

# CRAIN'S NEW YORK BUSINESS 2021

# NOTABLE

## IN NONPROFITS AND PHILANTHROPY



GETTY IMAGES

Aside from providing all manner of cultural, social and health services, New York City's vast nonprofit ecosystem is an economic powerhouse, accounting for nearly one-fifth of the jobs in the Big Apple.

Like every local "industry," the nonprofit sector in recent decades has had to navigate a variety of large-scale challenges, from 9/11 to the Great Recession to Superstorm Sandy.

But never in its history has the nonprofit realm been challenged as it has been this past year—nor has the sector and its supporters so robustly demonstrated resilience and purpose. During the 12 months dominated by disease, disruption and, all too often, death, New Yorkers individually and institutionally showed their generosity with their wallets, time, creativity and spirit.

This list of Notables in Nonprofits and Philanthropy is a celebration of 57 New York heroes who facilitated or led nonprofit work in the face of the pandemic. In compiling it, *Crain's* Custom sought to highlight a cohort of individuals whose fundraising, volunteer work, program management and other charitable efforts enabled New Yorkers to navigate a once-in-a-generation emergency. Indeed, the honorees have greatly helped the city emerge from a ravaging pandemic scathed but intact.

To find these individuals, *Crain's* consulted with trusted sources in the nonprofit and philanthropy realms and in the New York City business world. *Crain's* carefully vetted the nominations, which individuals and companies in the area submitted. Ultimately, all of the honorees who made the list were chosen for their efforts to help New Yorkers ride out the upheaval wrought by Covid-19.

Read on to learn how these honorees came to the rescue of a city gripped by disaster.

**METHODOLOGY:** The honorees did not pay to be included. Their profiles were drawn from submitted nomination materials. This list is not comprehensive. It includes only executives for whom nominations were submitted and accepted after an editorial review. To qualify for this list, nominees had to be working in the nonprofit or philanthropy sectors for a minimum of five years and have delivered innovative programs, managed volunteers or fundraised in response to safety concerns or other challenges in the wake of the pandemic. In addition, nominees had to demonstrate in their submission professional achievements from the past 12 months.

### ELIZABETH ALEXANDER

President  
Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

As a poet, educator and memoirist, Elizabeth Alexander brings refreshing new perspectives on philanthropy to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, a major funder of the arts and humanities. As the foundation's



president, Alexander led a reimagining of its strategic direction in 2020, ensuring that all grant-making is now done through a

social justice lens. Sample initiatives include the Million Book Project, which brings literature to prison inmates nationwide, and support for the Library of Congress to broaden access among communities of color. On top of Mellon's usual annual grantmaking, Alexander directed an additional \$200 million in emergency grantmaking in 2020 in response to the challenges of the pandemic. That funding has supported the NYC Covid-19 Response and Impact Fund and the Artist Relief Fund, among other organizations.

### DEBORAH ANTOINE

Chief executive officer  
Women's Sports Foundation

Deborah Antoine's great-grandfather, a Methodist minister, bequeathed to her a mission that has animated her four-decades-long career in the nonprofit sector: "Do all the good that you can, for as many



as you can, for as long as you can." That's a mandate Antoine has fulfilled in various ways. As chief executive

officer of the Women's Sports Foundation, Antoine oversees the provision of grants to community-based organizations, bettering the lives of underserved girls nationwide. During the pandemic, Antoine organized the distribution of an action plan to keep girls physically and mentally fit. She previously founded the Brooklyn-based Hope Program, which provides the homeless with the skills needed to secure and retain employment.

### CAROLINE ANDERSON

Founder and president  
BloomAgainBklyn

Caroline Anderson was keenly aware of the healing powers and emotional benefits of fresh flowers when she founded BloomAgainBklyn six years ago. The goal of the organization, of which she is president, is to



upcycle unsold flowers and arrangements from weddings and corporate events and distribute them to the isolated and downtrodden residents in New York City.

Under Anderson's direction, BloomAgainBklyn brings flowers to homebound seniors, at-risk youth and individuals served by homeless shelters, food pantries and nursing homes. Since the pandemic, that roster has included front-line workers in hospitals and health care facilities. Several major publications have recognized Anderson for her charitable work.

### MOHAMED ATTIA

Managing director of the Street Vendor Project  
Urban Justice Center

When Mohamed Attia arrived in New York from Egypt at age 20, he worked at a Harlem bodega to earn money to buy a street vending license. He is now managing director of the Street



Vendor Project, a legal advocacy wing of the Urban Justice Center, which consists of 2,400 members and seeks to transform life

for the vendors on New York City streets. Like Attia, most of those vendors are working-class immigrants. In the pandemic, when vendors struggled with decreased foot traffic and increased health risks, Attia raised nearly \$200,000 to ease their plight. Recently, Attia and the Street Vendor Project successfully lobbied the City Council to double the number of available street vending permits.

### GARY BAGLEY

Executive director  
New York Cares

Gary Bagley is a nonprofit leader committed to civic engagement, community building and education. As executive director of New York Cares, the largest volunteer network in the city and a provider of social service



programs at 1,000 nonprofits and schools, Bagley has played a crucial role in the organization's Covid-19 response.

Under his leadership, New York Cares has helped the city's most vulnerable by serving 33 million meals to food-insecure individuals throughout the five boroughs. In addition, it has ensured continuity of education by providing 59,000 tech support calls to students in transitional living and struggling to remain connected to their classrooms. Bagley was instrumental in making thousands of virtual wellness checks on isolated seniors and in implementing a large-scale coat drive.

