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CDCLI’s Family Self-Sufficiency program’s continued growth and our participants’ achievements are true points of light in what continue to be challenging times. I am so pleased to share that since we published our last Newsletter, we’ve had 16 new participants join FSS, for a total of 58 households kicking off their Family Self-Sufficiency journeys with just about a month remaining in 2021 as I write this column. Welcome new participants; we’re ready to support you as you work towards your Service Plan goals!

We’re extremely proud of our 6 graduates since our Fall Newsletter was published; bringing us to 24 graduates for 2021 thus far, who have earned a combined $222,526 in escrow savings dollars disbursed to them by the State of New York Division of Housing & Community Renewal based on household increases in earned income during their program tenure.

What a testament to your Success With FSS, graduates, congratulations!

Very warmly,

~Rachel E. Seiler, Resident Services Director

Great news, our Newsletter is now available online in English and Spanish at http://www.cdcli.org/fss-news/!

Adds and Grads

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Add and Grads

If winter has the courage to turn to spring, who says I can’t bloom just the same?

~ S.R.W
Personal Bill of Rights

I HAVE THE RIGHT:

• To ask for what I want.
• To refuse requests or demands I can’t meet.
• To express all of my feelings, positive or negative.
• To change my mind.
• To make mistakes and not have to be perfect.
• To follow my own values and standards.
• To not be responsible for others’ behavior, actions, feelings, or problems.
• To expect honesty from others.
• To be treated with dignity and respect.
• To my own needs for personal space and time.
• To be healthier than those around me.
• To be uniquely myself.
• To feel scared and say, “I’m afraid.”
• To say, “I don’t know.”
• To not give excuses or reasons for my behavior.
• To make decisions based on my feelings.
• To my own needs for personal space and time.
• To be playful and frivolous.
• To be healthier than those around me.
• To be in a non-abusive environment.
• To make friends and be comfortable around people.
• To change and grow.
• To have my needs and wants respected by others.
• To be treated with dignity and respect.
• To be happy.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Super Saturdays  The Wyandanch Community Resource Center will be open on Saturdays December 11th, January 15th, and February 19th. On these dates PSEG, National Grid Advocates, and DSS will be available. Receive assistance with completing a HEAP application and learn about assistance that is available! Call 631-643-1971 for an appointment.

National Grid Help is available for bill concerns. Call 1-800-930-5003. View Energy Affordability Program. Home Energy Affordability Team (HEAT) program may provide no-cost measures to improve your home’s energy use. Visit www.ngrid.com/liaffordable; call 844-375-4328.

PSEG Financial Assistance  For information on bill assistance visit https://www.psegliny.com/nyaccount/customersupport/financialassistance. Contact the PSEG Advocate at Please call 631-755-3407 (Suffolk) or 516-454-4331 (Nassau) 8:30 - 4 or email consumeradvocacyli@pseg.com.

HEAP Regular Arrears Supplement (RAS) is a new onetime benefit to assist with paying PSEG and National Grid arrears for heating. Contact 631-853-8825. Learn more at https://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/.

Project Warmth  An emergency heating benefit may be available to those who have used their HEAP benefits or are over-income for HEAP. Will open January 4, 2022. Call 2-1-1 (or 1-888-774-7633).

National Leased Housing Association Scholarship program offers four types of educational scholarships. Those residing in households that have Section 8 who demonstrate merit and need are eligible. Application period is open until April 15, 2022. To learn more visit http://hudnha.com/education-fund/.

Miller Business Center  Free virtual or in person career, college and employment counseling. Call 631-585-9393 x 133. Located in Middle Country Public library. View career resources.

Family Service League summer camp program  Lottery held in January. Provides camp referrals and assistance for ages 4-16. Call 631-470-6945.


Health & Welfare Council  Virtual VITA. Call 516-483-1110 or visit https://hwcli.com/work-we-do/direct-services/vita/.

