



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
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**MAYOR'S FUND TO ADVANCE NEW YORK CITY ANNOUNCES FUNDRAISING  
DRIVE FOR THOSE AFFECTED BY EAST HARLEM EXPLOSION AND BUILDING  
COLLAPSE**

*Safe Horizon, American Red Cross of Greater New York, Union Settlement, and  
Little Sisters of the Assumption Family Health Service will administer services*

*The Fund has already received \$250,000 in pledges from the Real Estate Board of New York,  
Con Edison, the Association for a Better New York and the Rudin family, and the families and  
Board members of East Harlem Tutorial Program*

**NEW YORK** – Today First Lady Chirlane McCray, Chair of the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City, announced the launch of a fundraising drive that will address the ongoing needs of those affected by the East Harlem explosion and building collapse on March 12. The funds will support a strategic relief plan with three primary components: a victims' assistance fund to cover costs associated with rent, funeral arrangements and household expenses; case management and counseling services; and community-based outreach focused on immigrant communities. First Lady McCray made the announcement alongside Mayor Bill de Blasio at Bethel Gospel Assembly, which counts among its congregation two victims of the collapse, and later at the Church of God.

The first two components of the program will be administered by Safe Horizon. Union Settlement and LSA Family Health Service, which are based in East Harlem, will lead the community outreach effort. The Red Cross will continue to provide disaster mental health support to survivors of the East Harlem explosion, as well as help to transition disaster survivors from immediate needs to ongoing recovery.

The Real Estate Board of New York, Con Edison, the Association for a Better New York and the Rudin family, and the families and Board members of East Harlem Tutorial Program have already pledged \$250,000 to the effort. The Mayor's Office is also working closely with Speaker Mark-Viverito's office to establish and operate the relief fund effort. Speaker Mark-Viverito has

provided key leadership throughout the tragedy, helping victims and displaced residents connect to critically-needed services.

“If there’s one thing New Yorkers can count on, it’s other New Yorkers,” said **First Lady Chirlane McCray, Chair of the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City**. “While the primary objective of the Mayor’s Fund is to support large-scale projects that address persistent problems, when disaster strikes, we will never hesitate to use the flexibility of the Fund to provide our neighbors with crucial assistance.”

“The worst of times often bring out the best in our city, and that is certainly true today,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “Thanks to the generosity of our private sector partners, combined with the passion and experience of the non-profit organizations that have signed on to this effort, New Yorkers, who just a few days ago lost everything, can take comfort in knowing they won’t have to walk the road to recovery alone.”

“I would like to thank the First Lady and Mayor de Blasio for stepping up to help East Harlem during this horrible tragedy,” said **City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito**. “I would also like to thank our first responders, the Red Cross, countless volunteers, and everyone else who donated food, office space, homes and their time to help East Harlem – these actions will never be forgotten. Through the Mayor’s Fund, we will be able to help New Yorkers affected by the blast and begin to heal together. New Yorkers always come together in times of crisis to help one another – and the response our community has received has been overwhelming.”

“Almost immediately after the collapse, concerned individuals, businesses, and service providers began reaching out to us, asking how they could help,” said **Gabrielle Fialkoff, Senior Advisor to the Mayor and Director of the Office of Strategic Partnerships**. “The plan we developed is a true collaboration that draws on the best of our city’s unparalleled public, private and non-profit sectors.”

The services will be made available as the initial response efforts led by the American Red Cross of Greater New York and Salvation Army phase out. The providers will conduct aggressive outreach efforts. Residents housed in the two buildings that were destroyed in the explosion, as well as the four surrounding properties, are eligible for relief services. Crisis intervention and counseling will also be made available to community members affected by the explosion.

The Mayor’s Fund developed the strategic relief plan in close consultation with the service providers that have been leading the immediate response effort, all of which have experience in relief and recovery. The line-up of services being announced will address ongoing needs that are not always covered by existing programs. Services include:

- **Victims’ Assistance Fund:** Safe Horizon will administer a victims’ assistance fund. After meeting with eligible individuals and families to assess their needs, Safe Horizon will process payments directly to the victims, or to specific vendors on behalf of the victims. Expenses that would qualify for this assistance fund include various rental costs, home goods and furnishings, funerals, and transportation. Eligibility guidelines will be

developed jointly with the city and the Mayor's Fund, and grants will be made up to \$15,000.

