ABOUT US

Mission: City Limits uses investigative journalism through the prism of New York City to identify urban problems, examine their causes, explore solutions, and equip communities to take action.

Board of Trustees

Martha Nelson | Chairwoman | Joined City Limits in 2018
Former SVP and Editor-in-Chief of Yahoo! & former Editor-in-Chief of Time Inc.

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Magazine publisher and entrepreneur

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Creative Director, Quad

Lynda Hamilton | Joined City Limits in 2021
Consultant, Gaia Park Group, LLC

Our Staff

Marjorie Martay | Executive Director
Jeanmarie Evelly | Executive Editor
David Brand | Deputy Editor

Liz Donovan | Reporter and RFA Corps Member, Climate, Health & Environment

Daniel Parra | Spanish-Language Reporter/Editor
Adi Talwar | Contributing Photographer
Jennifer Hendricks | Development Manager

Our History: Founded in 1976 in the midst of New York’s fiscal crisis, City Limits exists to inform democracy and empower citizens to create a more just city. The organization is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit funded by foundation support, ad sponsorship and donations from readers.
Dear Readers,

In preparation for 2021’s anniversary celebration, I combed through four and a half decades of City Limits’ print and digital archives.

It would be an understatement to call this exercise “inspiring,” but it was. In its impressive history, City Limits has published thousands of articles on issues impacting New York City residents, from land use hearings to tenant protests, debates at City Hall over legislation to neighborhood disputes over street space. Large or small, citywide or hyperlocal, we know these things matter and deserve the type of in-depth, conscientious reporting City Limits is committed to.

Our archives are documentation — not only of the hard work and dedication of the reporters, editors, photographers, readers and supporters who made those stories possible over the years—but of the countless New Yorkers who’ve shared their stories with us, many of them people fighting to make our beloved city better.

City Limits was proud to honor four community leaders who’ve done just that. Afua Atta-Mensah, Jenna Flanagan, Christine Quinn and Kathryn Wylde are the first inductees into the City Limits’ Hall of Fame, selected for their contributions to justice, media, housing, and economic development.

As we look back, we’re also looking forward, and are asking all of you to help position City Limits for another 45 years of fair, unflinching journalism. In the last couple of years, we’ve expanded our reporting on housing, homelessness, climate resiliency, aging, government policy, and more. In addition, City Limits operates a paid journalism training program for high school students as well as Una Ciudad Sin Limites, our Spanish-language reporting initiative.

None of this would be possible without your support. We’re grateful, and City Limits is eager and ready to embark on this next chapter together, to produce even more impactful reporting in the years to come.

All the best,
Jeanmarie Evelly
Executive Editor
"I would guess it was the broken promises kind of thing," said John Gallagher, an architect and last surviving staff member of the Sunset Park Redevelopment Committee. Once again, the success of the effort to turn this struggling neighborhood around depends in a large way on government. And while there are already some indications that it is hatching new obstacles, Gallagher remains optimistic. "Essentially, our second chance hasn't started yet. But things haven't looked this good in quite a while."

—December 1977

45 Years, 45 Stories
A LOOK BACK AT FOUR DECADES OF COMMUNITY NEWS FROM CITY LIMITS

In commemoration of our 45th anniversary we have compiled a collection of wonderful photos of our coverage of the city since 1976. We have received wide praise for the book and we hope for the opportunity to showcase these photos and stories, along with a montage photo video that captures each year of City Limits’ reporting. In 2022, we are planning an exhibit for the book, along with a panel discussion on the changes the city has experienced over the past 45 years.
City Limits continues to develop a robust and growing audience. In 2021, engagement across all platforms have increased. Our newsletter, The Weekly, went from 16% open rate to 24%. And all of our newsletters are routinely surpassing the 20% open rate goal. Further indicating that City Limits is a go-to news source for New York City.

**Increase in Facebook's reach**
- 115%

**Increase in Facebook's engagement**
- 27%

**Increase in Instagram's content interactions**
- 394%

**Increase in Instagram's account engagement**
- 482%

**Increase in capturing Instagram accounts not following us**
- 150%

**Twitter impressions**
- 3M

**Spanish Twitter impressions**
- 40.3K

**Website Users**
- 1.3M

**Newsletter Subscribers**
- 24K

**Sessions**
- 1.6M

**Pageviews**
- 1.9M
**City Limits Shelter Count**

In 2022, City Limits will publish regular tallies attempting to more accurately track the number of people staying in New York City’s homeless shelters, a population that spans five municipal systems run by four different agencies.