THE U.S. HAS **1.6 MILLION** NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.  
NEW YORK STATE HAD **91,758** NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS IN 2020.

—INDEPENDENT SECTOR

## 2021 NOTABLE IN NONPROFITS AND PHILANTHROPY

### DAHANN BILLINGS-BUFORD

Chief executive officer

Ross Initiative in Sports for Equality

During her two decades of public service and nonprofit



work in New York City, Diahann Billings-Buford has experienced firsthand the positive outcomes of committing to

equality of opportunity. Billings-Buford is chief executive officer at the Ross Initiative in Sports for Equality, which works to end racial disparities and push for social justice through sports. To that end, she has led programming, engineered partnerships and arranged outreach to community organizations and local schools to further the RISE mission. In 2020 Billings-Buford worked with team members to develop creative ways to maintain the organization's impact, such as through a web-based interactive learning tool that has seen more than 75,000 engagements.

### SUSAN BIRNBAUM

President and chief executive officer

New York City Police Foundation

Susan Birnbaum has raised hundreds of millions of dollars for important causes during her



career in the nonprofit sector. As president and chief executive officer of the New York City Police Foundation, she

champions fundraising initiatives to improve the quality of city police services, connect officers with community youth and make the city a safer place. When Covid-19 struck, Birnbaum leveraged her connections to procure masks, gloves, sanitizer and face shields for the men and women in blue. In addition, she arranged for meals and hotel stays for officers who needed to separate from their families to mitigate the risk of virus exposure. Birnbaum spearheads initiatives, such as the Options Program, which teaches young people how to navigate difficult situations involving gangs, sex trafficking, cyberbullying, guns and hate crimes.

### JONATHAN BOWLES

Executive director

Center for an Urban Future

The Center for an Urban Future is a think tank that uses research to elevate issues related to inequality and economic



mobility and to propose solutions to New York City's most pressing problems. As the center's executive director,

Jonathan Bowles is the architect behind its policy agenda. In the past two decades Bowles has propelled the center to its position as a mainstay of New York thought. Under his leadership, it has published hundreds of action-focused reports. In recent months Bowles has catalyzed support for the city's neediest by exposing the difficulties wrought by the pandemic on low-income workers, immigrants and communities of color. The center has presented policy proposals for rebuilding the economy with a renewed focus on equity.

### CAROLA BRACCO

Executive director

Neighbors Link

Carola Bracco, the daughter of Bolivian immigrants, has intimate knowledge of the immigrant experience and its



challenges. That's part of what makes her so well suited to serve as executive director of Neighbors Link, which works to

strengthen communities by helping immigrants successfully integrate. Under Bracco's direction, the organization provides educational programs, workforce development, legal services, early childhood programs, and nutrition programs to newly arrived and established immigrants. During the pandemic, when many service workers were short on income, Bracco arranged food drives to come to their aid. She is credited with forging valuable community relationships with police departments, corporations and other nonprofits.

### RUTH BROWNE

President and chief executive officer

Ronald McDonald House New York

When pediatric cancer patients travel to New York to access



advanced care not available elsewhere, they can bank on finding a supportive temporary housing environment at

Ronald McDonald House New York. Under the leadership of Ruth Browne, its president and chief executive officer, Ronald McDonald House serves thousands of families from all 50 states and around the world. Services include accommodations, transportation, educational services, food and nutrition, language access, and more for patients and their families. During the pandemic, Browne and her team labored to ensure that services would still be provided to those in need by developing virtual programming and online support groups.

**TEN PERCENT** OF AMERICA'S PRIVATE WORKFORCE IS EMPLOYED IN THE NONPROFIT SECTOR, MAKING IT THE THIRD-LARGEST WORKFORCE NATIONWIDE (AFTER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AND MANUFACTURING).

### —INDEPENDENT SECTOR

### CECILIA CLARKE

President and chief executive officer

Brooklyn Community Foundation

The year 2020 brought record grantmaking for the Brooklyn Community Foundation. The philanthropy, which works with



donors and community leaders to fund racial justice and social change efforts, distributed nearly \$13 million of

charitable funding. Credit for that accomplishment goes in no small part to Cecilia Clarke, the foundation's president and chief executive officer. Early on, she was instrumental in the development of a Covid relief fund that prioritized support for people of color hard hit by the pandemic. Clarke previously served as founder and executive director of the Sadie Nash Leadership Project, an educational leadership initiative aimed at low-income young women in New York City and Newark, New Jersey. City & State has named her to its Nonprofit Power 50 and Brooklyn Power 50 lists.

### NEILL COLEMAN

Chief philanthropy officer

Trinity Church Wall Street

As chief philanthropy officer of Trinity Church Wall Street, an inclusive Episcopal parish, Neill Coleman was the prime mover behind the church's massive



grantmaking efforts in response to the pandemic. Under his direction, Trinity Church provided rapid-response

grants to help organizations acquire personal protective equipment and meet overtime payments. It also collaborated with the Nonprofit Finance Fund to make available \$10 million in interest-free loans to nonprofits. Coleman, who previously served in the Bloomberg and Obama administrations, worked to establish a coalition of faith leaders to call on Mayor Bill de Blasio to create a more just reentry system for the formerly incarcerated. He sits on the board of the Stonewall Community Foundation, which works to address the needs of New York City's LGBTQ community.

### AIDAN CONNOLLY

Executive director

Irish Arts Center

Since 2007, Aidan Connolly has led the development and operations of the Irish Arts Center, which promotes Irish arts and culture. It's a space for



both Irish natives and the general public to come together to celebrate the Irish culture through music, dance, litera-

ture and traditional Irish language. As executive director of the center, Connolly has overseen its steady growth and its emergence as a celebrated New York City cultural center. In addition, he has governed the center's civic programming, including free events, such as St. Patrick's Book Day, wherein books—many by Irish authors—are distributed throughout the city. Throughout the pandemic, Connolly has worked to ensure the safety of the center's staff and the addition of virtual programming.

### GEORGE CONTOS

Chief executive officer

YAI

Since George Contos became CEO more than five years ago at YAI, an organization that provides services for the intellectually and development-



tally disabled, its operations have grown by leaps and bounds. Its annual budget grew by 24%, it acquired a school in

Harlem for children with traumatic brain injuries, and it launched an international consulting department. Contos is part of a New York City task force that works to improve outcomes for individuals facing mental health crises. During the pandemic, he insisted on hazard pay for YAI front-line employees despite reduced government funding, and he ensured that YAI's supported residences remained fully staffed through the worst of 2020. Contos has held various board positions at nonprofits and government councils in the disabilities field.

### LISA DAVID

President and chief executive officer

Public Health Solutions

Many low-income New Yorkers have Lisa David to thank for their access to nutritious food, health insurance and maternal



health support. She is president and chief executive officer of Public Health Solutions, a major public health nonprofit that

focuses on achieving health equity for all low-income New Yorkers. When it became clear at the start of the pandemic that the virus would disproportionately affect marginalized communities, David moved swiftly to transition PHS' operations to a virtual format and ensured that offerings such as health insurance enrollment assistance and child health programs would continue to be available—albeit in video-based sessions. In addition, she led efforts to source and distribute masks and face shields to community organizations across the city.



CHRISTIAN DOUCETTE

Director of community engagement  
CaringKind

Christian Doucette amplifies the work of Alzheimer's and dementia caregivers as director of community engagement at CaringKind, a community-based nonprofit serving such caregivers. He is creator of "Caregiver/

Storyteller," a popular podcast about Alzheimer's caregiving, and he is the individual behind a series of broadcast-quality video promotions developed for the organization. In 2020 Doucette transformed the annual CaringKind Alzheimer's Walk into a fully virtual format. The event actually surpassed the net revenue brought in the previous year. Earlier in his career, he worked for a number of progressive nonprofits, including organizations focused on nature conservation, LGBTQ youth, HIV/AIDS action and literacy.



RACINE DROZ

Director of donor relations and supply chain management  
City Harvest

Racine Droz has worked to feed needy New Yorkers for the past 12 years at City Harvest, the city's largest food-rescue organization. As director of donor relations and supply chain management, Droz sources food

that would otherwise be wasted and orchestrates the delivery of such provisions to those in need. She has fostered enduring partnerships with various food businesses—and under her leadership, the amount of food rescued from donors has increased by more than 124%. As co-lead of City Harvest's Disaster Feeding Team, Droz was instrumental in the sourcing of large quantities of additional food during the pandemic. She similarly helped feed disaster-stricken individuals in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy in 2012 and following Hurricane Irma in Florida in 2017.



ALEJANDRA DUQUE CIFUENTES

Executive director  
Dance/NYC

When stages across the country went dark last year, Alejandra Duque Cifuentes stood by the dance work-force she serves as executive director of Dance/NYC. Under Duque Cifuentes' leadership, the organization,

which promotes the appreciation and performance of dance across the metropolitan area, created the Coronavirus Dance Impact Survey in March 2020 to better understand the evolving needs of dancers. That resulted in a fundraising effort that saw more than \$1 million in relief funds raised for dance professionals and organizations. Duque Cifuentes is a fierce proponent of justice in the industry, working to help African American, Latino, disabled and immigrant artists persevere despite the additional obstacles they face.



THOMAS EXTON

Chief advancement officer  
Actors Fund

Thomas Exton can boast more than four decades of fundraising experience—which he put to very good use last year as he procured funds for important causes during the global crisis. As chief advancement officer of the Actors Fund, a human services

organization that assists the entertainment community, he worked to raise \$62 million in 2020—a 226% increase from the previous year. In a newly virtual world, Exton pivoted fundraising activities to online programming. He previously did fundraising work for the Wildlife Trust, the New York Botanical Garden and the Museum of American Folk Art, now rebranded as the American Folk Art Museum. Exton, who is passionate about increasing diversity in the fundraising field, works to cultivate equality and inclusivity in the teams he leads.



RITA FINKEL

Co-president  
Armory Foundation

The leadership of the Armory Foundation, which aims to promote fitness and education among New York City's young people, has had to reimagine its operations and programming in the past year. And Co-president Rita Finkel has been vital to that process.

Under her management, a virtual workout program for kids involving Olympic athletes was created, and an indoor marathon relay fundraiser was recast as a virtual event. She also directs Armory College Prep, an after-school program for student athletes in New York City offering academic support, test preparation and financial aid guidance. Recently, the Armory Foundation joined forces with New York-Presbyterian Hospital to transform its site into a temporary vaccine center.



