



Volunteers  
of America®

GREATER NEW YORK

## 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

# Counting on the Community Which Counts on Us



“We will go wherever we are needed and do whatever comes to hand.”

— Maud & Ballington Booth,  
co-founders, Volunteers of America



**Volunteers  
of America**®

## **GREATER NEW YORK**

Volunteers of America, Inc. (VOA, Inc.) is a national, faith-based human services organization that was founded in New York City in 1896 and has remained at the forefront of social service ever since, helping individuals and families in need overcome obstacles to living safe, healthy and productive lives in the community. The largest of the affiliates, Volunteers of America-Greater New York (VOA-GNY) serves tens of thousands of men, women, and children in need every year, through 80 programs staffed by 1,300 skilled and dedicated staff, throughout New York City, Westchester County and Northern New Jersey.

*Rendering pictured above: VOA-GNY's newest development project is Clarke Place Residence, a 122-unit apartment building in the Bronx that will provide permanent, supportive housing for low- and very low-income seniors, and all of the services they need to remain as independent and engaged in the community as possible.*

*Pictured on cover: Edwin and Derek are two graduates of Battle Buddy Bridge®, our innovative peer support program that trains veterans to assist their fellow veterans in need, recreating the military model of “Battle Buddies” out in the civilian world.*

# Dear Friends,

**Exactly 123 years ago, Maud and Ballington Booth, Volunteers of America's founders and visionaries, stood before a standing room only crowd in the Great Hall of Cooper Union in 1896, and made a promise that remains our guiding principle to this day: "We will go wherever we are needed and do whatever comes to hand."**

Principles like these are often lost easily to time, forgotten not long after they are uttered. But when you spend a day walking through our 80 programs, seeing how more than 30,000 lives are impacted and changed annually, in ways big and small, you come to realize just how meaningful that simple phrase has become to our growing community throughout the Greater New York area.

In the following pages, we will share with you stories of families strengthened and lives saved, new paths forged and hope restored. The generous support we receive in the form of financial donations, volunteer hours and major in-kind contributions confirm that our work is perceived as vital and impactful, and for this we are grateful. We are constantly assessing the needs of the community and then, in a very thoughtful and formal way, we determine if Volunteers of America-Greater New York has the skills and experience, relationships and resources to deliver the best possible response.

In 2017, the City published "Turning the Tide on Homelessness in New York City," a report that provided stark statistics on the number of homeless seniors in the shelter system and the high number who are rent-burdened and at risk of becoming homeless. As a leading nonprofit provider of supportive housing for populations with special needs, we knew we were extraordinarily well-suited to address this immediate and burgeoning community crisis. Last July we broke ground on Clarke Place Residence, a 122-unit building that will provide permanent, affordable housing and all the

services needed, for low- and very low-income older adults to ensure their well-being in the community. Lives will be changed here by our passionate and dedicated staff, and we look forward to the summer of 2020 when we hand keys to deserving residents!

Continuing our long-time commitment to veterans, and responding to the high number of veterans tragically taking their own lives, we established Battle Buddy Bridge®, a peer support program for veterans in crisis. Thirty-one veterans have already graduated from this program to date, and the results are very promising. This innovative program has the potential to change the trajectory of at-risk veterans in New York City and beyond, with the goal of reducing veteran suicides.

This year, thanks to a record 332 corporate and other community partners, Operation Backpack® gave every child living in a shelter in New York City who needed one – over 20,000 students – a new backpack full of grade-specific school supplies in time for the first day of school. When we began this program in 2004 we distributed 2,500 backpacks, and that seemed enormous! Today we work with an army of volunteers and supporters, and we turn no child away.

On behalf of our skilled staff and dedicated Board of Directors, thank you. Together, we help elevate the community. Together, we will go wherever there's a need.



