



# LIVESTREAMED ANNUAL GALA

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September 24, 2020 | 7 PM

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## Greg & Kathiryn Werlinich



**The Werlinich Family** is very proud to once again champion **CLUSTER** at its annual gala. We believe strongly in its mission to help our neighbors in need and we are pleased to support the tireless work done by its dedicated staff, led by Executive Director, Kristina Yamin, and Board President, Tony Carrizales. We encourage everyone to join us by giving generously to help enrich the lives of every member of our community.

# Kenneth Nilsen Nilsen Management Co.



Congratulates **CLUSTER** on 45 Years of  
community services!





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LIVESTREAMED ANNUAL GALA  
*SEPTEMBER 24, 2020*  
PROGRAM FOR THE EVENING

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**Introductions and Welcome**

Greg Werlinich, Host and Gala Committee Chair

**Video Presentation by Staff and Clients**

**Live Auction—Dinner for Six at X20**

5-course, wine-paired, tasting menu designed and prepared by world-renowned Chef, Peter Kelly

**Learn About CLUSTER**

**Please Support CLUSTER! How to Donate Tonight:**

- Text "**CLUSTER** (2587837)\_dollar amount\_your name to 970-840-9000

**Ways to Donate After the Gala:**

- [www.clusterinc.org/donate](http://www.clusterinc.org/donate)
- Mail check, payable to **CLUSTER**, to 28 Wells Ave, 4th Fl, Yonkers, NY 10701. Write "gala" in the memo line





**TONIGHT'S EXCLUSIVE AUCTION ITEM**  
**DINNER FOR SIX AT X2O BY RENOWNED CHEF, PETER KELLY**

Best Chef Award Winner: Westchester Magazine | Best Chef Award Winner: James Beard Award  
 Nation's Restaurant News Fine Dining Hall of Fame

Westchester's finest! Five courses. Six guests. A very special dinner - each course paired with an exquisite wine.

**PLACE YOUR BID!**





## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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# PROGRAMS & SERVICES

## YOUTH & FAMILY PROGRAMS

The goal of the Youth & Family Programs is to improve the lives of children and families by providing academic support, enrichment activities and youth leadership development. We assist youth to develop to their fullest potential by providing information, encouragement and support to parents and guardians.



### *Programs Include:*

- Community-based After-School Programs
- TEENS Program – Youth Leadership Development Program
- Summer Day Camp
- In-school Extended Day Learning Program



## HOUSING RESOURCE CENTER

*The goal of the Housing Resource Center is to help tenants preserve housing and improve living conditions in their buildings and neighborhoods. The Center works closely with local housing and government agencies to prevent evictions and the threat of homelessness due to landlord tenant disputes, building code violations, fires or foreclosures.*

### *Services Include:*

- Eviction Prevention
- Housing Counseling Services
- Benefits Advocacy
- Case Management
- Tenant Information, Education and Referrals



# PROGRAMS & SERVICES

## MENTAL HEALTH RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

*Provides housing and rehabilitative services to adults with serious persistent mental illness.*

- Licensed by the New York State Office of Mental Health
- Provides transitional and permanent residential placement
- Provides rehabilitative services in home like environments
- Offers three levels of care - two 24 hour supervised living residences, a treatment apartment program and 98 units of permanent supported housing.
- Participates in Person Centered Planning, as well as Wellness Self-Management Initiative through the NYS Office of Mental Health.
- Adult Behavioral Health Home and Community Based Services

## THE WESTCHESTER AND ROCKLAND MEDIATION CENTERS

*The Westchester & Rockland Mediation Centers provide the highest quality dispute resolutions services and education to Westchester and Rockland residents and businesses.*

- We train community volunteers to mediate, arbitrate and/or conciliate cases. They serve as a core labor force addressing cases at the mediation Centers. The Center serves small claims, civil, family, Surrogate courts and housing courts in Westchester and Rockland Counties.
- Mediate, conciliate or arbitrate cases referred by the police, probation department, local attorneys, schools and other service agencies, or by self-referral.
- Lemon Law Arbitration, Special Education and Early Intervention mediation are also provided by the Center through the New York State Dispute Resolution Association (NYSdra).
- Deliver Conflict Resolution Training to the corporate community as well as to educational institutions in both counties.



