



# NEW YORK RESTORATION PROJECT

Annual Report  
**2019**



# NYRP GARDENS AND PARKS

## BRONX

1. **211th Street Block Association Community Garden**  
735 E. 211th Street
2. **Bathgate Community Garden**  
1818 Bathgate Avenue
3. **Bette's Rose Garden**  
1017 Teller Avenue
4. **Clay Avenue Community Garden**  
1328 Clay Avenue
5. **Clinton Avenue Block Association**  
2044 Prospect Avenue
6. **Creston Avenue Community Garden and Playground**  
2242 Creston Avenue
7. **Eastchester Road Community Garden**  
3634 Eastchester Road
8. **Glover Street Community Garden**  
1642 Castle Hill Avenue
9. **Members Garden/Dalia Group Community Garden**  
724 Courtlandt Avenue
10. **Mildred T. Rhodebeck Garden (Garden of Eden)**  
927 Faile Street
11. **Paradise on Earth (Fannie's Garden)**  
1106 Fox Street
12. **Target Bronx Community Garden**  
1025 Anderson Avenue
13. **Willis Avenue Community Garden**  
378 Willis Avenue

## MANHATTAN

14. **103rd Street Community Garden**  
105 E. 103rd Street
15. **El Barrio Community Garden**  
415 E. 117th Street
16. **El Cataño Community Garden**  
171 E. 110th Street
17. **Family Garden - Sponsored by Tiffany and Co.**  
431 E. 114th Street
18. **Friendship Garden (Wicked)**  
499 W. 150th Street
19. **Herb Garden**  
176 E. 111th Street
20. **La Casita Community Garden**  
223 E. 119th Street
21. **Los Amigos Community Garden**  
326 Pleasant Avenue
22. **Maggie's Garden**  
564 W. 149th Street
23. **Riley-Levin Children's Garden**  
3703 10th Avenue (Sherman Creek Park)
24. **Rodale Pleasant Park Community Garden**  
437 E. 114th Street
25. **Dorothy Strelsin Memorial Community Garden**  
174 Suffolk Street
26. **The Home Depot Children's Garden**  
421 E. 117th Street

27. **Toyota East Children's Learning Garden**  
603 E. 11th Street
- H Highbridge Park**  
29 Dyckman Street
- S Sherman Creek Park**  
3703 10th Avenue

## BROOKLYN

28. **Aberdeen Street Community Garden**  
91 Aberdeen Street
29. **Bedford-Stuyvesant Community Garden**  
95 Malcom X Boulevard
30. **Bridge Plaza Community Garden**  
163 Concord Street
31. **Cooper Street Community Garden**  
34 Cooper Street
32. **Decatur Street Community Garden**  
1052 Decatur Street
33. **Essex Street Community Garden**  
3030 Fulton Street
34. **Garden of Hope**  
392 Hancock Street
35. **Gil Hodges Community Garden**  
534 Carroll Street
36. **Greene Acres Community Garden**  
322 Franklin Avenue
37. **Hendrix Street Community Garden**  
532 Hendrix Street
38. **Hull Street Community Garden**  
145 Hull Street
39. **Imani Community Garden**  
87 Schenectady Avenue
40. **Infant Jesus Garden**  
36 Aberdeen Street
41. **Jane Bailey Memorial Garden**  
327 Greene Avenue
42. **Madison Street Community Garden**  
974 Madison Street
43. **McLeod's Community Garden**  
130 Liberty Avenue
44. **Miraflores Community Garden**  
900 Broadway
45. **Scholes Street Children's Garden**  
134 Scholes Street
46. **Target Brooklyn Community Garden**  
931 Bedford Avenue
47. **Williams Avenue Community Garden**  
88 Williams Avenue

## QUEENS

48. **Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson Community Garden**  
117-15 165th Street
49. **Linden Boulevard Community Garden**  
178-22 Linden Boulevard
50. **Pembroke Avenue Community Garden**  
253-13 Pembroke Avenue
51. **Seagirt Boulevard Community Garden**  
30-03 Seagirt Boulevard

## STATEN ISLAND

52. **Westervelt Family and Community Garden**  
143 Westervelt Avenue

52





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 2** Letter from the Co-Chairs
- 3** Mission
- 4** Revitalizing Open Space
- 6** Cultivating Environmental Leaders
- 8** Building Urban Resilience
- 10** Financials
- 12** Supporters
- 15** Leadership

**A NOTE ABOUT THE COVER:** *After reading our annual report, we hope you'll remove the cover and keep the map of our gardens and parks that's printed across the inside spread.*

# LETTER FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

Dear Friends,

Over the last quarter century, New York Restoration Project (NYRP) has transformed New York City's landscape.

