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# The NYCHA JOURNAL

## CREATING CHANGE

Young NYCHA residents transform blank spaces into beautiful murals

**ON MARCH 8**, young Castle Hill residents began work on a vibrant mural at the Castle Hill Senior Center depicting images of togetherness and community, including two hands holding and an elder helping a young child. The mural is part of a new one-year initiative called "Public Art / Public Housing," in which 200 NYCHA residents ages 16 to 24 will paint murals featuring positive messages on vacant walls in their developments. The project is managed by Groundswell, an organization dedicated to producing community-based public art, and funded by City Council dollars under the leadership of Ritchie Torres, who chairs the Council's Committee on Public Housing and grew up in a NYCHA development.

Council Member Torres, along with Council Member Annabel Palma and NYCHA General Manager Michael Kelly, picked up brushes to help paint the mural. They were joined by Castle Hill Resident Association President Geraldine Lamb, Groundswell artists and staff, and community members.

"This new initiative aims to (CONTINUED ON PAGE 12)



Young Castle Hill residents spent the evening of March 8 beautifying the Castle Hill Senior Center with a mural about their community as part of a new "Public Art / Public Housing" initiative, funded thanks to Council Member Ritchie Torres. The program enables young NYCHA residents working with Groundswell, an organization dedicated to producing community-based public art, to add vibrant public art to developments across the City.



On March 23, 2016, NYCHA Chair and CEO Shola Olatoye spoke to staff at Chelsea-Elliott Houses in Manhattan about the new FlexOps expanded hours initiative. Chelsea-Elliott (including Chelsea Addition) is one of 12 developments FlexOps will begin at this spring.

# Announcing FlexOps

Early, Late, and Saturday Hours for Better Customer Service

**RESIDENTS WILL SOON** see cleaner public spaces when they leave for work and be able to schedule routine repairs for the early evening after they get home thanks to Flexible Operations (FlexOps): Expanded Service Hours, a transformative initiative NYCHA recently launched to extend hours for completing routine repairs, cleaning common areas, and scheduling meetings with property management. FlexOps will create a new, staggered shift schedule for frontline staff, including caretakers, maintenance works, property managers, and support staff.

As part of NextGeneration NYCHA, the Authority's 10-year strategic plan, FlexOps will improve residents' quality of life by creating multiple work shifts, which will allow properties to operate from 6:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. on weekdays and hold Saturday property management office hours for appointments and administrative duties. Employees will have the opportunity to benefit from a multiple shift structure, where some staff start/end their

shift earlier in the day, while others start/end it later.

NYCHA's current single shift, an 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. workday, dates back nearly 50 years and does not allow staff or residents to see improved conditions at the developments. A recent survey of more than 1,400 public housing residents, including 58 resident leaders, found that 94 percent supported extending NYCHA's service hours beyond the traditional 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. hours.

"If we genuinely want to create cleaner, safer and more connected communities, we must challenge ourselves to think differently about what it means to serve residents. It's clear the last generation's model is no longer working for this or future generations," said NYCHA Chair & CEO Shola Olatoye. "FlexOps is transformational change; real change our residents will be able to see and feel. Our staff deserves a modern work schedule and our residents deserve the type of services any other New Yorker should expect."

(SEE FlexOps RESIDENT FACT SHEET ON PAGE 3)

## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

# CHANGE IS COMING

Over the past two years, I've met with hundreds of residents at developments across the City. Many of you shared with me the frustration of wanting to raise your children in a safe, clean, and affordable place that you are proud to call home, yet you have the nagging sense that no matter what is said, NYCHA will never change. I've heard you.

I stand by the fact that we've made some notable progress at NYCHA—but it's not enough. If you, our residents, don't see the changes when you walk out the door of your developments, when you need repairs or need to speak with management, then changes simply do not exist.

For years, NYCHA's budget has changed, but our daily hours of operations haven't. Our buildings and the demands of our work have changed, but our hours remain the same. We can no longer tackle the issues we face today with the solutions and operations of yesterday.