### MAJOR PROGRAMS INCLUDE

*Community Mediation  
Custody/Visitation Mediation  
Divorce Mediation  
Elder Care Mediation*

*Eviction Prevention Conciliation  
Parent/Child Mediation  
Restorative Justice Services  
School Peer Mediation*



# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## YOUTH & FAMILY PROGRAMS:

Studies show that providing children the best start during their early school years offers the highest opportunity for success in life. Children who are engaged in structured, after school activities are more likely to make good healthy choices in life.

- **95%** of those who participated in the after school program saw improvement in their grades and/or attendance.
- **CLUSTER's** newly developed TEENS program was approved for a 3-year funding cycle from the Westchester County Youth Bureau. **30** youths annually will benefit from training in:



- Conflict resolution/peer mediation
  - Restorative Justice/Circle Keeping
  - Public Speaking/Facilitation
- Once trained, youth will participate in leadership opportunities within **CLUSTER**, local schools and communities.
  - TEENS Program saw **4** youth graduate in June. All of them are going on to attend an accredited college and/or university.
  - In the last **8 years, 100%** of the seniors in the Study Buddy Program have graduated High School.
  - **30** youth participated in weekly workshops throughout the 2018–2019 school year. The workshops focused on life skills training, providing youth with the necessary tools and information helpful to their future endeavors and goals.
  - During the 2018–2019 school year, **10** youth were a part of our college/university tour partaking in the college application process and financial aid orientation.
  - In the summer of 2019, **110** inner city children attended the six week summer day camp. More than **50%** received full or partial scholarships. All the children received free breakfast, lunch and snacks.

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## HOUSING RESOURCE CENTER:

- **CLUSTER** provided **\$292,000** of financial assistance and leveraged another **\$626,900** of partner assistance to preserve the homes of **298** families with **600+** household members who were facing homelessness.
- **400** households received some level of homelessness prevention services, which may include:
  - Legal assistance and housing counseling
  - Code enforcement assistance
  - Relocation assistance
  - Benefits advocacy
- **CLUSTER's** assistance—preserved housing for over **1000+** household members.
- **300** families received legal assistance and housing counseling.
- **120** families received code enforcement assistance.
- **250** household members received relocation assistance.
- **200+** household members received benefits advocacy.





# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## WESTCHESTER & ROCKLAND MEDIATION CENTERS

The Westchester and Rockland Mediation Centers of **CLUSTER** was awarded in late 2019 a multi-year contract to provide mediation services in Westchester County's Surrogates Court. With a little less than 2 years of program experience, our Surrogates Court Mediation Program is shaping out to be a model program for other courts statewide. 55% of the cases referred to mediation from Westchester's Surrogates Court Judges resolve in a full or partial agreement. Agreements garnered through mediation help to reduce the Surrogates Court docket as well as lessen the time and cost families would spend litigating identity and rights based disputes. Lastly, the Surrogates Court Mediation Program has also established a collaborative partnership between **CLUSTER's** Mediation Department and the Westchester Bar Association. **CLUSTER's** Mediation program has partnered with Westchester County Family Court, Westchester County's Department of Probation and New York State's Office of Children and Family Services to receive referrals for youth and families who can benefit from Conflict Coaching, Mediation and Restorative Justice.



