The BronxWorks August 2019 Newsletter

Full STEAM Ahead at BronxWorks

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Flying High: NASA Astronaut Joseph Acaba Visits BronxWorks

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Astronaut and Mission Specialist-Educator Joseph Acaba made a special visit to the BronxWorks Carolyn McLaughlin Community Center (CMCC) at 1130 Grand Concourse. BronxWorks and SoBRO summer camp participants had the opportunity to meet Astronaut Acaba and learn about his experiences in outer space. Acaba answered questions from the students and shared videos recorded in the International Space Station during his recent mission. Students were fascinated by footage of Acaba and other astronauts making pizza without the benefit of gravity. Born in California, Joseph is the first person of Puerto Rican heritage to be named as a NASA astronaut. He logged a total of 306 days in space over the course of three missions.

After Acaba's presentation, the students participated in a variety of hands-on Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math (STEAM) related activities facilitated by NASA educators. Participants tried on thermal gloves, looked up close at a rock collected from the moon, and learned about many different aspects of space exploration. One NASA facilitator described a space shuttle with the aid of a detailed model. Students also had the chance to see and touch a replica of an authentic space suit.

By all accounts, NASA's visit to CMCC was nothing short of thrilling for the summer camp participants as well as the BronxWorks staff and guests.

When asked about her favorite part of the afternoon, BronxWorks camper Jolany, age 10, quickly replied: "everything!"

BronxWorks would like to extend a special thank you to Congressman Jose Serrano and his staff for facilitating the incredible visit. BronxWorks would also like to thank News 12 for its feature story, Click here for more photos on Facebook.

Update on STEAM Programs at BronxWorks
BronxWorks afterschool program participants enjoy participating in STEAM activities.

From toddlers at the BronxWorks Early Childhood Learning Centers to older adults at the Agency’s senior centers, BronxWorks provides learning opportunities to our neighbors every day. BronxWorks is especially pleased to offer Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (STEAM) programming to students who participate in select afterschool and summer camp programs. STEAM is an approach to learning which encourages integration between subjects, critical thinking, and exploration of the sciences. BronxWorks extends a special thank you to our partners Con Edison, who supports STEAM at the Carolyn McLaughlin Community Center (CMCC) afterschool program as well as Children’s Hope India, who supports STEAM at the Bronxchester and Third Avenue programs. Children’s Hope India recently renewed its STEAM grant, and the Agency is grateful for its ongoing support. Nearly 200 students receive STEAM enrichment at the three locations annually.

Each year, counselors follow the lead of our STEAM instructor and create detailed lesson plans. Students learn STEAM concepts and engage in exciting hands-on activities on topics such as plant life, gravity, and the nature of sound. One particularly memorable lesson focused on the science of sports. Students studied physics as it relates to baseball and learned about the "sweet spot" of a bat, which is where vibration waves from the bat and the ball cancel each other out upon contact. They also learned about inertia, momentum, and velocity. Students then took their knowledge to the test and participated in an exciting game of wiffle ball. They were encouraged to apply and consider the lessons they learned in the classroom while at bat.

The BronxWorks afterschool programs celebrate the end of the academic year with special activities: a Science Fair at CMCC and STEAM Showcase at Bronxchester and Third Avenue. Both events feature STEAM-related projects created by the students, such as dioramas of the solar system, chemical reactions with dish soap, and paper mache volcanos. In addition to sharing their knowledge with family members and peers, the students celebrate their accomplishments. The STEAM enrichment continues during the summer months, when students attend day camp at Bronxchester, Third Avenue, and CMCC.

"BronxWorks is thrilled to continue teaching and inspiring our students with STEAM year-round. We are grateful to our partners Con Edison and Children’s Hope India, who provide invaluable support to these vital programs," said Eileen Torres, BronxWorks Executive Director.

Staff Profile: Michael Jackson
Michael Jackson, who goes by "Mike," has worked at BronxWorks for twelve years. Mike is currently the Superintendent at the BronxWorks Carolyn McLaughlin Community Center (CMCC) where he ensures that day-to-day operations are running smoothly. This includes assisting with special events and overseeing the facilities of CMCC. Hundreds of community members visit CMCC every day.

Mike's first role at BronxWorks was a maintenance position at the Living Room, which is the only drop-in center in the Bronx for street homeless adults. He assisted with the upkeep of the location and learned about homeless services. Mike also earned certifications in CPR and Narcan at the request of his supervisor, which he described as "incredibly valuable." Mike built a rapport with program participants at the Living Room, who have often experienced significant trauma and can be resistant to support. He was grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the Living Room and help community members thrive.

"I saw men and women go from the streets to a home," Mike said.

Before joining BronxWorks, Mike worked in a variety of roles including electrician, repairman, construction worker, plumber, and disc jockey. He began doing "odd jobs" at the age of 13 and developed a unique skill set over the years, which continues to serve him today. Mike was eager to pursue a long-term career when a friend and BronxWorks staff member suggested that Mike consider working at the Living Room. Mike earned an Associate's Degree in Facility Management from the Technical Career Institute (TCI) in Manhattan while working at the Living Room. His education and experience truly helped him to prepare for his current position as Superintendent.

