



A New Center for Recovery

Odyssey House opens the Kate Rothko Center for Recovery on Wards Island, expanding access to evidence-based treatment, clinical support, and hope for men in recovery.



Kate Rothko, MD, cuts the ribbon at the official opening of the Kate Rothko Center for Recovery on Wards Island, joined by Odyssey House leadership and state partners.

Left to right: Richard C. O'Connor, Odyssey House Board Chair; Robert J. Rodriguez, DASNY President and CEO; Chinazo Cunningham, MD, OASAS Commissioner; Kate Rothko, MD, Odyssey Foundation Chair; and Peter Provet, PhD, Odyssey House President and CEO.

On June 4, Odyssey House celebrated the opening of the Kate Rothko Center for Recovery on Wards Island — a newly constructed \$32 million, 60-bed residential medication for addiction treatment (MAT) facility that, as Isobelle Surface, SVP and Director of Communications, noted in her opening remarks as emcee, had already been quietly doing what it was built to do since January: providing sixty men in early recovery with the clinical care, the struture, and the dignity they deserve.

The ceremony brought together state partners, the Rothko family, Odyssey House board leadership and clinical staff, and one treatment participant who volunteered to speak about his experience.



Peter Provet, Christopher Rothko, and Kate Rothko in front of a work by an Odyssey House artist in recovery.

What the Center Provides

The center offers a full continuum of care under one roof: medication for addiction treatment — including methadone, buprenorphine, and naltrexone — alongside detoxification services, individual and group counseling, and individualized medical and psycho-social support.

Funded by the NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) and developed in partnership with the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (DASNY), the three-story, 22,500-square-foot facility expands residential MAT capacity for adult men in New York City.

Addressing the crowd, Odyssey House President Dr. Peter Provet said, “The men who come to us carry extraordinary burdens — medical, psychological, social. Medication for addiction treatment is the gold standard, and it works. But it works best when it is embedded in a place that provides safety, accountability, and real clinical depth. The Kate Rothko Center for Recovery is that place.”

Where Medicine Meets Art

The center is named in honor of Dr. Kate Rothko, Chair of the Odyssey Foundation since 2024, and the daughter of celebrated artist Mark Rothko. A retired physician specializing in Clinical Pathology and Transfusion Medicine, Dr. Rothko has been an advocate for recovery equity and a partner to Odyssey House in shaping the vision for the center. She has also supported Odyssey House’s expressive arts program for clients in recovery.

At the ceremony, she accepted the naming honor and the responsibility that comes with it.

“Opioid use disorder is a medical condition,” said Dr. Rothko. “It has a biology, a neuroscience, a treatment protocol that works — when we give people access to it, when we surround it with clinical expertise and human support, when we take it as seriously as

we would any other chronic disease. To have my name on that door is an honor I hold with great pride and humility.”

Her brother Christopher Rothko also spoke, reflecting on their father’s belief that art could reach people in places words cannot. “Recovery is not something that can be fully explained,” he said. “It is an interior experience — a person finding their way back to themselves after addiction has taken them very far away. It requires presence. Willingness. The courage to feel what is actually there.”

Finding a Way Forward

For men in the grip of opioid use disorder, a place like this can mean the difference between life and death.

Richard G., 44, volunteered to share his experience at the opening ceremony. He entered the program on New Year’s Eve after a counselor told him about Odyssey House and the new facility.

“Being here has been a turning point for me,” Richard said. “There’s something about being around others who are going through the same thing — we understand each other, and that makes a difference.”

He credited MAT with giving him stability. “Being on methadone has given me the stability to focus on my recovery instead of just getting through the day,” he said. He has also participated in Odyssey House’s expressive arts program.

A State Investment

Governor Kathy Hochul announced the opening as part of New York State’s ongoing commitment to expanding addiction treatment services. OASAS Commissioner Dr. Chinazo Cunningham and DASNY President Robert J. Rodriguez both spoke at the ceremony.

