Using Special Talents to Support the Bronx Community

The September 2016 Newsletter

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Middle school summer program participants from the BronxWorks three Cornerstones; Classic, Betances and St. Mary’s, came together on August 24 to present their final projects from a new summer media workshop they completed. Through a BronxWorks partnership with The LAMP and Children's Hope India (CHI), the students learned the art and skill of creating public service announcements (PSAs). Some of the PSA topics chosen by students included Black Lives Matter, improving school lunches, anti-bullying and protecting the environment.

The PSA presentations were followed by a question and answer session with the audience to learn more about the students’ experiences and what helped them to identify the topic(s). Many of the students enjoyed exploring and finding their social justice
"I like editing and switching stuff around, seeing what looks good together," stated 12 year old program participant Jamele Bell, "and the music was pretty fun, too, so I think I'm going to major in music."

The event was held at the Bronx Museum of the Arts and was attended by BronxWorks staff, friends and family of the participating youth and representatives from the LAMP and CHI. BronxNet Community Television covered the event and plans to featured the PSAs on the BronxNet cable network. You can view all of the PSA videos on the BronxWorks YouTube Channel.

BronxWorks is grateful to Children's Hope India for their financial support of the Social Justice PSA workshop and to the LAMP for sharing their expertise with our youth.

Running for the Bronx:
Meet the 2016 BronxWorks Marathon Team!

BronxWorks is proud to introduce the five runners that make up the BronxWorks 2016 TCS New York City Marathon Team. The November 6 race is quickly approaching and the runners are in the home stretch of their training. Each runner committed to raise at least $2,500 which will be used towards BronxWorks Children and Youth programs. Every mile and every dollar counts! If you would like to support a team member, please Donate here!

Genevieve Uslander (pictured in blue) knows BronxWorks well! She is former staff member of the BronxWorks HomeBase program and was a 2014 marathon runner for Team BronxWorks! Now living in Brooklyn and getting set for her second NYC Marathon, she's excited to be representing the Bronx once again in the race. Genevieve speaks from firsthand experience when she says, "BronxWorks is fully invested in the community, and knows the impact that each and every donation has."

As a reporter in Philadelphia, Michael Boren did some digging when selecting a charity team to join for the NYC Marathon. "Providing after-school and summer programs to low-income families and tutoring Bronx youth is important to me [because] it can put at-risk kids on the right track." While this will be his second marathon, it's a dream come true to run the NYC race through all 5 boroughs. Michael sees it as a true team effort: "Let's work together. You donate, I'll train. And we'll both help a community."

Dayna Matthew was born and raised in the Hunt's Point section of the Bronx and credits her loving family and alma mater, the Fieldston School, for showing her that urban kids can achieve their full potential and live out any dream. Now a law professor in Colorado, Dayna couldn't be more excited to return to NYC for her first marathon and link up with BronxWorks to help invest in programs that strive to build strong communities, strong families and strong youth.

Schuyler Ford isn't content to train for the NYC Marathon on a treadmill or running track. Last month he climbed Mt. Rainier, the highest peak in Washington State at over 14,400 ft! While these physical feats are challenging, Schuyler sees them as minor compared to the real-life battles fought everyday by those who may be struggling to make ends meet. "The courage children and families show in facing relentless issues is remarkable. There are many people out there like myself who are willing to run 26.2 miles if that means that a child may have access to better resources."

Annika Hinze is a Bronx resident originally from Berlin, Germany. Currently Annika is a professor at Fordham University and researches urban poverty. She loves learning about her new home borough and identifies with many other foreign born neighbors that give the Bronx such a rich diversity. Annika is excited to be running for Team BronxWorks as a way to get involved in the community.
BronxWorks extends best wishes to another class of the Summer Youth Employment (SYEP) Program much success in their educational and career goals.

Each summer in partnership with the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), BronxWorks provides hands on opportunities for career development in the form of paid six week internships for youth ages 14-24. Internships can take place at BronxWorks or at other partner organizations and businesses. The program provides participants with an opportunity to foster their talents and develop the necessary skills for future employment including: time management, how to work both independently and in groups, and how to develop effective communication skills and basic financial management.

For younger participants, ages 14-15, the program integrates an educational component of a group service project. The youth identify a social justice issue in their Bronx community and develop a plan to address the identified challenge.

In 2016, the SYEP program at BronxWorks enrolled a total of 700 participants. BronxWorks aims to place individuals in programs and industries in which they've expressed an interest. Whenever possible, the SYEP program aims to provide opportunities to try a career on for size and see whether a career interest is really the right fit for that individual.

"One of the best things for us to see, are our youth who've done really well, being hired by their worksites," states Shalima McCants, SYEP Program Director. "Witnessing youth who use this program as a spring board to employment at BronxWorks or elsewhere is really rewarding," affirms McCants.

Staff Profile: Meet Katherine Rodriguez

Katherine Rodriguez is a Bronx girl through and through - born, raised, educated and a current resident of her beloved borough. She completed both her undergraduate degree and graduate degree at Fordham University earning her Bachelor's degree in sociology and Master's degree in nonprofit leadership. Katherine always knew she wanted to work with youth in some capacity. She attended a local community center in her youth and understands the important role that community centers play in supporting and developing children, youth and teens.

