

# NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Neighborhood 360° Fellows

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**Jennifer Threat**

*Bridge Street Development Corporation*

Jennifer Threat has worked in sales and marketing at Good Housekeeping, Essence, Ebony and Buzz magazines. She also launched her own magazine, Double Dutch, to empower African-American and Latino teen girls and has been a speaker at teen events. In addition, Jennifer led workshops on buying homes with Habitat for Humanity and the Bridge Street Development Corporation. She has been a proud Bedford-Stuyvesant resident for over eight years and looks forward to helping neighborhood businesses. She earned her Bachelor of Science

degree in Advertising from Ohio University's E.W. Scripps School of Journalism and her Master of Science degree from New York University.

*Jennifer's Neighborhood 360 Fellows project with the Bridge Street Development Corporation will include recruiting small businesses and assessing the need for their participation in the Small Business Boot Camp and Makeover project. She will also assess planning, outreach and business engagement around the implementation of an economic development strategy for Tompkins Avenue.*



**Ilana Teitel**

*Central Astoria Local Development Coalition*

Ilana Teitel is a fourth-generation resident of Astoria who has lived, worked, and volunteered in the neighborhood for decades. As the Visioning Chairperson at Green Shores NYC, she helped to produce a community-driven plan for a nine-mile stretch of the East River waterfront in Western Queens. She has written and edited a Map and Guide to the Astoria waterfront, as well as neighborhood newsletters and histories. Ilana has helped small retail businesses and an

outdoor marketplace to build their brands and scale up quickly. She is passionate about helping neighborhood organizations and companies maximize their potential.

*Ilana's Neighborhood 360 Fellows project with the Central Astoria Local Development Coalition will include the activation of existing dormant merchant organizations on Broadway and 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue. She will also gather small business owner input on corridor needs, establish a merchant database, increase merchant membership, and hold membership meetings.*

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**Viarlenis Acosta**

*Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation*

Viarlenis Acosta's passion for economic and workforce development began with her management position in the Hospitality industry. Viarlenis' growing desire to further develop her team, led Shake Shack to promote her to International Training Manager. Through helping to open five international locations, she gained experience in providing a unique combination of tools and strategic direction to ensure operating standard procedures resulted in long-term success. Her success in developing and increasing the value of employee productivity within a rapidly growing business gave her the foundation to work closely with

small businesses through the Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation's Business Partners Program. She will take this experience forward to connect small businesses with a range of needed support services and continue the neighborhood's commercial corridor revitalize efforts.

*Viarlenis' Neighborhood 360 Fellows project with Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation will include assisting with the implementation of the solutions found in response to a commercial district needs assessment and supporting local businesses as they organize and prepare for neighborhood transition.*



**Asea Thompson**

*Flatbush Nostrand Junction Business Improvement District*

Asea Thompson has a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Interior Design and a Master of Regional Planning. While in graduate school, Asea became interested in Creative Placemaking as an alternative method to conventional planning practices. For the past 11 months, Asea lived and served as an AmeriCorps term in Brooklyn. During her term, Brooklyn's variety of cultures and lifestyles captivated her and led her to brainstorm various ways to welcome and encourage these differences through art practices, such as heritage festivals. Also, while in New York City, Asea

has attended many art, design, and placemaking conferences to engage in preexisting dialogue and see what has already been done in and around Brooklyn to bridge the gaps between cultures and communities.

*Asea's Neighborhood 360 Fellows project with the Flatbush Nostrand Junction Business Improvement District will include activating a cluster of small and large businesses to collaborate on real estate development, store displays and designs, logistical planning and public promotion. Asea will also develop a culturally relevant communication campaign to increase the interest and foot traffic for small business in the Northern section of the commercial corridor, as well as, work to cultivate a stronger relationship with the corridor's anchor organization, Brooklyn College, in support of local businesses.*

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**Natalie Mendell**

*Grand Street Business Improvement District*

Natalie Mendell is a graduate of the University of Colorado at Boulder. She has worked in the economic development field for the last four years in San Diego, working for two Business Improvement Districts and one Chamber of Commerce. Natalie has held managing positions at each of these organizations and has seen different types of neighborhoods grow economically. She is excited to work for the Grand Street Business Improvement District in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, helping to make her neighborhood an even better place to live and do business.