In 2016, we will make change a reality for residents. NYCHA property management will start serving you before 8 a.m., after 4:30 p.m., and on weekends. This new initiative is called Flexible Operations, or FlexOps and we'll launch it at 12 developments in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Queens this spring. We will start to have multiple shifts for caretakers, maintenance workers, property management, and support staff. This means some development staff will start their workday earlier, and others later, in order to extend our hours of daily operations



to 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. to better serve you, our residents.

This means that working families will be able to schedule an appointment for a routine repair in the evening after work. On Saturdays, residents will be able to sit down with development staff by appointment. We will have multiple shifts to better tackle property upkeep, repairs, and other critical issues, while supporting greater flexibility for our staff to work at different times.

These changes won't happen overnight, but they will happen. FlexOps, as well as other changes, requires a fundamental shift in the mindset of what it means to serve you, our residents.

We are changing how we do business. We are changing our hours and the quality of service we provide you. We are committed to taking NYCHA in a different and better direction through NextGeneration NYCHA, our 10-year strategic

plan to create safe, clean, and connected communities. FlexOps is just one way we can better live up to that promise.

**Shola Olatoye**  
Chair and CEO

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS

250 Broadway, New York, NY 10007 • Tel 212.306.3322 • Fax 212.577.1358



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## NYCHA BOARD MEETINGS

**N**YCHA'S BOARD MEETINGS, open to the public, take place on Wednesdays at 10 am in the NYCHA 12th floor conference room at 250 Broadway. People who wish to speak during the public comment period must pre-register at least 45 minutes before the meeting is scheduled to begin and can only comment about items on that meeting's agenda. Each speaker's time is limited to three minutes. The public comment period concludes either when all speakers are finished or after the 30 minutes allotted by law for public comment, whichever comes first.

Copies of the calendar for the upcoming board meeting are available on NYCHA's website or can be picked up at the Office of the Corporate Secretary, 250 Broadway, 12th floor after 3 pm on the Monday before the meeting. Copies of the dispositions of prior meetings are available on NYCHA's website or can be picked up from the Office of the Corporate Secretary no earlier than 3 pm on the Thursday after the board meeting. Any person requiring reasonable accommodation in order to participate in the meeting should contact the Office of the Corporate Secretary at **212.306.6088** no later than five business days prior to the meeting. For additional information regarding the calendar of meetings, dispositions, dates and times, please call **212.306.6088**.

### UPCOMING MEETINGS:

April 27, 2016  
May 25, 2016  
June 29, 2016

July 27, 2016  
September 28, 2016  
October 26, 2016

November 23, 2016  
December 21, 2016

\* Note: There will be no board meeting in August. The November and December board meetings are scheduled for the second-to-last Wednesday.



# FlexOps

Flexible Operations  
Expanded Service Hours

## RESIDENT FACT SHEET



Flexible Operations: Expanded Service Hours, or FlexOps, is a new initiative to extend property service hours by creating multiple, staggered shifts for NYCHA's frontline staff. The purpose of FlexOps is to improve customer service and the quality of life with extended hours to tackle property cleanliness, repairs and other critical issues.



**Property Management**

Current Schedule		FlexOps Schedule	
Office Hours		Office Hours	
Mon-Fri		Mon-Fri	Sat
8:30 AM-4:30 PM		8:30 AM-4:30 PM	8:30 AM-12:00 PM <i>by appointment</i>



**Maintenance & Repairs**

Work Order Repair Appointments		Work Order Repair Appointments		
Mon-Fri		Mon-Fri		
Morning 8:00 AM-12:00 PM	Afternoon 12:00 PM-4:00 PM	Morning 8:00 AM-12:00 PM	Afternoon 12:00 PM-4:00 PM	Early Evening 4:00 PM - 7:30 PM



**Janitorial & Grounds**

Cleaning and maintaining the grounds and public spaces.	Cleaning and maintaining the grounds and public spaces.
Mon-Fri	Mon-Fri
8:00 AM-4:30 PM	6:00 AM-7:00 PM

Simple repairs such as basic plumbing (faucet, clearing stoppages), carpentry, hardware for doors and windows; replacing windows guards, smoke detectors, CO detectors, and outlets; and fixing refrigerators and stoves, etc.

