

## New HIV Research Training Grant in Ukraine



The STAR Program's New York State International Training and Research Program (NYS-ITRP) received funding in March 2023 to implement a new HIV research training program in Ukraine. This 5-year, \$1.4 million dollar award, funded by the National Institutes of Health's Fogarty International Center, will address gaps in the HIV cascade and substance use treatment in Ukraine through training a new generation of researchers. The program will also work to enhance the in-country research training capacity through its collaborations with the School of Public Health at the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, the Ukrainian Ministry of Health and an HIV-focused research non-governmental organization (NGO), the Ukrainian Institute for Public Health Policy (UIPHP). The program builds on our previous HIV research training in Ukraine, and bolsters NYS-ITRP's presence in the Eastern European/Central Asian region, with our associated programs in Georgia and Kazakhstan.

This grant launches during a profound humanitarian crisis in Ukraine. The atrocities of the ongoing war will require a heightened public health response to the HIV epidemic, given large internal and external migration. Ukraine will also benefit from highly-trained researchers who can assess the current needs in HIV prevention and treatment and strategically implement programs to address those needs. The program provides US-based certificate and degree training for 9 individuals who will also complete an internship at the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute. In addition, US faculty will mentor these trainees in their research projects and help strengthen the curricula and training at the local School of Public Health. Jack DeHovitz, MD, MPH, MHCDS, Distinguished Service Professor, Department of Medicine, and Director of the STAR Program, serves as Principal Investigator along with Kostyantyn Dumchev, MD, MPH, Scientific Director of UIPHP. Last year, Dr. Dumchev gave an inspiring talk at the first [SUNY Global Research Symposium](#). Dr. Dumchev noted that even in the face of the Russian invasion, the critical activities of HIV and substance use treatment delivery and related research continue to reach marginalized populations who have become even more vulnerable. Some of our alumni and collaborators have published studies that have described the impact of these geopolitical conflicts on HIV transmission and access to care. For example, Dr. Dumchev with other alumni (Tetyana Vasylyeva, Alyona Mazhnaya, Sergii Antoniuk) co-authored an important review outlining the European response to displaced Ukrainians with HIV.

Last fall, the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy School of Public Health was able to launch a new Master of Public Health degree as a virtual offering, with several of our alumni as instructors in epidemiology, research methods, biostatistics, and health promotion. In addition, our alumni play a vital role of continuing HIV treatment services in their positions at the Ukrainian Ministry of Health, US CDC and PEPFAR, and other NGOs either in Ukraine or the broader region.

We are incredibly proud of our alumni trainees, partners and colleagues in Ukraine and look forward to continuing our collaborations for the benefit of people living with HIV.

[1]Vasylyev M, Skrzat-Klapaczynska A, Bernardino JI, Săndulescu O, Gilles C, Libois A, Curran A, Spinner CD, Rowley D, Bickel M, Aichelburg MC, Nozza S, Wensing A, Barber TJ, Waters L, Jordans C, Bramer W, Lakatos B, Tovba L, Koval T, Kyrychenko T, Dumchev K, Buihichyk V, Smyrnov P, Antonyak S, Antoniuk S, Vasylyeva TI, Mazhnaya A, Kowalska J, Bhagani S, Rokx C; European AIDS Clinical Society (EACS)Young Investigators (YING). Unified European support framework to sustain the HIV cascade of care for people living with HIV including indisplaced populations of war-struck Ukraine. *Lancet HIV*. 2022 Jun;9(6):e438 e448. doi: 10.1016/S2352-3018(22)00125-4. Epub 2022 May 13.



# PROGRAM UPDATES



The STAR Program's Stigma Reduction Project is a NYS Office of Mental Health (OMH) funded program to address and reduce the stigma often associated with mental illness. Under the direction of Michelle Melendez, MS, LCSW, CHC, the STAR Program's Behavioral Health Director, the Stigma Reduction Project is conducting activities that provide innovative, culturally relevant approaches to reducing stigma in underserved populations throughout NYC. Target populations include Black and Latinx adults with and at risk for mental health issues as well as the general public. A project website ([www.stopmentalhealthstigmaNY.com](http://www.stopmentalhealthstigmaNY.com)) developed by Jose Iorio, the STAR Program's Social Media and Marketing consultant, features interviews with people with lived experience and mental health service providers, and links to a wide array of resources.