Bette Midler founded NYRP in 1995 to clean up the city's open spaces and give public land back to New Yorkers—work we continue wholeheartedly in our 52 community gardens and beyond. In the past year alone, we:

- Renovated 10 community gardens;
- Repaired or replaced 100 garden beds; and
- Worked with neighbors to green 34 school yards, housing campuses, senior citizen centers, local gardens, and other public spaces.

Our Engagement and Programming team:

- Led workshops with over 1,000 gardeners and community members;
- Taught more than 7,500 K-8th grade students;
- Produced 65 free cultural events; and
- Hosted 22 free tree giveaway events, supplying over 3,000 trees throughout all five boroughs.



NYRP also welcomed new leadership with our election as Co-Chairs of the Board and the announcement of our new Executive Director, Lynn Kelly. Lynn is an experienced and recognized voice in the New York City open space movement. We are delighted that she will be bringing her deep knowledge, commitment to partnerships, and strategic mindset to NYRP starting in February 2020.

Achieving environmental and social justice in our city is more critical today than ever before. We are a strong example to the entire United States of how to invest in, value, and activate our green spaces. Thank you for sharing our belief that nature is a fundamental right of every New Yorker. With your support as NYRP enters its 25th year, we are equipped to collaborate with communities across the city to green more spaces, cultivate more environmental leaders, and build more resilient urban ecosystems.

We look forward to working with Lynn, and with you, to ensure that all New Yorkers enjoy the benefits of clean, green open space for years to come. On behalf of our Trustees and staff, thank you for being part of the NYRP community—you make our work possible.

With gratitude,  
Helena Durst and Darcy A. Stacom  
Co-Chairs, Board of Trustees



*Ben with honoree Amy Goldman Fowler at Spring Picnic 2019 at the New York Botanical Garden.*

## THANK YOU: Benjamin F. Needell

Ben Needell has supported NYRP since 1997 and served as Chair of the Board of Trustees from 2002 to 2019. We made great strides throughout Ben's 18-year Board Chair tenure thanks to his expert knowledge of the local real estate landscape, legal acumen, and passion for our cause. He has been a true partner and we are delighted that he will continue to serve as a member of NYRP's Board of Trustees. Thank you, Ben—we are forever grateful!



# MISSION

New York Restoration Project (NYRP) revitalizes green space in under-resourced communities. We partner with neighborhood residents, public agencies, and the private sector to create, maintain, and program shared open areas, making nature accessible to all New Yorkers.

Since our founding in 1995 by Bette Midler, NYRP has renovated gardens, restored parks, planted trees, educated students, and forged partnerships to transform the City's landscape. As New York's only citywide nature conservancy, we bring resources to public open spaces that need support in order to create a greener, more resilient City.





# REVITALIZING OPEN SPACE

**THE FIRST STEP** in revitalizing an open space can be as basic as providing a water line. “Irrigation is a lot of work for gardeners otherwise,” says Jason Sheets, NYRP’s Director of Garden Horticulture. “Carrying water by hand, connecting to a hydrant across busy two-way streets, having hoses bust—just being able to have water on site improves so much for our gardeners.”

It’s easy to understand then why securing water lines for 14 of NYRP’s Brooklyn gardens in 2019 was one of several capital improvement priorities under New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo’s Vital Brooklyn Initiative.

The State selected NYRP as a Vital Brooklyn open space grant recipient in 2017, aligning with us to help realize \$3.1 million in capital funding improvements for 22 Kings County community gardens (NYRP also completed work at 8 Brooklyn-Queens Land Trust sites).

Keeping our commitment to participatory design process, NYRP’s community engagement team began the work by reaching out to garden members and operations staff, requesting their input on upgrade priorities. Water access topped the list.

These lines were just the beginning in some gardens, though. In 2019, NYRP also completed infrastructure upgrades at Decatur, Bedford-Stuyvesant, McLeod’s, Target Brooklyn, and Green Acres Community Gardens that included replacing composting bins and rebuilding tool storage sheds.