**First initial developments will be phased in starting in spring 2016.**

**Start the day with cleaner public spaces and grounds, with caretakers beginning at 6:00 am.**

**Schedule routine repairs after work, in the early evening from 4:00 pm until 7:30 pm.**

**End the day with cleaner public spaces and grounds, with caretakers finishing at 7:00 pm.**

**Schedule a meeting to talk with property management on Saturdays (8:30 am – 12:00 pm).**

Safe · Clean · Connected

## Working within the terms of NYCHA's labor agreement, the Authority is launching FlexOps at 12 developments this spring. Initial phase sites include:



**MANHATTAN**

- Chelsea-Elliott Houses (including Chelsea Addition)
- Dyckman Houses
- Isaacs Consolidation (Isaacs Houses, Holmes Towers & Robbins Plaza)

**BRONX**

- Forest Consolidation (Forest Houses, McKinley Houses & Eagle Ave – East 163rd Street)
- Marble Hill Houses
- Mott Haven Houses
- Murphy Consolidated (Murphy Houses & 1010 East 178th Street)
- Pelham Parkway

**QUEENS**

- Hammel Consolidated (Hammel Houses & Carleton Manor)
- Ravenwood Houses

**BROOKLYN**

- Glenwood Houses
- Wyckoff Gardens Consolidated (Wyckoff Gardens, Atlantic Terminal Site 4B, & 572 Warren Street)

## Community Leaders, Advocates, and Residents Support Expanded Service Hours

**Nathaniel Green, Dyckman Houses Resident Association President:** "Residents have been fighting for greater staff flexibility for years. Now, with FlexOps, we no longer have to choose between working to take care of our families and staying home to get repairs done. With these new flexible shifts, NYCHA staff will be able to work with residents, from morning to evening, as a team, to get things done and make our developments stronger. This is the level of customer service our residents deserve."

**Damaris Reyes, Baruch Houses resident and Executive Director of Good Old Lower East Side (GOLES):** "As a resident, I believe FlexOps will improve maintenance and quality of life for public housing tenants. All too often, off-hours repairs aren't made quickly enough be-

cause there isn't adequate staff on-site. This new system will create flexibility—most importantly, for working residents by ensuring developments are staffed at hours that are convenient for all, and responsive to modern, busy schedules. We are thrilled that NYCHA is pushing forward with this monumental change."

**Reverend Dr. Johnny Ray Youngblood, Senior Pastor of Mount Pisgah Baptist Church:** "As residents themselves will tell you, the FlexOps program is finally bringing NYCHA into the 21st century—when life happens 24/7, not from 8 to 4 pm. For far too long, rigid work schedules did not match residents' realities—and this prevented timely and effective upkeep of NYCHA developments. Increased staff flexibility means working residents will

finally have access to round-the-clock service they have asked for and deserve—much like New Yorkers outside of public housing have come to expect. This strategy should be a model for public housing across the country."

**Reverend Frederick Davie, Executive Vice President of the Union Theological Seminary:** "It is important for working people trying to provide for their families that NYCHA should be flexible in scheduling appointments for repairs. People should not have to choose between their jobs and a NYCHA appointment."

**Shatia Strother, Program Coordination, Families United for Racial and Ethnic Equality (FUREE):** "FUREE fully supports NYCHA's efforts to move forward with

FlexOps, which represents reform that residents have long called for. We commend NYCHA for placing resident needs at the forefront of policy decisions, which will improve standard of living for all. This more effective delivery of services will restore residents' dignity and create thriving communities residents can be proud to call home."

**Michelle de la Uz, Executive Director of the Fifth Avenue Committee:** "No one, regardless of their address, should be denied the fundamental dignity of clean housing conditions and repairs or office appointments that accommodate working families. Extending service hours is a concrete way NYCHA can improve the lives of thousands of families living in public housing."

# Making Choices That Count

## Residents Envision Their Futures in NextGen Neighborhoods

**THERESA CASCONI LIKES** Site B — East 92nd Street between 1st Avenue and the F.D.R. Drive — because it is shorter than the other options and won't directly obstruct views of the other buildings. Site A blocks the views from her windows. She wants to make sure that the entrances between the new and old buildings won't be too narrow for residents to navigate strollers, wheelchairs, and shopping carts.