- **Case Management and Counseling Services:** Safe Horizon will station a Spanish-speaking Masters-level clinician and a case manager at their Community Office in East Harlem. The team will provide victims with crisis intervention services, mental health assessments, initial trauma-focused education and counseling, and linkages to longer-term treatment and other resources where needed. Along with Union Settlement and LSA Family Health Service, Safe Horizon will develop and distribute educational materials to households affected by the collapse.
- **Community-Based Outreach:** Union Settlement and LSA Family Health Service, both of which have deep roots in East Harlem, will provide grassroots outreach to local residents in order to expand the impact of this effort.

“Our commitment to the children and families of East Harlem isn’t limited to academics,” said **Jeff Ginsburg, Executive Director of East Harlem Tutorial Program**. “We immediately knew that we wanted to play a central role in the recovery process, and the plan developed by the Mayor’s Fund is far and away the best opportunity for us to leverage our resources and make a real difference.”

“Helping people when they need it most is what we do, so we are proud to be on the frontlines of this effort,” said **Liz Roberts, Chief Program Officer at Safe Horizon**. “Along with our fellow non-profit partners, we would like to thank the Mayor’s Fund and all of the donors for supporting our work in East Harlem. Together, we will rebuild this neighborhood, one person at a time.”

“Bringing together resources from the public and private sectors will make a real difference in supporting the individuals impacted by this tragic incident,” said **Rob Speyer, Chair of the Real Estate Board of New York**. “Our thoughts are with the victims and the displaced families at this difficult time.”

All program elements will be in place within the next 48 hours. Victims seeking services should contact Safe Horizon’s 24 hour hotline at 866-689-HELP (4357) to learn more.

New Yorkers who wish to contribute to the effort should call 311 or visit the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City website: [www.nyc.gov/fund](http://www.nyc.gov/fund).

## **About the Service Providers**

### **Safe Horizon:**

Safe Horizon is the largest victim services agency in the United States, with more than 50 locations, touching the lives of 250,000 children, adults and families affected by crime and abuse each year. Program areas include: Domestic Violence; Child Abuse; Human Trafficking; Sexual

Assault; Street-involved Youth; Court & Community. Safe Horizon works in all five boroughs of New York City.

**LSA Family Health Service (“the Little Sisters”):**

LSA Family Health Service, the “Little Sisters,” a neighborhood-based nonprofit, offers a holistic model of human services to the underserved, marginalized, and poorest families in East Harlem through specialized home visits and on-site care and services. Since 1958, LSA has focused on mitigating and preventing the adverse impact poverty has on the health of some of the most vulnerable New Yorkers and immigrants of “El Barrio.” LSA’s programs include: Advocacy, a Food Pantry, Family Support Preventive Services, Parenting and Child Support, Early Intervention, Environmental Health and Family Asthma, Nursing and The Sharing Place Thrift Store.

**Union Settlement:**

Founded in 1895, Union Settlement Association is an on-the-ground resource for East Harlem residents of all ages, and an advocate for the needs of underserved communities. Program areas include: Adult Education; Early Childhood Education; College Readiness; Manhattan HIV Care Network; Mental Health Counseling; Youth Services; Senior Services. Union Settlement serves more than 10,000 residents of East Harlem and surrounding communities each year.

**American Red Cross:**

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies about 40 percent of the nation’s blood; teaches skills that save lives; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a not-for-profit organization that depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission.

**About the Funders**

**East Harlem Tutorial Program:**

Founded in 1958, East Harlem Tutorial Program (EHTP) prepares students with the academic skills, strength of character and emotional well-being to excel in high school and college, to lead in their communities, and to realize their best possible selves. As a vital East Harlem education and enrichment center, EHTP works with students from early childhood through adulthood. EHTP operates high-performing, student centered K-12 after school programs and K-12 public charter schools, East Harlem Scholars Academies.

**Real Estate Board of New York:**

The Real Estate Board of New York’s membership consists of more than 15,000 property owners, developers, brokers, managers, attorneys, architects and other institutions and individuals professionally interested in New York City real estate.

**Con Edison:**

Con Edison supports hundreds of nonprofit organizations in New York City and Westchester County to strengthen neighborhoods, sustain communities and improve lives. These

philanthropic efforts support the arts, environment, and important educational initiatives in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Many of Con Edison's 14,000 employees share a personal commitment to the region's vitality through their own volunteer efforts and also choose to support education by utilizing the company's matching gifts program.

**Association for a Better New York:**

Association for a Better New York, chaired by William C. Rudin, is dedicated to improving the quality of life for those that live and work in New York City and for those that visit. We bring together hundreds of the city's finest citizens and organizations in the joint commitment of finding solutions to the challenges facing our city, and highlighting the best New York City has to offer. The ABNY Foundation was created to provide funds for social, educational, and civic initiatives that enhance the quality of life in the five boroughs of New York City.