“Medication for addiction treatment significantly reduces the risk of overdose deaths and has saved thousands of lives across New York,” said Dr. Cunningham. “Thanks to this new facility, more New Yorkers impacted by opioid use disorder will be able to find help and support in their community, as we work to drive overdose deaths down even further.”

“The Kate Rothko Center for Recovery represents the kind of infrastructure that changes lives.”

– Robert J. Rodriguez, President and CEO, Dormitory Authority of the State of New York

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Left to right: Durga Vallabhaneni, Chief Financial and Administrative Officer; Gretchen Kleinsmith, Senior Director; Asha Cameron, Director; Moriah Thomason, PhD, Board Member; Chinazo Cunningham, MD, OASAS Commissioner; Kate Rothko, MD, Odyssey Foundation Chair; Peter Provet, PhD, President and CEO; John Tavalacci, COO; Robert J. Rodriguez, DASNY President and CEO; and Richard C. O'Connor, Odyssey House Board Chair.

A Work of Art for a Work of Purpose



Mark Rothko’s Untitled, 1950, draws the viewer into a deep, enveloping field of orange — warm, intense, and alive — with a luminous band of color that both separates and connects. These are colors that speak of transformation, of something burning through to find its essence. It is perhaps no coincidence that his daughter, Dr. Kate Rothko, has devoted herself to a different but kindred pursuit: creating spaces where people can heal.

The Kate Rothko Center for Recovery, located on Wards Island in New York City, is named in honor of Dr. Rothko in recognition of her leadership as Chair of the Odyssey Foundation and her enduring commitment to the people Odyssey House serves.

Like her father’s work, this Center is built on the belief that transformation is possible — that, with the right environment and support, people can find their way to something new, meaningful, and productive.

A New Center for Recovery *(Continued from page 1)*



The Kate Rothko Center for Recovery — Odyssey House’s new 60-bed residential MAT facility on Wards Island, New York City.

Supporters and Partners

The Kate Rothko Center for Recovery reflects New York State’s investment in addiction treatment — and the support of every partner who has believed in the Odyssey House mission over more than five decades.

“People in the grip of addiction deserve the best care we know how to provide,” said Richard O’Connor, Chair, Odyssey House Board of Trustees. “Not adequate care. Not minimum care. Our best.”

Every gift to Odyssey House supports this work — and the men whose recovery it makes possible.

How It Was Built

The Kate Rothko Center for Recovery was built using modular construction — 71 factory-built modules fabricated out

of state, transported through New York City, and assembled on Wards Island in 16 days. Delivery required coordination for oversized loads, bridge access, city road usage, on-site staging, and escorted transportation through New York City streets.

Capital development at Odyssey House is led by Durga Vallabhaneni, Chief Financial and Administrative Officer, who steered this project, and nine other major construction and renovation projects totaling more than \$300 million. The project was designed by Posen Architects and constructed by J. Pilla Group.

“This building says something,” Mr. Vallabhaneni said. “It says that the people who come through these doors have lives that are worth investing in — and that their recovery deserves our very best.”

Affordable Housing & Housing Heroes: Odyssey House Helps Moms in Recovery

Monica Morales highlights Odyssey House and spotlights mothers courageously rebuilding their lives while battling addiction, homelessness, trauma, poverty, and mental health challenges. Ms. Morales talks with Gretchen Kleinsmith, Senior Director of Residential Programs at Odyssey House, to discuss how the organization is transforming lives through compassionate treatment, supportive housing, trauma counseling, mental health services, vocational support, and family-centered care that allows mothers and children to stay together during recovery.

The special takes viewers inside the powerful reality of Mother’s Day at Odyssey House, where many women are celebrating not only sobriety and stability, but the opportunity to truly feel proud of

themselves as mothers for the first time in years. Ms. Kleinsmith explains how Odyssey House treats every client as a unique individual, tailoring treatment plans to each person’s needs while planning for long-term success from the very first day someone enters the program.

