During the pandemic, artistic expression offered ICL clients a welcome respite from the frustration and loneliness felt by so many.

When the residents of an ICL homeless shelter created this quilt, they saw parallels with the pandemic: Making their own squares was social distancing; sewing squares into a beautiful whole was the faith that we will all come back together one day.

This observation is but one example of the amazing resilience of the people we serve and our commitment to support them every step of the way.
Coping with the unexpected is what ICL has done for more than three decades.

Every day, ICL is there for people facing extraordinary challenges—from serious mental illness to substance abuse to developmental disabilities. People get better with us because we tailor comprehensive services to meet their unique needs.

We draw inspiration from the people we serve—people who have lived through much pain and many traumatic experiences. Yet they wake up every day determined to live healthier, more independent lives.

If they can overcome tremendous obstacles, so can ICL. And we do. With commitment and determination, we tackle whatever stands in the way of offering meaningful care and support that changes lives. Whether it’s chronic government underfunding, public misperceptions about mental illness, or even a once-in-a-century pandemic—we take on whatever we have to, to keep our promise to the 10,000 people coming through our doors each year.

In the face of this raging pandemic—and the subsequent shutdown of our city—none of our services were interrupted. We kept every one of our 100 programs open from day one. We had to be there for the people who rely on us and respond to the groundswell of new needs created by the pandemic.

We will all be dealing with the social, emotional, physical, and economic impact of the pandemic for years to come. The unwavering support of our Board and the generosity of the community ensures that ICL will continue to be here for all New Yorkers in the days ahead. We will not stop offering services that have a real and lasting impact on people and the communities in which they live. That is a promise we are intent on keeping.

Mary Harrison, JD
Chair of the Board

David Woodlock
President & CEO
ICL Heroes: The Heart of Everything We Do

ICL provides support and community connection to people with mental health and substance use issues, adults with developmental disabilities, and families and children in crisis.

“We are all in this together”—the rallying cry over the long months of this pandemic—is an idea we have always embraced at ICL. Together, we have gotten through difficult days, weeks and months in order to help people continue on the path to greater health and well-being.

When we say “People Get Better with Us”—we mean it. They get better with us because—with the support of skilled and committed staff—they are able to make real and lasting changes in their lives.

In the smiling faces of clients AND staff we see hope and a belief in what is possible.
Institute for Community Living: THERE IN TIMES OF CRISIS

Every day, thousands of New Yorkers seek out the services of ICL. As the world shut down in 2020, we never stopped being there for the people who need us most.

When the pandemic hit, we were faced with an unprecedented crisis. While we all felt the impact of COVID-19, New Yorkers living with mental health challenges were especially vulnerable.

People who have had many traumatic experiences in their lives had to get through yet another distressing event. Individuals who rely so heavily on ICL’s interpersonal connections and support system were suddenly told they needed to keep physical distance from others and isolate in their homes.

More than ever, ICL had to be there to provide vital, life-saving services. And we needed to do it in a way that kept our staff, their families, and our clients and communities safe.

We are proud of what we were able to accomplish.

- Kept all of our more than 100 programs open
- Maintained select in-person services while always following protocols
- Successfully outreached for PPE and other supplies to maintain safety
- Quickly created telehealth capacity for all services
- Used home visits to bring basic necessities to clients
- Opened a hotline for New Yorkers in need of support

Talk Therapy Goes Virtual

To support our clients, we immediately expanded our telehealth and tele-therapy programs, preparing hundreds of laptops and other devices over the first weekend of the shutdown. This was particularly helpful for clients with chronic conditions that made attending in-person difficult.

A survey of clients showed very high satisfaction with our telehealth services; 80% said they wanted to continue remote appointments after the pandemic ends. By the end of 2020, ICL had made close to 18,000 telehealth contacts.
Responding to the Pandemic

**New York City required** that all shelters move to hotels to be as safe as possible during the pandemic; this meant 820 individuals living in ICL homeless shelters had to move and regroup in new surroundings.

The moves were seamless and services continued in their temporary homes. In fact, in spite of all of the obstacles in 2020, shelter staff were able to place 320 clients into permanent housing, one of the highest numbers we have ever achieved.

**Art Kept Me Going**

Residents from our Two Bridges shelter in Manhattan moved to a Chelsea-based hotel. Recreation specialist Mike Durkin made sure activities would be COVID-safe to provide much-needed stability for the artists. “There’s all this uncertainty. There’s all this in-limbo space. So the art is a way to process this,” said Mike. “We use art to help repair what’s inside—their internal housing—while preparing to move to new physical housing.”

