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The BronxWorks April 2019 Newsletter

BronxWorks Healthy and Livable Mott Haven Spotlight

Young adults participating in the Teen Battle Chef program at the BronxWorks Betances Community Center.

In this Issue:

BronxWorks Shop Healthy Youth and Teen Battle Chef Programs
Second Saturdays in St. Mary's Park
Staff Profile: Kim Wong
Did You Know? Surya Botofasina Joins the Gala
Photo Essay
"South Bronx Battles" by Carolyn McLaughlin Book Launch
Other Upcoming Events

BronxWorks Shop Healthy Youth and Teen Battle Chef Programs
BronxWorks Teen Battle Chef participants are learning cooking skills in at the Betances Cornerstone Community Center.

The commercial kitchen at the Carolyn McLaughlin Community Center prepares hundreds of meals for BronxWorks program participants daily.

BronxWorks is dedicated to improving the social determinants of health in the Bronx, which is the county ranked as having the worst health outcomes in New York State, according to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The Agency offers healthy meals to community members every day. In fact, the commercial kitchen at the Carolyn McLaughlin Community Center (CMCC) prepares hundreds of meals for participants in various BronxWorks programs daily. The Agency also offers a variety of exercise programs, including swimming at the indoor pool at CMCC as well as fitness classes for participants at the Cornerstone Community Centers and senior centers.

To engage more community members, BronxWorks joined forces with other local organizations to launch the Healthy and Livable Mott Haven Partnership (HLMH) in 2015. HLMH is dedicated to increasing access and awareness of healthy food, physical activity, and open spaces in the Mott Haven neighborhood of the Bronx. In addition to hosting events for families and programs for adults, HLMH offers exciting and informative programs for youth.

The BronxWorks Shop Healthy Youth Program utilizes a curriculum focused on food justice and youth action concepts. The program includes nutrition and culinary education, advocacy training, and lessons on food marketing. Participants showcase their skills by sampling items from partner Shop Healthy stores, presenting workshops on healthy food options, and attending local conferences.

The BronxWorks Shop Healthy Youth Program recently received local news coverage for strong advocacy work in the community. Participants were featured on featured on Fox 5 as well as PIX11 for their efforts to promote healthy food options in local bodegas.

Earlier this year, HLMH coordinated events at the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) area developments, where the youths presented "Rethink Your Drink" workshops to educate the community about the quantities of sugar in juices, sodas, and other beverages.

Building culinary skills is essential to learning how to eat healthy. The Teen Battle Chef program provides students an opportunity to learn cooking fundamentals and participate in head-to-head competitions. The nutrition program, created by Family Cook Productions, is offered in over 150 schools nationwide. Over nine weeks, participants learn to cook a variety of dishes, such as clam chowder, jambalaya, and risotto. The teens sample dishes they may have never tried before.

The program culminates in a final challenge event on May 7th. The competition will be attended by the teens, their friends, and family members. Judges will include BronxWorks Executive Director Eileen Torres and Councilmember Diana Ayala.
"The students are focusing on sharpening their skills in advance of the event!" said Marina Smith, Program Specialist, Community Health Programs.

"I am so proud of the students for their hard work and their growing passion for food justice," she added. "They are such important members of the Mott Haven community."

Second Saturdays at St. Mary's Park

The BronxWorks Healthy and Livable Mott Haven Partnership in cooperation with Health First is excited to announce Second Saturdays at St. Mary's Park. Beginning Saturday, May 11, BronxWorks will hold monthly events featuring family-friendly community activities, including fitness classes, health screenings, arts activities and performances as well as park stewardship projects.

This event series aims to encourage active use of the park and foster community stewardship leading to physical improvements and increased safety in St. Mary's. Now in its fourth year, the event series has brought nearly 4,000 participants to St. Mary's Park to volunteer, connect, be active, and learn.
Kim Wong, Program Director, Community Health Programs, has worked at BronxWorks for over seven years. After providing administrative support at the Agency's Morris Senior Center, Kim began working in the BronxWorks Positive Living Department in 2012. As Nutrition Program Specialist, Kim developed and facilitated nutrition classes and cooking demonstrations for Positive Living participants with chronic health conditions. In addition to working closely with program participants, Kim enjoyed building relationships with BronxWorks community partners.

Kim began her current role as Program Director, Community Health Programs in 2015, and much of her work remains focused on nutrition. Kim continues to lead cooking demonstrations at the Carolyn McLaughlin Community Center at 1130 Grand Concourse (CMCC). During a recent lesson, Kim taught community members how to cook lentil soup. Other meals have included a vegetarian stir fry with brown rice, whole wheat pasta, and omelets with spinach.

To help provide community members with the tools to eat healthy at home, Kim oversees the BronxWorks Farm stand, Fresh Food Box, and local farmers markets. Kim also oversees the commercial kitchen at CMCC and plays an instrumental role in the Healthy & Livable Mott Haven partnership. Kim is passionate about public health, and she is grateful for her role at BronxWorks.