From housing and employment support to therapy and recovery services, the goal is not simply treatment but lasting independence and healing. The organization also operates more than 450 units of supportive housing throughout New York City, helping individuals transition from residential treatment into stable independent living.

Visit odysseyhousenyc.org/odyssey-house-news-events/ to watch the full interview.



PIX 11 reporter Monica Morales interviews Gretchen Kleinsmith, Senior Director of Residential Programs, on what it takes to help mothers in recovery rebuild their lives.

“Making art helps me feel free from my pain and my addiction”



Richard G., 44, grew up on the Lower East Side. He spoke at the June 4 opening celebration of

the Kate Rothko Center for Recovery, where he has been a resident since January.

I thought I was in control of my drug use, but a few years ago, it became clear that I wasn’t. I’ve seen what happens to people who don’t get the help they need — I’ve

lost several friends to overdose. That stays with you.

Before going into the new year, I decided I wanted to take my recovery seriously. So on December 31st — New Year’s Eve — I checked myself into a 28-day program. While I was there, a counselor told me that Odyssey House had opened a new building and that it would be good for me. She was right.

Being at Odyssey House has been a turning point for me. There’s something about being around others who are going

through the same thing — we understand each other, and that makes a difference.

Being on methadone has also given me the stability I needed to focus on my recovery instead of just getting through the day. I gain insight from the core groups, topic groups, and morning meetings. I enjoy going on trips — since being here, I went to my first Knicks game. But most of all, I am really enjoying the art program.

The art program has helped me express myself, become more creative, and be more open-minded. Art brings me hope.

Making art helps me feel free from my pain and my addiction — when I’m creating something, it keeps the negative thoughts and the temptations away.

I am also working toward a lifetime of sobriety. My goal is to join the workforce again to live an honest life, and I am taking the steps to make that happen by completing my recovery.

I am honored to be a part of this program. I know it is leading me toward a better future — one where I keep making art and keep bringing my ideas to life.

Clients Find Meaning in Form at The Noguchi Museum



Clients from the Manor and the Kate Rothko Center for Recovery programs recently spent two days at the Noguchi Museum in Long Island City, immersing themselves in the visionary work of artist and sculptor Isamu Noguchi.

Museum Educator Luned Palmer guided the group through the collection, anchoring the visit with a meditation centered on Walking Void #2 (1970) — a work that is unassuming at first glance, yet quietly commanding in its form, surface, and weight. Noguchi himself described the piece in terms that resonate with anyone who has carried something heavy:

"I have carried the concept of the void like a weight on my shoulders. I could not seem to avoid its humanoid grip. It is like some inevitable question that I cannot answer."



For at least one client, the sculpture opened something personal. Mario D. reflected:

"The Museum is a peaceful place; the art makes you realize lots of things. The stone, the way it is polished, the reflection of the light, and the weight, made me think about life in general. I think about how many times I’ve been knocked down. I’m a lefty, so I fall to my left knee. It is the one that bears the weight. And then there is the choice — to stand back up or not. My decision is always to stand up."

The visit closed with a hands-on clay-building workshop led by Palmer, giving clients the opportunity to move from contemplation to creation — engaging directly with sculpture, creativity, and self-expression.

Odyssey House Named in Mayor’s \$12 Million Investment to Expand Peer Recovery Services

Odyssey House is proud to be among the organizations selected to receive funding through Mayor Zohran Mamdani’s \$12 million citywide investment in peer-led substance use recovery services.

The funding — drawn from the City’s Opioid Settlement Fund — will support the certification and employment of peer specialists across New York City’s five boroughs.

Over four years, the investment is expected to create 500 new peer specialist positions through community-based organizations, including Odyssey House. Funding will go toward staffing, mobile outreach, peer certification training and scholarships, and expanded enrollment in recovery services.

Peer specialists are people with their own history of substance use disorder who draw on lived experience and professional

training to help others access care, build coping skills, and navigate crisis. Research consistently shows that peer-led programs increase engagement, build trust, and improve recovery outcomes.