The Adolescent Education Program/Teens Helping Each Other (THEO), directed by Christine Rucker, MA, had an excellent round table discussion addressing Mental Health Stigma, moderated by our Behavioral Health Director, Michelle Melendez, MS, LCSW, CHC. Stay tuned for the release coming soon on our website.

**PLEDGE TO END STIGMA**

# FACULTY AND STAFF UPDATES

**Mariam Azam, MD, MPH**, joined the STAR Health Center as a resident in May 2023. Prior to attending medical school, Dr. Azam worked in public health including projects focused on HIV/AIDS. Specifically, she worked on an HIV vaccine trial in South Africa. She also worked in Malawi, a country with a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS (~13%), and on a USAID-funded project that involved maternal and child health. Dr. Azam is passionate about improving healthcare access for underserved communities and quality improvement. She received her MD, *cum laude*, from St. George's University and an MPH (with a focus in epidemiology) from Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health.

**Antoinette Barkley, BSc**, joined the STAR Program in March 2023 as the Patient Navigator for the Building Equity: Intervening Together for Health (BE InTo Health or BN2H) Program. Prior to joining STAR, Ms. Barkley worked as a healthy aging specialist working with older adults at GMHC (formerly known as Gay Men's Health Crisis), a not-for-profit organization dedicated to fighting HIV/AIDS. She earned a Bachelor of Applied Science in Community Studies at SUNY Empire State College.

**Alaina Chisholm, BS**, joined the STAR Program in February 2023 as the Case Management Supervisor for the STAR case management team. Ms. Chisholm has over five years of nonprofit professional experience working in the social services sector serving families, domestic violence survivors, the elderly, veterans, reentrants, and those living with HIV, mental health, and substance use disorders. She started her professional career as a community developer, a case manager, an operations coordinator and a case manager supervisor. She has connected clients to vital services such as permanency planning and aftercare so that clients can remain self-sufficient after placing several of her clients into safe, suitable and permanent housing. Ms. Chisholm holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Human Services and Policy Studies from John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

**Diana Diaz, BA**, joined the STAR Program in March 2023 as a Patient Navigator for the Care Coordination program. Before joining STAR, she worked at the New York Foundation for Senior Citizens Community Guardian Services as a case manager for individuals deemed incapacitated due to mental or physical health concerns. Ms. Diaz has additional experience working with families for the Department of Homeless Services shelter system. She earned a Bachelor's degree in Psychology at CUNY/Hunter College.

**Lori Hurley, PhD, MPH, MSW**, STAR's Director of Quality and Community Outreach, attended the national Training-of-Trainers (TOT) Program on March 22-24, 2023, in Dallas, TX. The three-day, in-person training was presented by the HRSA Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Center for Quality Improvement & Innovation (CQII). The TOT is an advanced capacity-building training program for individuals with experience in clinical quality management who wish to refine their skills in training others on quality improvement principles and practice. This year's TOT began in February 2023 with several Zoom meetings as well as preparatory self-paced studies in quality management and adult learning principles. While in Dallas, the cohort of approximately 50 leaders across the US in HIV care and quality management met in person for an intensive session comprised of didactic as well as hands-on, experience-oriented learning activities. The program culminated with a capstone project where participants had the opportunity to train each other regarding components of clinical quality management. In the next 4 months, participants will complete the program requirements by utilizing their training skills and resources to lead three clinical quality management trainings for other Ryan White program stakeholders. To learn more about CQII and specific training programs and resources, visit: <https://targethiv.org/cqii>

