

# FRIENDS OF THE NEW YORK CITY NURSE-FAMILY PARTNERSHIP

## IMPACT REPORT 2020-2021



**Transforming lives  
two generations at  
a time**



# LOOKING FORWARD WITH OUR FOUNDERS

In our society, mothers and their needs are grossly undervalued, especially low income women of color. For them, one of the biggest issues is the lack of financial resources, plain and simple. Increasingly, policy experts are suggesting the most efficient way to move people out of poverty is to put money into their pockets and let them purchase the programs and services they need. Friends of NYC NFP has been doing just that.

Friends is a unique add-on to the nationally renowned Nurse Family Partnership model. It exists only here in New York City where my co-founder Chris Wasserstein and I believe the best way to level the playing field for babies is to strengthen and build upon NFP's evidence-based program. We know babies born into high stress environments face threats to their safety, brain development, and chances of staying alive. Under NFP's model, which pairs a nurse with a first-time mother from pregnancy until the child is two, nurses give enrolled mothers the tools needed to achieve healthy pregnancies and successful parenting.

Friends then provides **additional resources critical to assisting NFP moms to reach the program's third goal of economic self-sufficiency**. Over the last five years, support from committed donors has allowed us to help hundreds of mothers and their children remove the financial barriers blocking them from entering post-secondary education or purchasing the resources to successfully complete it (e.g. laptops, metrocards, child care). Additionally, last year we understood that many new moms could not focus on career and school while living in an ongoing pandemic. So we created an Emergency Fund offering electronic gift cards for whatever a mom thought was essential. Since then, we have added emergency funds to our ongoing services in order to continue to safeguard families from losing their homes and to assure that they have access to food and medicine when public programs cannot meet their needs.

Our work is centered around the notion that moms know what is best for their families. But, as we look ahead, we realize that their vision of possibility is often limited by their circumstances and that we could be reaching larger numbers of moms if we provided education and mentoring around short term career training opportunities, something the nurses have limited time or experience to do.

In this endeavor we would support both clients and alums. We would help link them to existing workforce training as well as provide soft skills such as resume building and mock interviews. Additionally, we will expand our support for moms needing mental health resources. The moms in our program deal with traumatic life events including childhood abuse, family dysfunction, homelessness, single motherhood, and food insecurity, and the stress of these situations is compounded by the pandemic.

**We cannot imagine a more important time in our nation's history than today to support additional initiatives that empower moms to become great parents and to attain economic self-sufficiency.**

Thank you for joining us on this journey,

*Susan Orkin*

Susan Orkin

Co-Founder and President

*Chris Wasserstein*

Christine Wasserstein

Co-Founder and Vice President



# GOOD FRIENDS HELP YOU GROW AND FRIENDS HAS SOME REALLY GREAT FRIENDS!

Throughout the hardships of the last year and a half, our donors continued to show their support and ensured Friends was able to keep providing much needed aid to our moms and babies. Friends understands new moms can't be focused on career and school when living in an ongoing pandemic. We created an Emergency Fund at the onset of the pandemic and will continue to ensure families are safeguarded from losing their homes, stay safe, and have access to food and medicine.

**It is our firm belief that when donors provide financial resources, moms and babies don't just survive, they thrive!** None of this would be possible without you. Thank you for supporting us throughout the pandemic and as we look towards a brighter future. **For a full list of supporters, please visit our [supporters page](#) on our website.**

## Your Support Makes a Real World Difference



*"The Hearts Desire award, has had a MONUMENTAL impact on my life and my baby's. Receiving this award to go back-to-school, made me believe in MYSELF, when no one thought I, a homeless, eight month pregnant, single-mother, of a beautiful 15 month old could go back to school, post COVID-19.*

*Nothing was normal during 2020. This award was the first step to becoming a RDMS: Registered Diagnostic Medical Sonographer and gaining the financial support to finally earn an income that will support my daughter and my son, Emmalyn, and Joziah. The Hearts Desire Award blessed me with my hearts desire – hope. Hope to have courage and crush my goals!" - Melissa 2020 Heart's Desire Fund recipient*



### 2020 Financials at a glance:

**Program Costs: \$232,798**

**Fundraising: \$57,837**

**Management & General: \$21,076**

**This is Dariana and her son. Their family was hit hard by the pandemic but through our Emergency Fund, a gift of \$300 provided a month's worth of groceries and allowed her to put her money toward her rent.**