- **40** trained volunteer mediators provided services last year for **65** community mediation cases, 200 family mediation cases, 10 divorce mediation case, 4 special education cases with **70%** overall reaching agreement.
- We provided Lemon Law arbitration for 18 consumers vs. manufacturer cases.
- Over **1,000** students in the Yonkers Public Schools and the Peekskill School District were served through our school based program, receiving conflict coaching, mediation and restorative circles (pro-social skills development)

## MENTAL HEALTH RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

For most of our clients managing their mental health issues is a full-time job, physical health issues are ignored or not dealt with until the condition becomes critical. Because of **CLUSTER**:

- **142** people found a safe and secure home through **CLUSTER's** residential services program.
- **100%** of the people in the program created their own recovery plan and gained the skills necessary to manage their physical and mental health
- **80%** of the individuals in the program graduated and moved on to live in a more independent setting.
- Over **30** residents and staff participated in poetry and writing program producing an anthology "Reach Out Your Hand."



# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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I'd like to thank you all for joining us tonight. Some of you may be new to our organization while others have been long-time champions. I have always drawn strength from the support of my community, and in times like these, it is a comfort to know we can still join together for such a wonderful occasion, even if we do so from the comfort of our own homes rather than in a wonderful restaurant like X2O.

I think it's easy, in the midst of everything our country is dealing with, to feel hopeless right now. And yet I count myself lucky, for every day I am inspired by the tireless work of **CLUSTER's** staff. Through their dedicated and relentless service to our clients, I can see the light at the end of this dark tunnel, and as **CLUSTER's** Executive Director, it is my job now to share that light with others. I hope that tonight you are able to feel some of its warmth and are inspired in the same way I am. Of course, I would be most grateful as well if you would consider donating to our cause, so we can spread this light even further and continue to provide our vital services to the most vulnerable members of our community!

I am grateful, as always, to **CLUSTER's** Board of Directors, whose collaboration and dedication are critical to the success of **CLUSTER's** important work. I'd also like to give a special shout out to Greg and Kathyrn Werlinich, not only for their stellar hosting of this evening, but for their partnership over the past several months in making the Gala happen as we moved online.

And finally, a big thank you to all the **CLUSTER** community members out there for sharing this special night with us and showing your support for the difficult but necessary work our team performs every day. When others have thrown in the towel, **CLUSTER's** staff has shown up every day and done whatever was needed to provide our critically needed services. Your help tonight will ensure that those services will continue for years to come. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Kristina Yamin  
Executive Director



# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD

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Thank you for joining us tonight to support **CLUSTER** during our Annual Gala. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the resulting economic crisis, we have all faced extraordinary challenges, and **CLUSTER** has been no exception. However, through it all, I have been immensely proud to be associated with an organization that has managed to overcome these challenges in order to provide the essential services desperately needed in our community.

Every fall we gather to honor various community members that have supported **CLUSTER**. While the ability to assemble in-person has been paused, it doesn't prevent us from coming together virtually to celebrate the work of **CLUSTER**. Our annual Gala plays a crucial part in raising funds to support **CLUSTER** and the services it provides. This year may be one of the most important calls for support we have had in recent history. We really need your help so that we may continue to provide our critical programs and services amidst the pandemic.

So please, help us spread the word about **CLUSTER**, and give generously. On behalf of our Board of Directors, I want to express my deepest gratitude for your consideration and support!

Thank you to Greg and Kathyrn Werlinich for chairing and hosting our Annual Gala. I want to thank our Board Members for committing their time and experience to the Organization. Thank you to Kristina Yamin and the executive team who have managed and led **CLUSTER** through some extraordinary times. Finally, to the staff of **CLUSTER** who have worked tirelessly these past six months—your dedication to the clients and **CLUSTER** community has, and continues to be, the purest reflection of an organization's character and its commitment to service.

Sincerely,

Tony Carrizales  
Board President



## Steven Straus & Nancy Kliot



We are so proud and honored to be part of the **CLUSTER** family. We send a special thanks to **CLUSTER's** dedicated and talented staff that every day provide such vital work and support for our communities.

## Lucille Werlinich

As a lifelong resident of Westchester County, I understand the importance of supporting local social service organizations and I deeply appreciate the crucial work done by **CLUSTER** to improve the lives of so many of our neighbors in need over the past 45 years.



