

# 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

## Seafarers International House

### MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Record breaking!

Dear Friend of Seafarers International House (SIH):

Thanks to the support of friends like you, we broke all records in 2019!

Most seafarers come from low wage countries including China, the Philippines, Indonesia, the Russian Federation and Ukraine. They make huge sacrifices often leading lonely and dangerous lives at sea, months on end. Injury, kidnapping, and even death are relatively frequent occurrences.

To brighten their holidays, a **record 2,601 Christmas-at-Sea satchels** were donated by congregations, businesses senior groups and knitters. Our six port chaplains literally had their hands full carrying them to the crew members on container ships and tankers.

In the ports of Baltimore, Connecticut, Philadelphia, and New York & New Jersey, the SIH port chaplains board-

ed 1,894 ships to bring seafarers connectivity and counsel and to transport those that were allowed to enter the US to the mall or medical facilities, **serving a record total of 31,286 mariners.** This work was largely supported by attendees of the Setting the Course Banquet, which helped raise a record of \$230,000 from representatives of the shipping industry and unions.

Global displacement reached a record high of 68.5 million people by the end of 2017, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Approximately 25.4 million of these individuals were formally designated as refugees, 40 million were internally displaced persons, and 3.1 million were asylum seekers.

About 50 SIH volunteers visited some 20 asylum seekers at the Elizabeth Detention Center, where conditions are prison-like. They brought them hope and the prospect of avoiding homelessness or exploitation once released and granted the legal right to stay in the U.S. For these asylees we increased the number of rooms reserved for them from four to six. That means SIH lost the income that supports our mission for those two extra rooms. However, contributors helped us make up for that. In addition to generous individuals the Advent Mission Fund, Hyde & Watson Foundation, and Metro New York Synod, helped SIH support the work with immigrants.

*A record 905 Christmas-At-Sea satchels were donated by members of the Upper Susquehanna Synod. Bishop Barbara J. Collins helped put them into the two vans (with benches removed) needed to bring them to the ports. Photo by Marsh Drege.*

#### MISSION

*Seafarers International House (SIH) is the Lutheran response to the urgent needs of vulnerable seafarers and immigrants.*

*SIH offers hospitality, social assistance, and advocacy to a multi-national and multi-faith community in maritime ports on the Eastern Seaboard and in an 84-room Guesthouse in New York City.*

As a result we served a **record number of 36 asylees** in 2019 (up from 28 the year before) in addition to 68 human trafficking, domestic violence and local disaster survivors. Twenty asylees and asylum-seeking guests were men and 10 were women. They came from Dominican Republic (1), Ethiopia (1), Jamaica (1), Nepal (1), Philippines (1), Russia (1), Venezuela (1), Mexico (4), Nigeria (4) Uganda (4), Honduras (5), and unknown or not identified (12).

I don't want to sound like a broken record – pun intended – but YOU helped us achieve so much in 2019. Please accept our heartfelt appreciation on behalf of the **record 38,225 people** (including youth and community groups) we were able to assist together with you. ⚓



*Marsh Luther Drege*  
Pastor and Executive Director



# 2019 Program Impact

**38,225** immigrants, seafarers, and community members directly benefited from SIH services (up from 33,985)

**2,601** seafarers, regardless of faith, received Christmas-at-Sea satchels filled with warm clothing and holiday greetings prepared by volunteers (up from 1,853)

**36** asylees found their first home in the US in our guesthouse, staying a total of 1,651 nights (up from 28 asylees and 1,182 nights)

**50** volunteer visitors brought hope to 26 asylum seekers, who were locked up in detention centers

**3** advocacy events hosted to draw attention to the plight of asylum seekers

**31,286** total of seafarers who were either visited or transported from 1,894 ships (up from 25,183 and 1,793 vessels)

**451** youth, church and community gatherings accommodated serving about 6,765 people (up from 432 and about 6,480 people)

**68** survivors of domestic violence, human trafficking and local disasters were accommodated (up from 57)

**45** guest rooms renovated

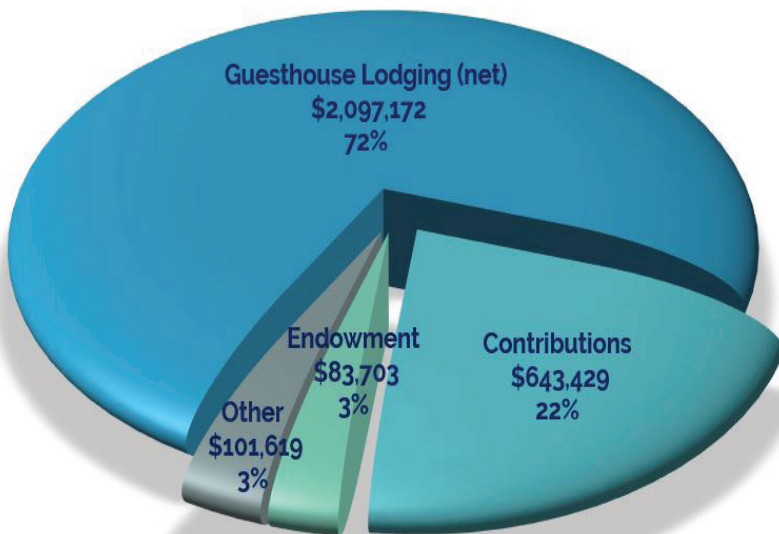
**1** Instagram account established; follow us on Twitter as well, both have the handle @SIHNYC

