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**STATEMENT FROM DAVID R. JONES, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICE SOCIETY, ON OPENING OF *SOCIAL FORCES VISUALIZED* EXHIBIT FEATURING DOCUMENTARY IMAGES OF POVERTY FROM 1900-1920**

New York, NY -- The faces of poverty in New York City at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were mainly those of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe whose plight ignited the emergence of the social work movement. A photo exhibit opening today at the Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Gallery at Columbia University, "[\*Social Forces Visualized: Photography and Scientific Charity, 1900-1920\*](#)," captures that period in stark and unforgiving imagery.

Over 125 photographs were selected for the exhibit from **Community Service Society's** (CSS) archives housed at Columbia University's Rare Book & Manuscript Library. The developing medium of photography served both to document social problems and spur reforms to help the poor. It's worth noting that CSS's deep connection to the social work movement led directly to the founding of Columbia's School of Social Work.

The *Social Forces Visualized* exhibit also includes a 1912 film on tuberculosis produced by Thomas Edison's film company. The film was made in collaboration with the National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis, government and the Charity Organization Society (COS), one of our predecessor organizations. Indeed, photography and media would help seed a tradition of giving and become an integral part of charitable strategies to assist the poor. One of the best examples of this is *The New York Times* Neediest Cases Fund, which is celebrating its centennial this year.

As New Yorkers of all walks of life experience this powerful exhibition, we hope they make the connection between efforts at the turn of the century to assist the poor and efforts today to create opportunities for low-income New Yorkers and the working poor to achieve economic security.

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*For more than 165 years, the [Community Service Society of New York](#) has been the leading voice on behalf of low-income New Yorkers and continues to advocate for the economic security of the working poor in the nation's largest city. We respond to urgent, contemporary challenges with applied research, advocacy, litigation and innovative program models that help the working poor achieve a better quality of life and promote a more prosperous city.*