## The Pollack Family

The Pollack Family Foundation is honored to celebrate the contributions of **CLUSTER's** dedicated and talented staff which every day and throughout the ongoing crisis provides such vital work and support for so many deserving community members.





## Marilyn and John Dimling



In appreciation of **CLUSTER**—its staff and its Board leadership—for 45 years of caring service to the community.

# Marathon Development Group



Congratulations on 45 years  
of community services!



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**#1 VIRTUAL EVENTS**

**#1 VIRTUAL GALAS**

**#1 VIRTUAL FUNDRAISERS**

**#1 VIDEO PRODUCTION**

[www.VeeKast.com](http://www.VeeKast.com)



## Stephen & Betsy Hunter

Many thanks to the staff of **CLUSTER** for being there for their staff during these difficult times.



## Anthony DiCaprio



### **DiCAPRIO MEDIATION GROUP**

64 Purchase Street, Rye NY 10580

[adicaprio@dicapriomediategroup.com](mailto:adicaprio@dicapriomediategroup.com)

In honor of Jenny Besch, congratulations to **CLUSTER**'s entire team for 45 years of unparalleled service to this community!

## Dr. Lynne Hoffman & Jerome Silverman



We are deeply grateful for **CLUSTER's** ongoing commitment to keeping our community healthy, safe and strong.  
Thank you!





We congratulate **CLUSTER** for providing excellent, and much needed, services to communities in need and recognize the very positive impact **CLUSTER** and its outstanding staff have on lives every day. We are proud of our long and valued relationship and are happy to support **CLUSTER** in its mission.



## Beldock Levine & Hoffman LLP

We are proud to support **CLUSTER** in its vital role in the community and to recognize the critical work done by its devoted and tireless staff.



## Tom & Margaret Roth



With thanks to **CLUSTER's** staff for their exceptional effort in a most demanding year.

## John & Kyla Murphy

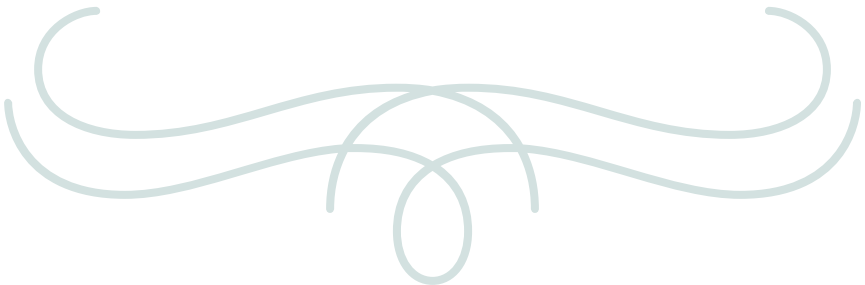


Thank you to the staff and leadership of **CLUSTER** for the work you do to empower individuals and families and for the support you provide to our community.



**From Mary & Arthur Kentros**

Thank you to Kristina and  
all of **CLUSTER's** staff.



## MESSAGE TO CLUSTER STAFF

Since COVID-19 struck in early March, there have been, and continue to be, unimaginable changes to our everyday lives.

Little did we know, six months ago, the challenges we would face. But **CLUSTER** has been able to stay on course and overcome these obstacles thanks to our phenomenal staff! Each day they have shown up, either in the office or remotely, and made a difference in the lives of those who needed us most.

Some have worn masks sewn by the wife of a Board member while delivering desperately needed food and medical supplies. Others have dropped off laptops to families that didn't have them, so their children could learn remotely. Many have been forced to rearrange their homes to find quiet spaces to work, learn new technologies and attend meetings via Zoom and Teams. Through it all, they have watched out for one another and taken care of our clients.

We are so very proud and humbled by our staff, and inspired by their resilience, tenacity and encouragement toward one another and the way they continue to help, and provide services to those in need, during this pandemic. Our clients are the reason we come to work each day but our staff is why **CLUSTER** is able to accomplish the great work we do!!!

