

Dear Friends of Union Settlement,

First, I hope that you and your families are staying safe.

We are all experiencing anxiety and uncertainty due to the spread of the COVID-19 virus, but the residents in low-income and vulnerable communities like East Harlem are facing **unimaginable and devastating financial and medical risks:**

- Many East Harlem residents are uninsured, do not have a primary care physician, and lack access to high-quality medical care.
- East Harlem has a high incidence of certain serious medical conditions that put local residents at greater risk of COVID-19.
- Already living paycheck-to-paycheck, many East Harlem residents now find themselves suddenly unemployed – particularly those who previously worked in the restaurant, retail and hospitality industries.

Union Settlement has been serving the East Harlem community for 125 years – which means we helped our neighbors through the 1918 flu pandemic, the Great Depression, two World Wars, and numerous other periods of turmoil.

We will help them through this one as well - **but we need your help now more than ever before.**

On March 18, the New York Times editorial board said it best: The city and state “cannot afford to lose” the nonprofit groups that provide services to poor New Yorkers. See their editorial here:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/18/opinion/nyc-poor-coronavirus.html>.

**If you can donate, please do so [here](#).**

Even with the challenges of the outbreak, our assistance to low-income East Harlem residents continues.

Our early childhood education and afterschool youth programs have closed, but we are continuing to provide parents with learning activities they can do at home with their children. Our Adult Education program similarly has shifted to a “distance learning model,” and our Business Development Center continues to assist East Harlem’s many small businesses that are now trying to survive.

Our senior centers are providing “grab and go” meals to the seniors who lack food in their homes, and we are also still hand-delivering about 500 Meals on Wheels lunches to homebound seniors every day.

Finally, our Mental Health counseling program is in full operation by providing tele-health sessions - which are extremely crucial given the stress and anxiety caused by the virus and the job losses.

Our commitment is unwavering, so please consider making a special [gift](#) to help the low-income residents of East Harlem survive this especially challenging time.

Thank you for your support of Union Settlement, and please stay safe.

Sincerely,

David Nocenti

Executive Director