

Health Care...

Many view health care as a complex and inhospitable arena for community organizations. The New Community Corporation, however, has used its position in the inner city and its direct connections to residents to capture a unique market for health care services. New Community uses innovative strategies to provide quality, accessible health care to Newark residents.

What is New Community Health Care?

New Community's Health Care network includes service, employment, and education programs. NCC fills a market niche by providing health care *services to vulnerable populations*. Direct contact with the community illuminates health care needs and provides an impetus for service provision that creates demand for workers. *A demand for more workers requires training* because there is a severe shortage of nurses in New Jersey and nationally. The nursing shortage provides the opportunity to target low-income Newark residents for training and creates a career ladder of opportunities (see diagram, "*New Community Health Care Career Ladder*" on page 4).

NCC Health Care staff work collaboratively to provide holistic and accessible health care services, employ health care professionals and support staff, and train Newark residents as health care professionals.



The Clarion, December 2003

New Community Health Care began when NCC **Licensed Practical Nurse Graduates** opened its Extended Care

Facility in 1986. It has since broadened to include a vast array of programs - including two medical day care centers, skilled and non-skilled home health care and chore services, a mental health affiliate, and a school of practical nursing (see boxes, "*New Community Health Care Services*" on page 2 and "*School of Practical Nursing*" on page 3). This assortment of programs fulfill three goals of New Community's Health Care operations: health care provision, job creation, and workforce development (see diagram, "*Inner City Newark*" on page 5).

Why does New Community provide health care?

New Community's mission is to help residents of inner cities improve the quality of their lives to reflect individual God-given dignity and personal achievement.

New Community Health Care Services

- The School of Practical Nursing trains Licensed Practical Nurses.
- Essex Valley Visiting Nurses Association and Care at Home medical professionals and home health aides provide skilled nursing, physical/ occupational/ speech therapy, medical social services, homemaker services, and nutritional services.
- The Extended Care Nursing Home provides 24-hour care for patients in 180 beds.
- The Family Service Bureau of Newark offers an Employee Assistance Program, domestic violence counseling, outpatient substance abuse treatment, counseling at Harmony House and Medical Day Care, Gateway to Work services, and a GOALS program with intense outpatient counseling services for at-risk youth, many of whom are part of the justice system.
- Medical Day Care provides traditional health care services, nutrition education and maintenance, social activities and interaction, and recreational trips for elderly residents during the daytime.
- Home Friends does daily chores for elderly or disabled residents.

The genesis of New Community Health Care occurred at a resident meeting more than 20 years ago. Elderly tenants expressed desire for a nursing home in the area. Based on these concerns and disparity in health care services accessible in Newark compared with surrounding suburbs, New Community staff opened the Extended Care Facility in 1986. The success of this facility was a catalyst for further health care ventures (*see Timeline on page 6*).

NCC positions its health care programs to take advantage of a market not traditionally served by other providers. Inner city communities suffer disproportionately from lack of adequate nutrition and poor environmental conditions. They are also at increased risk for mental illness, substance abuse, domestic violence, pre-term deliveries, and low-weight births. Even though the need for health care services amongst inner city populations outpaces that of suburban populations, inner city residents face far greater obstacles to accessing health care services.

Lower incomes and higher unemployment in inner cities combine to leave many residents without access to health insurance. In addition, inaccessibility to health services, poor transportation, little education about health care, and cultural barriers between inner city residents and medical service providers create significant – often insurmountable – barriers to decent, affordable health care. New Community Health Care seeks to diminish these health care disparities.

How does New Community address the health care needs of Newark residents?

While commitment to working toward improving the quality of life of inner city residents is paramount, New Community Health Care also thinks about the community as the market it serves and from which it recruits employees and students. New Community provides services different from traditional for-profit providers, including attributes specially geared to meet the needs of their target population. New Community uses business principles to reach community goals and its connection to the community to provide personal and accessible services. Its market perspective, business savvy, unique position, and deep roots within the community combine to put New Community in a powerful position to address community health care and workforce development needs (*see diagram, “The Cycle of Health Care Provision” on page 7*).