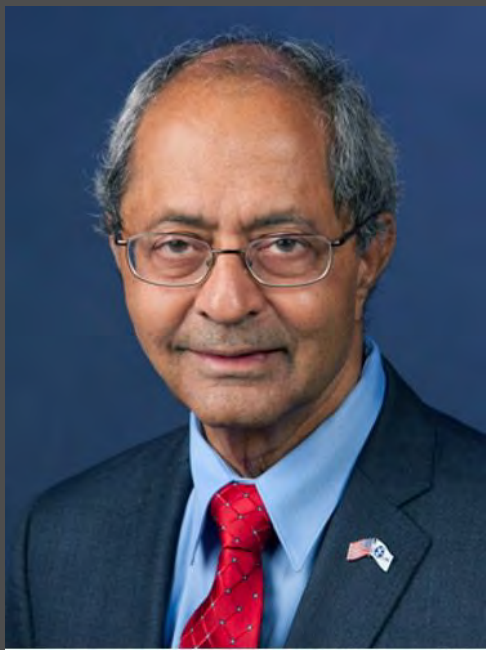
**Malika Mitchell, LMSW**, joined the STAR Program in February 2023 as the SAMHSA Counselor for the Harm Reduction Program. Prior to joining STAR, Ms. Mitchell worked as a



healthcare social services director. She is a licensed social worker with over 15 years’ experience working in a variety of settings and with diverse client populations. She has several years of clinical practice experience and is excited to bring her passion for supporting individuals to achieve their full potential and become healthier mentally and emotionally. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from CUNY Hunter College and earned her Master of Social Work degree from Touro College School of Social Work.

**Martha Mosco, MSN, PMHNP, ACRN**, joined the STAR Program in February 2023 as the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP). Prior to joining STAR, Ms. Mosco worked as the charge nurse (RN) at the multidisciplinary HIV clinic at New York Presbyterian Hospital Weill/Cornell and in inpatient psychiatry at NYU Langone Hospital. She is a licensed PMHNP and holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Simmons College and a Master of Science in Psychiatric Nursing from the Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing at Hunter College of CUNY.

**Lawrence Nicolas, BS**, joined the STAR Program’s Care Coordination team as a Patient Navigator in May 2023. Prior to joining STAR, Mr. Nicolas provided ADAP and medical insurance benefits support during the STAR Health Center’s Tuesday clinic sessions on behalf of Diaspora Community Services. He is a NYS Certified Application Counselor (CAC), which provides him with the ability to enroll individuals into Medicaid. He has a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Adelphi University in Garden City, NY.



Congratulations to **Ramaswamy Viswanathan, MD, DrMedSc**, professor and interim chair, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, on his recent election as President-Elect of the American Psychiatric Association (APA). Dr. Viswanathan’s term as president-elect begins in May 2023; he assumes the role of APA president from May 2024 through May 2025. Dr. Viswanathan is the first person from Brooklyn in Downstate’s history to be elected to this position; he is also the third person of color to be elected president since the organization’s inception in 1844—178 years ago! APA is the world’s largest psychiatric association and has more than 37,000 members, and is the main body of psychiatry in the United States.

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

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# EMPLOYMENT OPENINGS

## Attending Physician

The Special Treatment and Research (STAR) Program at SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University in Brooklyn, NY is seeking a highly motivated board certified/board eligible infectious disease attending to join our distinguished team in providing HIV primary care and inpatient infectious diseases consults. The candidate will have opportunities to provide Hepatitis C treatment, LGBTQ+ care, buprenorphine treatment, STI care, and biomedical interventions (PrEP/PEP). A successful candidate will demonstrate leadership skills, strong clinical capability, and will be eligible for appointment at the Clinical Assistant Professor level.

### Highlights of the position include:

- Provide primary care in a highly resourced multi-disciplinary environment
- Lead and mentor medical students, residents, and infectious disease fellows
- Opportunity to engage in clinical research and quality improvement in an academic environment
- Participate in scholarly activities with faculty members, fellows, and students
- Engage in inpatient consultations, leading a team of fellows, residents, and students
- Opportunity to work and live in the growing, culturally rich community of Brooklyn, NY

**Requirements:** M.D. with board certification or board eligibility in infectious diseases. A minimum of three years of experience providing care to HIV-infected patients. Effective written, verbal, and interpersonal skills. Training in infectious disease, plus two years of experience in the supervision of clinical staff preferred. Experience in treating Hepatitis C preferred. **Employer:** New York State. To apply, send CV and cover letter with salary requirements to: Jessica Yager, MD, MPH, Medical Director, STAR Program, jessica.yager@downstate.edu

## Behavioral Health Counselor (LMSW/LCSW/LMHC) – Integrated Care Project

**Minimum Qualifications:** New York State licensed social worker (LMSW/LCSW) or mental health counselor (LMHC); Must be able to work flexible schedule, including some evenings.

