



# *20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Luncheon*



Looking back, celebrating, and looking ahead to the next 20 years!

December 5, 2025 | Samuel's Grande Manor | Williamsville, NY



*2025 Luncheon Program*  
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# *2025 Luncheon Program*

## *Event Schedule*

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11:30 AM

Doors Open

12:15 PM

Welcome

12:20 PM

Reflections on 20 Years &  
Executive Director Remarks

12:30 PM

Lunch

1:15 PM

Award Ceremony

2:30 PM

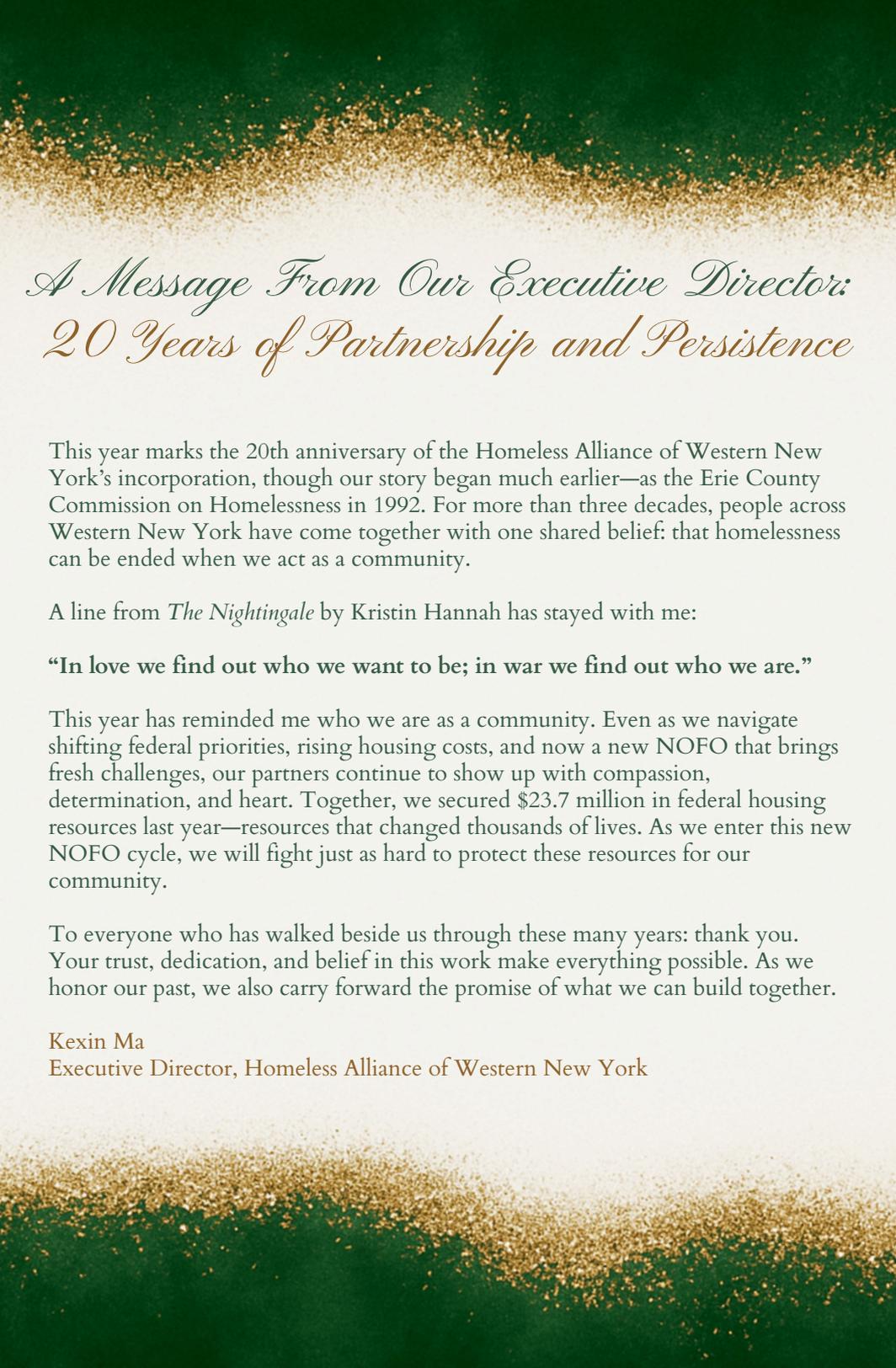
Raffle Pull

3:00 PM

Doors Close

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## *A Message From Our Executive Director: 20 Years of Partnership and Persistence*

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Homeless Alliance of Western New York's incorporation, though our story began much earlier—as the Erie County Commission on Homelessness in 1992. For more than three decades, people across Western New York have come together with one shared belief: that homelessness can be ended when we act as a community.

A line from *The Nightingale* by Kristin Hannah has stayed with me:

**“In love we find out who we want to be; in war we find out who we are.”**

This year has reminded me who we are as a community. Even as we navigate shifting federal priorities, rising housing costs, and now a new NOFO that brings fresh challenges, our partners continue to show up with compassion, determination, and heart. Together, we secured \$23.7 million in federal housing resources last year—resources that changed thousands of lives. As we enter this new NOFO cycle, we will fight just as hard to protect these resources for our community.