The New Community approach to health care is pragmatic and self-perpetuating:

1. The impetus to provide health care services is the demonstrated need within the community.
2. In order to provide the best possible services, New Community serves the Central Ward market, meeting consumer demand with the services it supplies.
3. As services grow, the demand for labor within New Community Health Care increases.
4. Demand for more health care workers requires New Community to supply more training.
5. New training opportunities provide opportunity for community members to become a part of the New Community Health Care career ladder.

This approach developed by taking risks, making smart business choices, and making difficult choices when necessary to keep businesses viable. Moreover, it would not have developed without strategic approaches to marketing and outreach, research, funding, internal

School of Practical Nursing Addresses Shortage of Nurses While Empowering Students

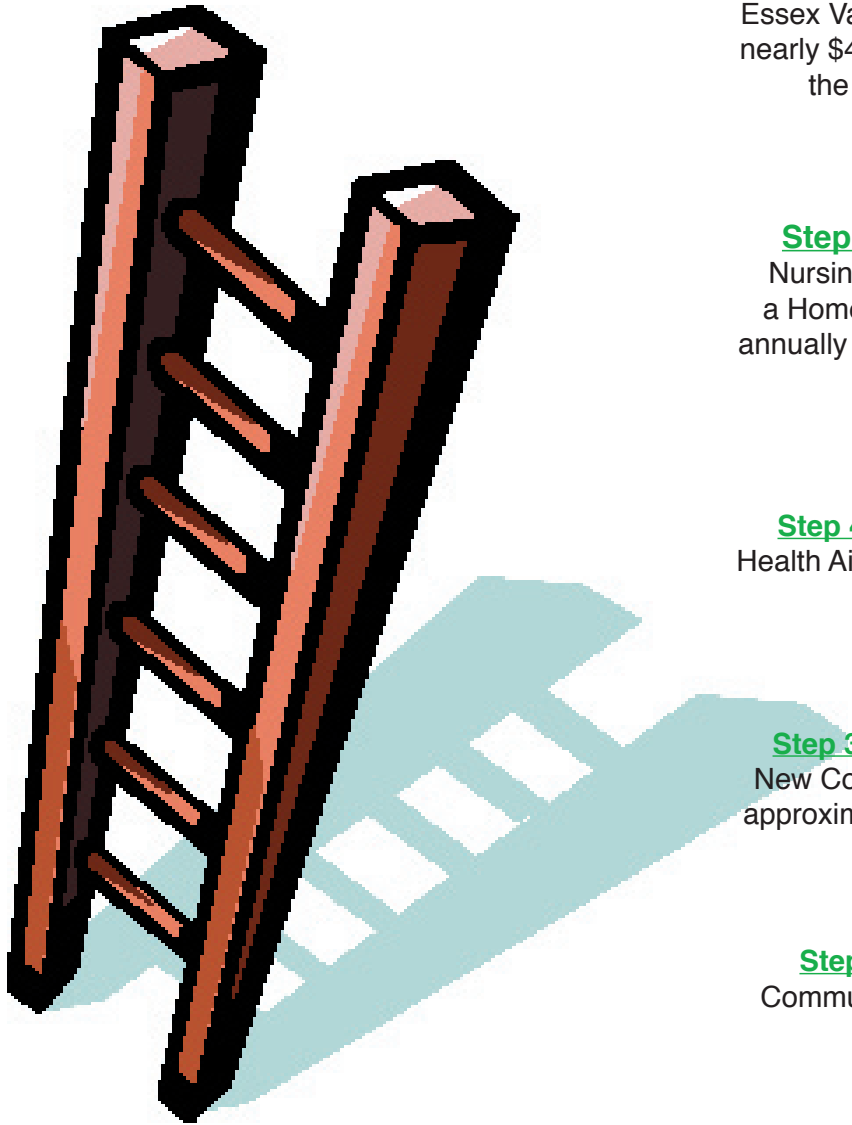
New Community opened its School of Practical Nursing in September 2002 to develop its own health care workforce and address the community’s need for more meaningful and diverse educational opportunities. This unique program is an innovative example of leveraging opportunity to create a program that accomplishes multiple community development goals.

