

# The New York Times

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EDITORIAL

## Catching Up

At the start of 2008, all was going according to Marcia Bladen's plans. She was earning enough as an administrative assistant at Time Warner to support her young son and, at night, was working on a master's degree in community health. In time, she was expecting to get a second master's, in clinical psychology, and open a rehabilitation center. She was not expecting to lose her job.

When she did, in February 2008, unemployment benefits kept food on the table, and an understanding landlord let her accrue arrears while she looked for work and stayed in class. But by the time she found a job, as a teller at Pay-O-Matic, she was six months behind on rent. "I recovered quickly," she said, "but not quickly enough."

Determined to pay off her arrears, Ms. Bladen made small dents in the sum when she could. But with her take-home pay lower than what she earned at her previous position, progress was slow-going. In the fall of 2009, she decided to move. She found a more affordable apartment in East Flatbush but couldn't pay for the move. Community Service Society, one of seven agencies supported by The New York Times Neediest Cases Fund, drew \$1,700 from the fund for her first month's rent and security deposit, and another \$598 for moving expenses.

Next month, Ms. Bladen expects to make her first considerable payment toward her arrears. "It will feel good to catch up," she said.

Donations to The Times's Neediest Cases Fund go to seven charities: The Children's Aid Society; Brooklyn Bureau of Community Service; The Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York; Catholic Charities, Diocese of Brooklyn and Queens; The Community Service Society of New York; The Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies; and UJA-Federation of New York.

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