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2021 NOTABLE IN NONPROFITS AND PHILANTHROPY

REBECCA FONTES

Director of business partnerships  
City Harvest

City Harvest aims to feed hungry New Yorkers—and Rebecca Fontes, its director of business partnerships, aims to keep its



coffers full. To meet the increased demand precipitated by the pandemic, Fontes raised more money than ever, with

her team bringing in revenue 458% higher than budgeted goals. That whopping success was in part because of her ability to involve corporate partners in organizational campaigns as well as her team's cultivation of hundreds of valuable new partners. In addition, Fontes spearheaded the launch of City Harvest's annual children's hunger campaign in a virtual format, an event that helped feed more than 44,000 children and their families during the summer.

RACHAEL GAZDICK

Chief executive officer  
New York Edge

Rachael Gazdick has devoted her career to pushing for equity in education. She is chief executive officer at New York



Edge, which provides youth from marginalized communities with the academic, health and wellness, and leadership skills

that are the harbingers of success. Under Gazdick's direction, programs ranging from chess and fencing clubs to robotics classes and career preparation are provided for free to thousands of public school students. Upon the closure of New York City schools last year, she oversaw the transition of these critical after-school programs to a virtual format, and she led the launch of innovative programs to keep participants as motivated as ever.

JOSEPH GIRVEN

Executive director  
James Lenox House Association

The James Lenox House Association was founded at the end of the Civil War to provide housing for war widows, and it



now provides affordable housing for elderly adults. It has weathered the 1918 flu outbreak, two world wars and the Great

Depression. Thanks to the tireless efforts of Joseph Girven, its executive director, it has now survived the Covid-19 crisis. The octogenarians and nonagenarians in his care benefited from Girven's rigorously maintained sanitation protocols, his innovations, his capable juggling of logistics and his procurement of personal protective equipment. Girven has collaborated closely with policymakers to address various critical challenges facing the elderly, and he works to educate seniors about the services and resources available to them.

WILLIAM GOODLOE

President and chief executive officer  
Sponsors for Educational Opportunity

Growing up in Brooklyn public housing taught William Goodloe



that latent talent often goes undeveloped. Now president and chief executive officer of Sponsors for Educational

Opportunity, which is dedicated to providing educational support to underserved youth, Goodloe works every day to change that troubling reality. He directs the organization's four major programs, which help 4,300 students reach for success. In his 20-year tenure, SEO's annual budget has increased by more than \$30 million. During the pandemic, Goodloe oversaw the transformation of SEO's operations into virtual programs, and he conceived of a coronavirus relief fund that raised more than \$1.5 million—a large portion of which was distributed as cash grants to more than 1,000 SEO students.

BROOKE GRINDLINGER

Chief scientific officer  
New York Academy of Sciences

As the chief scientific officer at the New York Academy of Sciences, which uses scientific research and education to drive



solutions to societal challenges, Brooke Grindlinger engages partners in academia, industry and

government to discuss the impact of science, technology and medicine on communities. That mandate grew more pressing than ever with the onset of the pandemic. With the goal of presenting verified facts and analysis about the virus to the public, Grindlinger galvanized a network of virologists, epidemiologists and drug developers, among others, to present educational materials on the evolving research and data. Topics included testing options, the need to "flatten the curve," and vaccine and therapeutic breakthroughs. And Grindlinger is a fervent advocate for more female involvement in the science, technology, engineering and math fields.



Rita Finkel  
Co-President



Jonathan Schindel  
Co-President

THE ARMORY  
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The Armory Foundation Board of Directors  
Congratulates our Co-Presidents

Rita Finkel & Jonathan Schindel

for their inclusion in

Crain's Notables  
in Nonprofits and Philanthropy List

Your leadership inspires us  
As well as your passion, friendship and  
Dedication to the Communities we serve

We Thank You

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**KATHRYN HASLANGER**  
Chief executive officer  
JASA

When Kathryn Haslanger joined the Jewish Association Serving the Aging, an agency that provides critical services to older New Yorkers, in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, she immediately directed thousands of staff members and volunteers to check on JASA seniors to ensure they had the provisions and medicines they needed. So there may have been a sense of déjà vu for Haslanger, now chief executive of the organization, this past year during the pandemic. Under her leadership, JASA's staff has delivered food and provided home care to the many vulnerable seniors isolated at home to preserve their safety. Most recently, Haslanger has played an important role in supporting the vaccine rollout to older New Yorkers through collaborations with government, health care and community partners.



**JANE HEDAL-SIEGEL**  
Director of volunteer and community relations  
Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services

Jane Hedel-Siegel arrived at the Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services, the largest human services agency in New York, following three decades leading hundreds of volunteers in hospital-wide programs at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. Hedel-Siegel is director of volunteer and community relations at her new place of employment, a role she took on just as the coronavirus began roiling the city. Always quick on her feet, Hedel-Siegel adapted to her new job remotely and promptly began pivoting the organization's volunteer programming to a virtual format. Such remote offerings have included a holiday gift drive, a career preparation series, cooking classes and craft activities for children.



**DANIELLE HOLLY**  
Chief executive officer  
Common Impact

As chief executive officer of Common Impact, a nonprofit that works to strengthen local communities, Danielle Holly did a remarkable job of leading the organization through the twin crises of 2020: the pandemic and the racial-justice reckoning. In response to the former, she led the expansion of Common Impact's existing virtual volunteering models and brought attention to the pandemic's disproportionate impact on marginalized communities through her podcast, "Pro Bono Perspectives." In reaction to the latter, Holly has amplified the voices of leaders from various racial and ethnic backgrounds through her podcast. She is vocal about what Common Impact has done to promote equity, including partnering with diverse groups' nonprofits and pushing for increased corporate involvement in racial-justice efforts.



