



FOR PLANNING PURPOSES

MEDIA ADVISORY

**New York City Probation Department of Probation
Stocks Up on Success with Launch of
South Bronx NeON Nutrition Kitchen at the
4th Annual Health & Harmony Day: Just For the Health Of It
Monday, July 13**

NEW YORK— New York City Department of Probation (DOP) **Commissioner Ana M. Bermúdez**, along with special guest **Elliot Lopez, Executive Chef** at the **Capital Grille** (Wall Street), and in partnership with Food Bank For New York City, and the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City, is set to launch the first of five city-wide *NeON Nutrition Kitchens* on **Monday, July 13th, 11:00 am**, during the **4th Annual Health & Harmony Day 2015: Just For the Health Of It** at the South Bronx Neighborhood Opportunity Network Office (NeON).

The high cost of food, utilities, and rent can be crippling, causing more and more households to seek emergency food. For DOP clients in need, pride and stigmatization often discourage them from seeking help at community-based soup kitchens and food pantries. In our research, we have found that DOP clients are not comfortable accessing community resources, yet feel safe coming to our offices.

In an effort to address the growing issue of food insecurity in communities underserved by affordable, nutritious food, the DOP worked in collaboration with the Mayor’s Fund to launch the NeON Nutrition Kitchens in a unique initiative that goes beyond a typical food pantry.

"The *NeON Nutrition Kitchen* provides healthy recipes, nutrition information, and cooking demonstrations and also distributes food to DOP clients and communities once a week to improve their understanding of a healthy lifestyle and provide a service to the community," stated **Commissioner Ana M. Bermúdez**. "Our goal is to assist our clients with overcoming barriers, like hunger, in an effort to create a successful and productive life for those transitioning from the justice system."

"We want everyone in New York to be able to eat nutritious meals they can afford," said **Director of Food Policy Barbara Turk**. "I congratulate the Department of Probation on launching this community-based approach to providing not just food, but essential resources for health and wellbeing to those who need it."

“Thousands of New Yorkers struggle to provide quality and affordable nutrition for their families – making it difficult to lead full, healthy and productive lives. By making healthier food choices and nutrition education accessible at NeON sites, this innovative initiative will help those transitioning from the justice system put their best foot forward,” said **Darren Bloch, Executive Director of the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City**. “NeON Nutrition Kitchens bring us closer to our goal of expanding access and opportunity to lift up all New Yorkers, and we are eager to join the Neighborhood Opportunity Network, the Department of Probation and Food Bank For New York in this critical work.”

The South Bronx NeON team will provide ongoing partnerships with local chefs and nutrition experts to continually provide clients with support for achieving a healthier lifestyle and to foster positive change in their decision making and behavior.

WHO: **Commissioner Ana M. Bermudez**; special guest **Elliot Lopez**, Executive Chef, Capital Grille (Wall Street); **Lisa Hines-Johnson**, Chief Of Operations, Food Bank For New York City; DOP clients and professionals from the food industry.

WHAT: Grand Opening of the South Bronx NeON Nutrition Kitchen

WHEN: **Monday, July 13, 2015**
4th Annual Health & Harmony Day 2015: Just For the Health Of It
10:00am – 3:00pm
NeON Nutrition Kitchen Ribbon cutting event 11:00 A.M.
Media Avail: 11:00am – 12:30pm

WHERE: South Bronx Neon ([Map](#))
198 East 161st Street **Bronx**, NY 10451.

PARTNERS: DOP South Bronx NeON, The Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City and Food Bank For New York City

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About the New York City Department of Probation (DOP):

The New York City Department of Probation (DOP) helps build stronger and safer communities by working with and supervising people on probation, fostering positive change in their decision-making and behavior, and expanding opportunities for them to move out of the criminal and juvenile justice systems through meaningful education, employment, health services, family engagement and civic participation.

About the NeON:

NeON is a network of community organizations, government agencies, local businesses, and community residents focused on connecting probation clients who live in the target neighborhood to opportunities, resources and services. The Department of Probation has 7 NeON offices and 7 Satellite offices throughout the five boroughs.

The Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City:

The Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City, chaired by First Lady Chirlane McCray, is a 501(c) (3) not-for-profit organization that facilitates high-impact public-private partnerships throughout New York City's five boroughs. The Mayor's Fund leverages individual, philanthropic, and corporate partnerships to support public programs advancing key Mayoral and agency priorities. The Mayor's Fund is focused on supporting public programs in areas including mental health, youth workforce development, immigration and citizenship, domestic violence, financial empowerment, and support for young men and women of color. To learn more about the Mayor's Fund, visit nyc.gov/fund.

About Food Bank For New York City:

Food Bank for New York City has been the city's major hunger-relief organization working to end hunger throughout the five boroughs for more than 30 years. Nearly one in five New Yorkers relies on Food Bank for food and other resources. Food Bank takes a strategic, multifaceted approach that provides meals and builds capacity in the neediest communities, while raising awareness and engagement among all New Yorkers. Through its network of more than 1,000 charities and schools citywide, Food Bank provides food for more than 63 million free meals for New Yorkers in need. Food Bank For New York City's income support services, including food stamps (also known as SNAP) and free tax assistance for the working poor, put more than \$100 million each year into the pockets of New Yorkers, helping them to afford food and achieve greater dignity and independence. In addition, Food Bank's nutrition education programs and services empower more than 275,000 children, teens and adults to sustain a healthy diet on a low budget. Working toward long-term solutions to food poverty, Food Bank develops policy and conducts research to inform community and government efforts.