You’ve helped us provide
48,767 Meals
so far this year!

“What lies behind us, and what lies before us are
small matters compared to what lies within us.”
Ralph Waldo Emerson

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FROM THE CEO

Dear Friends,

Many of the men who come to the New York City Rescue Mission (NYCRM) to enter our Recovery Program, do so as a last resort—one final, desperate grasp at life. Some of the men in our final graduating class have struggled with wanting to end their life. I remember each one of them, in the first day or two after they came to live in our house. Their eyes reflected dejection and desolation, detachment, and even animosity. Some of them had gone to incredible lengths to gain admission to the program, while others were “dragged kicking and screaming” by loved ones who could no longer stand by and watch them destroy their lives.

The journey of addiction recovery is volatile, and at times seemingly insurmountable. To see despair and desperation slowly but surely, yield to hope and aspiration, gladdens my heart beyond belief. As you read about the joyous occasion of the NYCRM’s final Recovery Program graduation in this month’s edition of Hope, I want you to know how vital a role you play in the stories of “surviving to thriving”. Some of you have worked alongside our guests in the kitchen—you know their stories, you call them friends. Some of you have not had the privilege of meeting our guests face-to-face, yet continue to support their journeys towards restoration and self-sustenance with compassionate benevolence. Thank you.

I am humbled by the generosity of our supportive community. It can mean the difference between life and death for the hurting people we serve. God’s greatest commandment is to love Him with everything we have, and to love our neighbor. It’s the principle that drives everything we do here at the Mission—helping to heal the wounds of our hurting neighbors. The Recovery Program has concluded, but our THRIVE Program (Emergency Food & Shelter, Workforce Readiness, Workforce Development) continues to fulfill our mission of restoring those who have lost their way. Thank you, friends, for embracing our exciting changes, and for continuing to support us in this compelling next season.

With a heart full of gratitude,

Craig A. Mayes, Ph.D.
CEO

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE...

+ Honor Her

On Saturday May 13th, the Mission hosted our annual event, Honor Her, to celebrate the strength and beauty of all women—especially women in-crisis.

The determination of our women to overcome the devastation of their current circumstances is astonishing. We can’t wait to share stories from the joyful day with you, in the next edition of Hope.

GIVING THANKS

We were delighted to have staff from One Kings Lane come and decorate our women’s shelter with a stunning range of paintings and prints. The art was installed across multiple walls in the women’s dorm, infusing the room with an incredible array of colors and patterns. Our women were in awe of the room’s transformation—pointing out their favorite pieces, and exclaiming how enchanting and homey the dorm feels.
FEATURE STORY: Our Final Recovery Program Graduation

On Thursday April 6th, the New York City Rescue Mission (NYCRM) had an especially significant night. Our Mission family gathered together to celebrate ten extraordinary men—our final graduating class of the NYCRM’s Recovery Program.

The graduation ceremony was attended by donors, volunteers, corporate partners, men and women from our emergency shelter—and even Recovery Program alumni. As our graduates prepared to commence the next chapter of their stories, it was a testament to have men present who could affirm the exciting possibilities awaiting them in life post-graduation. Several graduates had ecstatic family and friends present. One graduate requested a moment’s silence for his grandmother, whose passing meant that she did not have the opportunity to witness the culmination of her grandson’s life transformation. Acknowledging that years of substance abuse had strained and devastated relationships with their loved ones, our graduates expressed determination to repair and restore those relationships as part of the healing process.

As the audience listened, laughed, and cried with each graduate’s speech, there was a clear commonality woven throughout their stories. Although our men had entered the program as strangers—anguished and broken—they were graduating together as true friends—brothers. In the ceremony’s closing moments, NYCRM CEO, Dr. Craig Mayes, urged the graduates to continue supporting one another as they ventured into future adventures—future battles, “No lone soldiers out there...your relationships don’t end because you’re graduating. If anything, moving forward you need each other’s love and support more than ever.”

An unprecedented number of our graduates secured employment prior to graduating—transitioning directly into Workforce Development, as part of the Mission’s THRIVE Program. Our remaining graduates moved into Workforce Readiness, to continue pursuing preparatory educational and occupational opportunities. We wish our final Recovery Program graduating class every success and happiness, as they pursue renewed dreams and aspirations, with the bold conviction that the best is yet to come.

“In the beginning it was a really tough time, but we were able to get through this, and graduate from this program. There are so many people here that have affected me in a positive way.” - Asher, NYCRM graduate

“Remember that life is lived from the inside out. Guard your heart, because all the good that’s going to come is going to flow from that.” - Dr. Craig Mayes, NYCRM CEO
FROM OUR GRADUATES...

**Jorge:** “We made it. We made it through some tough times. I want to encourage you guys for the rest of your life. I want to give appreciation to the entire staff. The words of appreciation can’t even be described.”

**Anthony:** “I’d just like to thank God for being in my life. Thank you to everybody that’s supported me at the Mission: All of the volunteers, all of the staff, the kitchen crew. Thanks to everybody for the support.”

**Eric:** “You can’t change the whole world, but you can change someone else’s world. That’s what these guys did for me, and now I want to encourage everyone to go out and do just that.”

**Asher:** “We’ve had a lot of ups and a lot of downs, but I am so glad and proud of everyone’s accomplishments. Everyone here made me feel that I’m human again. Eric taught me that there’s no end to your thinking, and there’s no limit to what you should want to achieve.”

**Jesus:** “I just want to give a thank you to everybody at the Mission who has allowed me to be myself here, and to succeed. For everyone that has made me laugh and have good times here. Thank you.”

**Joe:** “I love all you guys. I love you Mr. Wright, Mr. DeSantos—you’ve helped me more than I could ever tell you. Eric, Jesus, Zach, Jorge, Paul, Steve. I wish you guys the best. Asher and Ben! I love you guys.”

**Zach:** “I can’t believe that I did this. I finished something that I started! I made it. I have a job. I’m sober. I love myself right now, and I want to thank everyone here.”

**Ben:** “I want to thank everybody graduating with me, I hope you all make it in the future. I want to give a shout out to Mr. DeSantos, my teacher, he’s been a very great help towards me. And to the staff at the Mission, I thank you very much.”

**Steven:** “I didn’t think this was possible. I was broken—completely. The Mission has now given me the chance to give to others, what they have given to me: the love. Everyone here has given me so much joy.”

**Gregory:** “I’m a prime example of how this program works, it’s not just another program. Thank God the Mission gave me a chance.”