**2021 Highlights**

**Housing**
- A new series called *Zoned Out* was developed covering Bill de Blasio’s legacy.
- Ese Olumhense and Daniel Parra wrote about *Jerome Avenue rezoning in The Bronx*, which found that the city has failed to distribute any of the funds it promised to dole out to auto businesses in the rezoning area for relocation.
- David Brand’s investigation found that the *East New York rezoning* has so far failed to create any new jobs in the neighborhood’s Industrial Business Zone despite the city’s initial promises that it would help spur some 3,900 local jobs.

**Homelessness**
- We began our second year of coverage in our series of articles on family homelessness, *"A Family Affair: Parents, Children and NYC’s Homelessness Crisis"*
- David Brand’s coverage of the city’s decision to send homeless shelter residents back into group congregate shelters, the legal challenges to the state’s *eviction moratorium*, the myriad issues with *homeless housing vouchers*, the ongoing *rezonings* in Gowanus and SoHo.

**Department of Homeless Services nightly population by category, 2022**

![Chart showing nightly population by category, 2022](chart.png)
In 2021, City Limits grew closer to its goal of becoming a fully bilingual investigative local media outlet, a first of its kind in the city.

City Limits’ series "Lo que necesita saber sobre" has published guides and explainers in Spanish and English which serve as real-service journalism, news-you-can-use pieces for immigrant and undocumented New Yorkers.

This Spanish-language project has been so successful that one of its articles "La licencia de conducción para indocumentados en Nueva York" was City Limits’ most-read article, achieving higher views than our English-language content.

Daniel continued production on his weekly Spanish-language policy podcast in partnership with El Diario, El Diario Sin Límites, and featured some high-profile guests, including Congresswoman Linda Sánchez, who sponsored President Biden’s immigration overhaul bill. Another high-profile guest on the show was Congressman Raul Ruiz (D-CA), who at the time was Chair of the Hispanic Caucus.
HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT

New Series

“The Whole Child: Reporting on Behavioral Health and NYC’s Children” includes in-depth coverage of city and state child welfare policies, particularly those relating to mental health care.

Age Justice Series Forum

City Limits hosted a forum with the mayoral candidates that focused on aging in NYC, and policies impacting older New Yorkers in partnership with LiveOn.

Environmental Justice

Donovan wrote about a high voltage converter proposed for the South Bronx, waste transfer stations in Queens, and how heat disproportionately impacts low-income communities. City Limits produced a number of stories on the impact of Hurricane Ida on the city and resiliency of the subway system.

Climate & Environment

Liz Donovan has been carving out our new climate and environment beat, getting scoops on several fronts and with stories on a number of issues including how several high profile energy projects — National Grid’s Brooklyn pipeline, a power plant proposed for Astoria — conflict with the city and state’s emissions goals.
In the summer and fall 2021, forty New York City high school students from across all five boroughs were engaged in an intensive paid training program, bringing the number of CLARIFY intern alumni to more than 300 since 2017. With funding support from the Google News Initiative and The Pinkerton Foundation, the program pivoted to an immersive online program that gave interns a real world digital newsroom experience, and the ability to create a digital high school newsletter. All students with the exception of one completed the internship, and earned a $1,000 stipend for their participation.

What they said

“I really enjoyed the editing session with Liz [fall CLARIFY instructor] because she taught me how to integrate quotes into articles more effectively. I appreciated her genuine positive feedback and relevant, helpful suggestions to make the article better. In the future, I’ll use knowledge from the editing session to better write articles for my school newspaper.”

“IT’S WORTH IT! I had a lot of fun and learned a lot. I gained more confidence in my writing and interview skills and it sparked a passion for journalism in me. I look at the world around me a lot more now, I watch more documentaries, and I’m open to listening, researching, and observing a lot more too. I read the news more too. Definitely worth it!”

By the end of the program ...

96% of students said they were considering studying journalism in college
86% of students said they were considering journalism as a career
Media Mentions

As a testament to our strong reporting, our recent stories have been highlighted and included in a number of news roundups by other outlets including City and State’s First Read, the New York Times’ New York Today Column, Politico’s daily Playbook newsletter, Gotham Gazette’s Eye-Opener and many more.

