

Grateful patient reunites with Jacobi staff

As part of his holiday trip from his home in the Dominican Republic back to the Bronx, former patient Alex Ramirez made a trip back to NYC Health + Hospitals/Jacobi to express his 20+ years of gratitude to the hospital staff.

In 1994, Alex Ramirez was flown to New York to receive treatment at NYC Health + Hospitals/Jacobi following a severe spinal cord injury from a diving accident in his native country, the Dominican Republic.

"I only had limited wrist function," he recalled. "I really had to relearn everything."

That's when occupational therapist Stephen Leonard and the rehabilitation team at NYC Health + Hospitals/Jacobi got to work. They partnered with Alex for four months of intensive rehabilitation, during which Alex relearned basic functions like sitting up, balancing himself, dressing, bathing, and other important skills, so that despite his paralysis, he could go about his daily life.

"Alex was in a tough place when he arrived," said Leonard. "But we knew that as long as he was committed to his recovery, we would be there to assist him, every step of the

way. Both figuratively and literally."

The rehabilitation team was also able to provide Alex with the emotional support he needed to overcome such a devastating injury, pairing him with therapists to help him adjust and eventually thrive.

"Steve and his colleagues at Jacobi went above and beyond to help me," said Alex. "I can never thank them enough."

Today, Alex is now Dr. Ramirez, teaching radiology to 600 students at a medical school in the Dominican Republic. Twenty years later, Leonard is the director of the



Dr. Alex Ramirez and occupational therapist Stephen Leonard.

rehabilitation team at NYC Health + Hospitals/Jacobi.

If you or someone you care about is in need of rehabilita-

tion services, contact the Rehabilitation Department at NYC Health + Hospitals/Jacobi at (718) 918-6204.

BY GENE DEFRANCIS

We are happy and grateful to announce we have an office space at 930 Allerton Avenue (between Radcliff and Colden avenues).

Tax Time Associates have been gracious enough to share their space with us. We will begin clothes drive (starting immediately) of new or gently used clothes. The items can be dropped off at our location. Especially professional attire for our young men and women. We will also accept canned food items.

If you are a family in need of any assistance you can stop by and we will guide you in the right direction and or do what we can to help.

And you can sign up for membership and save 10-20% on shopping at your favorite stores.

Membership cost \$25 and includes a subscription to the Bronx Times.

Or just stop by to say hi or share questions comments concerns.

We are also gearing up for our fourth anniversary party in April. Sponsors are welcome to reach out to us now and secure their space in the Journal at AllertonMerchants@gmail.com

Spread the word and add your friends to our Facebook page.

We wanted to share with the public a letter we sent to our community board who has joined us in our efforts to accomplish a few safety goals:

"Thank you for your attention this week to our concerns in Allerton regarding our residents safety and the safety of our local businesses.

"As noted in our meeting these issues are not new and

we have addressed them several times to the proper channels. The start to 2017 was not a very good one in Allerton and we feel could have been deterred if the solutions we suggested had been implemented.

"In 2017 already we have two fatal car accidents on Boston Road within the first week of the New Year. We are determined to prevent a third fatality and we want to work closely with our community board to do what we can.

"It is in the minutes of a general community board meeting in the presence of all of our elected officials that we requested a left turn only light at the intersection of Boston Road and Allerton Avenue.

"This intersection is a launching pad for speeding. When cars gets jammed at this intersection waiting for oncoming traffic as the cars in front wait to make a left turn it is not uncommon for cars to speed out of the jam to 'make up for lost time'. This is a common bad driving practice witnessed at this intersection. Add the element of alcohol or another factor that inhibits drivers and it is a recipe for disaster.

"Add the fact that half of the turns are blind left turns where vision is obstructed for drivers to see pedestrians if they are rushing to make a left turn before oncoming traffic prohibits them.

"It is dangerous and it is a known hazard to everyone who lives here. We could also speculate that many homeowners on the east side of Boston Road are intimidated by this crosswalk preventing some (especially many elderly or disabled homeowners) from shopping at our local busi-

Allerton International Merchants Association

nesses.

"Also several months ago we also brought up the need for cameras in our shopping district. We were proactive and received a quote from a reliable, trustworthy and local security company well known in our community. NyTek has given us a very generous price to install two storefront cameras at 40 different stores for \$40,000.

"We know that there are grants available to help small businesses add such features as well as grants to help beautify the facade of such businesses (which does effect safety and perception of safety in our community). We want to work with our community board to fund these projects through Small Business Services and other pro small business organizations.

"Again as predicted by our organization we saw the need for such cameras. And this month in this early new year at least three of our stores have been broken into, each one lacking security cameras.

"We also want to revisit the need for proper lighting and cameras in our two alleyways (between Wallace/Holland and Holland/Cruger) and raise funds to repave and gate this private property because it is a need for the entire community.

"To conclude we would also like to work together to acquire more lighting for the

entire Allerton corridor.

Angie's Salon, especially during the winter months when the sun goes down earlier, has a deep concern of their female clients and staff closing at night. Not too long ago our street light that lit up this block was replaced with a transformer. Understanding that both a light and a transformer can not co-exist, we still require a solution to add lighting to this and other blocks along Allerton. NYPD experts have also requested that we turn our lighting system to LED lighting.

"So we would like to formally request we work together to find funding to add LED decorative light poles that come from the ground on this and several other blocks where lighting is critical for the success of small businesses and the safety of our residents and visitors.

"I look forward to finally coming to a solution on these very important issues and

thank you sincerely for your time and service to this community."

We are very optimistic that we resolve these issues this year among concerns. 2017 will be the year to see results. We are very serious about quality of life issues. Concerns stemming from our area shelters, panhandler, businesses blocking the sidewalk with merchandise, businesses harassing pedestrians, businesses blasting music and delivery bikes not following traffic laws will not be tolerated.

To all the residents that continually report these complaints. We thank you for your patients as we work to resolve them.

Keep the information coming and together we will continue to grow this great community.

Our next meeting is Tuesday, February 7, at 7:30 p.m. at the Sanz 815, Allerton Avenue.

Jeanne-Jugan Home donations

Jeanne Jugan Home for the Aged, located at 2999 Schurz Avenue, is always in need of brand new or near-new items that can be sold in its gift shop and Annual Christmas Bazaar. They have a special need for new toys. Other items include jewelry, gift sets, electronic items, specialty items, new tagged clothing,

accessories, collectibles., but no VHS.

If you have any questions regarding a donation contact Joanne at the Home (347) 329 1800.

Make sure packages are securely wrapped attention Joanne/gift shop. If possible drop off donations during the weekdays.