



## Reflections On A Historic Moment

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By [Robin Bernstein](#)

As we prepare to move out of 197 East Broadway and begin our long-awaited [renovation project](#), there are many emotions swirling around here at the Educational Alliance. I am experiencing many emotions myself. One day last week, as I got out of the subway on East Broadway to begin my day as I have been doing for the past 24 years, I teared up as I looked at the building – knowing that it was going to change in deep and significant ways.

Last week, I joined the seniors at the [Whittaker Center](#) as we held our last Oneg Shabbat on the U-floor. When it comes back into 197, the Senior Center will be housed in a [new space](#) on the fifth floor. So we took the gathering to reminisce. One woman, 92 years old, shared that she has been coming to “The Edgies” for 84 years. A man shared that his grandparents came to “The Edgies,” as did his parents and his children, and as he continues to do almost every day. One man, who also has been coming here for most of his life, said the best day of his entire life was when he met his wife at “The Edgies.” And finally, someone recommended that everyone in the room take their vitamins so that they would all be alive when we come back to the new building in 22 months.

Hearing these stories, I was reminded of the impact our organization has had on the lives of millions of people over the course of [our history](#). What feels most powerful to me at this moment is our courage as an organization—Board, staff, and program participants alike. The seniors in the Whittaker Center totally understand that in order to leave the Alliance strong for generations yet to enter our doors, we need to rebuild, even though there is the possibility that some of them might never see the new building.

I believe that the story of the Educational Alliance is a story of courage. It would be easy for us to just keep applying a little paint and repairing our old elevator, but we courageously undertook this major renovation during this difficult economic time because we knew it would be good for our community.

[Robin Bernstein](#) is the President & CEO of the Educational Alliance.