Additionally, two gardens—Williams Street and Hull Street—underwent full redesign and reconstruction. Williams in particular became more of a gardening and gathering space than it had been previously, adding a raised stage, shade structure, garden beds, and other communal amenities.

“With the assistance of Vital Brooklyn funds, NYRP transformed a blighted site into a field of dreams in an at-risk underserved community,” says Williams Street Garden member Bill Wilkins. “It’s an urban oasis that’s tastefully designed with top shelf plants and infrastructure, and that level of care isn’t usually expressed in this community,” he continues. “Normally our residents would have to go to the



Botanic Garden for this quality of green space but now it’s in our neighborhood.”

Post-construction, NYRP has helped garden groups fully utilize their new space. Beyond an opening party, this has included movie nights, fitness classes, live performances, and craft workshops among other activities. “These gardens are safe open spaces that are accessible to all,” says Public Events Manager Matthew Dain. “Members can host programs with or without NYRP,” he assures. “At the end of the day, it’s about what the community wants.”





CLOCKWISE FROM BELOW: Willis Avenue Community Garden members in the Bronx's Mott Haven neighborhood close out the summer season. • Rendering of Hull Street Community Garden in Ocean Hill, Brooklyn. • Rendering of Williams Avenue Community Garden in East New York, Brooklyn. • Target Brooklyn member Judy Jones at our 2019 Gardener's Gathering in October: "When people come through the gates they shed their New York persona and become relaxed." / Photo credit: Ben Hider • A Madison Street Community Garden member (right) and home health care worker attend the garden's reopening celebration in July.





# CULTIVATING ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERS



**ONE OF NYRP'S CLASSROOMS** is in Manhattan's last remaining salt marsh. At high tide, our team of four environmental educators suits up local 3rd-8th graders at Inwood's Swindler Cove. Flanked by staff, two students at a time wade into the Harlem River with a seine net, hoping to snag some sign of life.

It's not surprising that most of these city kids have never been face-to-face with a live fish, let alone while standing in the New York Harbor. Understandably, trekking into the silty shoreline for the first time can be intimidating. "We sing, we chant, we joke... we make it silly, fun, and physical because sometimes [seining] can be a scary thing for students," says environmental educator Tess Wenstrup.

It turns out, though, that actually catching a jellyfish, crab, eel, or whatever turns up in the net ignites students' best instincts.

"First they're surprised to see a huge fish flopping around and spraying water all over," says Tess. "But then the students get this determined look when they pick up their fish. They seem to take ownership and are just really proud."



It's transformative moments like these that motivate our next generation of environmental leaders. "[Our students] were buzzing about it long after we left and I know it made a huge impression on all of them," says Rosemary Puckett of BioBus, one of our local nonprofit partners that helps minority, female, and low-income K-12 and college students discover, explore, and pursue science. "Perhaps [we even have] some future ecologists and just humans who feel responsible for observing and caring for their ecosystem."

These kinds of immersive lessons can also be critical since many participating schools don't have any science teachers and look to organizations like NYRP to fill in the knowledge gap on everything from photosynthesis to climate change.

"This work speaks to anyone," says Director of Educational Programs Nina Salzman. "Seining in particular reveals that there's life in the river that they can see and touch," she adds. "The experience can spark desire to care for the river because it's not a lost cause—there's still life there worth fighting for."





*CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT: A second grade student from P.S. 115 transplants tomatoes at Riley-Levin Children's Garden. • Students and NYRP environmental educators retrieve catch from a seining net. • Students participate in an Our River the Giver class at Sherman Creek Park. • P.S. 85 second grade students harvest produce from Bathgate Community Garden in the Bronx. • P.S. 115 students transplant tomatoes at Riley-Levin Children's Garden. • Kindergarteners from P.S. 5 search for birds in northern Manhattan.*



## OUR PROGRAMS

### GARDEN GROWERS

*Planting, Maintenance, Harvesting*

### NATURE IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD

*Swindler Cove Habitat Rove, Dig It, Talking Trees, Our River the Giver, Highbridge Hike*

### NATURE IN MY CLASSROOM

*Botany*

*Life Through the Seasons, Eat Your Leaves!, Seed to Plate, Compost: Nature's Recycler*

*Ecosystems*

*Interdependence, Habitats for All, Animal Adapt-Ability, Look Up!*

*Earth Science*

*What on Earth Is Soil?, Wonderful World of Water, Run Water Run, Our Estuary Explained*



# BUILDING URBAN RESILIENCE



**WE OFTEN HEAR ABOUT** New York’s vulnerability as climate change churns: sea levels rise, the heat island effect intensifies, Hurricane Sandy was just a warm up. But is it possible to imagine an environmentally resilient city that lessens climate change’s consequences instead of contributing to or being subject to them?