Katherine came to BronxWorks in March of 2014 working her way up from site monitor to her current role as the Program Coordinator for BronxWorks Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). In this role, Katherine helps facilitate the enrollment, placement and orientation process. When prompted for a success story Katherine recalls a young man who recently participated in the program. Living in the shelter system, he had many potential barriers to successful completion of the program. He nearly missed the deadline to enroll due to a lack of transportation and had to walk from the shelter to BronxWorks. There was also difficulty in setting a shift schedule for employment as he is subject to a curfew at the shelter. BronxWorks worked to accommodate these challenges and he became a successful graduate of the program. Katherine recalls passing him in the halls of the shelter the day after graduation. "I was so happy for him," she says. "I think he's going to do great!"
Katherine looks forward to continuing her career development at BronxWorks supporting youth and workforce programs.

Thank you Katherine!

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**Did You Know?**

Did you know once a month you can enjoy an entertaining comedy show and support BronxWorks? Allison McKelvy, our BronxWorks resident comedian, regularly hosts a night of comedy to benefit BronxWorks at the Standing Room in Long Island City, Queens. With an array of notable, talented comics and the evening benefitting the organization, it’s a fun night worth the train-ride.

Allison McKelvy has lived in NYC for the last 6 years. Originally from San Antonio and Dallas, Texas, Allison briefly worked as an Analyst before becoming a history teacher. She taught in both the Dallas, TX and NYC public school systems earning her degree from Southern Methodist University.

Allison transitioned away from teaching and moved to comedy three years ago as a creative and therapeutic outlet. Even as a comedian, Allison focused on making a difference and began to search for an organization she believed in and could support using her comedic talents. Allison wanted to look beyond the usual suspects of well-known large organizations for a more local cause. After learning about the BronxWorks mission to feed, shelter, teach and support from Development Manager Daniel Senes at a chance meeting, she made BronxWorks the regular beneficiary charity of her shows.

You can catch Allison’s latest benefit show in support of BronxWorks on Friday, September 30th at 7:30 PM at The Standing Room.

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**Breaking News!**

Yinia Ramirez Nominated for 2016 Coors Light Líder Award
BronxWorks is proud to announce that Yinia Ramirez, Director of BronxWorks Navigator Health Insurance Assistance and Community Health Advocates programs, has been selected as one of the 2016 Coors Light Líderes.

Since 2006, the Coors Light Líderes program has recognized and highlighted the achievements of emerging Latino leaders with a tenacious spirit who work hard to strive for more.

You can help Yinia become the 2016 Coors Light Líder of the Year and help our community climb on to the top by voting on [www.coorslightlideres.com](http://www.coorslightlideres.com) (you must be 21 and older). The deadline is October 28. Individuals can vote up to 10x's per day!

If Yinia becomes the 2016 Coors Light Líder of the Year, BronxWorks will receive a $25,000 grant to develop a community leadership project to empower other Latinos climb to the top in partnership with Coors Light.

**A Vote For Yinia is a Win for Bronx Residents**

[Vote Now](#)

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**Photo Essay**

**USI Volunteer Day at CMCC**
BronxWorks Staff Picnic
To celebrate the summer, staff and family gathered at Tibbett's Brook Park for the annual BronxWorks Picnic on August 26. There was lots of delicious food, games, family activities, and simple relaxing. Pictured here from left to right are Kayla Caravello with two of her sons along with Eileen Torres and William Wilcox. Pictured in front is Logan, the picnic’s unofficial mascot!

Back to School Shopping
Several generous partners helped BronxWorks children and youth get ready for the start of the new school year by providing school supplies and other essentials. Pictured here are three students who attended a special event at the Church of the Holy Nativity on Bainbridge Avenue.
BronxWorks Staff Takeover

To get a glimpse into the everyday lives and work of the fantastic BronxWorks team, we recently introduced the BronxWorks staff social media takeover. Carolina Espinosa (right), Nutrition Program Coordinator, piloted the project and provided an inside glimpse into our Healthy and Livable Mott Haven activities. Stay tuned for another takeover next month — and be sure to follow BronxWorks on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter!
Second Saturdays Celebrates St. Mary's Park
Second Saturdays is a day of fun, free activities in St. Mary's Park put on by the BronxWorks led partnerships Healthy and Livable Mott Haven! Pictured here are community members creating art that speaks to what St. Mary's Park means to them! Join us for the final Second Saturday of the year on October 8, 2016!

#GivingTuesday

Black Friday. Cyber Monday.

#GIVINGTUESDAY™

November 29, 2016

Join us for a special event at the Hard Rock Cafe at Yankee Stadium on Tuesday, November 29th from 6pm-9pm.

More information to follow regarding ticket sales and
If you have any questions or would like more info about BronxWorks, please contact Tiana Rogers at trogers@bronxworks.org or 646-393-4002.

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