**Additional Preferred Qualifications:** 2 years’ experience with substance abuse counseling, harm reduction and relapse prevention counseling and time effective, solution-focused and cognitive behavioral treatment models; experience in the treatment of trauma; CASAC or CASAC-T; experience working in multidisciplinary and multicultural, team-oriented setting. Bilingual in English/Spanish or English/Haitian Creole an asset; experience using electronic health record; experience working with LGBTQIA+ populations. **Responsibilities:** The STAR Program provides integrated medical and behavioral health care at two locations in Central Brooklyn: University Hospital at Downstate and Brookdale Hospital Medical Center. Enroll patients into the program and conduct intakes; collect baseline data and screens to assess substance use, depression, trauma, and domestic violence; develop comprehensive service plans. Provide individual and group counseling using MI and CBT interventions for clients both in-person and via telehealth. Coordinate with case management staff and refer patients for “wrap-around”/recovery support services such as housing, childcare, vocational, educational services to improve access and retention. Utilize telehealth, texting and social media to engage and retain clients in care. Contribute to patients’ care plan development by regular attendance at case conferences. Record session notes and patient follow-up in the electronic health record. Participate in community-based outreach activities. Participate in ongoing quality improvement activities. Participate in the development of abstracts related to program outcomes and to present on these outcomes when accepted by professional conferences. Salary Range: \$70,000-\$85,000 annually for full-time; will also consider candidates seeking a part-time position.

**Employer:** The Research Foundation for SUNY. To apply, send resume and cover letter with salary requirements to: Christopher Jimenez, MA, LMHC, Assistant Director, Substance Use Treatment Services, christopher.jimenez@downstate.edu

## Behavioral Health Counselor (LMSW/LCSW/LMHC) – Harm Reduction Services

**Minimum Qualifications:** New York State licensed social worker (LMSW/LCSW) or mental health counselor (LMHC); Experience with harm reduction and relapse prevention counseling and time effective, solution-focused and cognitive behavioral treatment models. Experience with dually diagnosed population and group counseling skills a must. Effective written, organizational and interpersonal skills. Must be able to work a flexible schedule, including some evenings and occasional weekends. Additional Preferred Qualifications: Experience with HIV+ populations preferred. Bilingual in English/Spanish strongly preferred. Familiarity with buprenorphine treatment preferred. Experience with integration of Seeking Safety intervention preferred. Experience using electronic medical records preferred. CASAC or CASAC Eligible. **Responsibilities:** Record session notes and patient follow-up in the electronic medical record and database systems, as required by funders. Provide evaluation, assessment, intervention and counseling services to inpatients, outpatients identified as having problems related to drug/alcohol use. Maintain close collaboration with MD’s for those patients receiving Buprenorphine treatment. Maintain close collaborations with offsite treatment providers through phone follow-up. - Participate in interdisciplinary case conferences & mental health meetings and serve as a resource for staff & patients on chemical dependency & treatment. Ensure referral for services not available on-site, such as inpatient detox and methadone & maintain collaborations with providers through phone follow-up. Participate in community-based outreach activities. Conduct individual and group counseling sessions for patients on the issues of chemical dependency and drug use, mental health disorders and integrating Seeking Safety into the treatment when appropriate. Conduct comprehensive intake and assessments on clients needing mental health and/or substance abuse care, develop comprehensive treatment plans and reassessments.



**Salary Range:** \$85,000 annually for full-time; will also consider candidates seeking a part-position. **Employer:** The Research Foundation for SUNY. To apply, send resume and cover letter with salary requirements to: Morgan Gebhardt, LCSW, CASAC, Program Coordinator, Harm Reduction, morgan.gebhardt@downstate.edu