**RACHEL KORBERG**  
Program officer  
Ford Foundation

The Ford Foundation works to reduce injustice, bolster democratic values and promote human achievement. Program officer Rachel Korberg is charged with managing a \$20 million portfolio focused on technology and the future of work within that framework. In addition, she co-manages an initiative that concentrates on racial and economic equity in business. In March 2020, Korberg created a fund to assist low-income families struggling with the realities of the pandemic. To date, it has provided direct cash relief to 15,000 individuals and has supported workplace health and safety training. Korberg is president of the board of the Stonewall Community Foundation. She writes frequently on topics related to poverty, opportunity and social innovation.



**MARY LAMASNEY**  
Manton social worker  
St. George's Society of New York

Caring for the elderly is the central focus of Mary Lamasney's professional life. She serves as the Manton social worker at St. George's Society of New York, a nonprofit that serves vulnerable seniors—predominantly immigrants and people of color. Lamasney helps her clients navigate the complexities of the social services landscape—ensuring their access to benefits and entitlements—and advocates for seniors at risk of homelessness and neglect. As the pandemic menaced New York's seniors in particular last year, she led the organization's emergency response efforts, making sure that clients had the supplies to shelter in place as well as phone friends to help battle isolation. For the seniors who ultimately succumbed to the virus, Lamasney ensured they received quality end-of-life care.



**BUILDING FOR THE ARTS CONGRATULATES  
OUR PRESIDENT, WENDY ROWDEN**

on being named to Crain's New York Business  
2021 Notable in Nonprofits and Philanthropy.  
Thanks for your leadership, Wendy, and for  
reimagining the future of both Theatre Row  
and Music and the Brain!









## 2021 NOTABLE IN NONPROFITS AND PHILANTHROPY

### JANE LEVY

Senior manager of volunteer programs

Open Door Family Medical Center and Foundation

Jane Levy is motivated by her belief that volunteerism has the



power to improve the general well-being of communities. As senior manager of volunteer programs at the

Open Door Family Medical Center and Foundation, which uses wellness, prevention and treatment measures to keep the people of Westchester and Putnam counties healthy, Levy helped demonstrate that maxim during the pandemic. She mobilized a network of volunteers to collect and organize personal protective equipment, provide weekly food deliveries, distribute diapers and clothing, and organize a communitywide book drive. In addition, Levy partnered with clinical staff to train volunteers to provide health screenings for people entering Open Door's health centers.

### HEATHER LUBOV

Executive director  
City Parks Foundation

For three decades Heather Lubov has served New York institutions that work with lower-income communities and



offer educational and cultural programs for the public. Lubov is executive director at City Parks Foundation, which

works to turn parks into vibrant urban spaces through sports, arts and educational events. Lubov is credited with overhauling SummerStage, free outdoor performing arts festival—in Central Park, a project for which she raised \$6 million. To keep the organization's mission alive despite social-distancing mandates this past year, she and her team launched a digital SummerStage that reached nearly a million viewers. Lubov co-founded the NYC Green Relief and Recovery Fund, which supports organizations that work to keep New York parks green and clean.

### AMANDA MCBRIEN

Assistant director of the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory DNA Learning Center

Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory

Amanda McBrien leads programs at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory's DNA



Learning Center to educate teachers on modern biology. McBrien is assistant director at the center, which is

dedicated to educating the public about genetics. It also operates classroom facilities for students in the New York metropolitan area. All told, McBrien oversees the education of 30,000 students in the region each year. With the onset of the pandemic, she and her colleagues developed online educational videos and home science kits to keep students scientifically engaged. In addition, McBrien has worked on the Urban Barcode Project, which helps students become "citizen scientists" by exploring genetics in their own environments.

### ABE MENDEZ

Managing director  
Per Scholas New York

Animated by the belief that a prosperous workforce begins with equitable education access, Per Scholas gives free tech



training to individuals from communities underrepresented in the technology sector. Abe Mendez, managing

director of the New York chapter, is the man behind its regional strategy, fundraising and learner recruitment. Mendez's dedication to his team truly came to light during the pandemic, when he worked to ensure staff members had the necessary equipment to work remotely and developed safety protocols to protect those who wanted to work on-site. Mendez has served as a driving force behind Per Scholas' efforts to connect communities hit hard by Covid-19 with economic opportunities in the tech space.

### ANELLE MILLER

Executive director  
Society of Illustrators

Following many years as a senior executive at the Estee Lauder Companies, Anelle Miller joined the Society of Illustrators in



2007. She is executive director of the organization, which works to promote appreciation of illustrative art and its history

through exhibits and education. When the coronavirus struck, Miller and her staff restructured those programs and exhibitions to make them available in an online format—a service much appreciated by the audience of 50,000 who were unable to visit the society's Museum of Illustration during its six-month closure. Since the museum's reopening, Miller has developed and installed detailed safety protocols to protect staff and visitors while continuing to oversee various in-person exhibits and online programs.