- David Brand’s story about **which mayoral candidates own property**, which ones **rent** their homes and **which ones are landlords** was widely shared and picked up/linked to by other outlets including the New York Times, Politico and Gothamist.
- David’s reporting on **Eric Adams and questions about his home address** was featured in a graphic on the HBO show “Last Week Tonight with John Oliver”
- Ese Olumhense was a guest on the Brian Lehrer show where she discussed her reporting on the **Brooklyn Borough President’s race**

Media Partnerships

Our staff has been featured regularly to offer commentary on **WNET’s MetroFocus**, **BronxNet’s BronxBuzz** and radio station **WBAI**. For three months leading up to the November election, Jeanmarie also contributed weekly radio spots that aired twice a day every Wednesday on **WFUV News**. City Limits also partnered with **Gotham Gazette, City and State** and the **Queens Eagle** to produce stories on all of the City Council races in the June primary election.

Social Media Mentions

Our stories were shared on social media by a number of prominent New Yorkers, including **Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez**, **New York Times national politics reporter Maggie Haberman** and famed entertainer **Bette Midler**.
City Limits' 45th Anniversary Celebration & Hall of Fame Induction

The 45th Anniversary Celebration & Hall of Fame Induction on Nov. 18th at Stanley Kaplan Penthouse, Lincoln Center was a tremendous success as a fundraiser and positive feedback received from guests and honorees.
2021 City Limits Hall of Fame

We were thrilled to honor four extraordinary women and induct them into the inaugural City Limits Hall of Fame: Afua Atta-Mensah, Jenna Flanagan, Christine Quinn and Kathryn Wylde. At our 2021 Annual Gala we also inducted our former honorees to establish this new institution: Wayne Barrett, Preet Bharara, Adam Blumenthal, Richard Buery, Angela Fernandez, Laura Flanders, Henry Garrido, Elizabeth Cooke Levy, Gabe Pressman, Tom Robbins, and Sean Strub.

Afua Atta-Mensah | Former Executive Director | Community Voices Heard

Afua Atta-Mensah is a longtime organizer and advocate who most recently served as executive director at Community Voices Heard, a Black-led grassroots organization that fights for racial and social justice across New York State. Atta-Mensah’s work there has focused on amplifying the voices of New York’s communities through civic engagement, and on creating a more equitable city by advocating for better housing, a stronger social and economic safety net and a more democratic local government. She has fought directly to increase access to affordable and safe housing, for a more equitable healthcare system and to help more women, people of color and other underrepresented New Yorkers pursue and secure leadership positions.

Jenna Flanagan | Host | MetroFocus | The WNET Group

Jenna Flanagan is a veteran public media journalist who has covered New York for more than two decades, currently as a host of WNET’s multi-platform news show MetroFocus, where she’s been interviewing elected officials, policy makers, experts and advocates since 2016. Her long career in broadcast journalism began in 1999 with a production assistant position at radio station 1010WINS. Flanagan has been an on-air reporter for WBGO Newark Public Radio, where she earned a Garden State Association of Black Journalists award, and for WMHT’s New York NOW. She also spent several years writing, producing and reporting for WNYC’s All Things Considered.
Christine Quinn | President, CEO | Win

Christine Quinn is the president and CEO of Win, or Women in Need, the city’s largest family shelter and supportive housing provider which operates 13 shelters and more than 4,000 supportive apartments across the city. She was a New York City councilmember representing the west side of Manhattan for more than a decade, where she also served as the first female and first openly gay City Council speaker. Since joining Win in 2015, Quinn has actively advocated for more affordable housing, to increase the value of the city’s rental vouchers for homeless families and for the city to expand resources.

Kathryn Wylde | President & CEO | The Partnership for New York City

Kathryn Wylde is the longtime leader of the nonprofit Partnership for New York City, where she’s served as president and CEO since 2001, building connections between the city’s business community and government leaders to strengthen New York’s economy and infrastructure. Under her tenure, the Partnership has helped guide New York City and its leaders through a number of fiscal crises, including the Great Recession of 2008 and today’s ongoing recovery from the COVID-19 crisis.

City Limits' New Fellowships

City Limits introduced two new fellowships of $25,000 each that will directly fund fellows in the areas of climate and health reporting with the Jarrett Murphy Fellowship, and in media and business innovation, with the Mark Edmiston Fellowship.