Even the strongest blizzards start with a single snowflake. ~Sara Raasch
**FSS Graduates!**

**FSS Graduate**
“I am proud that as a single mom, I was able to work full-time and still obtain a nursing degree. I persevered despite hardships. My FSS Case Manager helped me with many resources to achieve my goals.”

**Nikki Harper**
“One of my proudest achievements while participating in FSS was graduating with my phlebotomy certificate and landing a position during the pandemic in the busy emergency room. My FSS Case Manager was always so helpful and inspired me to keep going and not give up. I would recommend FSS because they work with you and not against you. They help you accomplish the goals you set for yourself.”

**Rachel Trent**
“One of my proudest achievements in FSS was meeting goals and responsibilities to become financially free. FSS helped me to overcome obstacles that stagnated me from obtaining financial freedom. My FSS Case Manager was great and very supportive. I couldn't have done this without her!!!

**Natalie Williams**
“One of my proudest achievements while participating in FSS was being able to close my public assistance case. FSS supported me in obtaining my driver's license. I liked that FSS helped me with finding resources that aren’t normally listed in newspapers.”

Thank you to our FSS participants for sharing your stories and success with us! We are proud and inspired by your dedication to your goals! Want to have your experience featured in these pages? Community organizations and PCC members: Please share your resources, information and programs. Email us at fssnewsletter@cdcli.org or call 631-469-7746.

**DON'T WAIT until you've reached your goal to be proud of yourself. BE PROUD OF every step you take toward reaching your goal.**

-Unknown

**FSS participants and community partners: Join us!**

Become a member of the **Program Coordinating Committee (PCC)**. Join us to network with community organizations such as PSEG, National Grid, and Long Island Cares and learn about supportive programs and services. The committee meets 5 times a year; January, March, May, September and November by Zoom until further notice. For more information, please contact an FSS team member at FSSPCC@cdcli.org.

We welcome you to our next PCC meeting:

- January 10th, 2022 at 10am via zoom- PSEG Long Island will discuss financial assistance programs.
FSS raffle winners share what they are thankful for...

Tamara Andrews "I’m thankful for my life, health, friends and my family."

Robbie Beauford "Being with family and friends. I’m thankful for food and a place to live."

Cynthia Binckes “Blessings, CDCLI’s help, and my family."

Erica Boynton “I am thankful for my life and the lives of my kids and family. After all we have been through in facing the COVID virus, I’m able to reach out to help others. I’m thankful to be able to spend time with family. Even though we lost my grandmother on my birthday, who was the foundation of the family, I am thankful we are still here.”

Laquita Brooks “For my faith. For a second chance in the journey of life. My family, my companion and support system. The family at FSS that I have come to know.”

Annette Brundidge “For my family, the FSS program and for having a job.”

Latarsha Brunskill “The opportunity to wake up and live and learn new things in life!!”

Lorene Cotterel “I am thankful for life.”

Tariana DeGraffe Crudupt “My beautiful children and a beautiful home to spend the holidays with them, and all of CDCLI for their assistance and amazing wonderful staff for helping me obtain it, by motivating me to reach my goals.”

Leslie Diaz “My family and CDCLI help through the years.”

Sheila Flythe “Life and family. During the COVID pandemic I learned a big lesson- to appreciate life. All that is in my life could be taken in the blink of an eye. Appreciate and love your family. Live life one day at a time. Live a humble life. Be kind to and love one another. Be thankful for the good/bad and big/small.”

Melissa Garcia “The opportunity to see another Thanksgiving holiday after going through a surgery that almost claimed my life this past July. I am thankful for my family and friends but most of all I am thankful for my faith for my salvation.”

Jocelyn Lawrence “I’m THANKFUL for waking up everyday!! I’m THANKFUL knowing that so far my family and I have been COVID free!! I’m THANKFUL for the little, simple things I have. As I see the struggles of some that make my life seem picture perfect. I’M THANKFUL I’M ME!!

Susan Millan “Having a family and a place to live. As a single mom, I’m grateful to have my health and be able to work so I can provide for my family and pay the bills.”

Cathy Neal “Thankful for my daughter, Section 8 and my health.”