Students are recruited from within the New Community system, often working as home health aides or in other positions at another health service program. Once they have started the 16-month program, students continue to work 20 hours a week. By doing so, they maintain their income, while earning their certificate. In addition, New Community’s Federal Credit Union offers financial aid (in the form of grants and loans) for tuition and wages lost from the reduction in work hours. In essence, students are paid to go to school. Upon graduation, students usually accept positions at the Extended Care Facility or The Essex Valley Visiting Nurses Association. By committing to working for New Community, students have portions of their financial aid loan payments forgiven—after three years, the entire debt is cancelled.

The success of the school continues to attract interest and funding as a creative approach to community development.

Deborah Jones, one of the graduates in the LPN school’s inaugural class, typifies the professional advancement the students are making. Ms. Jones is a veteran Certified Nurse’s Aide (CNA) at NCC’s Extended Care Facility. Someone who enjoys working with people and for NCC, MS. Jones decided that the LPN program offered her the chance to advance professionally, earn a higher salary and acquire new duties on the job. The nurse’s aide attended school full time while continuing on the job, including weekend work, so that she could earn her full salary. She graduated with the inaugural class in November 2003 and passed her state board-licensing exam in January 2004. Since graduating, Ms. Jones has continued to work with the same severely ill residents at the Extended Care Facility for whom she cared as a nurse’s aide, however, her salary has tripled. She calls her chance in outlook and lifestyle since becoming an LPN “dramatic” and is considering training to become a registered nurse.

New Community Health Care Career Ladder



Step 6: Licensed Practical Nurse working for the Essex Valley Visiting Nurses Association; earning nearly \$45,000 annually and considering entering the RN Bridge Program once launched



Step 5: Attends NCC's School of Practical Nursing while continuing to work part-time as a Home Health Aide; earning approx. \$16,000 annually through cost-of-living maintenance loans from the LPN program



Step 4: Recruited while working as a Home Health Aide to take part in the 16-month School of Practical Nursing



Step 3: Hired to be a Home Health Aide at a New Community extended care facility; earning approximately \$16,000 annually working full-time



Step 2: Attends training sessions at New Community Workforce Development Center to become Home Health Aide



Step 1: Welfare Recipient; annual income less than \$15,000 annually; Mother of two children attending New Community schools

partnerships, external partnerships, and recruitment of valuable and dedicated employees from inside and outside New Community.