In May of 2018, Mike assumed his current role where he quickly developed a reputation as a reliable problem-solver. Mike enjoys the diversity of his work and is always eager to help make improvements to CMCC.

"I'm good with my hands, and I love what I do," he said. Mike frequently assists at other BronxWorks sites, as well. "When something comes up, my colleagues know they can count on me."

After working at BronxWorks for over a decade, Mike has a strong appreciation for the Agency and its Mission.

"BronxWorks serves the needs of an entire borough, which is unlike any organization I know," he said.
A lifelong Bronx resident, Mike enjoys spending time with his four kids when he is not working.

Did You Know? Code Red

The BronxWorks Homeless Outreach Team outside of the Living Room, the only 24-hour drop-in center in the Bronx for street homeless adults.

BronxWorks strives to address the needs of vulnerable community members, especially during periods of extreme weather. When temperatures reach 95 degrees at any point for two days or more, the City of New York issues a "Code Red" alert. At these times, BronxWorks offers extended hours at select senior and community centers to accommodate individuals who have limited access to air-conditioned facilities. Community members without permanent housing are at an especially high risk. The BronxWorks Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) works around the clock to help our most vulnerable neighbors get off the streets and into shelter.

HOT also intensifies its efforts during "Cold Blue" warnings in the winter, which occur when the temperature falls below freezing. HOT works tirelessly to ensure the homeless have access and transportation to emergency shelters. This committed group of staff members help men and women obtain crisis assistance, medical and psychiatric services, among other services. Year-round, HOT is highly adept at assisting men and women as they take the first step towards permanent housing.

Photo Essay
Ribbon Cutting and Memorial Tribute at E. Roberts Moore

BronxWorks in collaboration with New York City Council Member Diana Ayala, The Horticultural Society of New York and Los Amigos de Moore, a dedicated group of volunteers, hosted a special event for the re-opening of the community garden at the BronxWorks E. Roberts Moore Senior Center. BronxWorks staff and community volunteers celebrated their accomplishments and honored the life of Anita Gonzalez, a beloved community advocate and cherished member of Los Amigos de Moore.
Two groups of dedicated volunteers from Altice USA enthusiastically spent the day at BronxWorks. One group of Altice volunteers completed exterior and interior painting projects at the BronxWorks Carolyn McLaughlin Community Center (CMCC) while the other visited our senior participants at the Morris Innovative Senior Center. Thank you to New York State Senator Gustavo Rivera and New York State Assemblyman Victor M. Pichardo for stopping by to show their support.

National Council of Jewish Women New York's Back 2 School Store

BronxWorks children attended the annual Back 2 School Store event sponsored by the National Council of Jewish Women New York (NCJWNY). Children had the opportunity to select supplies and clothing for the upcoming school year. Thanks to NCJWNY, many BronxWorks children are ready to go back to school with backpacks filled with school supplies and brand new outfits.
History Makers Summer Scholars Program at Fordham University

BronxWorks returned to Fordham University to celebrate the end of the History Makers Summer Scholars Program. History Makers is a joint project between Fordham University and BronxWorks to immerse high school aged youth in the college experience. Participants attended classes taught by Fordham faculty, met current Fordham students, took advantage of resources available in the college library, and stayed in dorms on campus. Students presented their final projects to friends and family.

BronxWorks Participates in NYC Care Launch Event

This month, BronxWorks participated in a round table discussion and launch event for NYC Care. NYC Care is a health care access program that guarantees low-cost and no-cost services for New Yorkers who are ineligible for or who cannot afford insurance. Enrollment is now open for Bronx residents.

The Holy Nativity Episcopal Church Back 2 School Event

For the fourth consecutive year, the Parish family from the Holy Nativity Episcopal Church in Norwood donated school supplies to BronxWorks youth participants. Students enjoyed lunch with Parish members
On Saturday, September 14, join BronxWorks staff, friends, and supporters for the fifth Annual BronxWorks 5K at Van Cortlandt Park.

This family-friendly event will award 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners for both men and women, and there will be prizes for top fundraisers.

Visit our website or click below to register.

For more information about the 5K, please email ehahn@bronxworks.org

Thank you to the 2019 BronxWorks 5K Sponsors.
For the 11th year in a row, BronxWorks is thrilled to be a charity partner in the TCS New York City Marathon on Sunday, November 3.

Click below to support the 2019 #TeamBronxWorks charity runners!

HELP OUR RUNNERS

SAVE THE DATE!

#GIVINGTUESDAY™

BronxWorks will once again participate in #GivingTuesday on December 3, 2019!

Please consider joining us and stay tuned for more information.
BronxWorks is pleased to announced that the 2017 - 2018 Report to the Community is now available.

To learn about our progress and recent accomplishments, please click below:

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

If you would like to request a printed copy please contact Danielle Mobley, Development Assistant at dmobley@bronxworks.org or 646-393-4002.

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