborhoods that gave more than 23,000 students the chance to achieve excellence.

PHOTO: DAVID MCNAMARA

Education has been proven time and again to be the single greatest deciding factor between a life in poverty and a life of opportunity. This is true in any economy. Based on research, Robin Hood estimates the value of a high school diploma to be worth at least \$6,500 in increased earnings per year for the graduate.

In 2009, Robin Hood invested \$23.5 million in schools and programs that rivet on educational outcomes. Your generosity helped to educate more than 23,000 New York City students in 2009. Standardized test scores, announced in May, revealed that charter schools supported by Robin Hood outperformed their districts by an average of 17 percentage points in reading and math. Among them were the New York City charter schools run by KIPP, one of this year's Robin Hood heroes.

In 1995, **KIPP (Knowledge Is Power Program)** opened KIPP Academy in the South Bronx (its second school nationwide). It immediately became the highest performing public middle school in the borough. There are now over 80 KIPP charter schools across the country serving over 20,000 students, with six in New York City educating 1,300 students. On the 2009 New York State tests, KIPP middle schools outperformed their respective districts by 20 percentage points.

Robin Hood was KIPP NYC's first funder. Since our original investment, we have been helping to bring the program to scale for greater impact on public education in New York City. Recently, we provided programmatic funding for a new KIPP NYC high school and elementary school that opened this fall, with more schools to follow.

Laura Reyes remembers what it was like to be a kid growing up in the South Bronx. Her older brother ran home from school every day to avoid getting jumped by other kids. The girls she knew in the housing project were getting pregnant, one by one. Laura's mother tried to send her kids to a private school, but the tuition was too expensive. There seemed to be no other school choices for Laura. Her future seemed very much uncertain.

Her life changed one day when David Levin showed up at her home to recruit her to the new public school he was starting in her neighborhood, KIPP Academy. The first lesson her teachers taught her was "Everything Is Possible." Laura took that lesson and ran with it. In 2006, she became the first in her family to graduate from college. In 2007, she began her teaching career with Teach for America at P.S. 211 in the Bronx. This year, she returned to KIPP Academy to teach seventh and eighth grade math.

Her students are on the same class schedule she had—7:15 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.—and have an extended school year. But it's not just the time on task that makes the difference; it's the teachers' approach to their work. "People here really, really care. There's not a teacher here who will say, 'There's a kid struggling in my class, and there's nothing I can do.' We'll find a way."

Today, the South Bronx is home to the poorest Congressional district in the country. But Laura sees a bright future for her students. "We want them to succeed. We want them to be model citizens and change the world, and we'll do whatever it takes. Don't you mess with my kids' education."



\$2,500 sends one child from a poor neighborhood to a first-class charter middle school for one year.



This year, 10,000 homeless families slept in New York City shelters each night, an all-time record. In 2009, Robin Hood-funded organizations helped 16,000 individuals avoid or overcome homelessness.

PHOTO: DAVID McNAMARA

ROBIN HOOD SHELTERS

Harlem United's programs respond to the needs of people whose H.I.V. diagnosis is complicated by homelessness, mental illness and substance abuse. Robin Hood has funded Harlem United since its inception and has helped it grow into a leading resource for people with H.I.V./AIDS. In 1988, Harlem United began as a volunteer organization that provided counseling and shelter in 20 apartments. Now it is a professional institution, managing 545 apartments and running health centers and outreach programs that provide over 7,000 people with housing, primary medical care, H.I.V. testing, nutritional training, mental health services, support groups and meals.

At 62, **Linda Hampton** has finally fulfilled her childhood dream to become a bus driver. She's traveled a long, painful road to get there.

When Linda was 10, her friend's father and uncle gave her beer and cigarettes, then molested her. The sexual abuse continued for years, and those first sips turned into a dependency on alcohol to mask the pain and shame. As she got older, she turned to PCP and crack cocaine. She married a man who hit her with iron pipes and two-by-fours. To her, this was love. She put up with the abuse and used drugs and alcohol to kill the pain. When she finally ran from her husband and the beatings, she found herself homeless.