This is one of the questions we’re investigating with our living shoreline work at Inwood’s Swindler Cove. “This site is actively mitigating climate change,” says Director of Northern Manhattan Parks Jason Smith. “We expect it to substantially improve the carbon storage at this location, as well as the water quality.”

Our living shoreline work began in 2017 as part of an effort to protect and expand a small patch of salt marsh—the last remaining ecosystem of its kind in Manhattan. In 2020, Swindler Cove will become a multifaceted example of what an environmentally resilient New York waterfront could look like, including installing an oyster reef, adding more wetland plantings, and making structural improvements. We will also begin plans for incorporating this work into our education programs at the site.

Additionally, we have partnered with Baruch College professor Chester Zarnoch and his students to measure the environmental impact of what has





*CLOCKWISE FROM BELOW: NYRP Assistant Gardener Oliver Martinez (left) works with a volunteer to remove invasive species as part of our forest restoration work. • Community based organizations gather at Inwood's Sherman Creek pop-up park for the season's opening day. • Baruch College professor Chester Zarnoch's students sample invertebrates prior to our living shoreline installation.*



become NYRP's largest scientific research project to date. Chester and his classes gather physical, chemical, and biological data at Swindler Cove, bringing in additional funding and technical expertise to support our work.

"Empirical research on the ecosystem functioning of these projects lags far behind investment in their construction," says Chester. "It's my belief that research projects should be integrated in these large-scale restoration projects to learn how to make them more successful while also achieving greater ecological and social impacts," he continues. "Our collaboration with NYRP provides a unique

In our nearly 25 years of work, NYRP has helped plant hundreds of thousands of trees throughout New York City in partnership with NYC Parks and dozens of community based organizations. In 2019 alone, we organized 22 free tree giveaway events throughout the five boroughs, adding more than 3,000 trees to the urban canopy.

Each tree was one of 17 native species—including pawpaw, bald cypress, witch hazel, and red bud—specifically selected for New York City's evolving natural environment. These hardy trees are known for their valuable ecosystem services including carbon sequestration, air pollutant removal, and storm water interception.



Looking ahead to 2020 and beyond, trees remain vital to NYRP's mission of bolstering New York City's resilience. From reforestation of Inwood's Highbridge Park to neighborhood tree distributions on Staten Island's North Shore, NYRP is committed to working with partners city-wide to combat the climate crisis.

