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June 2018

2018 Annual Gala Highlights & An Update on Our Mission to Feed Our Neighbors

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The BronxWorks 2018 Annual Gala, held on June 11, was a memorable evening honoring some of the community's most important BronxWorks supporters. Special ambassador and NFL Legend Carl Banks took photos with guests, and Lisa Evers of HOT 97/FOX 5 charmed the crowd as the Mistress of Ceremonies. Both new and longtime friends of BronxWorks turned out to raise funds for the agency's programs in support of the children and young adults of the Bronx and their families. Thanks to many generous donors, significant dollars were committed to our work.

The evening's program was introduced by BronxWorks program participant Dakum Henry Ibrahim, who expressed his gratitude for the services he and his daughters receive from BronxWorks. NFL Legend and the evening's Special Ambassador, Carl Banks spoke about his humble beginnings in Michigan and the importance of the agency's programs and services which feed, shelter, teach and support Bronx community members.

"Serving the underserved, making sure people have safe spaces to study, work, to play and helping the homeless...that's BronxWorks at its best," said Carl.
Recognizing Leaders Who Support Bronx Communities

The honorees of the 2018 Annual Gala included Morgan, Lewis, and Bockius, LLP; Popular Bank, and Demetris Giannoulias, Founder and Co-Chair of Spring Bank.

BronxWorks General Counsel Erica Coleman and Executive Director Eileen Torres presented the first award to Morgan Lewis. "Morgan Lewis has provided thousands of dollars worth of pro bono counsel to BronxWorks in areas such as personnel policies, hiring, and workforce management issues," Erica noted. Ira Rosenstein, Partner and longtime friend to BronxWorks, accepted the award on behalf of the firm.

Connie Claman, BronxWorks Chief Financial Officer, presented the next award to Paul Mak on behalf of Popular Bank, the American branch of Banco Popular. Serving customers in New York, New Jersey, and South Florida, Popular Bank is committed to strengthening the social and economic well-being of the communities it serves. "We are thrilled to honor such a trusted partner to BronxWorks," said Connie.

Demetris Giannoulias, whom Assistant Executive Director Scott Auwarter described as "a great supporter and friend to BronxWorks," was the third honoree of the evening.

A competitive silent auction held in conjunction with Eagel Sports Promotion sent many guests home with unique experiences and valuable memorabilia. This year's "Wine Wall" was also a hit as attendees purchased wine to support BronxWorks. Each bottle was wrapped, so every purchase was a surprise! Cheers to an exciting celebration of 46 years of lifting lives and building futures in the Bronx. You can still respond to the 2018 BronxWorks Call to Action by clicking below.
"Since the day we started, BronxWorks has been a partner to Spring Bank in helping a community we both serve. Working with BronxWorks and receiving this honor from the agency is inspiring," said Demetris.

Demetris Giannoulias (left) received one of the BronxWorks honoree awards. He is pictured here with Scott Auwarter, BronxWorks Assistant Executive Director (center) and Eileen Torres, BronxWorks Executive Director (right).

MORE GALA PICTURES

Thank you Gala Sponsors and Silent Auction Contributors
Thank you to the Silent Auction Contributors:

Special Thanks to The Bronx Design Group, our printing partner, and BronxNet our partner in the production of the 2018 Call to Action video. BronxNet also provided news coverage which is available below.
Update on Feeding Our Neighbors:
The Food Pantry & Farm Stand at CMCC

The BronxWorks Farm Stand launched on April 19 and is open on Thursdays from 2pm-6pm. Fresh fruits and vegetables from local and regional farmers are available at affordable prices through a partnership with Greenmarket, an initiative of GrowNYC. Greenmarket is dedicated to promoting regional agriculture and ensuring that all New Yorkers have access to fresh, nutritious food. The kitchen at CMCC has been providing healthy meals daily using ingredients from Greenmarket since 2015. BronxWorks launched the Farm Stand after the popular Food Box Initiative at CMCC was discontinued.

"Our main goal is to continue providing community members with opportunities to access healthy local food," said Carolina Espinosa, Nutrition Program Coordinator, Community Health Programs at CMCC.

Nutrition interns from Lehman College help to staff the Farm Stand, and Tania Lopez, Culinary Educator at CMCC, leads cooking demonstrations to community members featuring free samples. Popular dishes included a kale citrus salad, a cabbage slaw, and roasted potatoes with rosemary. "Through our weekly food demos, we are excited to share healthy recipes with fresh ingredients," said Carolina. The Farm Stand will be offered through the end of October.

On June 9, BronxWorks launched a food pantry at CMCC, offering canned foods, grains, protein, dairy, and vegetables for individuals and families. The food pantry is held every Saturday from 10:00am - 1:00pm and will continue year-round through a partnership with City Harvest. To receive food from the pantry, community members must complete a registration form and bring a form of identification. The pantry serves both walk-in and registered participants.

Opening a food pantry at CMCC and providing food access over the weekend has been a longtime goal of the agency.
"Offering the food pantry on Saturdays allows us to reach more working individuals and families than we could during the work week," said Eileen Torres, Executive Director at BronxWorks.