## 2019 FINANCIAL REPORT

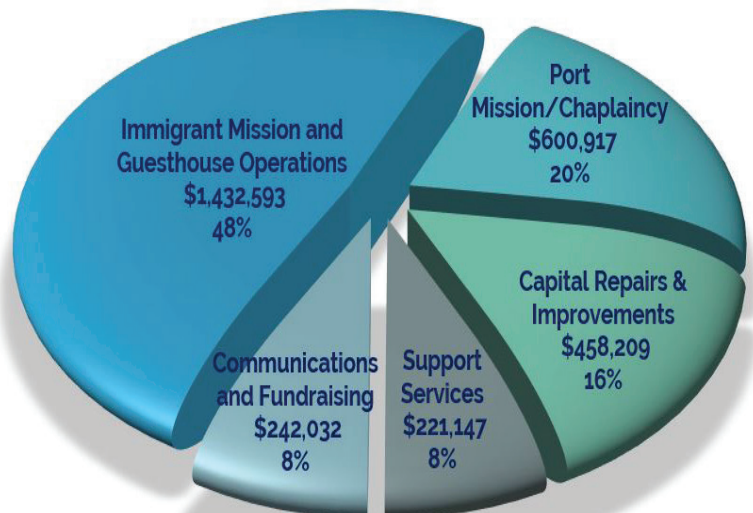
In 2019, SIH allocated \$162,610 to accommodate asylees as well as domestic violence and human trafficking survivors and provided a room subsidy of \$128,100 to seafarers. The operating expenses exceeded revenues \$28,975 because of unexpectedly lower guesthouse occupancy. Program services accounted for 84% percent of expenses with only 16% spent on support services and fundraising. Net Assets increased from \$5,374,369 in 2018 to \$6,150,830 in 2019.

The figures below reflect unaudited revenue and expenses and are subject to change once audited. You may request the audited 2019 financial statements by email ([henryk@sihnyc.org](mailto:henryk@sihnyc.org)), call (212) 677-4800 ext. 1203, or mail your request. [📎](#)

**Operating Revenue 2019 (pre-audit)**  
**\$2,925,923**



**Operating Expenses 2019 (pre-audit)**  
**\$2,954,898**



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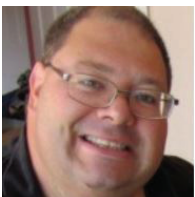
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*In December 2019, friends of asylees prepared a holiday pot luck for the weekly Monday community meal that enables asylees and their friends where they exchange experiences and build friendships. Pictured (from left to right) are Barbara Stern of Brotherhood Synagogue, SIH's social work intern Lindsay O'Connell, and Kristie, a former SIH resident.*

## HOMEPORT SOCIETY

Members of the Homeport Society included Seafarers International House (SIH) in their retirement and legacy planning by including SIH in their will or making SIH a beneficiary of a life insurance or a qualified retirement plan.

- Barbara and Rev. Dr. Dennis Anderson
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- Susan Smyth Bell
- Paul K. Erbes
- Dr. Ann Siegle Drege and Rev. Marsh Luther Drege
- Pauline and Harry Forse
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**For more information or if you would like to participate email Henryk Behnke ([henryk@sihny.org](mailto:henryk@sihny.org)) or call him at (212) 677-4800 X 1203.**

## LIGHTHOUSE KEEPERS

Lighthouse Keepers have set up automated monthly giving to ensure that Seafarers International House has a regular and stable income stream to fulfill its mission.

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- Guan Yang



*Seafarers appreciate the reusable Christmas-At-Sea satchels provided by donors and volunteers. Photo by SIH Port Chaplain Luisito Destreza.*

# CHRISTMAS-AT-SEA: A HOLIDAY INITIATIVE

**A** new record: The following volunteers donated, knitted, and put together 2,601 satchels, up from 1,853 last year!

Advent Lutheran Church, Wyckoff, NJ

Vineet Arya, Jericho, NY

Baltimore International Seafarers' Center

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Gail Kennedy, Philadelphia, PA

Mike Kolupar c/o Foley and Lardner, Milwaukee, WI

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Dena Renda, Shelton, CT

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Kathleen Ross, Flushing, NY

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**2,601 crew members regardless of their faith or nationality received their satchels filled with a sweatshirt, socks, a T-shirt, a knitted cap, nuts or chocolate and a Holiday Greeting Card.**

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Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night ... prevent Port Chaplain Sigrid Erickson and her dog Leif from transporting seafarers desperate to spend a few hours ashore.

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