

Welcome Home!

Martin Luther Court Recipient of Lutheran Services in America – Weinberg Grant

MLC in Brooklyn is one of five TLCN community housing sites providing independence and safety to low-income seniors. East New York is a diverse neighborhood. Tenants speak a variety of languages. Many speak English, approximately fifty percent speak Spanish, a steadily increasing Chinese population communicate in Cantonese and Mandarin and most recently we've welcome Korean language residents.

Lutheran Services in America – a non-profit headquartered in Washington, DC, serves a network of 300 health and human services organizations in 1,400 communities. Executive Director Alesia Frerichs reached out to TLCN offering a program funded by the Weinberg Foundation designed to help low-income housing centers address needs of residents returning from a hospital or rehab stay. Susan Cadoff, TLCN V.P. for Community Housing, and Ivette Fuentes, Social Services Coordinator at MLC jumped at the chance to learn from this educational opportunity. The *Connect-Home* training was designed by The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

The goal is to assist seniors in remaining independent longer. The program adheres to an efficient protocol targeted at identifying and engaging tenants as they return to MLC after a hospital or rehab stay. Staff work together to recognize those who would benefit. Ivette engages them in a conversation about their needs: Do you have the meds you need? When is your follow-up visit with your doctor? Do you have food in your fridge? Do you need transportation? This approach has already ensured successful transitions home. Residents appreciate the care and attention to their well-being.

Funds from the grant were also used to purchase technology and provide training. Olga, a library computer instructor, mentored residents in the use of two new computer stations enabling them to communicate with family, healthcare providers, access banking resources and place grocery orders. A large-screen TV with mics has been used by the tech mentor for tutoring as well as for exercise classes and social activities such as movie and karaoke evenings.





We are grateful to **Lutheran Services in America** and the **Weinberg Foundation** for these life-changing resources!