**Dariana is also a Heart's Desire Fund recipient, With your support, she received her Certified Nursing Assistant Certificate..**



**75%**  
OF EXPENSES GO DIRECTLY TO MOMS & BABIES IN NEED



# WE HELP MOMS AND BABIES SUCCEED

**This is Genvea Hidalgo Nazario who received a Heart's Desire Fund award to help cover tuition fees last year.**

Genvea works full time while juggling life as a single mom. She wanted to go back to school but the costs made it impossible. The Heart's Desire Fund helped her to go back to school and covered fees.

The Heart's Desire Fund (HDF) makes it possible for vulnerable mothers to pursue post-secondary education. Friends reviews essays from interested mothers and letters of recommendation from their nurses. We pay tuition and necessary additional resources such as Metro Cards, laptops, books and short-term child care.

*"Now, when looking to the future I see a home for my daughter and I see us moving out of the ghetto. I can afford a home on my own. **I see a happy, higher-educated mother and her daughter living on their own with no worries.**"*



**Meet Smriti Ulak and her Daughter, recent Emergency Fund recipients.**



Smriti is a native of Nepal. She had been working as a nail technician while her husband worked as an UBER driver. Like so many of our clients, Smriti and her husband were both unable to work during the pandemic. For less than \$100, Friends was able to provide Smriti's family with diapers, wipes, baby spoons, sippy cups and bibs to help get them through the worst of the pandemic and ease the burden of unemployment through our Emergency Fund.

**Thanks to the generous support of donors, Friends was able to continue providing for our clients during a critical time.**

# CHEERS TO FIVE YEARS

Five years ago, Susan Orkin, a social worker and Christine Wasserstein, a psychotherapist, launched Friends of New York City Nurse-Family Partnership to assist the NYC NFP program. When they discovered Nurse-Family Partnership in New York City had no mechanism for stimulating or collecting philanthropic contributions from individuals to improve the lives of low-income mothers, **they decided to do something.**

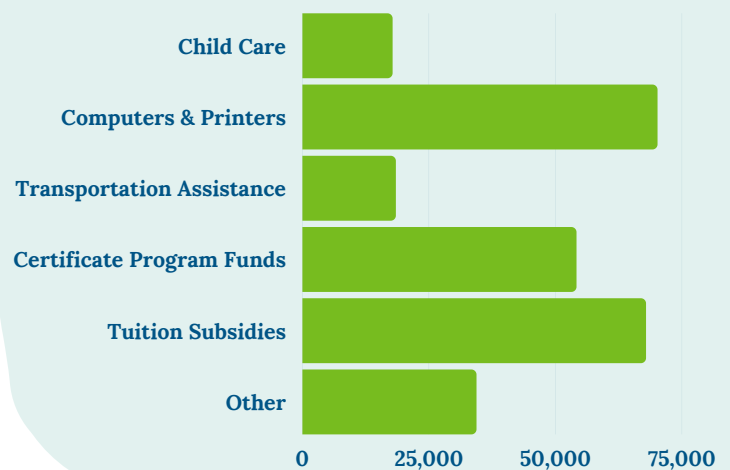
As women in the helping professions, **they believed that by teaming up with NYC NFP they could increase the program's impact.** Friends - the result of Chris and Susan's vision - has grown into a major supporting arm of the NYC Nurse-Family Partnership, earning the gratitude of moms and respect of nurses and supporters. This year, we welcomed several new board members and grew our staff to a five person, part-time team all dedicated to helping Friends achieve further success.



# 95%

OF HEART'S DESIRE FUNDED MOMS MADE PROGRESS TOWARD THEIR INTENDED GOALS

Since 2017, Friends has awarded 303 mothers with funds and equipment through our Heart's Desire Fund totaling \$262,810. (In addition in 2020, we gave out \$113,000 in Emergency Funds.)



## Friends Welcomes Karin Romans as new Executive Director

I joined Friends after the birth of my son, and I know firsthand how exhausting and isolating the past year and half has been. The expression “it takes a village” is true and I am glad that, at Friends, we can be part of that village for NFP moms.