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Congratulations to  
Amanda McBrien  
Assistant Director

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## DEE DEE MOZELESKI

Vice president, Office of Institutional Advancement and Communications; executive director, the Foundation for City College; senior adviser to the president, the City College of New York; the



Foundation for City College  
Dee Dee Mozeleski has proved a visionary and multiple-role figure at the City

College of New York. She is vice president of the Office of Institutional Advancement and Communications, executive director of the Foundation for City College and senior adviser to the president. Mozeleski is credited with merging two formerly independent organizations into one unified foundation, which helped enhance the public image of CCNY as an engine for upward financial and social mobility. She oversees a \$290 million endowment and, to combat student hunger at a CCNY school, Mozeleski was involved in the establishment of a food pantry that she made available to all City University of New York staff and students during the pandemic.

## JOSE ORTIZ JR.

Chief executive officer  
New York City Employment and Training Coalition

Jose Ortiz Jr. has been covered by The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times and MSNBC,



among others, for good reason. Ortiz is doing noble work as chief executive officer at the New York City Employment and Training

Coalition, which provides workforce development and training to those in need. Ortiz, who's been in the nonprofit sector for more than 15 years, leads an association of more than 180 organizations—including colleges, unions and community-based groups—that provide vocational skills and education to a half million New Yorkers. During the pandemic, he founded the New York Workforce Recovery Strategy Group, made up of leaders from the private and human services sectors that are working to develop a recovery plan focused on small businesses and marginalized communities.

## DINA PAUL-PARKS

Co-founder and chief executive officer  
Healthy Humor

Dina Paul-Parks works every day to infuse the bleakest places for children—hospitals—with joy.



Paul-Parks is co-founder and chief executive officer of Healthy Humor, an organization of professional clowns that brings smiles

and wonder to hospitalized kids. Under Paul-Parks' management, Healthy Humor serves patients in Harlem Hospital, Brookdale Hospital and Medical Center and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, among other hospitals in New York City and around the country. She oversaw the conversion of many services to a virtual format in 2020, and formulated a system by which some personnel could visit hospitals in person during the summer. Paul-Parks previously worked as a senior policy adviser in the Bloomberg and Cuomo administrations, where she led community-based initiatives in New York City.

## ALEX POLLAK

Board member  
ParaDocs Ambassadors

Alex Pollak has been a hero for a while, considering that he was a first responder at the 9/11 attacks nearly two decades ago.



Pollak, a volunteer paramedic, is a board member of ParaDocs Ambassadors, a group of safety personnel that—pre-pandemic—worked to ensure the

safety of attendees at mass gatherings, such as festivals and sporting events. With the onset of the pandemic, the organization pivoted its operations to assist those battling the virus in New York City. Thousands of face masks and hundreds of thousands meal-replacement bars were supplied to first responders, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, local hospitals and homeless shelters. Pollak is president and CEO of ParaDocs Worldwide.

## SHIEMICKA RICHARDSON-BANNER

Vice president of philanthropy  
Cardinal McCloskey Community Services

Shiemicka Richardson-Banner has worked at Cardinal McClos-



key Community Services for more than a dozen years—but the impact of her work has been particularly pronounced in the past 12

months. As vice president of philanthropy at the organization, which provides services to youth in foster care, children from low-income families and developmentally disabled adults, Richardson-Banner sprang into action at the start of the pandemic to ensure that CMCS' important fundraising would continue. Under her direction, a virtual walkathon, virtual wine testing, virtual Giving Day, and Holiday Appeal brought in significant sums for the organization. As a member of the executive team, Richardson-Banner often leads conversations on diversity, equity and inclusion.

IN 2018 ANNUAL CHARITABLE GIVING IN THE U.S. TOTALED MORE THAN **\$427 BILLION**, WITH MORE THAN TWO-THIRDS OF THAT TOTAL COMING FROM INDIVIDUALS.

—INDEPENDENT SECTOR

## WENDY ROWDEN

President  
Building for the Arts NY

With three decades of real estate experience and performing arts expertise, Wendy Rowden is



uniquely suited to serve as president of Building for the Arts NY, an organization that provides communities with creative

cultural opportunities through various arts initiatives. Rowden, who has reshaped the organization to expand its impact, led the renovation of Theatre Row to make it more affordable and accessible to nonprofit performing arts companies. She worked to fortify an in-school music literacy program called Music and the Brain, expanding its reach to Philadelphia, Nashville and Miami, and on the launch of a hybrid learning platform to sustain the program through the pandemic. Rowden routinely takes part in conversations about the transformative power of cultural community projects.

## MICHAEL ROYCE

Executive director  
New York Foundation for the Arts

The New York Foundation for the Arts provides artists, arts



administrators and emerging arts organizations with the support, tools and resources to secure professional artistic success.

Its executive director, Michael Royce, has led the NYFA through periods of upheaval before. So at the start of the pandemic, the executive director jumped as usual to support the arts community. Under his leadership, NYFA has to date distributed nearly \$2 million to artists adversely affected by the pandemic. Royce has also long endeavored to foster racial justice and equity in the arts industry, and in recent months he secured funding from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund to back NYFA's Emerging Arts Leaders of Color initiative.

**Congratulations to  
Neill Coleman,  
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2021 NOTABLE IN NONPROFITS AND PHILANTHROPY

DAWN SAFFAYEH

Executive director  
Heartshare St. Vincent's Services  
Heartshare St. Vincent's Services helps children and families surmount the challenges of



poverty, addiction and mental illness. In-person services such as foster parent visitation and clinic-based therapy

typically are at the crux of the organization's work. Thankfully, with a talented executive director such as Dawn Saffayeh at its helm, HSVS underwent a successful metamorphosis that kept operations humming during the past year. Saffayeh oversaw initiatives to distribute warm meals and canned goods to families affected by illness or job loss, to provide computers to families adjusting to distance learning, and to create a telehealth therapy program. In addition, she led HSVS in the formation of its racial equity and LGBTQ committees.