For four years, Linda lived in a hotel that warehoused people from the shelters. At night, she would knock on doors to offer sexual favors for money. Then she'd visit the run-down tenements nearby to buy drugs, get high and, often, pass out

in the hallways overnight. She smelled so bad that the superintendent walked by her in the mornings and told her, "Linda, you stink." He would then throw bleach on her as she lay there. For years, her nickname was "Stinky Linda."

In 1998, Linda was arrested for helping an undercover officer buy drugs. "I pleaded with God to take the taste of drugs out of my mouth." She entered detox, and shortly after she was diagnosed with H.I.V. She was scared. On the streets, Linda had seen friends with AIDS die slow, agonizing deaths.

Uneducated about the virus and unable to afford health-care, Linda turned to Harlem United. There, she got medical and dental treatment, counseling, therapy and a place to live. **Linda says that Harlem United saved her life. And among the staff and clients of Harlem United, she also found a family she could count on.** The day before Linda's commercial driver's license exam, Harlem United's C.E.O. Patrick McGovern took her out in a program van to help her practice and calm her nerves. In November, Linda celebrated her 12th year of being drug- and alcohol-free with the Harlem United family that calls her "Nana."

Every morning, Linda is up at 3:30 a.m. She commutes from Harlem to Staten Island, where she transports mentally challenged clients by bus to their daily treatments and therapy. She couldn't be happier. With her new job, she is on her way to financial independence, and she has Harlem United to thank. "My self-esteem when I came here was lower than the gutter. Once I walked through the doors, I found me. I can't see myself without Harlem United."



120,000 New Yorkers—including nearly 44,000 children—slept in homeless shelters this year.

The Robin Hood Difference

Robin Hood is 100% Charity

Our board pays for all of Robin Hood's administrative expenses so that every cent you give to Robin Hood goes directly to the 200 programs and schools we support.

Robin Hood Targets Poverty Today

Rather than setting your donation aside in an endowment, we believe in maximizing our poverty-fighting impact now to reduce poverty in generations to come. In 2009, Robin Hood invested more than \$130 million to improve the lives of 430,000 New Yorkers in need.

Robin Hood Measures Success

The average \$1 granted by Robin Hood yields an estimated \$18 in future revenue for a New Yorker in need. By tracking the impact of every dollar invested, we ensure that the grantees are held accountable for their performance. We also provide management assistance to help them reach goals and expand capacity.

How to Be Robin Hood

Mail your philanthropic investment using the enclosed response envelope. Or give online at www.robinhood.org. Thanks to a two-year challenge grant from George Soros and Robin Hood's board, every donation will be matched 1:1, up to \$100 million.

Check whether your employer matches charitable gifts. Spouses can sometimes get a second corporate match. It's easy. To double or even triple the impact of your gift, ask your company's human resources department for the form.

Send Robin Hood's holiday cards to friends and family (see back page).

Give Tribute. Honor your loved ones with a donation to Robin Hood. They can also do the same for you (see back page).

Volunteer your time. Find opportunities at www.robinhood.org/volunteer.

Get your family involved with the fight against poverty. Visit www.robinhood.org/family to find out how.

Follow Robin Hood online on Facebook (www.facebook.com/robinhood) and Twitter (@RobinHoodNYC).



\$75 keeps a formerly homeless family in housing with social services for a day.

What are you doing for the holidays?

THREE WAYS YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES CAN HELP OUR NEIGHBORS:

1. Give Joy

Limited-edition Robin Hood holiday cards can be customized for family, friends and associates. Choose from three art cards or photo cards designed by Robin Hood board member Gwyneth Paltrow. To find out more, visit www.robinhood.org/holidaycards or contact Marianne Macrae (212-227-6601 or macrae@robinhood.org).



2. Give a Meal

Order complete holiday meals (turkey and all the fixings for eight) for \$50 each by December 15, 2009, and FreshDirect will deliver them to Robin Hood-funded organizations across NYC. Visit www.ifed.robinhood.org to donate a meal and spread the word.



3. Give Tribute

Honor your loved ones with a donation to Robin Hood, or invite friends and family to support Robin Hood rather than buying you gifts. You can also run, bike or swim for Robin Hood. Go to www.robinhood.org/take-action and click on "Give Tribute."



Double your impact.

Thanks to a two-year challenge grant from George Soros and Robin Hood's board, every donation will be matched 1:1, up to \$100 million.

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Targeting Poverty in New York City.
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