Consistency in services is essential and creativity is so important in the recovery process.

“Art has been taking me to another level of calmness,” explained Simone, a resident and poet who pens her thoughts on the pandemic and the racial justice movement. Simone attended Black Lives Matters protests; her poetry reflects the empowerment she felt as a result.

An ICL video showed the agency’s response in the early months of the pandemic.

Local TV station, PIX11 aired a piece about shelter artists continuing to work in their temporary space.
There for All

**COMMUNITIES**

*My Hub.*

That is what people have been calling ICL’s integrated center for health and behavioral health in East New York, even before the 43,000 square foot building opened in late 2018.

Today—two years in—local residents and ICL staff are prouder than ever of this beautiful, light-filled space devoted to the well-being of the community.

Every person who walks into the ICL Hub is greeted with respect and helped to find the support they are looking for. We want people coming to the Hub to get to a place where they *feel* better, *live* better, and *do* better.

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**American Institute of Architects**

A very special moment this past year was learning that our East New York Health Hub and Dattner Architects were recognized with an American Institute of Architects New York State Excelsior Honor Award in the renovation/addition category.
In collaboration with Community Healthcare Network (CHN), our medical services partner at the Hub, ICL uses a whole health, person-centered approach to serve people with serious mental illness, substance use, chronic homelessness, and long histories of trauma. We employ this whole health perspective—and have for more than a decade—because we know that health and mental health are inextricably tied and cannot be treated separately.

ICL began collaborating with CHN long before the building opened. With a shared commitment to integrated care, they believed the Hub could turn around some of the social determinants of health of this historically underserved community. Thanks to the ongoing support of the Altman Foundation and New York Community Trust, ICL and CHN are working together in new and innovative ways to make person-centered—rather than program-focused care—possible.

Your ICL Health Hub.
Within the Hub, adults, children, and families can be helped through a range of programs, whose staff work together to provide the most integrated care possible.

Inside the Hub—Highland Park Behavioral Health Center, a Family Resource Center, Care Coordination, Pathways to Wellness & ICLConnects, PROS Treatment and Recovery Program, Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Teams and the full medical services of the Community Healthcare Network (CHN).

ICL, Major Hospital and Health Care Company Partner to Improve Health Outcomes

One of only two behavioral health agencies to be chosen for a New York State Value-Based Payment pilot, ICL partnered with Mount Sinai Health Systems and HealthFirst to prove what a whole health approach could bring to the highest need populations. The goal was lofty—to bring care to people with significant and longstanding health, mental health, and substance abuse challenges, people long considered by funders and health care providers as “impossible” to serve. This pilot proved them wrong. In January, 2020, the partners in the pilot announced that their approach to the highest-need New Yorkers you CAN improve health outcomes while reducing costly hospitalizations and ER use, thereby expanding capacity to serve more people.

An astounding $1.3 million in Medicaid cost saving were realized in the course of the pilot. If more broadly implemented, this partnership could save the state tens of millions of dollars each year.
ICL was fortunate to be among the first grantees of the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation in support of organizations having a real impact in a distressed community. At the time, no one could have predicted how essential ICLConnects would become.

The program supports people eligible for but not yet connected to public assistance, a number that grew over the course of the pandemic along with unemployment. While enrolling people in programs, ICLConnects helps fill in the gaps by providing money for weekly grocery shopping, transportation to medical appointments, legal support, rent payments, and even connection to social activities. We’re pleased that as 2020 was coming to a close, the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation renewed ICL’s grant, to meet the growing needs of our East New York neighbors.

Supporting a Mother’s Health Helps Heal the Whole Family

When the pandemic hit, I wasn’t able to get in touch with my healthcare provider to renew my medications. I found my health slipping, which made it difficult to care for my children, who were all doing school from home. One day, I saw a flyer in my mailroom about ICLConnects. I called right away and they immediately swooped into action. By the next day, I had my medication and they were helping me with the challenges facing our family due to remote learning. I now feel like I can get my life back on track and support my children as they continue to deal with the ups and downs of this pandemic school year.

– Cristal

ICLConnects in the News

ICLConnects has received a lot of media attention, including an appearance by Gerardo Ramos, SVP for Integrated Care, on Univision. After the piece aired, the number of inquiries to the program more than quadrupled.
ACT Teams Embrace Primary Care
Health Improvements for the Most at Risk

On a bench in the local park. Outside the corner store. At home. By a hospital bed. For years, our Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams have been caring for people with extremely complex mental health needs, meeting them wherever they are.