**Behavioral Health Case Manager (Senior Research Support Specialist)**

**Minimum Qualifications:** Bachelor's degree in social work or related field with 2 years of experience providing counseling or mental health case management in a health care, substance use treatment center or community mental health care setting required; 2 years of experience providing counseling or mental health case management in a health care, substance use treatment center or community mental health care setting required; effective computer, verbal, organizational and interpersonal skills. **Additional Preferred Qualifications:** Lived experience or experience working with individuals with mental health or substance use disorders strongly preferred. Experience conducting psycho-social assessments, intakes and treatment plans, individual, family and group counseling. Training in Motivational Interviewing, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) or other solution-focused evidence-based interventions preferred; CASAC or CASAC-T; experience working in multidisciplinary and multicultural, team-oriented setting; bilingual in English/Spanish or English/Haitian Creole an asset; experience using electronic health record; experience working with LGBTQIA+ populations. LMSW or LCSW may be substituted for 2 years' experience. **Responsibilities:** The STAR Program provides integrated medical and behavioral health care at two locations in Central Brooklyn: University Hospital at Downstate and Brookdale Hospital Medical Center. Enroll patients into the program and conduct intakes; collect baseline data and screens; and develop comprehensive service plans. Provide case management, peer support and patient navigation, schedule medical appointments and services, link patients to CBOs for wrap-around"/recovery support services. Provide goal-oriented individual supportive counseling, on-site or via telehealth; provide group, family and couples counseling, in collaboration with LMSW/LCSW/LMHC. Utilize telehealth, texting and social media to engage and retain clients in care. Contribute to patients' care plan development by regular attendance at case conferences. Record session notes and patient follow-up in the electronic health record. Participate in community-based outreach activities. Participate in ongoing quality improvement activities. Participate in the development of abstracts related to program outcomes and present on these outcomes when accepted by professional conferences. **Salary Range:** \$50,000-\$55,000 annually. Employer: The Research Foundation for SUNY. To apply, send resume and cover letter with salary requirements to: Christopher Jimenez, MA, LMHC, Assistant Director, Substance Use Treatment Services, christopher.jimenez@downstate.edu

**Nurse Supervisor (BSN, RN) – Ambulatory Care**

**Minimum Qualifications:** Registered nurse with NYS license; BSN from accredited nursing school with at 3 years of ambulatory care experience. Proficient in the use of Microsoft Office, EHR, and hospital-based applications. **Additional Preferred Qualifications:** Master's degree in nursing, public health, or related field. Experience in the care of HIV/HCV and substance use disorders. Experience in academic medical center with integrated care/research. Experience with regulatory requirements of Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH). Hours: 37.5 hours per week; must be able to work flexible schedule, including some evenings and occasional weekends. **Responsibilities:** Provide direct patient care involving the administration and oversight of medications, vaccinations, and nursing care assessments, participate in the evaluation and screening for patients receiving buprenorphine. Participate in the development and implementation of teaching plans for patient, family, and/or caregivers and promote patient self-care activities and treatments that facilitate optimal levels of functioning. Provide direction to outreach activities including provision of HIV testing and education. Serve as team leader and role model for professional and paraprofessional nursing staff; ensure development, execution and adherence of nursing policies and procedures. Participate in the development and implementation of multi-disciplinary case-managed care. Identify mental health and substance use disorders and report issues to the patient's health care team. Document all plans and treatment in the electronic health record (EHR), and complete documentation for NYS DOH and other regulatory agencies. Participate in quality improvement activities, including data tracking and development of PDSA cycles. Provide telephone and walk-in triage for acute patient problems and make appropriate referrals. Assist in coordinating services for new and emerging programs, and assist with administrative responsibilities as needed. **Employer:** The Research Foundation for SUNY. To apply, send resume and cover letter with salary requirements to: Weda Sen, MHA, ACHE, Operations Manager, STAR Health Center-Downstate, weda.lewis@downstate.edu

