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The BronxWorks July 2018 Newsletter

SYEP, Summer Camp, and Honoring Max Blauner

A group of summer camp participants at the BronxWorks Carolyn McLaughlin Community Center (CMCC).

In this Issue:

Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) Provides Career Experience to Teens and Young Adults
Dedication of the Max Blauner Building for Social Services
Did You Know? Community Garden at the Living Room
Summer Camp at Bronxchester, Third Avenue and CMCC
Staff Profile: Tyron Johnson
Photo Essay
The BronxWorks 5K
Upcoming Events

Summer Youth Employment Program
Each summer, in partnership with the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), the BronxWorks Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) provides hands-on opportunities for career development in the form of paid six-week internships for youth ages 14-24. Internships take place at BronxWorks or at other partner organizations and businesses. There are currently 827 teens and young adults enrolled in SYEP through BronxWorks.

The younger youth participants (ages 14 & 15) engage in service learning projects aimed at introducing them to various topics and work sectors, giving them work experience and income over the summer. These topics include: Health & Well-being; Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math (STEAM); College Readiness & Exploration; and Civil Participation & Social Change.

The older youth participants are assigned to school-based and non-school-based work sites. School-based work sites include Bronx International High School, DreamYard Project, PS96, PS42, and Grove Hill Learning Garden. BronxWorks work sites include the Administrative Office at 60 East Tremont Avenue and the Carolyn McLaughlin Community Center at 1130 Grand Concourse (CMCC). BronxWorks internship roles include camp counselors, receptionists, maintenance team positions, and support for the Aquatics Program.

Community partner organizations and businesses hosting BronxWorks SYEP interns include the Bronx Borough President's office, Bronx Gardens Center for Rehabilitation & Nursing, Kids Creative 404, Mid Bronx Citizens Council, New York State Senate, New York Urban League, New York City Councilmember Vanessa Gibson's office, among others.

"We aim to place individuals in programs and industries in which they expressed an interest, and each year, many of our participants connect their SYEP experience to another work or educational opportunity," said Shalima McCants, BronxWorks Assistant Department Director for Children and Youth.
On Friday, July 13, 2018, BronxWorks held a special reception to celebrate the dedication of the Max Blauner Building for Social Services located at 800 Barretto Street, home to the BronxWorks Department of Homeless Services, the Homeless Outreach Team (HOT), and The Living Room, the only 24-hour drop-in center in the Bronx for street homeless adults. Max Blauner was a Holocaust survivor, a pillar of the Hunts Point Community, and a dear friend to BronxWorks. Attendees included members of the Blauner Family; BronxWorks staff; Carolyn McLaughlin, former Executive Director of BronxWorks; Paul Lipson, President of Barretto Bay Strategies; and elected officials.

After Eileen Torres, BronxWorks Executive Director, gave a warm welcome to guests, Scott Auwarter, BronxWorks Assistant Executive Director, spoke fondly of Max Blauner's service to the Bronx.

"Everyone who knew Max Blauner has a story about him that they will always remember," said Scott. "He touched many lives through his work."

Max moved to the Bronx from Germany with his family in 1952. Later on, he entered the real estate business and relocated to Yonkers, but Max kept the Bronx in his heart.
Max purchased several properties in Hunts Point, helping to develop the neighborhood in what was a turbulent time for the city. Max was particularly proud of his development of the American Bank Note Building, which lead to the creation of 2,000 jobs in the South Bronx. He also worked with local stakeholders to establish The Point, a community development cooperation, by allowing them to transform one of his buildings into a community center, free of rent, for one year.

Max was also a staunch advocate for the homeless and the underserved, and he played an instrumental role in helping BronxWorks secure a location for the newly established Living Room. At the ceremony, a plaque was unveiled in Max's honor at the entrance of the building. Community leader and long-time friend of the Blauner's, Paul Lipson paid tribute to Max's business acumen and generosity. Gail Blauner, Max's daughter, shared a well-deserved nickname Max earned for his work in the community.

"My dad was known as 'the Mayor of Hunt's Point,'" Gail said with a smile.

Reflections on Max's legacy continued while lunch was served.

Click here for more pictures of the Max Blauner Building for Social Services Dedication

Did You Know?
The Community Garden at the Living Room

A BronxWorks program participant tends to the garden daily and picks fresh vegetables for The Living Room.

BronxWorks is dedicated to addressing food justice issues and providing access to healthy, sustainable food in Bronx communities. Year-round, BronxWorks offers nutritious meals to program participants, often cooked with ingredients from the agency's own gardens (several of which are featured in the July 2017 Newsletter). For the past five years, program participants at The Living Room have tended to its garden.

Alfred Charles, Activity Specialist at The Living Room, and BronxWorks program participants water the garden daily, yielding a variety of vegetables and herbs, such as kale, spearmint, peppermint,
"Participants at The Living Room love to garden," said Alfred. "It’s very rewarding for them to grow their own ingredients, which takes time, energy, and patience," he added.

BronxWorks Summer Camp at Bronxchester, Third Avenue and CMCC

When the BronxWorks afterschool programs end, summer camps begin and build on all the lessons learned while incorporating summer fun. STEAM lessons continue thanks to generous support from Children’s Hope India and Con Edison, and young learners have the opportunity to visit local parks and attend exciting trips around the city.