JONATHAN SCHINDEL

Co-president  
Armory Foundation  
Jonathan Schindel has proved an exceptional innovator these past months. As co-president of the Armory Foundation, which



promotes fitness and education among youth through various athletic and educational programs, Schindel has

been at the forefront of the organization's efforts to adapt to the pandemic-imposed limits on indoor activities. He worked to develop a virtual workout program for kids and oversaw the rebirth of the Armory Foundation's usual indoor marathon relay as a virtual three-day event. Under his leadership, the foundation runs Armory College Prep, a highly successful after-school program for student athletes. In recent months, the Armory Foundation has partnered with New York-Presbyterian Hospital to transform its site into a temporary vaccination center.

LORIE SLUTSKY

President  
New York Community Trust  
In her four decades with the New York Community Trust, Lorie Slutsky has been an agent in the New York region's



recovery from such vastly different challenges as 9/11, the Great Recession and Superstorm Sandy. So it was no surprise

when Slutsky, the president of the organization that connects munificent New Yorkers with local nonprofits, reacted as robustly as she did to the crises caused by the pandemic. Under Slutsky's leadership, \$99 million of the \$267 million in grants the New York Community Trust made in 2020 went to coronavirus-related causes. She has led the trust in funder collaborations aimed at addressing longstanding regional issues, including workforce development, racial equity and immigration. Slutsky, a leader in the philanthropic sector, is a trusted partner of government officials, donors and many nonprofits.

CARLA SMITH

Deputy chief executive officer  
Urban Resource Institute  
For Carla Smith, serving New York's most vulnerable populations is a deeply personal goal. As deputy chief executive officer



at the Urban Resource Institute, the nation's largest provider of domestic violence shelter services and a major provider

of services for the homeless, she excels at doing just that. Smith oversees all of URI's services, including more than 20 New York City shelters and various education, prevention and intervention programs. Smith has been vital to the development of economic empowerment services for clients and to a program aimed at holding accountable individuals that cause harm to others. Since the pandemic, Smith has worked to ensure these crucial services continue apace for URI's clients, and she has overseen the implementation of the requisite safety protocols.

REBECCA SMITH

Director of philanthropy  
Salvation Army of Greater New York  
While working as a psychiatric social worker in a community clinic, Rebecca Smith witnessed



the impact of underfunding on the social services sector—and was inspired to make a major career transition. Smith is now

director of philanthropy at the New York branch of the Salvation Army, the largest social services provider in the country. She oversees a large team of marketing and development professionals, and she provides fundraising training and support to pastors running Salvation Army community centers. The pandemic was no match for Smith's fundraising zeal as she transformed traditional campaigns into coronavirus-safe affairs, complete with virtual presentations and proposals. In addition, Smith arranged an attention-grabbing fundraising stunt on Giving Tuesday in Times Square: Every time a donation was texted to the organization, a giant red kettle flashed.

NEW YORK STATE'S NONPROFIT SECTOR EMPLOYED 1.38 MILLION PEOPLE IN 2020.  
—INDEPENDENT SECTOR

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## MCGREGOR SMYTH

Executive director  
New York Lawyers for the Public Interest

McGregor Smyth is an attorney who has channeled his skills into the pursuit of justice for all. He's



the executive director of New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, a civil rights organization that strives to secure equality and

justice for New Yorkers by challenging biases based on race, poverty, disability and immigration status. Smyth, a vocal supporter of diversity and inclusion work, has built an executive team in which two out of three members are Black, Latinx, Asian, Indigenous or disabled people. In 2020, the organization under Smyth's leadership sought to defend New Yorkers hardest hit by the pandemic—particularly those with preexisting disabilities. Case in point: The organization secured new safety protocols to protect 144,000 paratransit riders from Covid-19.

## NOREEN SPRINGSTEAD

Executive director  
WhyHunger

Noreen Springstead began manning the phones at WhyHunger more than a quarter of a century ago. Springstead is



now executive director of the organization, which works to end world hunger by increasing access to nutritious food,

supporting food banks and investing in solutions that address the root causes of hunger. In response to the hunger crisis precipitated by the pandemic, WhyHunger under Springstead's leadership provided nearly \$700,000 in 50 grants to organizations in 25 countries and raised more than \$600,000 for its pandemic Rapid Response Fund, which provided emergency support. The organization connected more than a million food-insecure individuals nationwide to free meal sites via its Hunger Hotline.

## GARY URBANOWICZ

Executive director  
New York City Fire Museum

Gary Urbanowicz certainly has the academic expertise to serve as executive director of the New York City Fire Museum. The



established New York Fire Department historian has published two books on related topics and regularly teaches a class

on the department's history and tradition to incoming probationary firefighters. At the New York City Fire Museum, which seeks to preserve and present the heritage of fire service in the city and educate the public about fire safety, Urbanowicz has worked on a soon-to-be-launched exhibit. "Unmasking Our Heroes," will highlight the brave efforts of first responders during the pandemic. Urbanowicz is vice president and a trustee of the Honorary Fire Officers of the FDNY.