**The role Friends plays in helping mothers achieve self-sufficiency cannot be overstated.** Nurses can build moms' confidence but they cannot remove financial barriers standing in the way of their goals: what an incredible waste when a mom who receives a full scholarship to college can't go to school because bus fare is too expensive.

In five short years, we have increased the number of moms we reach from 44 to more than 500. But our work is more than just the number of moms we help. **Our follow up shows more than 95% of our 2020 grant recipients used their awards to make progress toward their goals.** I am honored to be leading this work and look toward expanding our impact as we look to the future.



# Hearts Desire Fund

More than 70% of NFP participants want to pursue higher education or certification programs. But the stress of putting food on the table, finding and paying for safe housing, and raising a healthy baby with minimal support means that mothers cannot prioritize their own dreams. **This is why your donations make a critical difference in the lives of our clients.**

The Heart's Desire Fund grants awards for moms to return to school, launch new business endeavors, and removes countless other financial barriers standing in the way of their personal and professional growth.

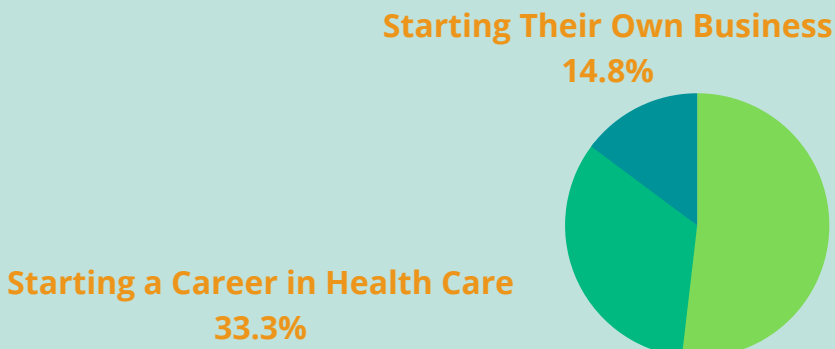
**Moms like Michelle (pictured right).** She had a been working as a fashion stylist before the pandemic limited her ability to make a decent wage and support her children. The Heart's Desire Fund helped her buy equipment and take classes to make a career shift into web design.



Before receiving the Hearts Desire Funding I was stressed and depressed about not being able to fund the process of getting my degree evaluated and completing the necessary workshops after having a baby and not working for so long. I really felt hopeless at that time. Now, I see myself in the classroom and making a decent wage that can take care of my family the way they deserve. This program has been very helpful to me as a first time mom.

ABEGAIL GAGE, HEART'S DESIRE FUND RECIPIENT

## HEART'S DESIRE FUND RECIPIENTS IN 2021 ARE HEADING TOWARDS BRIGHT FUTURES

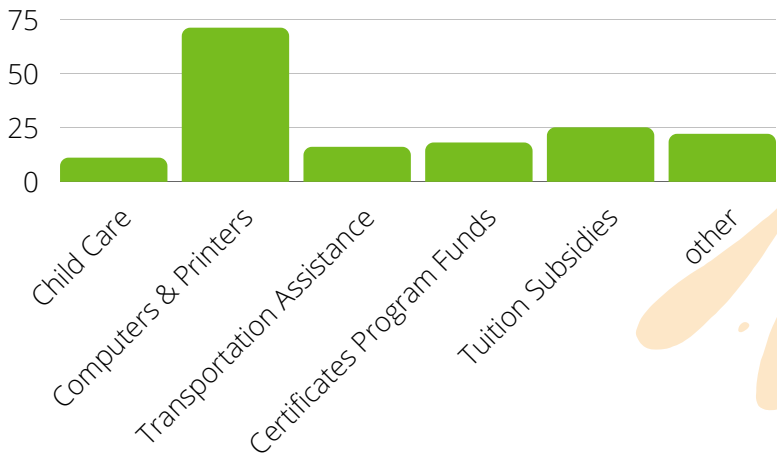


The Heart's Desire Fund supports women at varying stages of their motherhood journey. Though all are low-income, first-time moms, some are mid schooling while others are seeking professional support. Some are raising their child with a partner while others are going it alone. One thing they have in common is a desire to create better futures for themselves and their children.