*Tere Pettitt*

**TERE PETTITT**

*President and CEO,  
Volunteers of America-  
Greater New York*

*Gerry Cunningham*

**GERRY CUNNINGHAM**

*Chairman of the Board of  
Directors, Volunteers of  
America-Greater New York*

# Responding to the Needs of the Community

## Outreach, Transitional and Supportive Housing for Individuals and Families

We help those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless achieve housing stability, while addressing the underlying causes of their situation.

## Survivors of Domestic Violence

We offer safe, emergency housing to families recovering from domestic violence, while providing intensive interventions to ensure they do not return to an abusive relationship.

## Veterans

As the largest provider of supportive housing for veterans in New York, we offer a continuum of care to address their housing, employment, health, and other needs as they reintegrate into civilian life.

## Children with Developmental Delays

We provide special education and therapy services to children with developmental delays at our two early learning centers to prepare them for school-age services in less restrictive settings.

## Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

We provide supervised apartment living for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities so they may remain safely in the community, engaged and supported, as opposed to in an institution.

## At-Risk Youth

We offer stability and security through both residential housing and supportive programming for at-risk youth, equipping them with the necessary tools to become mature, independent adults by the time they age out of the foster care system.

## Individuals with Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorders

In many of our residential programs we have adults living with behavioral health and/or substance use disorders for whom we provide all the services they need to rebuild their lives.

## People Impacted by HIV / AIDS

We offer safe, affordable, permanent housing to men and women living with HIV/AIDS and their families, while providing supportive services through counseling and case management.

## Older Adults

Permanent, supportive, affordable housing for older adults does more than just house our clients; it ensures they are safe, healthy, and not isolated.



## Support from our Partners

Our partners and volunteers are the heart and soul of Volunteers of America-Greater New York. It is their support that helps transform a bare-bones shelter into a temporary “home” where children receive homework help and veterans are treated to a special holiday dinner. Our partners help normalize life for children who are living in a shelter through no fault of their own. They help those in our care envision and attain a better future by funding new programs, offering job skills training, leading poetry and yoga sessions, or simply engaging in conversation over a meal – letting our clients know that they are seen, that they matter.

Now in its 15th year, Operation Backpack® has been embraced by New Yorkers and beyond, as a community initiative that benefits the city’s homeless students. In 2018, 332 partners from every industry imaginable helped us fulfill every request we received from New York City shelters, allowing us to distribute 20,000 backpacks brimming with grade-specific supplies. This

campaign would not exist without support from our generous sponsors and media partners, the devoted families who return to Sort Week again and again, and new friends – like the cast from Broadway’s *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* and officers from the NYPD Transit Bureau – who lend their days off to give back.

At our annual fundraising dinner, *A New York Winter’s Eve*, we honored Wells Fargo with the 2018 *Spirit of the Founders* award for its generous and deepening support. In addition to funds raised that evening, Robert DiDiano, accepting the award on behalf of Wells Fargo, announced an additional \$100,000 Foundation grant. We also recognized the year-round support of Magnusson Architecture and Planning, PC and The Weeks Lerman Group, two partners we can count on to help at a moment’s notice.

We are grateful to our partners who are committed to caring for the city in which they live and work. We count on this community, which in turn, counts on us.

*Left: Jo Ann Craig of McGraw Hill Education and her nephew were eager to pitch in at Operation Backpack®, one of the city’s best opportunities for families to volunteer together.*

*Top: PITCH secured \$1 million+ in pro-bono ad space for Operation Backpack® 2018, including on digital billboards in Times Square donated by our generous media partners; Robert DiDiano (L), Regional Managing Director for Wealth Management, accepted the 2018 Spirit of the Founders Award on behalf of Wells Fargo for its support of Operation Backpack®. The campaign was introduced to Wells Fargo and championed by Ross Weinberg (R), Vice President of Investments.*

*Bottom: 2,173 volunteers donated their time, energy, and financial support to our programs in 2018, helping to enrich the services that we provide to those in our care, like this child at Bushwick Family Residence.*



# The Love of a Family

The love between 12-year-old Heaven and her father Solomon is palpable. The pair exchange inside jokes and tease one another constantly—and Heaven, who’s almost as tall as Dad now, knows exactly where to nestle herself in his arms for a hug. Solomon, who has a degenerative eye condition that has left him completely blind and unable to work, depends quite a bit on his daughter to help with everyday tasks.