Jarrett Murphy
Contributing Editor | Former Executive Editor | City Limits

Mark Edmiston
Treasurer | Former Board Chair | City Limits
2021 Gala Donors

Thank you to our 2021 Gala donors, for helping us celebrate 45 years of media service in New York City.

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Thank you to our sponsors, we couldn't have done it without you.
Recognitions

"City Limits Day in New York City"

Former Mayor Michael Bloomberg proclaimed October 26, 2011, as “City Limits Day in New York City"

"Honoring the non profit investigative news organization’s role for going above and beyond it’s role as a content provider. It’s efforts to build communities and help underrepresented groups find a voice have provided a valuable example for New York and the rest of the nation”.

— Former Mayor Michael Bloomberg

CLARION Awards
from The Association for Women in Communications

2020 Winner: Online Media — Online Journalism — Special Feature Section
SERIES: The Ride, News and Views for a Commuting City
City Limits won the 2020 special features award for our coverage of the NYC transit system, which included an investigation into how one of the key laws of the city’s Vision Zero initiative, intended to hold reckless drivers more accountable, was actually letting those drivers off with fewer penalties than before. We also looked at the complexities of a proposal to ban criminal offenders from the subway system — an idea elected officials have renewed in recent months — as well as the various hardships that New Yorkers with disabilities face in accessing public transit, be it through the largely inaccessible subway system or the MTA’s much beleaguered Access-a-Ride program, and we reported extensively on the mounting death toll for NYC cyclists in recent years.

2019 Winner: Online Media — Online Journalism — Special Feature Section
SERIES: Can Buses Be Better? Angely Mercado and Jeanmarie Evelly
In this series, City Limits explored problems with the city’s sluggish bus system — a MTA service that gets very little attention when compared to the subway but which 2 million riders relied on each day pre-pandemic, a majority of them low-income New Yorkers, including many seniors and people living with disabilities who can’t access the subways. Our stories examined who relies on the city’s bus networks, the various problems with existing service and possible solutions for making the system more efficient. Since this series was published, both the MTA and the city have paid renewed attention to bus improvements, including expanding the number of bus lanes and revamping routes, and City Limits’ is proud to have been an early voice in shaping that public discourse.
Upcoming Events & Coverage

Upcoming Events

- **Skills-building Workshop**: In the Spring, City Limits will host a skills-building workshop for high school journalists as part of CLARIFY
- **Spanish-language Event**: In early Spring, Daniel will moderate a Spanish-language event on Latino representation in NY politics, and the new law that will allow non-citizens to vote in NYC municipal elections
- **Housing Forum**: David will moderate a forum discussion on housing development and community engagement
- **Hurricane Sandy Event**: In October, City Limits plans on hosting an event to mark the 10 year anniversary of Hurricane Sandy

Upcoming coverage and projects

- **Fund for Investigative Journalism-supported series**: In April and May we will complete two more stories for the Fund for Investigative Journalism-supported series on NYC Community Benefits Agreements
- **Art at the Limits series**: City Limits has received renewed support to continue our Art at the Limits series. We are planning a series of articles, including a look at the state of arts education in public schools/the impact of the pandemic
- **Multimedia project with Lehman College students**: Daniel will continue his work with journalism students from CUNY’s Lehman College during the spring semester on a multimedia project examining the impact of the pandemic on the economic lives of Bronx residents
- **Zoned Out Series**: We’ll continue our Zoned Out series examining the impact of the de Blasio-era neighborhood rezonings
- **Bilingual Election coverage**: We are gearing up to cover the June primary and November general elections for governor/state senate/state assembly. We are working with students from the bilingual program at CUNY Newmark’s Journalism School to produce Spanish and English dispatches from the polls on those Election Days
- **Voter’s guide**: We are also planning to produce a voter’s guide to cover the competitive races in partnership with other news outlets, as we did with Gotham Gazette/City and State/Queens Eagle in 2021
- **City on the Edge**: City Limits has launched an investigative series on the effect of climate change to New York City’s most vulnerable communities. In 2022 we seek to to pursue bigger impact-driven investigations on policies and programs
Website Launch

City Limits is proud to launch our new website Spring 2022.

New Features

More standardized programmatic ad units

A streamlined aesthetic approach focusing on news and information

Content is higher up and above “the fold”

User-friendly navigating throughout the site
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