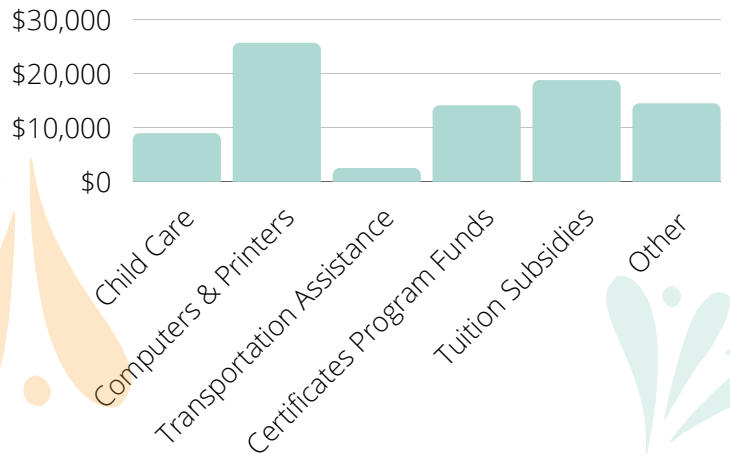
**Pursuing Higher Education**  
51.9%

Thanks for helping us fulfill so many hearts' desires for our hardworking moms and their families.

Number of Awards Given



\$\$ Amount of Awards



# LEAP [LEARN EAT AND PLAY]

COVID-19 has been a catalyst for change in so many places and Friends has felt this within our LEAP program. Going from routine in-person gatherings to zoom sessions has pushed the boundaries of how we help our clients continue to get the support they need through this uncertain time.

Until the COVID pandemic, LEAP had been in person program designed to create community and support for NFP moms through in person get togethers. COVID-19 restrictions made life more isolating for new mothers, and women experiencing their first pregnancies felt more overwhelmed than ever before. In response, we took a more critical look at our programs in order to deliver informative and engaging content to hundreds of first time moms in an online-only setting.

Your support ensures mothers have programming that reduces isolation, improves social supports, and works to improve the relationship between mom and baby.

Alex Albert joined the Friends team in 2021. Alex coordinates the Heart's Desire Fund, LEAP Program, and training opportunities extended to the nurses of NYC NFP. Previously, Alex spent the last five years working in non-profit development, program operations, and reproductive and maternal health research.

In Alex's own words, "**Zoom fatigue is real.** As we gear up for Fall, we're looking to engage first-time moms with sessions that include raffles, hands-on 'do it yourself' workshops, and maybe even prenatal yoga! Though we'll still be virtual, we plan to focus on making programming as interactive as possible."





# Help Make a Lasting Impact

NO OTHER ORGANIZATION IN NYC GIVES FIRST-TIME, LOW-INCOME MOTHERS THIS KIND OF FINANCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT.

\$25,000



Donations at this level enable us to grow our programming to support more mothers and babies

\$20,000



Covers fees for 5 new moms to complete a fast-track Medical Assistant Program, while covering child care as they pursue professional success

\$10,000



Pays off overdue tuition balances for at least 6 women, providing them the opportunity to go back to school

\$5,000



Assists 5 nurses to better serve NFP clients, paying for continuing education courses

\$1,500



Will equip 3 moms with laptops which allows them to work at home with their children

## Ways to Give

Support from donors helps Friends provide life-changing opportunities for first-time moms and their babies. If you are not part of our community, we're always looking to make a new friend!

### DIRECT DONATIONS

Make checks payable to Friends of NYC NFP:  
1035 Fifth Avenue, Suite 10B, New York, NY 10028.  
Give securely online at [friendsofnycnfp.org](http://friendsofnycnfp.org)

### HOST AN EVENT

Our volunteer hosts make a big impact by helping to raise awareness—and funds—for the moms and babies in our community. Contact us to learn more.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Karin Romans, Executive Director,  
[Karin@friendsofnycnfp.org](mailto:Karin@friendsofnycnfp.org).

### ADDITIONAL WAYS TO GIVE

Contact us to learn how you can easily set up your own online fundraiser to support Friends of NYC NFP. We also work with family foundations, accept stock donations, and are honored to be included in your estate plans.

### BECOME A VOLUNTEER

We value our volunteers and ambassadors. Volunteers can have the biggest impact on our clients' lives by providing expertise they would not have access to otherwise. To volunteer as a LEAP group leader or support us at an event please contact us today.

Friends is a registered 501(c)3. Donations are tax deductible to the fullest amount allowed by law. EIN: 47-4519333