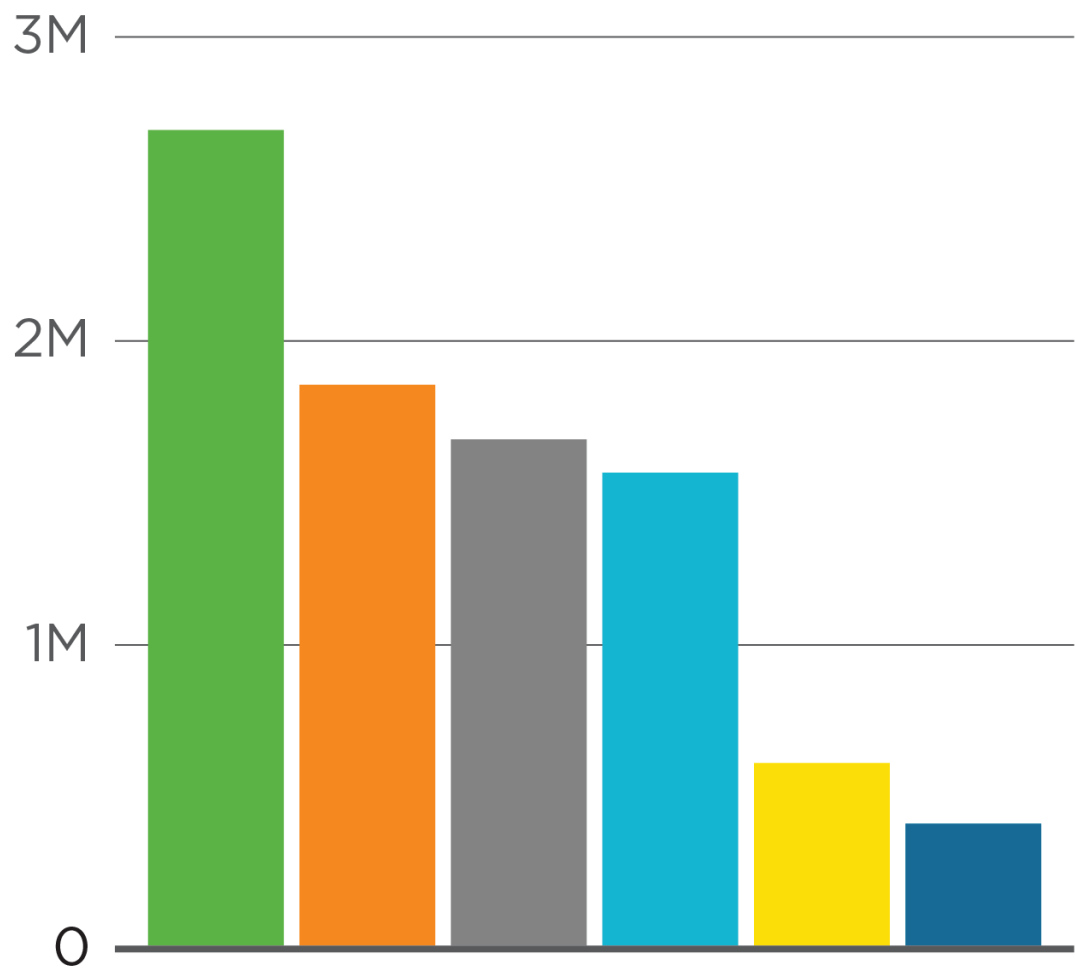
opportunity to integrate research into an existing project. What we learn at Sherman Creek will be helpful to future living shoreline projects in New York City and beyond."

A city shoreline isn't really living, though, unless people are present, too. "Our pop-up park and fall festival at the site, for example, illustrate how this kind of soft, accessible environment is also part of a strong community," Jason says. "We want to have people at Swindler Cove and Sherman Creek Park. Even if we're not talking about wetlands, the site is doing its job in terms of building a resilient neighborhood."



