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Eddie Rosa found that life was better outside of The W

Posted July 6, 2023



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Eddie Rosa, who suffered from many maladies, found life was better at a senior housing apartment complex called Van Cortlandt Green rather than The W Assisted Living facility. He passed away right before Memorial Day.

Courtesy of Luisa Beltran

By Luisa Beltran

Sometimes, getting older can have a happy ending. Consider Eddie Rosa, who lost his apartment in 2021 following the death of his wife.

The 63-year-old former city employee landed at Valley Lodge, a 110-bed transitional shelter on the West Side where — outside a stint at a nursing home due to health issues — Rosa stayed for a year before moving to more permanent housing.

He initially considered going to The W Assisted Living at Riverdale Home for Adults. He visited, noticing several residents sitting outside.

“That’s a horrible place,” Rosa told The Riverdale Press in April. “It wasn’t happening.”

Case workers instead took Rosa one block north to Van Cortlandt Green, which offers housing for low-income senior citizens. The Green’s 85 studio units are on the small side — about 415 square feet — but the building is clean and safe, said Rosa, who moved into the building last July. He signed a lease in March.

“It’s a very nice complex,” he said.

Van Cortlandt Green is one of 17 affordable senior housing facilities in New York City and Long Island that are owned and operated by the nonprofit Selfhelp. The buildings house more than 1,500 low- and moderate-income residents in apartments, while also providing social services.

Van Cortlandt Green, at 6469 Broadway, has a social worker on-site that is expected to “work with older residents so they can live with independence and dignity out of institutions,” said Mohini Mishra, vice president of Selfhelp Community Services.

All of Selfhelp’s 17 buildings have income requirements. Rents are based on income, and residents can use any form of payment, including rental vouchers, a pension, and Supplemental Security Income to make the rent, the spokeswoman said.

There’s also activities for tenants. Van Cortlandt Green offers weekly movies and a nutritionist that visits on Mondays, Rosa said. Other social services include educational and recreational programming, physical activities, as well as volunteer opportunities.

"He was very happy there," she said.



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Felix Lam has been the superintendent at 2465 Palisade Ave., in Spuyten Duyvil for 50 years. The 81-year-old has made his home — and career — at the eight-story co-op since he was a young man. And how does that make him feel? “I’m very happy about it,” Lam said.



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