*Natalie's Neighborhood 360 Fellows project with the Grand Street Business Improvement District will include creating a Grand Street passport and discount card program for local shoppers. She will also research and survey business trash and recycling carting information to attract a single company to serve the district, and increase parking regulations through surveys of surrounding neighborhoods, mapping findings, and liaising with the Department of Transportation.*

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**Maureen Hoon**

*Greater Flushing Chamber of Commerce*

Maureen Hoon has lived, worked, and supported local businesses in the Queens borough for the last four years. This experience has brought about a much deeper appreciation of the vibrant and diverse communities within Queens. Having worked with global organizations across different sectors - the arts, technology, business enterprise, and digital media - Maureen's approach to community engagement is multidisciplinary. Her aim is to foster greater synergies and lead collaboration between enterprises, residents, and cultural institutions to share resources and collaborate effectively, as well as to help expand community offerings.

*Maureen's Neighborhood 360 Fellows project with the Greater Flushing Chamber of Commerce will include collecting and analyzing data from a commercial district needs assessment. She will also organize business owners around the City's "Flushing West" redevelopment plan, ensure local entrepreneur participation in the "Flushing Trading Post" outdoor green market and expand "Flushing Night Out" community night market, and work on the "Tech Boot Camp" project with Monroe College.*

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**Kara Isabella**

*Two Bridges Neighborhood Council*

Kara Isabella is a designer from Cleveland, Ohio, but has called the Lower East Side home for the past two years. She recently graduated from the School of Visual Arts with her Master's of Fine Arts in Design for Social Innovation. Kara has worked in the marketing departments of Ann Taylor and American Greetings, and her recent projects include creating the brand and narrative for UNICEF's new Policy Planning Unit and developing a program that transforms vacant lots into safe and convenient recreational outlets for Slavic Village (Cleveland, Ohio) youth.

*Kara's Neighborhood 360 Fellows project with the Two Bridges Neighborhood Council will include creating a commercial district needs assessment for the South Street East River Community Development Corporation's service area. She will also conduct outreach to small businesses and residents impacted by Hurricane Sandy to encourage participation in the RISE resilient communication technologies project and the NeighborFood healthy food financing program.*



**Christopher Freire**

*Union Settlement Association*

Christopher Freire is a recent graduate of the Macaulay Honors College at CUNY Hunter, where he double majored in Sustainability Management and History. Previously he has worked with the Trust for Governors Island, the Stuyvesant Park Neighborhood Association, and the CUNY Institute for Sustainable Cities. As a Neighborhood 360 Fellow, Christopher looks forward to serving East Harlem's 116th Street commercial corridor – the heart of a neighborhood he has grown to know and love during frequent visits to Central Park and the Silberman School of Social Work. In the years to come, Christopher hopes to pursue a master's degree in urban planning and continue to serve his fellow New Yorkers.

*Christopher's Neighborhood 360 Fellows project with the Union Settlement Association will include identifying challenges to business retention, growth, and expansion along East Harlem's 116<sup>th</sup> Street commercial corridor. He will also quantify the results of a merchant survey, discuss results with merchants, and identify actions steps, as well as schedule informational and training workshops for merchants.*

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**Uriah Johnson**

*Westchester Square Business Improvement District*

Uriah Johnson is an urban planning enthusiast with an interest in the built environment and community engagement. After attending Occidental College and earning a bachelor's degree in Urban and Environmental Policy, Uriah returned to her hometown of the South Bronx to serve as an Americorps volunteer with the partnered program Blue Engine. For two years, she acted as a Teaching Assistant and taught Algebra at Renaissance High School located on the Lehman High School campus. Inspired to become a permanent advocate for the Bronx, she is pursuing a master's degree in City and Regional Planning at Rutgers University.

*Uriah's Neighborhood 360 Fellows project with the Westchester Square Business Improvement District will include creating a marketing and outreach strategic plan, conducting outreach to merchants, residents, landlords, schools and local government, as well as producing the Halloween and Christmas holiday events.*



**Sarah Evers**

*Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation*

Sarah Evers' academic and professional background focuses on exploring issues of environmental justice and socio-spatial exclusion. She is interested in how features of the built environment can enforce or alleviate inequity in urban areas. For the past year, she has worked for a disaster relief organization in the Rockaways, where she has led groups of volunteers through the construction of homes that were damaged during Hurricane Sandy. While in college, Sarah worked with park advocacy groups in the Hunts Point and Soundview neighborhoods. She is looking forward to returning to the South Bronx to work with community members and business owners along Jerome Avenue with Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation. Sarah enjoys eating dollar slices and biking to the far reaches of the five boroughs.

*Sarah's Neighborhood 360 Fellows project with the Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation will include surveying existing businesses and assessing consumer retail needs. She will also identify vacant spaces and prospect potential businesses, advocate for neighborhood improvements, and connect the Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation's existing business and family services to local merchants and community residents.*