Thank you to every **CLUSTER** staff member!

Be well, Be Safe!

Freda Macon, Deputy Executive Director  
Kristina Yamin, Executive Director





# KNOW GREATER VALUE<sup>®</sup>

Proud to Support  
**CLUSTER, INC.**



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**Steven J. Walters**, Partner  
914.341.7607  
swalters@pkfod.com

**pkfod.com**



## Dr. Andrew Levin

Congratulations to Kristina and the **CLUSTER** staff on this 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary and for their dedication during this pandemic!

— Andrew P. Levin, MD  
Adult and Forensic Psychiatry  
Hartsdale, NY



## Patricia Woods

Congratulations to Kristina, and all the dedicated staff members of **CLUSTER**, for the tireless work you do, in very difficult circumstances, to help raise up our community. I'm honored to support such a worthy organization.



# A Tribute to Craig Kennedy



Craig started with **CLUSTER** in January of 1985 as a part time Mental Health worker on the 4-12 shift. Within a year, it was clear he had bigger plans for our Mental Health Residential clients and therefore was promoted to become our Recreation Coordinator.

For the past 35 years, activities with Craig have often been the best part of our residents' week. Highlights include fishing trips, excursions to major league baseball and professional basketball games, hundreds of barbeques and, of course, the infamous Annual Holiday Party. Without question, Craig has done it all!!

Craig has been a staunch advocate for our clients and a faithful supporter of our staff. He is leaving behind huge shoes to fill and will be sorely missed by everyone here at **CLUSTER**.

Craig, as you head off into retirement, we will miss your beaming smile, your handful of crumbled receipts turned in at the end of the month, your never-ending supply of energy and enthusiasm and especially your huge heart!!

We wish you well and hope you enjoy this next phase of your journey - think of us often as we will you.

The Grateful Staff of **CLUSTER**



We applaud the great work of  
**CLUSTER Community Services**  
in improving the quality of life  
in the communities we serve.

Our thanks and gratitude go  
out to the leadership team and staff  
for their vision and hard work.



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**Tony J. Carrizales**  
*Board President*  
and  
**Michelle Carrizales**



Thank you to **CLUSTER** Community Services and to the dedicated staff for your commitment and service to the community!



  
**South  
CHURCH**  
southpres.org

## **SOUTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CELEBRATES CLUSTER!**

2021 will be the 33rd annual Martin Luther King Jr. Brunch at South to benefit CLUSTER's summer programs!



Congratulations  
to  
**CLUSTER COMMUNITY SERVICES**  
on the occasion of your  
**45th Anniversary**

*Thank you for your dedication and commitment  
to our City and its residents.*

**MIKE SPANO**  
Mayor



## Sam Buckley

Thank you, **CLUSTER**, now more than ever,  
for all of your essential services!

—Sam Buckley



## Jenny Besch

It is my honor to place this ad in  
honor of Kristina Yamin and the  
whole team at **CLUSTER**, who  
have been so deeply committed  
to the community they serve.



## Susan and Dan Thaler

Thank you, **CLUSTER**, for all you  
do to sustain our community!







## EVENT COMMITTEE

Greg Werlinich: *Chair*

Kathyrn Werlinich: *Co-Chair*

Tony Carrizales

Jonathan Pollack

Eli Glanz

Mara Gross

Audrey Silverman

Kristina Yamin

Freda Macon





## OUR MISSION

**CLUSTER** provides services and programs that assist residents in Yonkers, and throughout Westchester and Rockland Counties, to build better futures for themselves and their communities. The focus of all our programs is the empowerment of individuals, families and communities to fulfill their dreams and potential.



### **CLUSTER Community Services**

28 Wells Avenue, 4th Floor • Yonkers, NY

**914-963-6440**

**[www.clusterinc.org](http://www.clusterinc.org)**