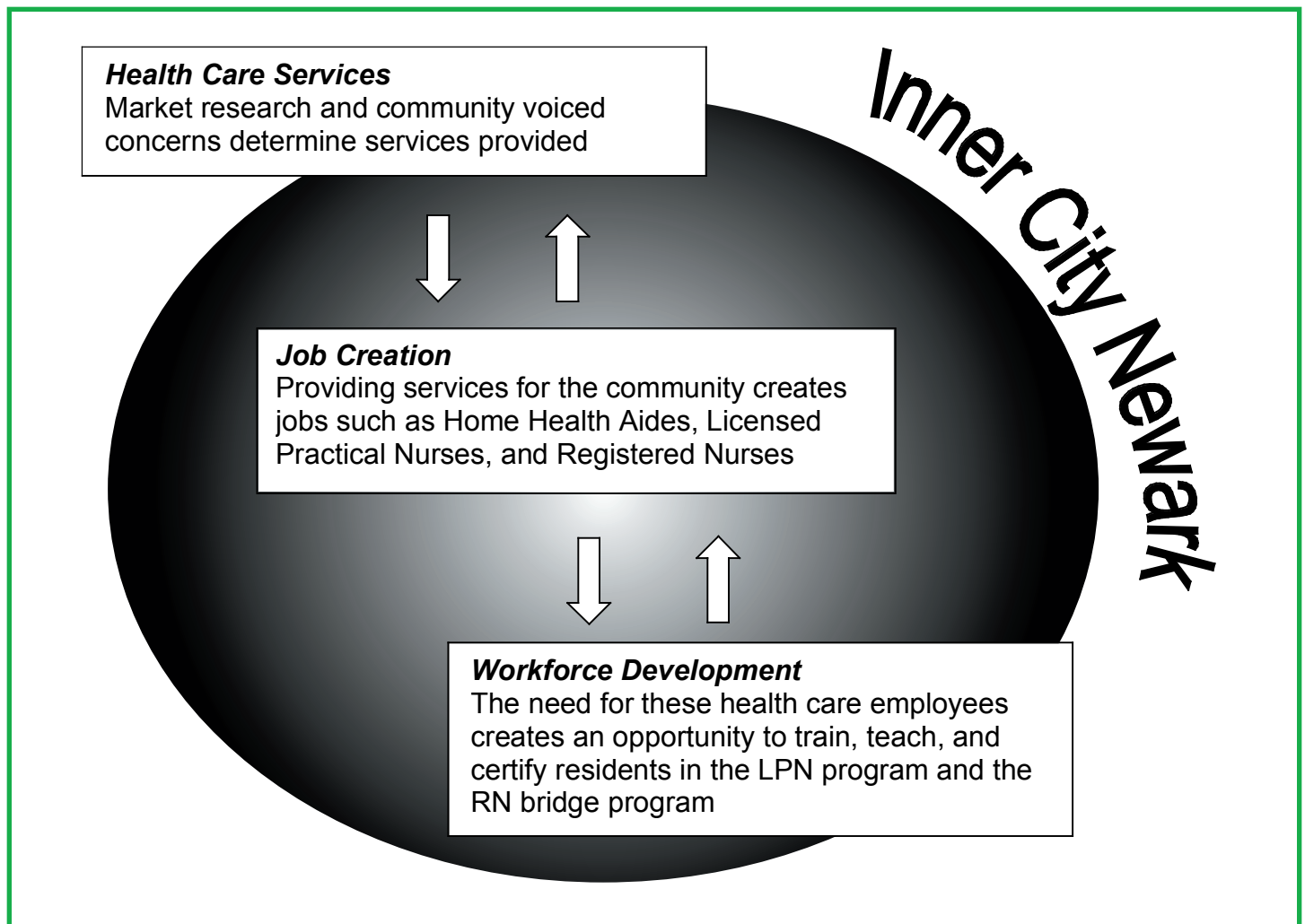
Marketing and Outreach

Through a new program called “The Face of Health Care,” New Community actively balances its market-driven recruitment tactics with its desire to provide accessible services to community residents. The Face of Health Care reaches residents in the neighborhood, acting as both an outreach and marketing mechanism. In an attempt to promote proactive and preventive health care and education, New Community locates itself in the community, often at NCC’s facilities such as its supermarket and housing—in short, it goes