“She started to pick up Braille at two or three years old when I was learning it,” Solomon says.

Noticing her thirst for learning at a young age, Solomon has poured every dollar and every ounce of energy he has into ensuring that Heaven gets a fair chance at success. The two arrived at VOA-GNY’s Regent Family Residence early last year after escaping an abusive family situation down south.

The staff at The Regent connected Solomon with the Lighthouse Guild, Access-a-Ride, and other supportive services for the visually impaired that helped him get around the city and receive proper care. VOA-GNY made sure that Heaven received a backpack full of school supplies this summer through

Operation Backpack®. After school, she was able to pursue her passions for drawing and painting at Rutgers Presbyterian Church Community Programs, a dedicated partner of VOA-GNY’s that offers art classes to children at The Regent and the Bronx Early Learning Center. At the end of the school year, Heaven was awarded the New York State Attorney General’s Triple C award for “commitment, character, and courage.”

“It validates everything we’ve been through,” says Solomon, bursting with pride for his daughter, who is now a high-achieving sixth grader at Wadleigh Secondary School for The Performing & Visual Arts. “The schooling she is receiving in New York is a golden opportunity for her.”

After a nine-month stay at The Regent, Heaven and Solomon secured an apartment through the help of VOA-GNY’s housing specialists. Heaven says she misses her friends at The Regent, but enjoys having more space in their new home where she plays the trumpet, makes claymation movies, and practices her science experiments; she’d love to be a science teacher some day.

“I really want to thank The Regent for helping my father and me when we were in need,” Heaven says. “They opened up to us, so some day I hope that I can repay them for what they did.”

## Unconditional Support

Lisa, born Luke\*, knew from an early age that she was meant to be a girl, and identified as such, wearing feminine clothing and going by the name “Jackie” around Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. When she was 10, Lisa’s “double

life” was revealed when her mother overheard kids calling her Jackie. Unaware that Lisa had been presenting as a girl in public, her mother pulled down the child’s pants in front of the neighbors and demanded, “Does this look like a girl to you?” From then on, Lisa was bullied unmercifully. Formerly an A+ student, she dropped to the bottom of the class after changing schools five times. At home, Lisa was shunned, teased, and hit. To escape the pain, she ran away at 13 years old and found an accepting community in the West Village.

What she believed to be a loving relationship with a “boyfriend” quickly revealed itself for what it really was: a drug abuser, pimping out a young girl he got addicted to crack, in order to support their drug habit. Life on the streets was a constant struggle, and at 19, Lisa discovered she was HIV positive. For decades, she battled addiction and served jail time. Finally, homeless and sick, she found her way to VOA-GNY’s supportive housing residence in Manhattan for men and women living with HIV/AIDS.

VOA-GNY staff cared for Lisa, even when they knew their efforts were falling on deaf ears. Though Lisa acknowledges, “This was the first place I’d ever felt so comfortable,” she was not yet able to stop her destructive patterns. Nevertheless, staff didn’t abandon her. They nurtured the healthy choices she made, making sure she was eating and coming home at night. Finally, Lisa hit rock bottom. Sick and on the brink of death, she spent six weeks in a coma. Upon waking, she was terrified, and vowed to make a change. VOA-GNY helped arrange for in-patient drug rehabilitation and visited her every week to ensure she was making progress.

Today, Lisa has been clean for nearly a year, and is studying to become a Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor. She educates others about HIV/AIDS and has reconnected with her mother. She still visits her former VOA-GNY home to thank the program director, case managers and others, “who stuck with me, and did not judge,” but remained patient and adamant, helping Lisa survive and ultimately thrive.



