

GRAHAM RECORD

Message from President & CEO, Kimberly Watson

Dear Graham Community,

I am Graham-proud! - proud of our youth, families, staff, community and the 2025 Vision progress we have made together over these two and a half years.

We have been helping youth & families achieve their dreams by providing workshops and one on one coaching to help Hunts Point/Longwood community members develop business plans. We secured funding to expand Graham SLAM coaching to youth from 8th grade as well as more youth from our ACS contracted Family Support & Empowerment program and our Community Centers in Hunts Point and Harlem.

We have been helping families in crisis heal with parent support from more Parent Advocates in our Enhanced Family Foster Care branch and with Family Coaches in our Family Success Initiative. We also established an Essential Needs Fund to provide short term support to families as they manage any crises.



We have been changing biased systems & fighting inequity by partnering with other leaders in the child welfare sector, system-impacted parents and court officials to effect changes in Family Court to expedite due process as well as advocate for changes to mandated reporter policies and practices.

We have been building a thriving One Graham culture by committing to being an anti-Black racist, multicultural organization where our practices and policies are anti-racist, humane, equitable and trauma informed.

In January, we opened a new space at 195 Montague Street that is welcoming, enriching and mitigating against toxic stress. It will serve as the model for future Graham spaces beginning with the next renovation at 274 West 145th Street in Harlem and the upcoming renovation project at our Bronx center on Webster Avenue.

There is still much work to be done to achieve excellent outcomes for our youth and families. We are determined to create opportunities and remove the obstacles that prevent our families from thriving. As we deepen and expand the supports we provide, we will continue to listen to our children, youth and families to ensure they receive the “helpful help” and opportunities they deserve.

I hope you enjoy this quarterly newsletter, which highlights Graham’s graduation celebration.

Upward,
Kym

Graham Leader Earns Doctorate



On June 2nd, Emily Lopez, Graham’s Senior Director for Community Leadership Development, proudly walked across the stage at Lincoln Center’s David Geffen Hall to receive her Doctorate Degree in Social Welfare from Hunter College. After five years of hard work and dedication, while working full-time at Graham, Dr. Lopez successfully defended her doctoral dissertation, “Exploring The Barriers and Facilitators of Puerto Rican Women Senior Leadership In NYC Nonprofit Social Service Organizations.” The findings in her research bring attention to the experiences of Puerto Rican women in senior leadership positions within nonprofit

organizations. Prior to receiving her doctorate, Dr. Lopez has a 38-year history in community organizing, youth development, and program leadership and management. Graham celebrated Dr. Lopez's accomplishment on June 16th, where Dr. Lopez presented her dissertation to a group of Graham staff and community members. Congratulations Dr. Lopez!



Graham Graduation Celebration Congratulations Class of 2023!

This year Graham celebrated 201 graduates: 141 eighth grade; 44 high school; 2 obtaining their high school equivalency; and 4 youth and 10 staff members earning college degrees. We also had one Graham SLAM program graduate, who achieved critical employment and academic milestones that have positioned him for continued success in life.

The graduates attending the June 28th celebration held at John Jay College were presented with Certificates of Achievement to the applause of family, friends and staff. The celebration featured performances by Hip Hop Violinist Christian Rose and the Shooting Stars dancers from our Cornerstone Community Center.

Keynote speakers and SLAM youth, Janelle and Shu-Qui inspired everyone by sharing how they overcame various academic and personal challenges to successfully graduate. Janelle earned her Bachelors in psychology. Shu-Qui earned her Bachelor's in Nursing and plans to pursue her Master's in order to become a family Nurse practitioner.

President and CEO, Kym Watson expressed her appreciation of those who are constantly learning. She encouraged those gathered to "keep growing, keep going" as individuals and as a One Graham community.

DID YOU KNOW?

Since our founding in 1806, supporters of Graham's work have gone above and beyond to help our children. In one instance, girls at a seminary voluntarily ate mush and molasses for some days so they could contribute \$43, a large sum in 1808.