**Licensed Practical Nurse**

**Minimum Qualifications:** NYS Licensed Practical Nurse; current American Heart Association Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification. Minimum of one (1) year of clinical experience in an ambulatory care setting; experience with electronic health record (EHR) and Microsoft Office applications. **Additional Preferred Qualifications:** Experience with HIV and HCV treatment; substance abuse treatment experience; bi-lingual Spanish/English or English/Haitian Creole. **Hours:** 37.5 hours per week; must be able to work flexible schedule, including some evenings and occasional weekends. **Responsibilities:** Provide direct patient care involving the administration and oversight of medications, vaccinations, buprenorphine inductions and nursing care assessments. Participate in the development and implementation of teaching plan for patient, family, and/or caregivers. Provide telephone and walk-in triage for acute patient problems and make appropriate provider referrals. Identify substance abuse problems; promote patient self-care activities and treatments that facilitate optimal levels of functioning. Assist in coordinating services for new and emerging STAR-Downstate programs related to care, clinical education and research. Provide HIV and HCV counseling and testing for clients and family members; perform phlebotomy according to UHB clinical laboratory guidelines. Participate in SHC outreach activities, including provision of HIV Pre and Post-test counseling as needed. Participate in developing and implementing multi-disciplinary case-managed care (e.g., attending team huddles, transition and prenatal meetings). Participate in quality improvement activities related to STAR-Downstate, including quality improvement data tracking, including development of PDSA cycles. **Salary Range:** \$60,000-\$70,000 annually. **Employer:** The Research Foundation for SUNY. To apply, send resume and cover letter with salary requirements to: Weda Sen, MHA, ACHE, Operations Manager, STAR Health Center-Downstate, weda.lewis@downstate.edu

# GRANT AWARDS

- The STAR Program was awarded \$1,875,000 over 5 years from the NYS Department of Health AIDS Institute to conduct the Family-Focused Health Care for Women Program (FFHC). The FFHC’s purpose is to provide a comprehensive, patient-centered health service model that utilizes a health equity lens to provide co-located HIV primary care, OB/GYN services, and supportive services for individuals who are planning a pregnancy, birthing, persons of child bearing age, are pregnant, or are the primary care giver to their dependent children (age 18 and under) and are living with HIV. Program services are designed to improve health outcomes for women, reduce the risk of mother-to-child transmission, and proactively address intersectional factors impacting racial and ethnic disparities using a health equity framework. Services are tailored to meet the needs of women with dependent children to improve timely entry, access and retention in care.
- The STAR Program was awarded a general operating grant of \$100,000 over two years from The Keith Haring Foundation. The Keith Haring Foundation was established to sustain,



expand, and protect the legacy of American artist, Keith Haring, and his ideals. The foundation provides essential funding for organizations involved in HIV education, prevention, and care related to HIV/AIDS. While the foundation remains a generous supporter of Downstate's HEAT Program (which serves young people (ages 13-25) living with or at risk for HIV), this additional grant will bolster the STAR Program's comprehensive range of interdisciplinary services, including HIV/HCV/STI screening and treatment, women's health and prenatal care, specialized care for LGBTQIA+ populations, PrEP/PEP, and a full scope of behavioral health services.

- The STAR Program was awarded \$1,000,000 over 5 years by the NYS Department of Health to conduct "HIV/STI/HCV Prevention and Related Services for Young People Through the Use of Youth Health Advocates." The Youth Health Advocates Program (YHAP) will be conducted by the Adolescent Education Program (AEP)/Teens Helping Each Other (THEO). The YHAP Program will focus on African American, Afro-Caribbean, Latino, Asian-American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) and LGBTQ+ youth (ages 13-24 yrs.). Services include HIV, STI, HCV, pregnancy and substance use prevention and clinical referral services for LGBTQ+, homeless youth, justice and foster-involved youth and young women previously involved in sex work. Partners include SUNY Downstate's HEAT Program, which provides clinical care to HIV+ and at-risk youth (ages 13-24) and Diaspora Community Services, which identifies at-risk students. YHAP will train 6-10 YHAs (ages 15-24) who represent target populations to provide outreach, engagement and clinical referrals and provide 2 evidence-based, age appropriate and medically accurate sexuality education interventions to at-risk youth. Anticipated outcomes include providing prevention and clinical referral services to 360 youth annually and providing prevention services, counseling and testing, clinical screenings and workshops to 1,800 youth over 5 years.

## SAVE THE DATE

**BROOKLYN ASSOCIATION OF TEEN EDUCATORS (B.A.T.E.S.)**

**PRESENTS**

**THE 29TH ANNUAL YOUTH CONFERENCE & THEATRE FESTIVAL**

**RSVP TODAY!**

**Saturday, June 3rd**  
**10 AM to 4 PM**  
**SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University**  
**395 Lenox Road**  
**Brooklyn, NY 11203**

**https://tinyurl.com/BATESisBACK2023**

**FEELIN' SUMMER VIBEZ: OUTLOUD, OUTSPOKEN, OUTPROUD**

**CO-SPONSORED BY: PROTECTING THE EAST**

**ADDITIONAL SPONSORS:**

DIASPORA COMMUNITY SERVICES, HEAT, CCRB, PROJECT REACH YOUTH, BELIEVE, NEIGHBORS IN ACTION, C.R.C.E.C., Public Health Solutions, NYC HEALTH+ HOSPITALS, Able Program at Woodhull, HMI, HETRICK-MARTIN INSTITUTE FOR LGBTQIA+ YOUTH, COMMUNITY COUNSELING & MEDIATION, NYU Lutheran, CAMBA, BLACK HEALTH.

