The history of the New Jersey Nets has been defined by difficulties on the court. In 35 years, the team has had just 12 winning seasons and, in 2010, the Nets posted a 12-70 record, one of the worst in NBA history.

The franchise’s move to Brooklyn came with its own struggles, including protests and multiple lawsuits over the construction of the $1 billion Barclays Center. Even the Nets’ first game in Brooklyn, a cross-town battle against the New York Knicks, was postponed when Hurricane Sandy barreled into town.

But perhaps the misfortunes have run their course. A 107-100 win against the Toronto Raptors heralded the start of the 2012–13 season, one that ends a 55-year sports drought in a borough that saw its last team, the Dodgers, move to California. In September, Barclays Center opened with a sold-out Jay-Z concert, the first of eight he performed, and the arena has since attracted a diverse array of artists ranging from Justin Bieber to Depeche Mode.

With a packed calendar of events, Barclays Center has been well received by fans and media alike, including glowing praise from several critics, such as The Philadelphia Inquirer’s Inga Saffron, who called the arena a “glam, gritty architectural success.”

Buoyed by the praise of its new home and the December appointment of coach P.J. Carlesimo, the Nets were second in the Atlantic Division with a 46-32 record by mid-April. The Nets’ front-office employees, who for years sold the dream of Brooklyn while facing an often less-than-exciting reality on the court, are an integral part of the team’s revival and relocation.

Here, three of those employees—graduates of the School of Tourism and Hospitality Management—as well as a current Nets intern from STHM, share their challenges and triumphs.