"I feel like I'm helping the Agency make a positive impact on the community because food and nutrition are so tangible. Everyone has to eat. I feel like we're helping to make a change on a systemic
Kim earned a Bachelor's in Ecology and Biology at University of California, Davis. She moved to New York City and earned her Master of Public Health (MPA) at the CUNY Graduate School of Public Health and Health Policy. Outside of BronxWorks, she enjoys hiking and cooking. Lately, Kim has been creating plant-based versions of her family's favorite Chinese dishes.

Kim is excited about the Agency's local partnerships, and she is very optimistic about the future for Bronx communities.

"I've noticed a good level of cooperation and collaboration on events, and more community members are working together to get healthy."

The BronxWorks Farm Stand at the Carolyn McLaughlin Community Center at 1130 Grand Concourse will resume in May. The Farm Stand offers locally sourced fruits and vegetables to the community at an affordable price.

Did You Know?

Surya Botofasina Joins the Gala

Did you know that The BronxWorks 2019 Lifting Lives Gala will feature live music by Surya Botofasina?
Surya will play piano in his unique style and perform a variety of classics, standards, jazz, and contemporary hits.

"BronxWorks provides services to so many community members of all ages, and I'm honored to be performing at The Lifting Lives Gala on May 14," Surya said.

Native to Southern California, Surya now calls New York City home. He is a lifelong fan of Dwight "Doc" Gooden, who will be our Special Ambassador at the Gala. "That's another reason I'm looking forward to the event!" he said. Surya has performed at venues all over the world. We look forward to his performances during the cocktail and dessert receptions! To purchase a ticket to The Lifting Lives Gala, please click here.

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**Photo Essay**

![Image of Julie Spitzer and BronxWorks staff](image)

**Julie Spitzer Recognized by National Association of Social Workers**

Julie Spitzer, Department Director, Homeless Prevention and Access to Benefits received the Emerald Leader award from the National Association of Social Workers New York Chapter. Julie was joined by her husband, Andy Spitzer, and BronxWorks staff pictured here from right to left: Marjorie Jeannot, Residence Director of Willow Avenue Family Residences; Andy Spitzer; John Weed, Assistant Executive Director; Marie Edwards, Program Director Jobs-Plus; Julie Spitzer; Betty Ann Tamaisar Department Director Workforce Development; Eileen Torres, Executive Director; Bibi Karim, Department Director Positive Living; Evelyn Rodriguez, Program Director FHEPS.
BronxWorks Senior Participants visit the Horticultural Society of New York (HORT) Greenhouse

A dedicated group of volunteer senior participants called "Los Amigos de Moore" from the BronxWorks E. Roberts Moore Senior Center visited The Horticultural Society of New York greenhouse in Riverbank State Park. Seniors enjoyed a tour of the greenhouse and planted seedlings for the E. Roberts Moore Senior Center Garden.

BronxWorks Staff and Family Members Volunteer at CMCC Food Pantry
The BronxWorks weekend food pantry at the Carolyn McLaughlin Community Center at 1130 Grand Concourse offers community members canned foods, grains, protein, dairy and vegetables. Staff and volunteers generously spend their Saturday morning coordinating, organizing and distributing these valuable resources to BronxWorks participants. Pictured here are community volunteers from the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, SUNY Maritime, and BronxWorks staff and their family members.

**BronxWorks Staff Attend the Homeless Services United Gala**
Eileen Torres, BronxWorks Executive Director had the honor of introducing Bronx Borough President, Ruben Diaz Jr., who received the Outstanding Leadership Award for his leadership and dedication to the Bronx. Pictured here from left to right: Gordon Miller, Chief Financial Officer; Eileen Torres; Ruben Diaz Jr.; Marjorie Jeannot, Residence Director Willow Avenue Family Residence; Zandra Haywood, Program Director HomeBase; Scott Auwarter, Assistant Executive Director.

"South Bronx Battles" by Carolyn McLaughlin Book Launch
Join members of the BronxWorks community to hear Carolyn McLaughlin read excerpts from her new book, "South Bronx Battles: Stories of Resistance, Resilience, and Renewal." Carolyn is the former Executive Director of BronxWorks.

Thursday, June 13, 2018
11:00am - 1:00pm

The Carolyn McLaughlin Community Center
1130 Grand Concourse

The book will be available for purchase in advance of the event at a discounted rate. Net proceeds will support BronxWorks programs. RSVP by May 15 to reserve a copy.

RSVP
BronxWorks is once again this year a charity partner in the TD Five Boro Bike Tour, America's largest cycling event. On Sunday, May 5th, 32,000 people will ride over 40 miles of car-free streets through all five boroughs in New York City.

Click here to help our charity riders reach their fundraising goals!

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The BronxWorks 2019 Lifting Lives Gala takes place on

Tuesday, May 14, 2018
6:00pm - 9:00pm

THE GRAND HYATT NEW YORK
109 E. 42nd Street

Click below to RSVP and learn about tickets, journal ads and sponsorship opportunities.

LEARN MORE

Guests and sponsors will support BronxWorks programs that help children, families and seniors in the Bronx.

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Lisa Evers
Fox 5 News Reporter
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**Special Ambassador**

Dwight "Doc" Gooden  
Major League Baseball Legend  
Three-time World Series Champion

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**Featuring Live Music**

Surya Botofasina  
Pianist and Music Director

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