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New Hour Support Services

- Support services for families and children of incarcerated women
- Advocacy at every stage of re-entry
- Safe spaces and events, including summer camp to support children of incarcerated parents
- Leadership training for formerly incarcerated women
- Monthly member support group and higher education support

Message from the Executive Director

Renée, a woman who was in our jail-based program, visited our office for clothing and support. Through our #ProjectDignity initiative, we donate essentials for women who return home with little support. She told me she “feels the stigma and shame of incarceration every day that she’s made to feel not good enough because of her crime.” Like Renée, our mothers, grandmothers, and children live with the deep scars of incarceration. At New Hour, we work to return dignity, hope, and self-worth to each of our members.

For those of us who have been incarcerated, it is our lived experiences that propel us to urge the criminal justice system to treat women with dignity and respect. As a former policy director focused on criminal justice reform, I know movements begin with people. Rockefeller drug law reforms were once considered impossible and over the last 12 years, we were told decriminalizing domestic violence survivor defendants would not happen.

With seed money from the Long Island Community Foundation’s LIUU Fund, we launched our newest project, EMERGE: Empowering Members for Effective Re-entry, Growth, and Engagement. New Hour engaged EMERGE members in statewide criminal justice efforts, heading to Albany to meet with lawmakers more than half a dozen times.

Among our accomplishments: we called for an end to the use of isolated confinement for prisoners with NYCAIC’s Halt Solitary campaign; we rallied with Release Aging People in Prison (RAPP) to urge Governor Cuomo to fully staff five of seven vacant parole board seats and to support parole consideration for elderly prisoners; and we supported the momentous passage of the Domestic Violence Survivors Justice Act along with the Women and Justice Project and the Coalition for Women Prisoners, which will allow judges to ensure domestic violence survivors are no longer sentenced for decades in prison for defending themselves.

We will continue to support women behind bars and families impacted by mass incarceration, but we can’t do it alone. We need your support. Please consider becoming a monthly sustainer or donor today. Thank you for continuing to help us make this work possible.

Gratefully,

Serena Liguori
Executive Director
New Hour for Women and Children – LI
New Hour Children Supported by Summer Camp Scholarships

We sent a dozen children to summer camp this year with scholarships provided by your donations and Helping Hands Fund for which we are grateful. Sheila, a grandmother raising her 11-year-old grandson whose mother has been incarcerated since he was a toddler, writes, "I wanted to say thank you so much for your time and help with getting my grandson into the Summer Camp Program in my area. He absolutely loves it! It meant a lot to me and I greatly appreciate it and so does he!"

Aunt Stacey of siblings Chris and Christina, whose mom is serving a 10-year sentence, shared: "I just wanted to thank you from the bottom of my heart. The kids are having a blast at camp."

We are also grateful to Holiday House in Huntington Bay, which sponsored summer camp sleepaway camp for some of our New Hour member’s young girls.

Albany Advocacy Days

This past legislative session, New Hour EMERGE members and their families participated in a series of Albany and in-district advocacy efforts. EMERGE graduate Anitria Blue gave powerful testimony about the need to reform the broken parole system at the Albany press conference, joining Release Aging People in Prison. In addition, we advocated for the successful passage of the Domestic Violence Survivors Justice Act, which will work to decriminalize survivors of abuse who are coerced into a crime by an abuser or who defend themselves as a result of abuse along with the Coalition for Women Prisoners, the Women & Justice Project, STEPS to End Family Violence, and the New State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, among others. We also joined New Yorkers Against Isolated Confinement to call for an end of the use of 23 hours in isolated confinement, which by United Nations standards is deemed torture beyond 15 days.

New Hour Works to “Ban the Box”

New Hour board and staff members, as well as more than 10 members, testified before Suffolk County Legislature and urged the passage of fair hiring practices for those with a conviction seeking employment in Suffolk County.
“Vessel,” a Poem by Melissa Bennett

Melissa is a New Hour EMERGE fall 2019 class member and attended our Albany Advocacy Day to support Release Aging People in Prison parole reform.

He uses me in the most unexpected ways
How a thought manifested itself here
I am as an activist sitting beside other riders to help settle justice for right causes
giving the people opportunities to be set free as they age

To have potential in a new space in the new age with grace and gratitude
To live in new eyes that raise their pride
To not be shamed for an eternity for what they've been through but who they are since they've grown internally
transforming their demons and
coming out the other side

United States of America used to stand for the land of the free in NY
alone 1,000 people 55+ older left to die in prison without parole sounds like a death sentence to me
Mass incarceration is where it all leads

God whispers I have a choice, let’s use our voice
Lord knows I'm not
not what I use to be

These laws try and define us to confine us, incriminate, incarcerate, and take away our soul’s divineness and deprive us
He speaks to me through me
His voice comes out of me
As I got out of the way

I'm liberated and
Today I'm living for a cause bigger than my old selfish taste
I'm a vessel as I prayed upon
Watching as the fruit ripens from the tree of life
that was only once a seed
You never know what your words mean
People are in need
we are their voice when they can’t speak
We are divine vessels as we come together we discover the truth that’s clear for a unified eye to see
We are divine vessels

New Leaders EMERGE,
Thanks to Capital One!

We are grateful to our first corporate sponsor, Capital One, for supporting women in re-entry who participate in our EMERGE leadership and advocacy 12-week training program. Thank you, Capital One!
Upcoming Events

LI Stakeholders Social Justice Meeting
October 16
9 a.m.-noon
New Hour will convene a meeting with statewide organizers of criminal justice and immigration reform to mobilize Long Islanders to impact statewide advocacy efforts.

EMERGE Women’s Leadership and Advocacy Fall 2019 Graduation
December 3
4 to 6 p.m.
Please join as family and friends gather to celebrate our fall 2019 graduates and to hear what they’ve learned.

For more information, contact Executive Director Serena Liguori at (631) 273-3300, (631) 672-7147, or sliguori@newhourli.org.

Thank You, TD Bank!

Thanks to TD Bank’s Affinity Giving Program, you can support us and receive a $10 bonus for telling TD Bank you support us. TD Bank will also make an annual donation to New Hour for Women & Children – LI. Stop by or call your local branch and give them our affinity code AH887 to support New Hour. You’ll also receive $25 when you open a new bank account at TD Bank and tell them that you are supporting New Hour!

New Hour Founders Host Summer Reception

New Hour founders Mr. and Mrs. George and Patty Kraus hosted a summer donor reception at their home in Southampton on August 24 where members of EMERGE our leadership program shared how New Hour has supported them in their reentry journey. At the event, Topeka K. Sam of Ladies of Hope Ministries shared in our joint effort to help New Hour fund a future home for women in re-entry.

Back to School BBQ Welcomes 80 Families!

Our 4th annual back to school BBQ and backpack giveaway was held on August 27, welcoming 80 families. More than 50 backpacks were donated to children with a justice-impacted parent. We are grateful to Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone (who joined in our children’s tug of war) and Department of Social Services Commissioner Frances Pierre for attending and supporting our mission. A special thank you to PSEG LI Women’s Network who brought over a dozen volunteers who donated backpacks and coordinated children’s activities, including face-painting and craft making.

Donate to New Hour

To send your donation today, mail check or credit card info to: New Hour for Women & Children – LI, PO Box 213, Brentwood, NY 11717; visit us online at newhourli.org/donate; or use the QR code to the left.