RSVP: THE 29th Annual Youth Conference & Theater Festival

## THEO ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



Roudjessie Charles is a graduate of CUNY/Brooklyn College and is currently pursuing her Master of Public Health with a concentration in Healthcare Administration at SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University. She has been working in the public health field for several years, beginning with her work at the Arthur Ashe Institute for Urban Health, Inc. (AAIUH) as a Facilitator for their Health Science Academy program. She has also been a Duke Fellow as part of the AAIUH. Currently, Ms. Charles is the Program Assistant for the PREP Project at the Adolescent Education Program-THEO. She is fluent in Creole/French and enjoys working with youth. She loves this work because it gives her the opportunity to give back to her community and be a "change agent" in the field of public health.



# COMMUNITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



Harvest Home Farmer's Market (HHFM) (<https://www.harvesthomefm.org/>) is a New York City-based, 501(c)(3), non-profit organization dedicated to increasing access to local, farm-fresh produce in low-income neighborhoods. HHFM also provides education to achieve healthier lifestyles. Founded in 1993, HHFM's markets create community gathering places that educate the public about health and nutrition, support regional agriculture and provide job opportunities. Its farmer's markets are open six days a week during the farmer's market season; serving all members of each community. HHFM operates markets in the Bronx, Brooklyn and Manhattan. They accept cash, credit/debit, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (Food Stamp/EBT cards), Women Infant and Children (WIC) Program checks, Farmer's Market Nutrition Coupons (FMNP), Health Bucks and Health Senior Healthy Shoppers coupons (H2S2).

Healthy Seniors Healthy Shoppers (H2S2) is a program that HHFM developed in response to the lack of access to fresh produce for low-income seniors. To qualify, seniors must be 60 years or older and cannot receive more than \$200 in SNAP benefits per month. The senior shopper must spend a minimum of \$1 in SNAP at the market to receive \$4 in H2S2 vouchers, which they can use exclusively on fruits or vegetables. If the shopper were to take out an additional \$10 in SNAP at the market, they would also receive \$10 in HealthBucks that could be used towards produce as well. So, if a senior spent \$11 in SNAP at one of HHFM's markets, they would receive a combined \$14 from H2S2 and HealthBucks to spend on produce. The H2S2 program operates at all of HHFM's market sites throughout Harlem, the Bronx, and Brooklyn (at Kings County Hospital Center), which are open from June-November.

## Editorial Board

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Patient Care, Community and Medical Education, and Research Programs are listed below. For more information, please call the numbers listed below or the STAR Program at: (718) 270-2690 OR visit our website at: [www.starprogram.nyc](http://www.starprogram.nyc)

## PATIENT CARE AND SERVICES

### FOR ADULTS

**Outpatient Care at Downstate**  
STAR Health Center (SHC) - Downstate:  
(718) 270-3745

**Outpatient Care at Brookdale Hospital**  
STAR Health Center (SHC) – Brookdale  
(718) 240-8233

**Behavioral Health Services:**  
(718) 270-3745

**Family-Centered Health Care Program:**  
(718) 270-2357 or 3745

**Mental Health Services:**  
(718) 270-3745

### FOR ADOLESCENTS

Health & Education Alternatives For Teens  
(HEAT) Program:  
(718) 467-4446

### FOR CHILDREN

Infant and Child Learning Center (ICLC):  
(718) 270-2598

### COMMUNITY AND MEDICAL EDUCATION

Prevention Services for Adolescents and Young  
Adults – SUNY Adolescent Education Program  
(AEP):  
(718) 270-3203

### RESEARCH

MACS/WIHS Combined Cohort Study:  
(718) 270-4435

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