# FINANCIALS

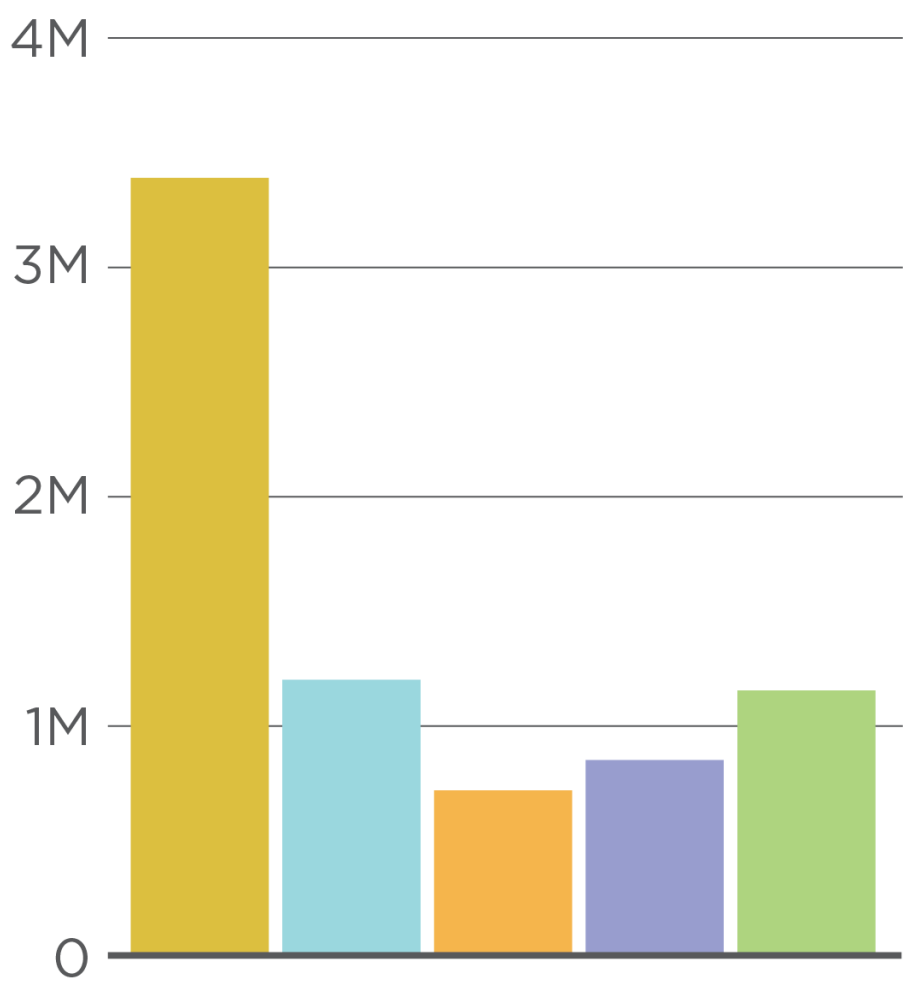
2019 Revenue \$8,936,457



<div></div> <div>Government</div> <div>\$2,723,769</div>	<div></div> <div>Individual Donations</div> <div>\$1,591,236</div>
<div></div> <div>Special Events (net of expenses)</div> <div>\$1,871,873</div>	<div></div> <div>Corporations</div> <div>\$631,346</div>
<div></div> <div>Foundations</div> <div>\$1,685,892</div>	<div></div> <div>Other (Earned &amp; Investment Income)</div> <div>\$432,341</div>



# 2019 Expenses \$6,996,718



- Garden & Park Operations and Maintenance** \$3,314,542
- Community Engagement & Programming** \$1,167,230
- Capital Construction** \$559,392
- Management & Administration** \$826,925
- Fundraising** \$1,128,629

All figures based on audited financials.



# SUPPORTERS



*Our Founder Bette Midler with her namesake rose the “Divine Miss M” at NYRP’s Spring Picnic at the New York Botanical Garden.*



*Home Depot replaces garden beds at the Curtis “50 Cent” Jackson Community Garden.*



*Bloomberg Philanthropies helps remove invasive species from Highbridge Park.*

## FISCAL YEAR 2019

*October 1, 2018–September 30, 2019*

### Foundations

Louis and Anne Abrons Foundation  
Bloomberg Philanthropies  
Blooming Prairie Foundation  
The Diller-von Furstenberg Family Foundation  
The Ferriday Fund  
John and Marcia Goldman Philanthropic Fund  
The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation  
The J.M. Kaplan Fund  
The Liebowitz and Greenway Charitable Family Foundation  
The Longhill Charitable Foundation  
New York State Health Foundation  
Newman’s Own Foundation  
The Rudin Foundation  
The Shubert Organization  
The Dorothy Strelsin Foundation  
Tiger Baron Foundation

### Corporations

American Express  
Antares Capital, L.P.  
Atlas Capital Group  
Bank of New York Mellon  
Bon Jovi Productions, Inc.  
Bronx-Lebanon Hospital Center  
Brookfield Properties  
Capalino+Company  
CB Richard Ellis  
CBRE Foundation, Inc.  
Chubb  
Columbia Sportswear  
Cravath, Swaine, & Moore  
Creative Artists Agency  
Discovery Inc.  
The Durst Organization  
EarthShare New York  
Ernst & Young LLP  
EvensonBest LLC  
Global Holdings Management Group  
Goldman, Sachs & Co.  
GreenOak Real Estate Advisors LP  
Hines Interests LP



HOLLANDER design | Landscape Architects  
 Home Box Office  
 The Home Depot  
 HPS Partners  
 IAC  
 Jamestown LP  
 L&L MAG  
 Lee & Associates  
 Michael Levitt Productions Inc.  
 NARS Cosmetics  
 Nederlander of New York, Inc.  
 Oxford Properties  
 Paradigm Talent Agency  
 Penske Business MediQ LLC  
 Rockwell Group  
 RXR Realty  
 S&P Global  
 Sage Realty Corp.  
 The Sapir Organization, LLC  
 Shiseido Americas Corporation  
 Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP  
 SL Green Management LLC  
 Taconic Investment Partners  
 TIAA  
 Tishman Speyer Properties, L.P.  
 The Travelers Companies, Inc.  
 United Airlines  
 The Walt Disney Company, Inc.  
 WarnerMedia  
 WebMD Health Corp.

