On October 14, twenty-five staff and volunteers — including a brave CV trustee, pictured below — spent the night in tents and sleeping bags to raise awareness of teen homelessness.

The event took place following Dobbs Ferry’s annual street fair, where visitors to CV’s booth received balloons and bracelets saying “1,400 every night — Stop teen homelessness.”

We work with kids every day who have no place to call home. Some jump from one friend’s house to another’s in what is called “couch surfing.” Others have family members who take them in for a while with the understanding that the arrangement is temporary. And still others spend nights riding the trains and buses, sleeping in the park, or trading sex for a warm bed.

“Within 48 hours of leaving home, many kids get approached by a trafficker,” said Jennifer Madera, Director of CV’s Shelter.

Thanks to donors like you — and our event volunteers (see article at right) — many were helped. Some called our hotline or came to the Shelter, the only one in Westchester County for homeless teens. Others moved into our supported apartments, where they can live for up to two years while they learn to be independent.

Learn the signs of teen homelessness — and how you can help — on page 2.

1,400 teens are homeless in Westchester County.

Thank you for raising $135,000 for homeless teens!

Our volunteer committees are super creative, but they also have a serious side. They understand that the money they raise is helping kids get off the streets.

The Sally Paddle Tennis Tournament, volunteer-run for over 20 years, raised $35,000 for the Shelter. And the outrageous and fun Masquerade Gala raised an all-time high of $100,000. (Both amounts are after expenses.)

Events may seem like too much fun to be doing good, but we want to thank every person who picked up a racquet or created an amazing costume. You changed lives.

Please join us for the Inwood House Luncheon on March 7 at the Yale Club and the Circle of Friends Dinner at Chelsea Piers on April 26.
At 22, Anthony Trotter is poised, well dressed, and just landed a plum job at Hunter College. That’s a far cry from the “wild and rebellious” teenager (his words) who came to Children’s Village nearly a decade ago. He’s proud of his current success, but doesn’t want that to be all you remember about him.

“My history — all of it — is a beautiful thing,” he says. “I was in foster care. I was in trouble with the law. I made some really bad choices. And I turned my life around. All of it has made me who I am today.”

Anthony’s story. The WAY Program

The turning point came when Anthony began playing on CV’s basketball team. His grades improved and his behavioral problems all but disappeared. He was so talented on the court that he was offered a basketball scholarship to Tomkins Cortland Community College in Ithaca.

The transition didn’t go well. Without the structure he once thought was too much, Anthony floundered and was expelled. “It was devastating. It’s one thing to let yourself down, another to let others down, too. Some people said I couldn’t hack it when I was offered the scholarship, and I hated to prove them right.”

Anthony returned to CV briefly, then left with the support of our privately funded WAY Program. His counselor helped him come up with a plan to get his own apartment, enroll in school, and work.

CV’s President, Jeremy Kohomban, personally kept in touch with many of the kids, and helped Anthony get his current job (see sidebar). Anthony also serves alongside Jeremy on NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio’s Foster Care Interagency Task Force.

A special text message to Jeremy from Anthony:

Jeremy, just wanted to reach out to say thanks again for connecting me with this wonderful opportunity to strengthen my professional self.

And I thank you not as a former resident or a kid but as a young man trying to make it. These types of opportunities rarely come about and just wanted to tell you I appreciate it because few people would put their name out there to recommend someone. Thanks again.

You helped write Anthony’s story. The WAY Program would literally not exist without our generous donors.
Teen Pregnancy Rate Down by 67%

As any parent knows, talking with teens about sex is uncomfortable and awkward — and vitally important. But for the counselors in our school-based programs, frank discussions about safe sex are an everyday occurrence.

We’re working with both boys and girls in 26 middle and high schools throughout New York City to develop leadership, healthy relationship behaviors, and prevent teen pregnancy as part of our Inwood House program. Discussions, projects, and fun activities are designed to help students learn to make wise choices — about delaying sexual activity, avoiding parenthood until they’re ready, and not smoking or using drugs. Lessons about condoms, STDs, and when “no means no” are interspersed with making videos about bullying and holding educational fairs for their fellow students.

“I learn something new every day,” says Ylani. “I’ve learned what to think about before I make a decision that might affect my life for a long time. Last month we did a project called ‘Spread the Word’ where we made posters about avoiding pregnancy and got to talk to the other kids about what we’ve learned. I feel like I’m learning to be a leader.”

Just 38% of teen mothers get a high school diploma; daughters of teen mothers are three times as likely to become teen mothers themselves.*

The good news is that teen pregnancy rates have been dropping — 9% since 2015 and 67% since 1991. There are many factors that have led to this good news, but part of the solution is education delivered to teens in a way that is frank and nonjudgmental. Ylani has her sights on being a pediatrician. She understands that doing well in school, avoiding drugs, and not getting pregnant are critical to making that happen.

* According to the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy.