

## NCC KICKS OFF 50TH ANNIVERSARY WITH CELEBRATION, REFLECTION



**Left:** Students from Community Hills Early Learning Center held candles and participated in the human birthday cake marking NCC's 50th anniversary kickoff. **Center:** Diane Johnson, at podium, served as mistress of ceremonies. **Right:** Founder Monsignor William J. Linder reflects on what New Community has accomplished since its founding in 1968.

It started with ashes in 1967. Years of political disenfranchisement, economic disinvestment and police brutality erupted in violence on July 12, 1967, sparking a six-day melee in Newark that left 26 people dead and devastated the Central Ward.

The Newark rebellion gave birth to New Community Corporation, which was founded by Monsignor William J. Linder and a small group of residents in 1968, in the wake of despair. Since then, NCC has reshaped the landscape of the Central Ward, with safe, decent and affordable housing for seniors, families and the homeless. Over the years, its services and reach has expanded. New Community now offers a vast network of services in the areas of housing, health care, early childhood education, workforce development and more. While primarily concentrated in Newark's Central Ward, NCC sites can be found around the city and also in Orange, Kearny and Jersey City.

On April 6, 2017, New Community officially kicked off the celebration of its 50th anniversary at St. Joseph Plaza, with dignitaries, residents, students, staff and supporters.

"We've spent 50 years getting a few things done," New Community CEO Richard Rohrman said.

The kickoff ceremony began with a candlelight processional where 50 people formed a human birthday cake, each holding a candle symbolizing a year of hope.

New Community has never failed to "always give dignity, always give opportunity," said Central Ward Councilwoman Gayle Chaneyfield Jenkins, who grew up at NCC. Her father, Joe, was part of the group of residents who helped to lead NCC in its early days.

NCC may have reached its golden anniversary, but there is still more work to do, according to its founder. A Better Life will provide permanent supportive housing to chronically homeless individuals, including military veterans.

"We need to take care of people," Monsignor said of the latest development project that's slated to open in June. "We've got to live up to that." Monsignor Linder also held a book signing of his memoir, "Out of the Ashes Came Hope," which is available for purchase online at Amazon and Barnes and Nobles.

Diane Johnson, former director of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, served as mistress of ceremonies for the occasion. The rows in the atrium at St. Joseph Plaza were filled with senior residents, many of whom have been part of NCC for years.

"It's been a wonderful journey. It hasn't been easy," Dr. A. Zachary Yamba, a board member, said.

Students from Community Hills Early Learning Center sang a song and recited a poem. They also capped the event with a surprise glitter confetti toss to the delight of the audience.





Anna Sing-King, at podium, was accompanied by her husband as she delivered a powerful and emotional testimonial of her journey and how NCC has impacted her life.



Richard Rohrman, CEO of New Community, delivered remarks.



Fifty residents, employees, students and volunteers created a human birthday cake lit with 50 candles. Jackie Andrews, far right, led a selection of the song, "We've Come This Far By Faith."



Residents from Commons Senior enjoyed the luncheon.



Newark Central Ward Councilwoman Gayle Chaneyfield Jenkins reflected on how NCC impacted her life since childhood.



Seniors from Hudson Senior in Jersey City took a photo at Monsignor's book signing table.

## Upcoming Anniversary Events For 2017-2018

- May 17, 2017 - NCC International Day: This event will celebrate the global cultures represented throughout the New Community network and will feature a cultural fashion show, music and food, and will be held at the Extended Care Facility.
- May 2017 - Launch New Community Guide.
- June 2017 - Ribbon cutting of A Better Life.
- June 2017 - Multicultural Music Appreciation Month at St. Joseph Plaza.
- June 27, 2017 - Golf Classic at the Montclair Golf Club.
- July to August - Book signings of "Out of the Ashes Came Hope" at various locations in New Jersey.
- September 16, 2017 - Annual Parade and Street Festival.
- October 15, 2017 - Fireside chat: A historical policy discussion and presentation of the emergency of New Community and its impact on the greater Newark region.
- November 27, 2017 - #GivingTuesday and launch of "50 NCC Supporters" giving campaign.
- March 3 2018 - 50th Anniversary Gala at the Hilton Meadowlands in East Rutherford.



# CLARION

## Serving The People Of The New Community Network

In the end, it was Anna Sing-King's testimonial of hope that brought the room to its feet. Pregnant with her first child at age 19, Sing-King said her life was filled with uncertainty. At age 24, she found herself homeless and was referred to New Community.

That's when her life began to change. New Community's vast network of services—ranging from housing, social services, early childhood education and workforce development—provided Sing-King with the tools she needed to become self-sufficient.

Now, Sing-King is a homeowner in Newark, married and the mother of two children. In 2013, she earned her bachelor's degree. Sing-King has worked at NCC for more than two decades, starting as a clerical temp who climbed her way up to her current role as manager of the Department of Human Resources, where she touches the lives of the corporation's roughly 500 employees, many of whom are Newark residents.

She's also focused on paying forward the support she received from NCC by working with youth. Currently she and her husband have custody of an at-risk teenage boy who recently lost his mother to cancer.

"New Community has provided me with a sense of self-worth," Sing-King, 46, said. "My life has improved."