\*names changed for privacy

## Leave No One Behind

For many young recruits, the military offers a sense of protection and family that they never experienced at home. Whether escaping an abusive upbringing or life on the street, many soldiers find their first support system in a

Battle Buddy – a partner they’re assigned upon entry into service. Once discharged, stability can be difficult to maintain without the camaraderie and care offered by a fellow brother or sister in arms. Some veterans in crisis turn to suicide.

A year after joining the Army in 1985, Edwin received an honorable medical discharge after a fall rendered him unable to continue his service. Health complications and PTSD led Edwin to begin abusing drugs, and eventually resulted in his homelessness.

Edwin was placed in supportive housing in the Bronx where he met Derek, a veteran peer specialist who served in Korea. Understanding Edwin’s struggle, Derek recommended that he join Battle Buddy Bridge®, an innovative program developed by Volunteers of America that certifies veterans to become peer specialists and trains them to better understand their mental health diagnoses. Together, the pair completed the week-long training, administered by Sharmin Prince, Director of Veterans Programs at VOA-GNY.

“My second day of class, I asked Ms. Prince if I was in the right place,” Edwin said, holding back tears. “She told me I was. She told me to give myself a chance.”

Three days before Veterans Day, Derek and Edwin proudly graduated from the Battle Buddy Bridge® program together, equipped with the tools to aid both themselves and others in their reintegration journeys.

“I want to take what I’ve learned here and pay it forward,” Edwin said, thanking his support system of peers. “I want to help the next vet in need.”



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This list represents gifts made between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018. Total giving includes in-kind gifts.

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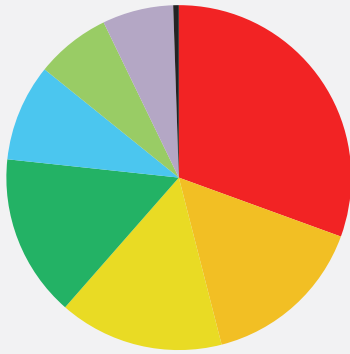
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\* Indicates Board Member



## 2018 EXPENDITURES BY SERVICE

- **31%** Housing services
- **15%** Services for children and youth
- **15%** Behavioral health services
- **15%** Shelter services
- **10%** Services for veterans
- **7%** Services for survivors of domestic violence
- **6%** Services for the disabled
- **1%** Rehabilitation services



## 2018 EXPENSES

- **81%** Program expenses
- **17%** Administrative expenses
- **2%** Fundraising expenses

# FINANCIALS

## CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

For Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2018

<b>REVENUE</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
Public Support - cash	\$1,393,247	\$1,571,768
Public Support - gifts in kind	3,721,375	3,950,679
Grants and contracts from governmental agencies	89,194,537	87,872,482
Client income	9,094,229	9,398,690
Investment return appropriated for operations	1,750,000	-
Other income	1,116,217	3,449,235
Gain on sale of fixed assets <sup>1</sup>	-	40,548,997
Program service fees	3,192,193	1,878,640
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>\$109,461,798</b>	<b>\$148,670,491</b>
<b>PROGRAM SERVICES</b>		
Housing services	\$28,784,988	\$26,388,894
Services for children and youth	14,557,693	14,249,226
Behavioral health services	14,559,624	14,597,124
Shelter services	14,353,479	13,386,575
Services for veterans	8,578,410	9,657,828
Services for victims of domestic violence	6,611,959	6,391,921
Services for the disabled	6,275,224	5,314,947
Rehabilitation services	491,034	507,925
<b>Total program services</b>	<b>\$94,212,411</b>	<b>\$90,494,440</b>
<b>Total supporting services</b>	<b>21,918,803</b>	<b>21,627,017</b>
<b>Total operating expenses</b>	<b>\$116,131,214</b>	<b>\$112,121,457</b>
Operating excess/(deficiency)	\$(6,669,416)	\$36,549,034
Net non-operating gain/(loss) <sup>2</sup>	\$(1,490,867)	\$3,570,294
Increase/(decrease) in permanently restricted net asset	28,693	89,456
<b>Change in net assets</b>	<b>\$(8,131,590)</b>	<b>\$40,208,784</b>
Net assets - beginning of year	68,908,267	28,699,483
Net assets - end of year	\$60,776,677	\$68,908,267

## CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET

<b>ASSETS</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
Cash and cash equivalents	\$5,354,134	\$29,291,813
Investments	42,227,709	16,961,698
Grants, contracts and accounts receivable	25,343,946	21,914,022
Prepaid expenses	1,071,532	1,796,617
Fixed assets	104,691,590	96,809,832
Other long-term assets	11,299,086	11,025,092
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$189,987,997</b>	<b>\$177,799,074</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$12,590,000	\$12,540,398
Other liabilities	16,444,622	12,178,043
Indebtedness	86,200,057	66,919,158
Pension liability	13,976,641	17,253,208
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>\$129,211,320</b>	<b>\$108,890,807</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>60,776,677</b>	<b>68,908,267</b>
<b>Total liabilities and net assets</b>	<b>\$189,987,997</b>	<b>\$177,799,074</b>

(1) During fiscal 2017, a building that was not used to serve clients was sold and the company now leases administrative office space.

(2) Variation is due to actuarial valuation of pension liability and variability and timing of real estate development transactions.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

<b>CHAIRMAN</b> Gerry Cunningham	Susan Axelrod
<b>VICE CHAIRMAN</b> Tom Johnson	Patricia Daly Paige Davis
<b>TREASURER</b> Tim Carey	Eric P. Gies Adele Gulfo
<b>SECRETARY</b> Andrew T. Brandman	David Matera Patrick McClymont
<b>PRESIDENT AND CEO</b> Tere Pettitt	Diane L. Powell Gary M. Stein
<b>CHAIR EMERITUS</b> Herbert L. Camp	Stellar Tucker Robert Wolk

## CHIEF COMPLIANCE OFFICER

**Lynne Plavnick**  
Vice President, Human Resources  
(646) 685-0202

## CORPORATE PRIVACY OFFICER

**Nicole Gniewkowski**  
Director of Performance Improvement  
(212) 496-4369

## 2018 GOVERNMENT FUNDERS

NJ Department of Children and Families  
NJ Department of Children and Families –  
Children’s System of Care  
NJ Department of Human Services – Division  
of Developmental Disabilities  
NJ Department of Human Services – Division  
of Mental Health and Addiction Services  
NJ Department of Human Services – NJ Medicaid  
NJ Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency  
NYC Department of Education  
NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene  
NYC Department of Homeless Services  
NYC Department of Homeless Services –  
Emergency Shelter Grant  
NYC Department of Youth and Community Development  
NYC Human Resources Administration  
NYS Education Department  
NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services  
NYS Office of Mental Health  
Port Authority of NY and NJ  
U.S. Department of Housing and  
Urban Development–Section 811  
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Westchester County Department of Social Services

*Pictured on back cover: In June, Dominic and classmates proudly graduated from VOA-GNY’s Bronx Early Learning Center, which serves 250 preschool-age children with a range of developmental delays.*