Each ACT team includes a nurse, social worker, peer counselor, and psychiatrist. While they were engaging some of the most difficult to reach individuals with mental health support, an essential element was missing for longer-term, sustainable improved health: Access to primary care—a principle that drives so much of ICL’s work.

Thanks to a grant from New York Community Trust, we launched a pilot program to add a primary care nurse practitioner from CHN to ICL’s four Hub-based ACT teams. The nurse practitioner provided home visits and basic primary care, such as monitoring diabetes, cholesterol, and weight—measures that help determine risk for diseases that correlate with trauma, poverty, and mental illness.

By seeing the promise of the pilot, the Trust extended the grant for 18 months. A Mobile Medical Home will increase the number of clients receiving the screenings and preventive visits that contribute to improved health outcomes.

Longer term, goals are for participants to build a trusted relationship with a primary care provider, and for government to make integration of primary care in the ACT model standard practice, and a covered, reimbursable expense.

Missing Vital Programs and Friendships during COVID-19
ACT programs have become a lifeline for so many—particularly those living isolated and marginalized lives. Program participants look forward to weekly lunches with peers and program staff and group meetings where they feel accepted and understood. Because of the pandemic, there have been no ACT group meetings or events. Among those most looking forward to these gatherings returning is Aubrey. He misses staff and the people in the program who have become like family.

Global Media Coverage for ACT
The heroic work being done by ACT teams was covered in a major story by the Associated Press which reached more than 110 outlets around the country and the globe. See how ACT brings help to people... wherever they are.
Supportive Housing

A PLACE TO CALL HOME

A Great Past, a Promising Future: The New 50 Nevins Street

One of the largest providers of supportive housing in New York State, ICL has in recent years expanded its real estate footprint into largescale development projects offering both affordable and supportive housing for lower-income people, many who can benefit from ICL services.

Now, to address the affordable housing crisis in New York City, ICL and New York State Home and Community Renewal joined forces for the construction of a $72 million affordable and supportive housing development in Downtown Brooklyn.

The Nevins Street project will offer 129 affordable apartments, including 78 supportive homes for formerly homeless individuals, including veterans and young adults as well as others with a serious mental illness or in recovery from substance misuse. All residents will have access to ICL’s comprehensive onsite support services and linkage to other community resources.

“...The new housing being created on Nevins Street will increase access to safe, affordable homes and services for vulnerable New Yorkers while contributing to a more vibrant and healthier Downtown Brooklyn.”

– Governor Andrew Cuomo

Friends and supporters celebrate the groundbreaking for the Nevins Street project.
Emerson Reunites Families

Separating children from their parents is very, very painful for everyone involved. But there are programs designed to avert that situation. Emerson-Davis Center offers supported housing, comprehensive case management services, counseling, parent skills training, and childcare to families struggling with mental health issues and the challenges of parenting.

This is a program that works—since its founding some 20 years ago, Emerson has reunited hundreds of families. With so few services of this kind available and the growing demand ICL recently announced plans to expand the residence to create more apartments better suited to families and ample space for support services to families.

Mother and Daughter Find Safe Place to Call Home

Seventeen years ago, Renee was battling mental health issues and struggling with substance use. With a one-year-old daughter, Monique, to raise on her own, Renee knew she had to make changes in her life. “I didn’t want my daughter to become a statistic, I knew I needed help,” she explained.

Renee found Emerson-Davis Family Center, an ICL residential program designed for single parents. Over time and with continuous support, she learned more about parenting and creating a solid home for her young daughter. Renee got a job—and has been working ever since. She and Monique eventually settled into their own apartment and continue to benefit from ICL support—and advocating with state legislators to fund more programs like Emerson.

Today, Monique is a thriving young woman. Her many awards adorn the walls of their apartment. Though the pandemic temporarily derailed plans to attend college, Monique is determined to follow her dreams. And her mother has no doubt she will.
Better health, stronger futures for all New Yorkers.

Spotlight on Integrated Care
ICL’s Health Hub was the subject of a major study by Primary Care Development Corporation (PCDC) on bringing health care and behavioral health together to advance integrated care. Funded by New York State Health Fund, the report was preceded by a Primary Care Summit with David Woodlock and Robert Hayes, CHN CEO and leaders of New York State health-related agencies.

ICL Artists at Brooklyn Museum
For the 14th year, the works of ICL artists were exhibited at the world-renowned Brooklyn Museum. At the opening event, surrounded by friends and families, clients talked about how it felt to be seen as an artist rather than be defined by their disabilities.