Mayor Mamdani noted that peer specialists “understand what recovery looks like because they’ve lived it themselves,” and that their leadership will help more New Yorkers “find care, stay connected and build stable futures.”

"Peer support has been at the heart of Odyssey House’s work for more than five decades," said Dr. Peter Provet, President and CEO of Odyssey House. "We are grateful to Mayor Mamdani for this investment, which will allow us to deepen our outreach, grow our peer workforce, and reach more New Yorkers who need and deserve support."

Odyssey House Celebrates Mothers in Recovery at Annual Mother’s Day Breakfast



On a bright spring morning, Odyssey House gathered family, friends, staff, board members, and community supporters for its annual Mother’s Day Breakfast — an event that has become one of the most cherished mornings on the Odyssey House calendar.

“This breakfast is one of my favorite mornings of the year,” said Isobelle Surface, SVP, Director of Communications, who welcomed guests to the program. “Because in this room, we don’t just talk about recovery in the abstract. We sit across from it. We break bread with it. We celebrate it together.”

The breakfast honored the mothers in treatment at Odyssey House, whose courage and commitment to recovery inspire everyone around them. It also recognized two women whose careers have made a lasting difference for families across New York.



Julia Watt-Rosenfeld (right), recipient of the Public Service Award, with her mother, Nancy Rosenfeld.

Honoring Outstanding Achievement
This year’s Public Service Award was presented to Julia Watt-Rosenfeld, a community organizer with two decades of experience fighting for affordable housing,

improved schools, and equitable policy across New York City. Today, she serves as Campaign Manager of the Spring Street Climate Fund and as Adjunct Assistant Professor of Public Service at NYU Wagner Graduate School of Public Service. Julia is also a Trustee of the Elizabeth and Baretts O. Benjamin Foundation, through which she honors the legacy of her father, Odyssey House’s beloved late Board Chair George Rosenfeld.

The Advocacy Award was presented to Patricia Lincourt, Deputy Commissioner of Programs at the NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS). With over 35 years of clinical and administrative experience spanning addiction, mental health, and child welfare, Patricia oversees OASAS divisions of Prevention, Harm Reduction, Treatment and Recovery, and Criminal Justice. A champion of evidence-based, person-centered care, her partnership with Odyssey House has had a meaningful and lasting impact on the families we serve.

A Morning to Remember
The program was emceed by Monica Morales, eight-time Emmy Award-winning reporter and host of PIX11’s “Monica Makes It Happen” — returning for her third consecutive year. “The courage it takes to be here, to do this work, to choose your family and yourself at the same time — that is something I have enormous respect and admiration for,” she told the room.

Guests were also treated to a special video featuring mothers in treatment at Odyssey House sharing their stories in their own words, alongside reflections from Dr. Uju Berry, psychiatrist, research director at NYU, and Odyssey House Board member.

The highlight of the morning came when three mothers in treatment at Odyssey House stepped to the podium to share their own stories — a moment that drew on the unique power of this event to bring the mission of Odyssey House to life.



Patricia Lincourt, Deputy Commissioner of Programs, OASAS, recipient of the Advocacy Award.

A Community That Shows Up
Closing remarks were delivered by John Tavalacci, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, who recognized the generous sponsors whose support makes the work of Odyssey House possible year-round. “Your generosity is not just a line item — it is a lifeline,” he said. “It is housing, it is treatment, it is a mother holding her baby in a safe place.”

Special thanks were extended to the Elizabeth and Baretts O. Benjamin Foundation and the Elevance Foundation for their support of the event and Odyssey House’s family services, along with the many corporate and individual sponsors whose contributions made the morning possible.

Odyssey Foundation Welcomes Two New Members to Its Board of Trustees

Odyssey House is pleased to announce the appointment of Tim Barr and John Witherspoon to the Board of Trustees of Odyssey Foundation. Both bring distinguished careers and deep commitments to the communities we serve.