This summer’s theme at the BronxWorks Bronxchester Camp is "Building Bronxchester," encouraging children to work together on projects to improve their community. At Third Avenue, students are learning about "Everyday Superheroes," such as firefighters, doctors, and teachers.

While at CMCC the summer camp theme is "Bring a Book to Life." Each class has an author or book they are focusing on, such as "Island Born" by Junot Diaz, "Trickster Tales" by Gerald McDermott, and various books by Dr. Seuss. The students participate in book-making activities and even go on theater-related trips that tie in with their reading. This month, campers enjoyed productions at the TADA! Youth Theater and Story Pirates, an education and storytelling nonprofit for children.

Other trips include the Children’s Museum of Manhattan, the Museum of Math, the Bronx Zoo, and the Greenkill Retreat Center, a YMCA Camp.

"The trips provide our students with exciting opportunities to learn outside the classroom," said Ms. Kim Haynes, Program Coordinator at CMCC.

The children at Bronxchester, Third Avenue, and CMCC also stay active while at camp. The three groups swim in the BronxWorks newly renovated indoor pool at CMCC on a regular basis and frequently exercise in local parks.

Between swim lessons, educational trips, and more, the children have a jam-packed, fun-filled summer. Summer camp at BronxWorks continues through mid-August.
Tyron Johnson, STEAM Specialist at Bronxchester and Third Avenue, has a rich history with BronxWorks. He was once a participant in BronxWorks afterschool programming himself.

"Going to the afterschool program at the Carolyn McLaughlin Community Center (CMCC) is where I discovered that learning could be fun," he said. "It was one of the best parts of my childhood."

Tyron grew up across the street from the CMCC and began attending afterschool programming there when he was five. His career aspirations included becoming a firefighter and a veterinarian. When Tyron met Tamara Polanco, then a counselor at CMCC, she inspired him to become an educator. Tyron extols Tamara for the exciting lessons she taught and the values she instilled in him. While in high school, Tyron enrolled in the BronxWorks Summer Youth Employment Program. After graduating, he received his first job as a counselor at CMCC, where Tamara became his mentor. These days, Tyron is not far from his mentor as Tamara is currently the Afterschool Program Coordinator at the BronxWorks Betances Community Center.

Tyron was promoted to STEAM Specialist in January of 2018 after serving as both a Counselor and Head Counselor at Bronxchester. In his new role, he leads interactive experiments with the students, such as how to filter water. Tyron draws inspiration from his students for his projects.

"The students tell me what they want to do, and I'm grateful I can learn from them," he said. "It's a blessing, watching kids be kids," he added.

Tyron is currently enrolled in social work courses at Bronx Community College, which will allow him to continue working with children in more specialized roles. But for now, this self-proclaimed "Science Geek" is very happy as STEAM Specialist. "I'm grateful for the platform I have to do something I love," he said. In his free time, he loves to dance.

Tyron feels indebted to BronxWorks for the role the agency has had in inspiring him to learn and continue on his career path. "Without BronxWorks," he said, "I don't know where I'd be."
Community Advocates at St. Nicholas Park

This year’s theme at the BronxWorks South Bronx Prep Middle School Summer Camp program is “Young Community Advocates.” Each Thursday, participants partner with the Trash Project, a non-profit organization that focuses on urban beautification and environmental waste awareness through artwork. This picture features participant volunteers helping to clean up St. Nicholas Park in Harlem.

2018 Second Saturdays Third Edition

On July 14, the BronxWorks Healthy & Livable Mott Haven Partnership continued “Second Saturdays
in St. Mary's Park," a series of 6 monthly events. Community members participated in healthy family-friendly activities, such as fitness classes, health screenings, arts activities and performances. In this photo, the Ailey Extension Dance Studio hosted a New York Style Samba/Afro-Brazilian Dance Workshop with instructor, Quenia Ribeiro.

Click here for more information.

Touring SUNY Maritime Campus

BronxWorks was recently invited to tour the SUNY Maritime Campus and meet with the college's athletic and student affairs leadership teams to discuss a community service partnership.
Independence Day BBQ

The BronxWorks Heights Senior Center celebrated a traditional 4th of July BBQ in their beautifully renovated private backyard. Participants enjoyed hamburgers, hot dogs and grilled corn barbecued by the Heights Senior Center kitchen staff.
Fun-filled Field Trips
This summer, several participants of the BronxWorks South Bronx Prep Middle School Summer Camp enjoyed a spa treatment while others participated in a day of bowling, pool and ping pong at Lucky Strike NYC.

The BronxWorks 5K

On Saturday, September 15, join BronxWorks staff, friends, and supporters for the Fourth Annual BronxWorks 5K at St. Mary's Park.

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

Visit our website or click below to register.
For the 10th year in a row, BronxWorks is thrilled to be a charity partner in the TCS New York City Marathon on Sunday, November 4.

Click below to meet the 2018 #TEAMBRONXWORKS charity runners and help them reach their fundraising goals!

HELP OUR RUNNERS
BronxWorks will once again participate in #GivingTuesday on November 27, 2018!

Please consider joining us and stay tuned for more information.

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