## Government

Dormitory Authority of the State of New York  
 New York City Department of Design and Construction  
 New York City Department of Parks and Recreation  
 New York City Department of Youth and Community Development  
 New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
 New York State Environmental Protection Fund



*From left to right: Lance Le Pere, Founder Bette Midler, Trustee Michael Kors, and Jane Krakowski on the red carpet at Hulaween 2019.*



*From left to right: Carole Bayer Sager, Bob Daly, and Candice Bergen at Spring Picnic at the New York Botanical Garden.*



*Trustee Shelly Malkin and her husband Tony Malkin with friends at Hulaween 2019.*



# SUPPORTERS

## INDIVIDUALS

### \$150,000 AND ABOVE

Mica Ertegun  
Michael Kors and Lance Le Pere  
Shelly and Tony Malkin  
Bette Midler and Martin von Haselberg  
Benjamin F. and Kathleen C. Needell  
Estate of Nancy Rosenthal  
Darcy A. Stacom, CBRE  
Ann Ziff

### \$100,000 - \$149,999

Anonymous  
Linda Allard  
Diane and Clyde Brownstone  
Todd DeGarmo - STUDIOS Architecture  
Amy Goldman Fowler and Cary Fowler  
Fred and Nancy Poses

### \$50,000 - \$99,999

Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation  
Barry C. Diller  
Michael Douglas and Catherine Zeta-Jones  
Susanne and Douglas Durst  
Jane H. Goldman  
Sol Goldman Charitable Trust  
Kitty Hawks and Lawrence Lederman  
Edmund D. Hollander, FASLA  
Margo M. and James L. Nederlander  
Elaine P. Wynn & Family Foundation

### \$25,000 - \$49,999

Samuel Ashner  
Carole Bayer Sager and Bob Daly  
Elliot Friman  
Scott and Laura Malkin  
Ryan Murphy  
Darryl Pardi  
Janice Parker, ASLA  
Margie Perenchio  
Andrew & Ann Tisch Foundation, Inc.  
Dan and Sheryl Tishman  
Linda J. Wachner

### \$10,000 - \$24,999

Anonymous (2)  
Lovee and Bob Arum  
Kim and Pamela Baptiste  
Laurence and Carolyn Belfer Family Foundation

Charles Bendit  
Betty Y. Chen and Peter Coombe  
Anke Dening-Volcker  
David Geffen  
Robert Goldberg  
Joyce & Irving Goldman Family Foundation  
Tim Gunn  
The Joseph Handleman "I Believe in You"  
Trust Foundation  
Elton John Charitable Fund  
Sophie Coquillette Koven  
Estate of Liam Lacey  
The Ralph & Ricky Lauren Family Foundation, Inc.  
Edith W. MacGuire  
The Malkin Fund, Inc.  
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Elizabeth Peabody  
David Hyde Pierce  
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Rockwell Group  
Lily J. Safra  
Paul D. Selver  
Bill Shanahan  
Joshua Sirefman  
The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust  
Jon Recor and Daniel Stewart  
Linda and Brian Tauscher  
Barbara E. Wilks  
Andrea Woodner  
Bruce Yablon

### \$5,000 - \$9,999

Candice Bergen and Marshall Rose  
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Peter L. Christensen  
Laurie David  
Peggy & Millard Drexler Foundation  
Thomas and Mindy Fortin  
The Gluck Family Foundation  
Joshua Goldfarb  
Marc Jacobs  
Frank Pellegrino  
Scott Rudin  
Larry A. Silverstein  
Robert A.M. Stern  
The Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation  
Margaret and Michael Valentine  
Harry T. Wilks Family Foundation  
Bunny Williams



# LEADERSHIP

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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*FOUNDER*