## ASHWIN VASAN

President and chief executive officer  
Fountain House

Dr. Ashwin Vasani has tackled several public health challenges throughout his career, including



work on the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the global south with Partners in Health and the World Health Organization. Vasani is

president and chief executive officer of Fountain House, which works to improve the health and social and economic prospects of individuals with significant mental illness. Under his leadership, the organization has become involved in social justice efforts—a particularly salient mission since the majority of Fountain House beneficiaries are individuals from various racial and ethnic backgrounds affected by systemic barriers. Vasani appeared in the media more than 100 times throughout 2020 to share his views on public health, crisis response and the racial disparities of the pandemic.

## STEVEN VERNIKOFF

Chief executive officer  
Center for Family Support

In Steven Vernikoff's more than four decades in the field of developmental disabilities, his model of service delivery has



been consistent: person-centered thinking focused on goals that are defined by the individual in need of help. Vernikoff is chief execu-

tive officer of the Center for Family Support, which provides assistance to individuals with developmental and other disabilities and their caregivers. Under Vernikoff's direction, the organization, motivated by the recognition that many were dealing with new trauma and challenges during the pandemic, pivoted nimbly to a virtual mode of service delivery. In addition, he is board president of two provider collaboratives, Advance of Greater New York and Advance Care Alliance.

DATA FROM 2019 INDICATES THAT NEW YORKERS DONATED **\$16.4 BILLION** TO CHARITY THAT YEAR, REPRESENTING NEARLY **3%** OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME.

—INDEPENDENT SECTOR

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2021 NOTABLE IN NONPROFITS AND PHILANTHROPY

JANE VERON

Co-founder and chief executive officer  
The Acceleration Project

Jane Veron’s brainchild has served more than 42,000 businesses in the past year alone. Veron is chief executive officer of The Acceleration Project, a business advisory nonprofit that supports underserved small businesses—particularly those owned by women and people of color—by providing strategic guidance. Under Veron’s leadership, TAP has been unflagging in its support of floundering small businesses during the pandemic. It has provided free emergency services, such as guidance on cash flow problems, Small Business Administration loan applications, Paycheck Protection Program tracking and forgiveness, and strategies for adaptation tailored to clients’ particular needs. Since 2012, TAP has donated more than 32,000 hours of consulting, collectively valued at more than \$8 million. Veron has been featured in USA Today and on Bloomberg Radio for her work.



ROBERT WERNER

Executive vice president, operations  
Parker Jewish Institute

Serving as executive vice president of operation for a nonprofit center for adult care and rehabilitation is always a tall order—but Robert Werner proved he was up to the task even in the most grueling year in modern health care history. In 2020 Werner ensured that all of the Parker Jewish Institute’s investments and expenses were focused on the health of patients and employees. He installed ultraviolet lighting in the heating, ventilation and air-conditioning units and introduced a digital turnstile system for building entry that enabled contactless temperature readings. Werner, sympathetic to family members unable to visit loved ones, oversaw the creation of a call center through which families could have their concerns addressed and virtually visit relatives via online platforms.



KIMBERLY WILLIAMS

President and chief executive officer  
Vibrant Emotional Health

Kimberly Williams began at Vibrant Emotional Health as a public policy intern more than 15 years ago—and she’s since risen to become its president and chief executive officer. Each year the organization helps more than 2.5 million people strive for emotional well-being through innovative programs. Williams has rebranded the more than half-century-old organization to better lead modern mental health efforts. She has overseen the expansion of programs, such as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and the Disaster Distress Helpline, which are available via call, text or online chat. During the pandemic, she oversaw a 50% increase in Vibrant’s staffing to meet increased demand for support. Out of concern for her staff, Williams has emphasized in meetings the importance of wellness and self-care.



SHEENA WRIGHT

President and chief executive officer  
United Way of New York City

Sheena Wright is the first female chief executive officer of the United Way of New York City in its more than seven decades of existence. Throughout her tenure, she has worked to make the organization, which helps low-income New Yorkers achieve self-sufficiency, take a more activist role in communities. To that end, Wright led the organization’s efforts to increase census participation that ultimately defied expectations despite the challenges imposed by the pandemic. Wright is working with various partners to help the Black community in the face of the coronavirus, including efforts to address health disparities, improve testing access and vaccine education, and support Black-owned businesses.



STEVEN ZEITLIN

Founder and executive director  
City Lore

In a March 2020 Wall Street Journal article, Steven Zeitlin wrote, “We believe in grassroots creativity as a redeeming force in society and a symbol of the irrepressible nature of the human spirit.” That motivating belief guides Zeitlin in his work as executive director of City Lore, the first organization nationwide devoted to the documentation and presentation of urban folk culture through a gallery, performances and educational programs. The City Lore founder initiated a cultural ambassador program, which helps local leaders develop presentations based on their communities’ music and dance traditions, and a POEMobile, a minibus that projects poems onto walls during live poetry readings. Lately, City Lore has been archiving creative responses to the pandemic.



Nominations are now open for Crain’s New York Business 2021 Notable LGBTQ Leaders and Executives

This is a special print and digital editorial feature within Crain’s June 7 issue. This feature is a celebration of LGBTQ business professionals who have impacted New York City in major ways. It honors their professional, civic and philanthropic achievements. We are welcoming nominations to help us determine those recognized in this feature.

CRAIN’S NEW YORK BUSINESS 2021  
**NOTABLE**  
NOTABLE LGBTQ LEADERS & EXECUTIVES

NOMINATE TODAY: [CrainsNewYork.com/Nominations](https://CrainsNewYork.com/Nominations)

DEADLINE TO NOMINATE: APRIL 9