

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Media alert, Sunday 9/13 art protest and rally**  
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*The UWS Open Hearts Initiative and “Homeless Can’t Stay Home” Protest Mayor de Blasio’s  
Handling of Shelter “Musical Chairs” Debacle*  
**2pm in Riverside Park, 3pm at Lucerne, 4:30pm at Gracie Mansion**

**WHAT:** The UWS Open Hearts Initiative will hold a free art therapy event on Sunday, September 13 in support of homeless NYers, with a march to Gracie Mansion and rally with electeds in collaboration with Homeless Can’t Stay Home to follow. Participants will gather in Riverside Park at 2pm to paint wooden stars with messages of hope and healing to be hung throughout the Upper West Side, then march to the Lucerne Hotel to hang stars in protest of Mayor Bill de Blasio’s and the Department of Homeless Services’ decision earlier this week to move Project Renewal operations and over 200 shelter residents out of the hotel, displacing disabled residents at Harmonia shelter in Midtown.

The march will continue from the Lucerne to Gracie Mansion, to join the Homeless Can’t Stay Home Coalition, homeless activists, and other protestors to listen to the voices of current shelter residents who are being displaced, and the elected officials who support them. “If the Mayor’s plan goes through, the residents of the Harmonia will lose their homes, the staff will lose their jobs, and Project Renewal and the men at the Lucerne will have to start from scratch in a new location. How many lives need to be disrupted to satisfy the Mayor’s need for approval from wealthy whiners?” said **Corinne Low of the UWS Open Hearts Initiative**.

**WHO:** The **UWS Open Hearts Initiative** formed in late July to provide direct support for residents of temporary hotel shelters and build community awareness. **Stars of Hope** is the world’s largest and fastest growing healing arts program. **Homeless Can’t Stay Home** formed in March to call for the use of vacant hotel rooms to protect homeless NYers from COVID.

**WHERE:** Riverside Park at 75<sup>th</sup> Street (By the basketball courts), The Lucerne Hotel (79<sup>th</sup> and Amsterdam), and Gracie Mansion (88th and East End Ave.)

**WHEN:** Sunday, September 13, 2020

**2PM:** Make "Stars of Hope," 75th & Riverside, with kids and shelter residents, march to Lucerne

**3:00PM:** Hang up “Stars of Hope” / Sign-Making / Rally in front of Lucerne (79th & Amsterdam)

**3:30PM:** March from Lucerne to Gracie Mansion to protest Mayor's disastrous shelter shuffle

**4:30 PM: Rally/Press at Gracie Mansion: Speakers will include current residents of the Harmonia and Lucerne shelters, elected officials from both districts, the Legal Aid Society, and homeless advocacy organizations**

**CONTACT:** Please contact [info@uwsopenhearts.org](mailto:info@uwsopenhearts.org) for more information and to schedule interviews. Learn more at [twitter.com/uwsopenhearts](https://twitter.com/uwsopenhearts), [instagram.com/uwsopenhearts](https://instagram.com/uwsopenhearts), and [uwsstrong.org](https://uwsstrong.org).