Genesis Mejia, CMCC Food Pantry Coordinator, is leading the outreach for the food pantry to local businesses and other programs within the agency. "We hope to eventually serve 250 individuals each week," she said. To help meet this goal, BronxWorks is seeking volunteers to assist with the food pantry on Saturdays. To get involved or learn more, please e-mail info@bronxworks.org.

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Staff Profile: Genesis Mejia

Genesis Mejia was born and raised in the Bronx. She grew up around the corner from the BronxWorks Carolyn McLaughlin Community Center (CMCC) and still lives nearby. Genesis was raised by a single mother and benefited from public assistance. She is grateful for the support she received and is pleased to give back to her community as the Food Pantry Coordinator at CMCC.

Genesis has worked at BronxWorks for over three years. Before assuming her current role, Genesis worked in Eviction Prevention as a Program Specialist at the BronxWorks Senior Homelessness Prevention Program (SHPP) and Family Eviction Prevention Supplement (FEPS). In addition to helping seniors and families stay in their homes, Genesis also connected program participants to other resources within the agency.

"BronxWorks has so many programs—workforce, education, childcare, and more. There is something for everyone," she says.

Genesis continues to help seniors obtain funding so that they can remain in their homes, but her primary focus is now the food pantry at CMCC. Held every Saturday, the food pantry serves individuals and families living in the South Bronx. Genesis was instrumental in the launch of the CMCC food pantry, and she is looking forward to expanding its reach and serving more community members over the next few months.

Genesis is enrolled at Bronx Community College, where she is studying Business Management. Inspired by her position at BronxWorks, she plans to take courses in social services. When she is not working or studying, Genesis enjoys relaxing with friends and family. In fact, her grandmother lives next door and is a big part of her life. Genesis is proud that she is helping her neighbors in her role at BronxWorks. "This is where I grew up," she said, "so I'm glad I can make a difference."

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Did You Know?

JCTS Graduation
On June 25, a cohort of approximately fifty students graduated from the Jill Chaifetz Transfer School (JCTS), a community school serving students ages 16-21. JCTS opened in 2007 in partnership with BronxWorks to offer programming to students who have experienced significant barriers that have hindered their academic progress in traditional high school settings. Students at JCTS receive case management from BronxWorks to help connect them to any resources they and their families may need. Students also receive assistance with college applications and financial aid, as well as opportunities to pursue internships and network with professionals. The JCTS students who graduated this month are slated to attend CUNY schools, SUNY schools, and vocational schools in the fall. Click here to see more pictures from the graduation.

Photo Essay
New York City Human Resources Administration Visits BronxWorks

In early June, several NYC HRA officials took a tour of one of the BronxWorks facilities with some of the agency's senior staff members. Pictured here from left to right: Grace Bonilla, HRA Administrator; Gary Jenkins, HRA First Deputy Commissioner; Eileen Torres, BronxWorks Executive Director; Teanika Chamberlain, BronxWorks Program Director of the SEPS and Rapid Rehousing Programs; Annette Holm, HRA Chief Special Services Officer; Julie Spitzer, BronxWorks Director of Homelessness Prevention and Access to Benefits; Betty Ann-Tamaisar, BronxWorks Director of Workforce Development; John Weed, BronxWorks Assistant Executive Director; Marie Edwards, BronxWorks Program Director, Jobs Plus; Bruce Jordan, Chief Homelessness Prevention Officer; Karla Cordero, Chief of Staff for HRA Administrator.
A Walk in the Park

Alfred Charles, Activity Specialist at the Living Room/Safe Haven (lower middle) coordinated a trip to Bronx Community Day at the New York Botanical Gardens for the BronxWorks Living Room participants. The Living Room is the only 24-hour drop-in center in the Bronx for street homeless adults.

The Second Second Saturdays

On June 9, the BronxWorks Healthy & Livable Mott Haven Partnership continued "Second Saturdays

#NOT62

The Campaign for A Healthy Bronx
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 a group of energetic seniors who call themselves the St. Mary's Senior Marlins pause for a photo after a stretching exercise with Clarisa Alayeto of Shape Up NYC.

A Little Graduation

Congratulations to our Early Childhood Learning Center (ECLC) participants on their graduation! The BronxWorks ECLC at the Carolyn McLaughlin Community Center at 1130 Grand Concourse is a high-quality childcare facility serving children between the age of 3 and 5 years old.
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.

Our team is making a big difference for Bronx children and youth and will be a part of the excitement in one of the world’s most famous marathons!

To find out how to become a BronxWorks charity runner and secure your spot in the TCS New York City Marathon.

CLICK HERE

JOIN THE 5K RUN WALK
ST. MARY’S PARK
FALL 2018
DATE TBD

www.bronxworks.org
This Fall, BronxWorks will hold its Annual 5K Run/Walk at St. Mary’s Park.

More details to follow.
For more information about the 5K Run/Walk, please email info@bronxworks.org.

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