Building Community
Our Myrtle Avenue residence provides beautiful and much-needed housing for people living with mental illness, including young adults leaving foster care. The project was recognized by the Big Apple Brownfield Award for Community Outreach.
Moments to Remember

Lifting Holiday Spirits
No matter how many experiences had to be postponed in 2020, bringing joy to children could not be one of them. Toys, games and clothing were distributed to kids throughout ICL, thanks to loyal donors like David and Kristin Woodlock—whose annual trip to a holiday extravaganza for kids had to be cancelled and Leadership High School students—who continued a great tradition of sharing gifts, this year without their wrapping party.

Commemorating History
ICL’s Black History Month was celebrated in 2020 in the historic courthouse in Brooklyn Borough Hall with opening remarks by David Woodlock and welcome by Pastor Gilford Monrose. Local events throughout the agency included a festive lunch and discussion by staff of Supportive Housing, some dressed to represent different cultures.

Supporting Local Clergy
Now in its third year, ICL’s Clergy Clinician Community Collaboration Initiative continues to be successful. This partnership between NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, faith-based leaders, and ICL, help clergy explore strategies to address mental health needs of congregants. Their “Let’s Talk About It” series moved successfully to a virtual platform. This support took on new meaning in the wake of the pandemic.

Staff Go the Extra Mile
Once again, ICL honored Employees of Excellence—this year in six small, live-streamed, “COVID-friendly” events. Though the pandemic showed the strength and commitment of all ICL staff, this group of 25 and one outstanding program, went above and beyond.

Santa visits ICL in 2019

At right, Jeanine Costley, SVP, celebrates Tracey Vann, from Borden Veterans Residence.
New York Giants —
New ICL Friends

After honoring Sean Chandler at the 2019 gala, the former safety of the New York Giants invited children and staff from ICL Family Resource Center to attend training camp. Sean talked to the children about working hard and to believe in their futures. After spending much of his youth in family shelters, thanks to his persistence and talent, Sean went on to become a champion college football player and a member of the NFL.

Breakfast of Champions Goes Virtual

Forced to cancel our 2020 gala, ICL hosted its first virtual Breakfast of Champions. Honorees were Dr. Patrice Harris, former president of the American Medical Association, and Ethan Medley, Giants director of community relations and youth football for the Giants.
Promising Outcomes
REINFORCING OUR WHOLE HEALTH MISSION

What informs everything we do at ICL is an understanding of the inextricable link between physical and mental health. We focus on the whole person and their life experiences—not symptoms or diagnoses.

In biannual Healthy Living surveys of clients we consistently see significant improvements in outcomes and outlook. Here are some of the highlights of what we learned in 2020 about the impact of our work.

- 97% of clients feel better and more in control of their lives
- 102 people with developmental disabilities have a warm and caring place to call home
- 10,000 adults & children improved their health & well-being
- 2,412 people housed in a safer and secure home
- 87% reduction in hospitalizations for mental health
- 2,400 people with mental illness found secure, safe, supportive housing
- 330 people moved from shelters to permanent housing
- 66% of clients report improved quality of life

People Get Better With Us
A Pledge to Undo Systemic Racism:
Renewing Our Commitment to Equity.

Over the past year, across the country, there has been a long overdue reckoning with the systemic racism that has plagued the United States throughout its history. Just as these injustices have led to increased incidents of police brutality and diminished employment, education, and housing opportunities, structural inequality has led to poorer health outcomes in communities of color.

Given these disparities in health care and mistreatment of so many of its people, it is not surprising that communities of color were disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. But that fact is no less disturbing and must force all of us to take meaningful action.

Over the past few months, ICL is taking more action to eradicate racism in our work, eliminate health disparities and stand up for the civil rights of the clients and communities we serve. An agency-wide Equity Committee made up of staff at all levels and from many cultures is looking at how generations of injustices and disparities manifest in the workings of ICL staff and the lives of clients.

We look forward to the work of the Committee and the actions they are recommending, some of which have begun to be instituted.
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ICL Headquarters
125 Broad Street, 3rd Floor
New York, NY 10001

Contact
(844) ICL-HOPE
info@ICLINC.org

Website
www.ICLINC.org

ICL—The Institute for Community Living—helps some 10,000 people each year through a range of supportive services in more than 100 locations across the five boroughs.

With your support, we can assure New Yorkers facing the most serious life challenges—mental illness, substance abuse, and chronic homelessness, we will help them through the years of healing and rebuilding we know lies ahead.

Work That Changes Lives
Wherever you work at ICL—you will have a real and lasting impact on the lives of the people we serve. To learn about how ICL is building a healthier New York for all, go to www.iclinc.org/careers