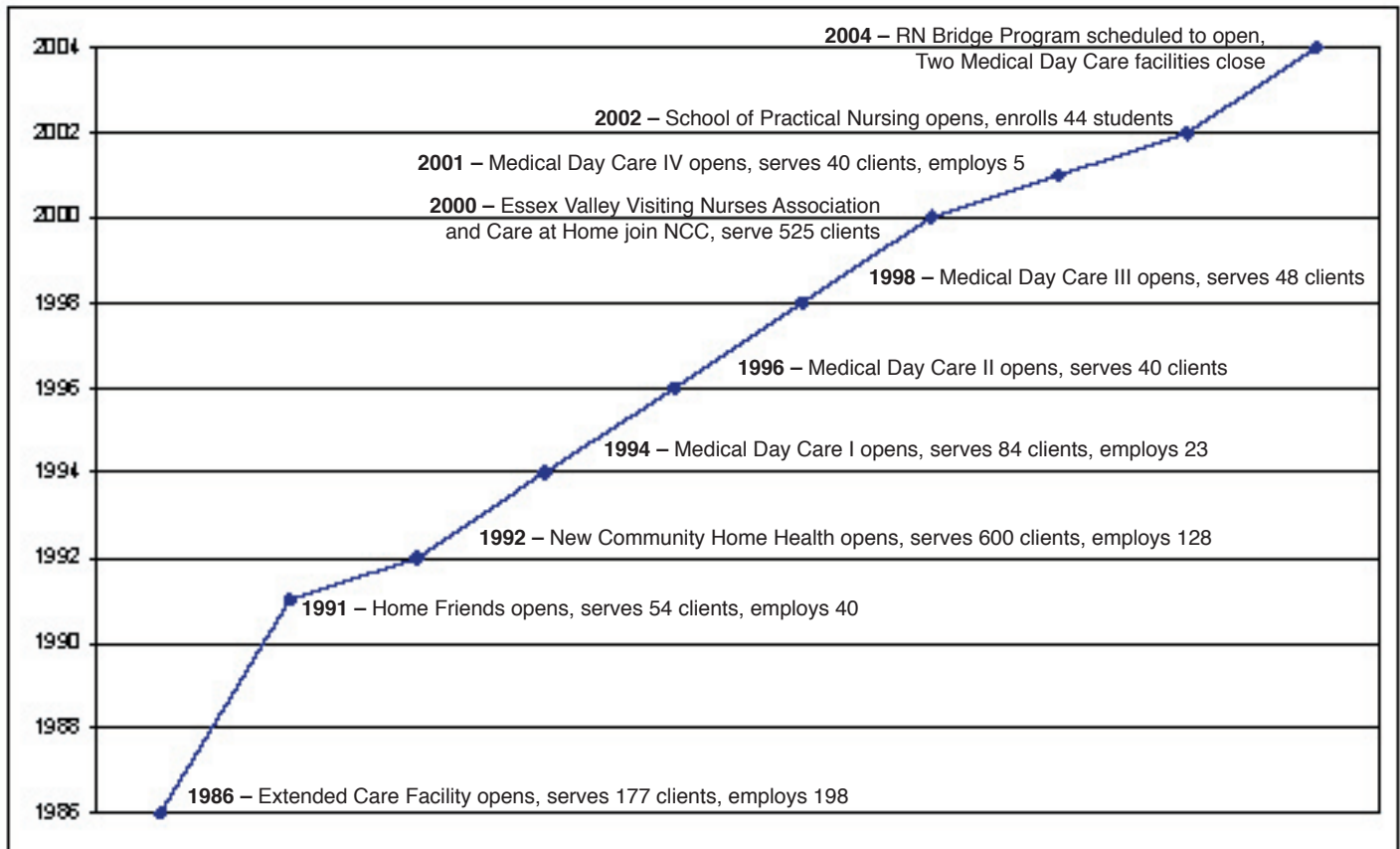
where people live, shop, and work. This concern for and attention to proactive health care not only reaches out to people in need of health services, it works as an effective marketing tool.

Research

To successfully build health care programs, New Community carefully researches its potential market and capacity for serving that market. Research pertains to a broad scope of activities, from identifying untapped markets to recruiting funders. A focus on research quantifies the need for services and legitimizes community-based health care in funding and political arenas.



New Community Health Care Time Line



Funding

Consistent with its business-like approach to community health care provision, New Community makes pragmatic funding decisions. However, it takes risks to achieve determined goals. For example, in 2000, New Community acquired the foundering Essex Valley Visiting Nurses Association (EVVNA). Since EVVNA was in poor financial shape, this acquisition was a major financial risk. However, EVVNA provided an opportunity to increase New Community's health care staff and serve the many homebound residents in New Community's housing and throughout Essex County. To minimize the risk of the acquisition and bring the association into financial solvency, New Community chose to downsize the program substantially and decided to only accept Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement.

Comprehensiveness

New Community Health Care uses its connection to participants in other New Community programs to market its health care services and provide needed care. The mental health arm of New Community, the Family Service Bureau (FSB) provides counseling in New Community schools and residences in conjunction with other New Community programs and simultaneously markets its services. FSB also provides initial counseling sessions for New Community staff and family members.

New Community improves the quality of its services through a new internal team called the Program Improvement Taskforce. This group assesses how to improve individual programs to meet the needs of the community as well as how to strengthen the existing relationships across programs to improve the comprehensiveness of service delivery.

External Partnerships

New Community views partnerships as professional relationships formed around common interests. Rather than searching for long-term partners who share a common community vision, New Community Health Care joined forces with those willing to enter a new market. New Community provides several Health Care services through partnerships with local hospitals and physicians. These services include a mammography screening van at NCC's Pathmark and a physician home visit program for residents of New Community's senior housing.

Recruitment

A nationwide nursing shortage makes drawing well-trained nurses particularly difficult for a nonprofit organization providing adult medical day care or long-term care services in the inner city. To overcome this obstacle, New Community uses its vision to achieve business goals. The organization markets its community vision to draw employees. Education programs are another successful recruitment tactic. The Family Service Bureau, for example, runs an internship program that acts as a recruiting, training, and screening tool.

