New York, N.Y. - Bronx Legal Services received a grant of $6,800 from the New York Bar Association to support its initiative called Helping At-Risk Communities (HARC).

HARC provides targeted interventions and assistance to four vulnerable populations facing eviction: people with disabilities/serious illnesses; noncitizens; survivors of domestic violence; and, people age 60 or over and creates longer-term stability for the most vulnerable populations at risk of homelessness by going beyond the emergency rent grant or subsidy that stops the eviction and providing targeted, ongoing legal advocacy once their housing case is resolved. HARC keeps people out of Housing Court longer, reduces the likelihood that DV survivors will return to unsafe situations, and improves health outcomes, among other benefits.

Marie Richardson, the Acting Project Director of Bronx Legal Services, celebrated the grant from The New York Bar Foundation. As Ms. Richardson explains, “We love partnering with The New York Bar Foundation to bring critical services to the communities who need our help the most. We are proud of HARC’s accomplishments over this past year which brought in almost $300K in retroactive benefits awards to our clients.”

Paula Arboleda is the Deputy Director of the Public Benefits Unit and helps to oversee HARC. She loves the interdisciplinary work of HARC, sharing that “meeting the health needs of people facing eviction so often goes overlooked. HARC is the safety net for our safety net, ensuring that we provide stability for families even after their Housing Court case ends.”

Foundation grants assist non-profit organizations with essentials-of-life issues such as child support, consumer debt, housing, access to health care and education, and family matters such as domestic violence and family stability.

“The New York Bar Foundation has allocated nearly $650,000 in grants to 110 programs across New York significantly increasing the total number of grants over the past several years,” said Lucia Whisenand, chair of the Grant Review Committee. “The issues we touch on are extensive and impact people in life changing ways.”

By raising awareness of the need for access to civil legal services and allocating resources to help meet these needs, the Foundation will help make access to justice a reality for New Yorkers and, thereby, enhance the understanding of and respect for the rule of law.

“Through our grant-making program we help improve access to justice by providing seed grants to innovative legal projects piloting new ways to help those in need,” adds June Castellano, Vice-chair of the Grant Review Committee. “When you give to the Foundation you help make a difference across New York State.”