**Helena Durst**  
*CO-CHAIR*

**Darcy A. Stacom**  
*CO-CHAIR*

**Vered Rabia**  
*PRESIDENT*

**Darryl Pardi**  
*TREASURER*

**Adrian Benepe**

**Betty Y. Chen**

**Todd DeGarmo**

**Edmund D. Hollander**

**Michael Kors**

**Shelly Malkin**

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**David Rockwell**

**Mitchell J. Silver, *Ex Officio***

**Joshua Sirefman**

**Sophie von Haselberg**

**Ann Ziff**

**Jann S. Wenner, *Emeritus***

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*CHAIR*

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**Alexandra Cohen**

**Sophie Coquillette Koven**

**Douglas Durst**

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**Yoko Ono Lennon**

**Frank Raffaele**

**Paul D. Selver**

**Barbara E. Wilks**

**Andrea Woodner**

## INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

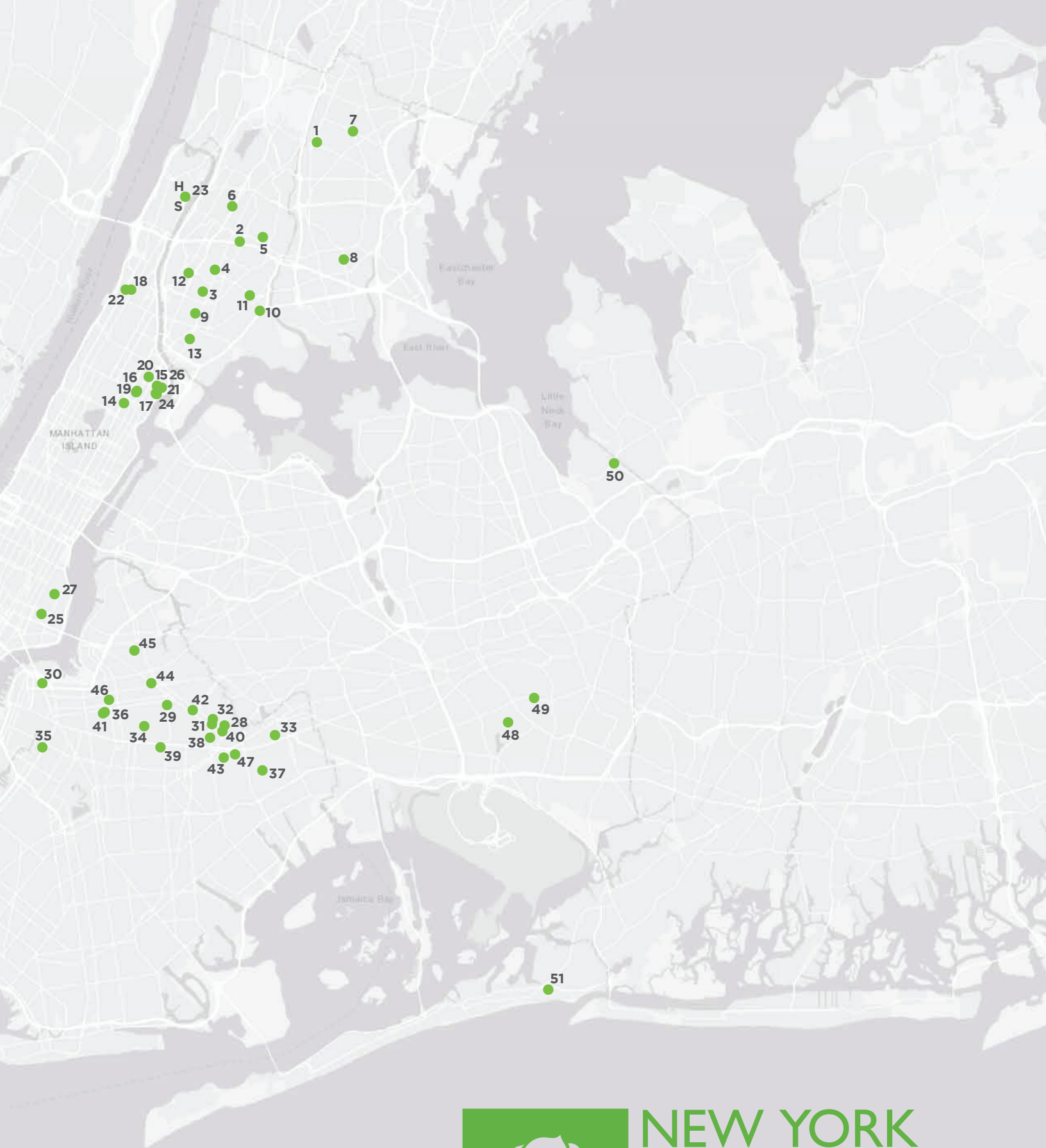
**Catherine Hall**



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NEW YORK  
RESTORATION  
PROJECT





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*Report design by Samarra Khaja*