To everyone who has walked beside us through these many years: thank you. Your trust, dedication, and belief in this work make everything possible. As we honor our past, we also carry forward the promise of what we can build together.

Kexin Ma

Executive Director, Homeless Alliance of Western New York

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- Knowledge of HUD, OASAS, and supportive housing models
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## Congratulations to

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**on your Pillars of Homeless  
Service Awards!**

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“*Home*

makes all things possible: personal growth, contentment, stability, and all these things lead to a positive societal change.

No one deserves to be homeless; every individual needs and deserves to know what a safe and secure home is and how feeling ‘at home’ creates a positive outlook and a feeling of wellness or completion.”

— Alyssa Hebel  
*Managing Director of Housing*  
Spectrum Health and Human Services



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# *Pillars of Homeless Service Awardees*

**Grant Babcock**

Community Missions of Niagara Frontier, Inc

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The Salvation Army

**Norman Felschow**

Community Missions of Niagara Frontier, Inc

**John Ferby**

Compass House

**Melissa Figini**

Transitional Services, Inc.

**Lisa Freeman**

Compass House

**Nyla Gaylord**

United Way

**Alyssa Hebler**

Spectrum Human Services

**Tracy Hunt**

Buffalo City Mission

**Robyn Kreuger**

Community Missions of Niagara Frontier, Inc

**Jan Mansfield**

Cornerstone Manor Buffalo City Mission

**James McClain**

Buffalo City Mission

**Karen Rybicki**

Erie County Department of Social Services

**Annette Slaughter**

Cornerstone Manor Buffalo City Mission

**Adrian Smith**

Buffalo City Mission

**Amy Smith**

Compass House

**Chris Syracuse**

Living Opportunities of DePaul

**Dan Szewc**

Erie County Department of Social Services

**Reno Tabone**

Living Opportunities of DePaul

**Joy Tedeschi**

Belmont Housing Resources for WNY

**David Zapfel**

Gerard Place

# *The Mustard Seed*



The mustard seed is one of the smallest seeds on Earth; it is barely visible when held in your hand. Yet when nurtured, it grows into something far greater than its size would ever suggest.

Over the past year, our community has been tested.

We have faced proposed changes that could reshape housing as we know it. We have navigated uncertainty, defended the foundation we have built, and stood together to protect the thousands who rely on us for housing, food, shelter, warmth, and hope.

Through it all, our roots have held firm.

What began as a small idea, a belief that we could end homelessness through coordination, data, and compassion, has grown into a network of more than 300 partners working every day to lead people home.

Like the mustard seed, our strength has never been in our size.

It has been in our resilience, in our belief that even in uncertainty, growth is possible when we stand together, and in our shared conviction that small efforts, rooted in purpose and care, can grow into something extraordinary.

As we celebrate 20 years of the Homeless Alliance of WNY, we honor the truth that small acts of listening to a client, coordinating a referral, showing up for a meeting, and defending a program can grow into lasting change.

Thank you for planting seeds of hope, nurturing this work through challenge, and growing with us.

Together, we continue to build something that will not only last, but is deeply rooted, ever growing, and always leading people home.



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# Belmont congratulates HAWNY on 20 years of service and advocacy!



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# *Our Board of Directors*

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**Joyelle Tedeschi**

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**Van Jorgali**

Treasurer | ZLC Group CPAs

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Family Promise of WNY

**Michael Henry**

Retired

**Robyn Krueger**

Community Missions of the Niagara Frontier

**Sr. Mary Augusta Kaiser**

Sisters of St. Joseph

**John McMahon**

Rental Assistance Corporation

**Chris Syracuse**

Living Opportunities of DePaul

**Kim Tolley**

CVR Network

**Peter Warn**

Community Activist

# *The Homeless Alliance Team*

**Kexin Ma**

Executive Director

**Michael Devine**

Operations Manager

**Tracy Schmidt**

Director of Community Impact

**Daniella Gallego**

CoC Supervisor

**Nicole LaLonde**

Training Coordinator

**Katey Soellers**

Quality Assurance Coordinator

**Treya Gough**

Data Quality Specialist

**Jamie Dolan**

Rapid Re-Housing System Coordinator

**Nick Arlain**

Supportive Services Senior Coordinator

**Kyla Dyer**

Housing Navigator

**Ashley Matrassi**

Director of CoC Programs

**Nate Pyzikiewicz**

HMIS Director

**Dan Gordon**

Coordinated Entry Team Lead

**Sara Carlson**

Permanent Supportive Housing System  
Coordinator

**Haley Diagostino**

Aging Program Coordinator

**Abby Szarowicz**

Housing Systems Coordinator

**Evan Coyle**

Coordinated Entry Systems Specialist

**Maddie Fooks**

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Coordinated Entry Specialist

**Angel Torres**

Coordinated Entry Specialist

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# 20 YEARS

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