Tim Barr



Tim Barr joins the Board following more than 40 years in nonprofit leadership and development. Most recently, he served as Executive Vice President of the Calvary Fund at Calvary Hospital, where he directed fundraising strategy, development operations, and public engagement in support of the hospital’s programs and services. His career includes leading multimillion-dollar capital campaigns at St. Joseph’s Healthcare System and serving in advancement roles at WNET/Thirteen and several major New York-area universities.

Throughout his career, Tim has focused on building inclusive communities and advancing missions centered on behavioral health, recovery, and social justice. He has served in governance and leadership roles across nonprofit, educational, and healthcare organizations throughout the tri-state region. His experience and commitment to collaborative problem-solving make him a strong addition to our Board.

John Witherspoon



John Witherspoon brings more than two decades of financial leadership to the Board. He is a Managing Director in Citigroup’s Real Estate Investment Banking division, where he oversees major transactions, capital raises, and mergers and acquisitions. Before joining Citigroup, John spent 23 years at JPMorgan Chase & Co., advancing from analyst to Managing Director within the investment banking sector.

A graduate of the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, John is based in New York City. His background in complex financial markets and organizational growth will provide valuable governance and oversight as Odyssey House continues to expand its behavioral health and housing programs.

We are grateful to welcome Tim and John to the Odyssey Foundation Board of Trustees and look forward to their contributions in the years ahead.

In *The New York Times*: On Drug Reform, Honesty About Risk Still Matters

Recent federal actions — including the Justice Department’s move to ease restrictions on medical marijuana and a new executive order accelerating research into psychedelic drugs — have prompted widespread debate about the future of drug policy in the United States. Odyssey House President and CEO Dr. Peter Provet entered that conversation with a letter published in The New York Times, cautioning that policy reform and public health clarity are not the same thing.

Drawing on decades of experience treating substance use disorders, Dr. Provet argues that a sound approach to drug policy must move away from punishment and toward prevention, treatment, and recovery — while remaining honest about the real risks these substances carry, particularly for young people and those vulnerable to dependence.

The New York Times

To the Editor:

The Justice Department’s move to ease restrictions on medical marijuana is an important policy shift, and the administration’s separate push to speed research on psychedelic drugs suggests a broader rethinking of federal drug policy. But these changes should not be confused with a declaration that such substances are harmless.

A sensible drug policy should move away from punishment and toward health and wellness, with more emphasis on prevention, treatment, and recovery. That shift is welcome, but it must be grounded in evidence and clear-eyed about the risks of cannabis and other drugs, especially for young people and those vulnerable to dependence.

At Odyssey House, we see how cannabis use can become part of a broader behavioral health struggle. Public health is best served not by replacing one form of overstatement with another, but by being honest about both the potential benefits and the proven harms.

Dr. Peter Provet
President & CEO, Odyssey House

This letter was originally published inThe New York Times on May 2, 2026.

Save the Date!

Run For Your Life 5K Run & Recovery Walk

Saturday, September 26
Icahn Stadium at Randall's Island

- Registration opens at 8am
- Family fun begins at 9am

For more information on this event, please visit
odysseyhousenyc.org



Odyssey House
Where recovery gets real

At Odyssey House, our mission is to provide healthcare and housing equity to those in need — to help people reclaim their lives, find purpose, and discover their best self.

We empower people to create lasting change by addressing every aspect of their well-being, from physical and mental health to family, education, and community connections.

If you or someone you know is struggling with addiction, call us at **866-888-7880** — we can help. Residential, outpatient, and housing services available immediately.



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New Cards, Same Purpose: Share Hope Through Client-Created Art

Support recovery and celebrate creativity with a new boxed set of cards featuring original artwork by Odyssey House clients.

The Odyssey House Art Program fosters creativity, healing, personal growth, and community. Each design in this collection reflects a story of hope and transformation.



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Gift Box Set available with a minimum donation of \$100, all proceeds support treatment programs for men, women, and children on their journey to lasting recovery.



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