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**Bronx Neighbors: Meet Carolyn McLaughlin**

By Kirsten Sanchez

*Bronx Times*

Carolyn McLaughlin has dedicated her life to making other’s lives better.

Now she’s finally taking a well deserved rest, stepping down as the not for profit’s chief executive officer since 1979, back when it was first called the Citizens Advice Bureau, helping individuals and families improve their economic and social well-being.

McLaughlin watched the organization grow from a small operation in one Bronx neighborhood to a settlement house with programs serving neighborhoods across the Bronx.

McLaughlin first came to the Bronx in the late 1960’s after graduating college in her home state of Pennsylvania. She went on to receive her master’s degree in social work from Columbia University, then work in welfare before joining the organization, founded in 1972.

Under her guidance, the organization expanded its services to include immigrants, the homeless, people with HIV/AIDS, youth and working age adults moving from welfare to work.

Today, BronxWorks services make a difference in the lives of 35,000 Bronx residents annually, from preschool children to seniors.

It has 27 locations spread across a 26-square- mile area covering Bronx Community Boards 1 through 7, which McLaughlin has said has made her especially proud during her 34 years at BronxWorks.

“I am proud of the high quality and range of services that we offer,” she said. “I am proud we are able to meet so many needs of the people in the community. I think the people of the Bronx deserve high quality, professional programs.”

McLaughlin will say her final goodbye as executive director on June 10 at BronxWork’s 40th Anniversary Celebration and fundraiser at the Landmark on the Park.

“It seems like it’s time,” McLaughlin said. “The city administration is going to be changing, so there is going to be a big change in city agencies, and I’ve already been through a number of these — at least four. There is going to be a new mayor and rather than me getting to know a new set of people, it just makes sense that somebody else will do that.”

McLaughlin said she plans to continue looking for ways to volunteer and help others, spending time with her three children and five grandchildren, as well as spending time in nature and bird watching with her husband.
“I’d like to do some traveling,” she said. “I have no great plans to go around the world, but some little trips. I’ll probably look around for some volunteer work. I like children and senior citizens, so I’d be interested in work with that. But, I really don’t know yet.”

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