Obstacles into Opportunities

New Community responded to critical healthcare needs in Newark by identifying an untapped market and using a business approach to meet community goals. They effectively turned a major obstacle – a lack of access to decent, affordable health care – into an opportunity to provide services, employment, and education to improve the quality of life of Newark residents. This philosophy filters down into programmatic decisions and promotes innovation.



Rutgers Community Outreach Partnership Center, 2004

Construction of new Home Health Facility

The Cycle of Health Care Provision

Service Provision

Vision	Marketing
New Community fulfills its mission by providing health care services that maintain dignity for those who are ailing	By focusing on providing services the community needs, New Community is able to balance the risk of running its Health Care operations

Expansion

Vision	Marketing
Training more residents creates more employment opportunity. More nurses are able to provide more health care services.	Adding services and service providers helps New Community Health Care operations remain economically viable.

New Patient Care

Vision	Marketing
Provide accessible, proactive health care for Newark residents.	New Community Health Care facilitates health-screening services such as mammography van at the neighborhood Pathmark to bring new patients into New Community Health Care.

Program Links

Vision	Marketing
Address the needs of the whole person including health care, counseling, and workforce development opportunities.	By tracking patients and their needs, New Community can keep patients by referring patients to other programs and services within New Community.

Top Lessons

New Community Health Care offers an array of experience-based lessons that may be useful to other community organizations interested in health care provision, job creation, or training.

- **RESEARCH.** Non-profits must know the need, the gaps, the process, the clients, the competition, and potential partners. This is step one, but is also a critical part of every subsequent step.
- **LEARN FROM YOUR PEERS.** Connect with others in the field, look at failures as well as successes.
- **BE VISIBLE.** No program, no matter how necessary, will succeed without marketing and outreach to potential clients and potential supporters.
- **MAKE YOUR SERVICES ACCESSIBLE.** Providing a needed service is not enough. You have to make sure that the people who need it can access it. This may mean providing transportation, daycare, meals, or covering costs.
- **BE FLEXIBLE.** New Community health care is a dynamic process. Learn to balance structure with flexibility. Change things that do not work on individual and programmatic levels
- **RECOGNIZE THE DIVERSITY OF SKILLS REQUIRED.** Recruit staff and support that has medical, administrative, and developmental skills.
- **EMPHASIZE DELIVERY.** Nonprofits have to be “as good or better” than for profits in order to compete.
- **TAKE STRATEGIC RISKS.** However, understand the nature of the risks and ways to balance them against the advantages provided by the program.
- **DO NOT SACRIFICE PASSION FOR SKILL.** This is a balancing act. Staff and supporters who will make community health care succeed will be passionate about the mission. Skilled support is necessary, but without passion, commitment waivers and goals diverge.



Resources

All information except where noted within was gathered from interviews with the following New Community staff:

Mary Rigby Abernathy, *Director of Project Development*

William Baez, *Human Resources Nurse and Health Services Recruiter*

Ellen Boddie, *Director of Health Education*

Michael Davie, *Assistant Executive Director of Essex Valley Visiting Nurses Association, Care at Home, and Home Friends*

Lisa Fedder, *Executive Director of The Family Service Bureau*

Dale Anglin, *Director of Resource Development*

Bob Guskind, *Staff Writer*

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For More Information:

New Community Corporation
233 West Market Street
Newark, New Jersey 07103

Phone: 973/623-2800

<http://www.newcommunity.org>
Email: info@newcommunity.org

Created By:

Community Development Studio
Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy
Rutgers Community Outreach Partnership Center
Rutgers University
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Research Team

James Bennett
Lindsay Boyer
Amanda Frazier
LaTanya Harry

Nora Lovrien
Sarah Lutz
Tanya Marione
Greg Mitterman

Film Crew

Anne-Marie Jerlaianu
Robert Mermet

Professors

Norm Glickman
Kathe Newman

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New Community Corporation
233 West Market Street
Newark, NJ 07103

www.newcommunity.org • **973-623-2800** • info@newcommunity.org