

The Voice of Low-income New Yorkers.

Who We Are

The Community Service Society (CSS) is a leading voice on behalf of low-income New Yorkers. Known for its independence, CSS informs leaders from across the political spectrum about the plight of over two million poor and near-poor families and individuals in our city.

With an annual budget of just under \$16 million, and a staff of 114—including researchers, attorneys, case managers, benefits specialists, and 6,500 older adult volunteers—CSS fights poverty by strengthening New York.

Responding to Urgent Challenges, Then and Now

CSS's historic accomplishments include setting up the prototype for New York City's free school lunch program, laying the groundwork for social security, and increasing the representation of minorities in City Council districts.

Today, our work is foremost as an advocate, connecting people to family-sustaining jobs, building economic security, and ensuring access to opportunity for all New Yorkers. CSS gives a voice to those who are too often excluded from the policy debate.



The Vision for a Working New York

CSS works to influence leaders and decision makers from the public and private sectors and across the political spectrum. **Examples include:**

- **Research:** Exposing pervasive injustices—such as our city's insufficient GED system, the jobs crisis in communities of color, or barriers facing the formerly incarcerated—that particularly affect low-income families—through litigation, research, and our annual Unheard Third survey of low-income New Yorkers;
- **Advocacy:** Creating and advocating for policy solutions that will remedy these injustices—such as the preservation and expansion of affordable housing, ensuring health care access, and seeking improved funding for workforce development programs;
- **Outreach:** Providing trainings and assistance to service providers through our Center for Benefits and Services, which enables tens of thousands of New Yorkers to access Food Stamps, rental subsidies and other public benefits;
- **Access:** Working with immigrant and other low-income communities to access health insurance through our Community Health Advocates program; and,
- **Volunteers:** Marshalling the resources of trained, caring adults through our Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP).

“No one should be denied the opportunity to work at a job that provides for their needs.”

David R. Jones, CSS President and CEO

“Civic leaders rely on CSS research to develop policies that truly benefit all New Yorkers. CSS is a valued partner in serving our city”

**NYC Mayor David N. Dinkins
Lifetime CSS Trustee**

THE CSS ACTION PLAN: OUR URBAN AGENDA

Year after year, representatives of every income level in New York City tell us that they support aggressive measures to help hard-working New Yorkers get ahead. CSS responds with a comprehensive three-point action plan that creates opportunity, secures families, and strengthens New York through the following actions:

1. Advocate for better job opportunities to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty that particularly affects communities of color in New York City:
 - Remove employment barriers for the formerly incarcerated;
 - Create pipelines to sustainable, living-wage jobs that combine paid work experience with skill development and supportive services;
 - Provide tax credits to encourage the employment of out-of-school youth; and
 - Create public works programs to reengage youth in projects rebuilding and maintaining our national and local infrastructure.
2. Promote policies and programs that advance the economic security of the working poor:
 - Build awareness and expand access to existing public benefits (including \$2 billion in annual, unclaimed state and federal assets) that directly support economic mobility for eligible recipients;
 - Create and promote financial education programs that help low-income New Yorkers develop strategies for achieving financial stability, while also aggressively preventing and deterring predatory practices that prey on our constituents;
 - Promote policies to preserve affordable housing for the working poor; and
 - Advocate for improved wages and access to employer sponsored benefits for low-wage workers in NYC.
3. Promote health care reform as an essential strategy for alleviating barriers to employment:
 - Work directly with immigrant and other low-income communities to access health care through New York's public health insurance system;
 - Advocate for policies that allow low-income workers with chronic health conditions and inadequate health insurance to achieve greater self sufficiency;
 - Identify racial disparities that prevent access to appropriate health care and developing strategies to eliminate them; and
 - Advocate for universal health care coverage in New York State.

The New York Times

Report Shows Plight of Puerto Rican Youth

By Sam Dolnick/October 28 2010

But by many measures, young Puerto Ricans are faring far worse than the young Dominicans, Mexicans and other Latinos in New York, according to a report to be released on Monday by the Community Service Society of New York, a leading antipoverty group.

CNNMoney.com

A Service of CNN, Fortune & Money

Youth jobless crisis could have lasting impact

May 26, 2010

NEW YORK (CNNMoney.com) -- The recession has fueled a record level of unemployment among young workers and is likely to have a lasting impact on their job prospects, according to a congressional report released Wednesday.

NEW YORK'S HOMETOWN CONNECTION WWW.NYDAILYNEWS.COM

DAILY NEWS

Editorial: New York flunks GED

November 11, 2009

It is a shame of the Empire State: New York ranks dead last in the percentage of test-takers who pass the exam for a general equivalency diploma.

crain's new york business.com

Poll: Health reform too pricey for New Yorkers

September 25, 2009

Insurance reforms being proposed in Washington are just too expensive for most New Yorkers, according to a poll released Friday by the Community Service Society.

David R. Jones

CSS President and Chief Executive Officer

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Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer

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