Jewella O’Neal “My home with my 3 children and that we survived this past year and a half and that we will continue to prosper in the future. That is my forever hope and prayer.”

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**A Thankful Heart is a Happy Heart!**

~Alvin Gan
It is not happy people who are thankful, it is thankful people who are happy.
~Dr. Brené Brown

More raffle winners share what they are thankful for...

**Eleticia Perez** “My health and the health and well-being of my family. These past two years have been not only life changing but also a very trying time for all families. I am extremely thankful for CDCLI and the FSS program, which changed our lives and are a blessing and privilege to have. Thank you CDCLI!

**Pamela Postell** “My family and support I receive from all. I am thankful for overcoming COVID-19. I am blessed to have my grandchildren who were very loving and caring during my illness. I am thankful for doing my best in pursuing my education.”

**Stacyann Randolph** “That I still have life, family and friends.”

**Siobhan Reid** “I am thankful that my family is healthy and never caught COVID-19.”

**Vanessa Rodriguez** “I am thankful for many things this year. CDCLI was able to put me and my children in a more stable home. I was able to finally graduate this year and obtain my HS Diploma and now I am proceeding with my career as a Payroll Management Clerk. For my progress from where I was five years ago to today as a single mom, striving.”

**Angelina Rojas** “Family and good health.”

**Sharleek Rose** “CDCLI and the Section 8 housing choice voucher program. Nine years ago, my daughter’s father passed away. I lost a co-parent supporter and income. CDCLI and its programs now allow me to improve my options in life while adding much needed income. $2,200 is more than some mortgages. Thank you!”

**Alissa Savastano** “I’m sure many would agree that being in good health is more than enough to be thankful for this year considering what we have been facing due to the pandemic. So yes, I am thankful for my health and that of my children! So very thankful, but this year I am thankful for that and so much more. So far this year I have been fortunate enough to relocate with my family to an amazing new town, community and school district. Moreover, I have doubled my income and enjoy my new employer and friendly work environment. But most of all, this year, I am thankful for the joy, laughter and happiness I see in my children! It’s such a heartwarming feeling and fills me with gratitude and thankfulness everyday! I would like to include and thank the CDCLI family and the FSS program for the huge role they played in making my new beginning and relocation possible! Thank you so very much.”

**Sandra Sotke** “My children.”

**Tameika Welch** “I give thanks and praise for my faith.”

**Shaquana Williams** “I am thankful that I get to spend another day with my children and watch them get older and become independent.”

**Janiece Wimbush** “Being able to provide for myself and my children. We are all I have. I am thankful for life. I am very thankful for my FSS Case Manager because she has been so influential to me these past few years. She’s been helpful and very supportive but most of all, a great listener. I don’t have many family or friends and she has helped me get through a lot.”
NEIGHBORHOOD CHOICE LONG ISLAND

The Neighborhood Choice Long Island (NCLI) program provides housing mobility coaching and financial assistance to Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) families that have children age 18 or under who are interested in living in high opportunity areas. This mobility pilot initiative is made possible by support from Enterprise Community Partners.

HAVING CHOICES MATTERS
Where you live is important for the future of your family.

- **Success:** Research shows that neighborhoods can have lasting influence on an individual’s health, lifetime earnings, and educational success.
- **Stability:** The longer you stay living in a healthy neighborhood that meets your family’s needs the greater the benefits to you and your children.
- **Choice:** Long Island has many communities. Our coaches can help you decide which ones are best for YOUR family.

HOW WE CAN HELP
The NCLI program provides:

- Housing search assistance with an experienced housing mobility coach;
- School information and liaison services with school staff;
- Neighborhood information and tours;
- Referrals to financial counseling;
- Landlord engagement during housing search;
- Post-move counseling for two years
- Short-term financial assistance to help with move;
- Peer support program; and
- Assistance for property owners.

ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE
- Families who are currently receiving housing voucher assistance (section 8) from the Division of Housing and Community Renewal with CDCLI or Nassau County and
- Have children under the age of 18 and are not currently living in an NCLI neighborhood

DID YOU KNOW
- **Competitive rents:** Higher voucher payment amounts have opened up neighborhoods that used to be unaffordable to voucher holders.
- **Program support:** Housing Coaches will provide 1-1 training and/or group training dependent on demand. All participating families are provided with group or individual training. Trainings may be provided via phone or over video conference as needed.
- **Know your rights:** Housing discrimination because you have a voucher is illegal in New York State.

Every family deserves all the opportunities Long Island has to offer. We are committed to supporting your housing search and moving you into the community of your choice!

NEXT STEPS
Visit our website at http://www.cdcli.org/ncli/ and complete an online intake form.
NEVER GIVE UP

Obstacles don’t have to stop you. If you run into a wall, don’t turn around and give up. Figure out how to climb it, go through it, or work around it. – Michael Jordan

CDCLI’s Financial Education

Do you have a financial goal for the new year? Maybe you plan to catch up on bills, create a budget or start a savings account for emergency expenses. The secret to keeping a financial goal is in the planning. The simpler the steps, the more likely your success. If, for instance, your goal is to pay down debt, break it down into easy, specific steps; i.e., “I’ll pay an additional $10 towards my credit card with the highest interest every month.”

Check if your budget allows for the $10, or to save for it, track your spending to figure out a simple change. For example, maybe cutting back on eating out, making coffee at home, adjusting shopping or reducing a cable fee.

To help keep on track, check in regularly with those who are there to support you and discuss difficulties and successes: perhaps a family member or a friend is working on a similar goal; your FSS Case Manager is just a phone call away and don’t forget CDCLI’s Financial Fitness Health & Wealth upcoming virtual classes that take place over 4 sessions at http://www.cdcli.org/programs/ffhw/ or online Money Management at http://ehomeamerica.org/cdcli.

After Financial Fitness Health & Wealth or Money Management, you’ll have the opportunity to meet with CDCLI’s financial educator to establish a Financial Action Plan to achieve your financial goals!

Keep a positive attitude. If you believe in your goal, each small step will lead you closer to success!

Julia Orlik, FSS Case Manager

Power of Perseverance

Family Self-Sufficiency helps participating Housing Choice Voucher-subsidized households begin on the road to greater economic independence and empowerment. Hope and resilience can be sources of strength amid uncertainty. Lucille Clifton’s poetry speaks to the power of perseverance. A native New Yorker, Clifton was discovered as a poet by the famed Langston Hughes. Her work is described by Poetry Foundation as emphasizing “endurance and strength through adversity, focusing particularly on African-American experience and family life”. I hope her poem (at right) “won’t you celebrate with me” will help connect you with your own powerful sense of determination, and faith in yourself as you wind down your 2021 and prepare to step with confidence and hope into a New Year.

~Rachel E. Seiler, Resident Services Director

“won't you celebrate with me” from Book of Light Copyright © 1993, by Lucille Clifton

won’t you celebrate with me
what i have shaped into
a kind of life? i had no model.
born in babylon
both nonwhite and woman
what did i see to be except myself?
i made it up
here on this bridge between
starshine and clay,
my one hand holding tight
my other hand; come celebrate
with me that everyday
something has tried to kill me
and has failed.

Lucille Clifton, 1936-2010
FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM
Open to Head of Household Housing Choice Voucher Participants

Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) is a FREE voluntary program that helps families/individuals with a CDCLI Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) obtain services to become more financially stable and successful.

FSS provides:
~ One-on-one emotional support and encouragement
~ Links to community resources
~ Financial education & coaching
~ Possible cash savings - based on increases in household earned income
~ Potential for Voucher Homeownership
~ Online quarterly newsletter

Questions? Need help now? Contact our Resident Services Team:

General FSS Program
Call or Text: 631-332-1886
Email: fss@cdcli.org

Moxey Rigby Residents Only
Call or Text: 631-357-4037
Email: eadames@cdcli.org

Sign up today!

Community Development Corporation of Long Island
www.cdcli.org
@cdcoflongisland