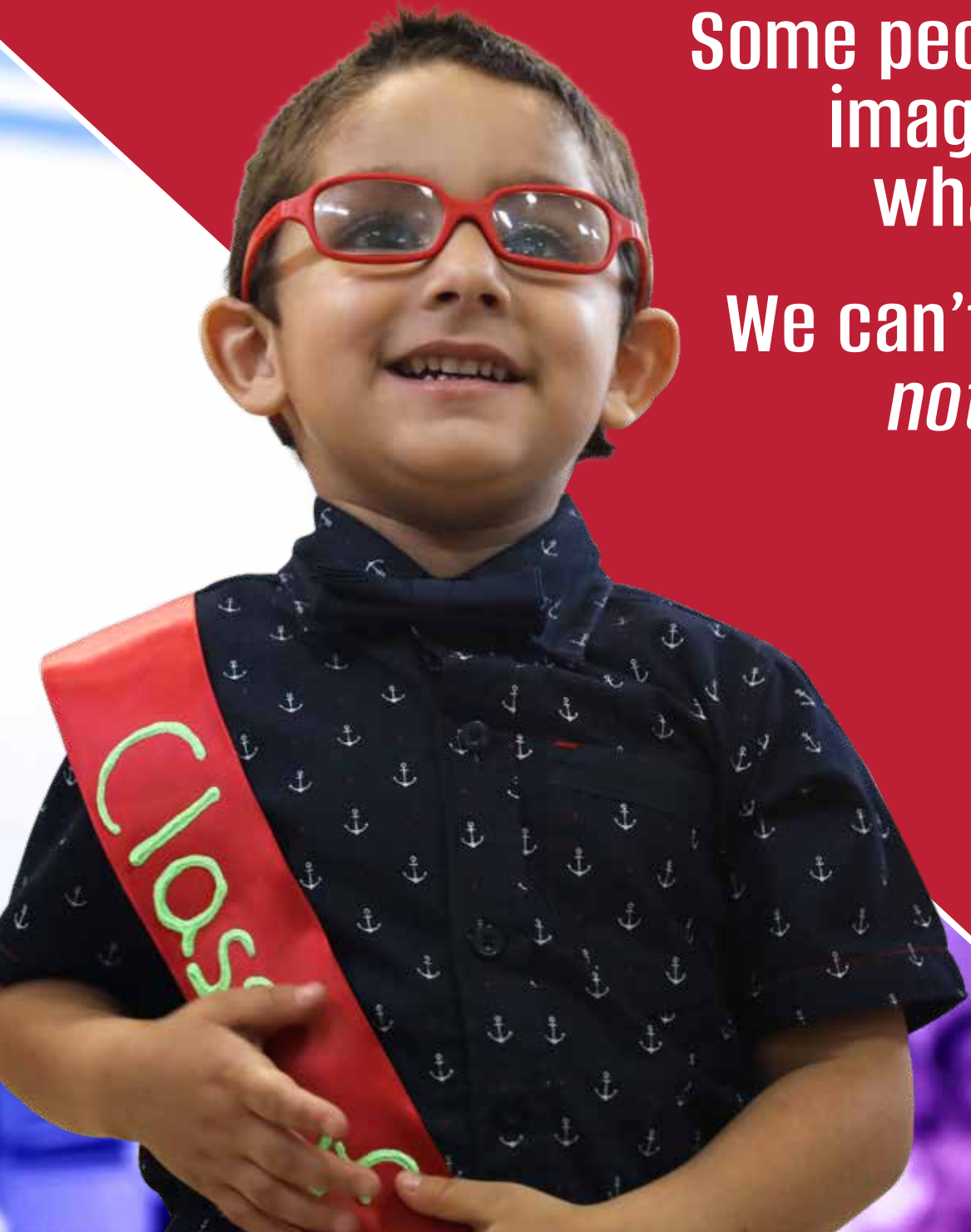


**Volunteers  
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GREATER NEW YORK

Volunteers of America promotes ethical conduct among all of its employees and lives by its shared values. We encourage employees to report violations, behaviors, and practices that could be viewed as unethical by contacting their supervisor, service sector human resources department, or calling the anonymous, 24-hour, toll-free Employee Hotline: (800) 826-6762.

Volunteers of America values cultural diversity and provides employment opportunities and social services to individuals regardless of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, age, physical condition, or disability.

Copies of the complete Financial Statement, together with the report of our auditors KPMG Peat Marwick LLP, are available upon request. Additionally, the Pro Forma 990 is available upon request. Volunteers of America-Greater New York is a charitable, nonprofit organization. Gifts and contributions are tax-deductible to the extent provided by the law.



Some people can't  
imagine doing  
what we do.

We can't imagine  
*not* doing it.



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of America®

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