

Agatha Vassallo is the Executive Director of the Pride Center of Staten Island, bringing more than 30 years of leadership experience in the culinary, hotel, and operations industries to the nonprofit sector. A lifelong advocate and volunteer, Agatha's commitment to service began at a young age through her involvement with a volunteer ambulance service and continued throughout her career, where she consistently spearheaded charitable campaigns and fundraising initiatives to support causes close to her heart.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Agatha recognized the profound isolation and struggle many people were experiencing, particularly closeted LGBTQIA+ individuals who needed connection, understanding, and a safe place to be themselves. She created virtual support groups that offered a judgment-free space for community, support, and belonging during an incredibly difficult time. At the height of the pandemic, she also organized a COVID-safe Halloween celebration for neighborhood children, bringing joy and a sense of normalcy to families when it was needed most.

The self-fulfillment Agatha found in helping others ultimately inspired her transition from the culinary /hotel industry into nonprofit leadership. What had always been a personal passion became her professional calling: creating meaningful connections, advocating for equity, and building stronger communities. Today, she continues to build bridges across Staten Island, championing inclusion and meaningful partnerships to ensure everyone has the opportunity not only to survive, but to thrive.