"I gave my opinion and it was very helpful," Casconi says. "I hope it will all work out."

She was one of many residents who attended a visioning meeting at Holmes Towers, one of two NextGen Neighborhoods sites where NYCHA plans to build 50 percent market-rate and 50 percent affordable housing units on underused land. Some of the income generated by the new housing will be used to repair and renovate Wyckoff and Holmes, which have \$35 million and \$31.5 million in capital repair needs over the next five years, respectively.

Visioning meetings are part of the NextGen Neighborhoods process of gathering resident input that NYCHA staff has engaged in since last September when the two sites were first announced. In this phase, staff work with residents to recap resident feedback from previous visioning sessions held earlier in February, identify building sites that residents prefer for the proposed buildings, and possible site improvements.

On two days in February, 75 Holmes residents and 97 Wyckoff residents formed small groups and engaged in conversations with NYCHA staff from Resident Engagement and Real Estate Development to discuss different options. Though the majority of residents who attended the sessions don't want a new building or buildings at their developments, residents were committed to having their voices heard.

"I appreciate the fact that NYCHA is attempting to engage us and giving me the opportunity to give my five cents, allowing me to have some control over my residential destiny," Holmes Towers resident Lawrence Thorne said.

Holmes Towers is composed of two 25-story buildings on the Upper East Side, Manhattan with 540 units that house about 930 residents. The buildings cover about 16 percent of the land at the development. The proposed new building would involve replacing the current playground to construct one mixed-income housing tower of about 250-350



**At a visioning session on February 24, Wyckoff residents viewed physical models of their development and discussed the proposed new buildings that will be built on the development as part of NextGen Neighborhoods, a plan to build 50 percent market-rate and 50 percent affordable housing units on underused NYCHA land.**

apartments between the two existing buildings on 92nd Street. Residents were given the chance to work with physical models of the existing site, as well as some proposed building options.

Wyckoff Gardens includes three 21-story buildings in Boerum Hill, Brooklyn with 530 units that house approximately 1,150 residents. The buildings cover about 12 percent of land at the development. The proposal for Wyckoff would replace two underused parking lots with mixed-income housing buildings consisting of about 600 units. Residents were able to work with physical models of the three proposed sites and voiced major concerns with the amount of units. The proposed location most Wyckoff residents preferred among the given options were Sites A and B — a building on the parking lot at Third Avenue and Wyckoff Street and a building



## I am NextGeneration NYCHA



*"I tell my officers to treat everyone as if they are family. NYCHA residents are willing to be partners with you."*

—James Secreto, NYPD Housing Bureau Chief

*Grew up in Albany Houses*

on the parking lot at Nevins and Wyckoff Streets — because these buildings would allow for all 600 units at heights lower than Wyckoff's, therefore not obstructing views and natural light.

Each group at Wyckoff was tasked to come up with a fifth option for distributing 600 new units at the development. Resident Craig Holmes' group decided to create a

completely new option with 450 units.

"They want 600 and we want to compromise with 450 apartments," Holmes said. "We want to put the buildings on the corners so that everyone can see, so that there are no shadows, with entrance ways that face the developments so that everyone can integrate."

Holmes signed up for the Resident Stakeholder Committee, a group of residents who will attend quarterly meetings with NYCHA to provide feedback as the process continues. Holmes said of the visioning process, "with residents involved, it's a big collaboration and not a dictatorship."

Feedback gathered from residents will inform the development of the RFP. Follow-up sessions were held in March to recap and summarize resident feedback and answer any additional questions. For more information about NextGen Neighborhoods, visit <http://www1.nyc.gov/site/nycha/about/nextgen-neighborhoods.page>.



## NYPD 911 OPERATOR EXAM

Police Communications Technicians (911 Operators/ Radio Dispatchers) are assigned to the Department's Communications Section as 911 emergency call takers. They serve as a radio dispatcher of police resources and perform all other clerical and administrative duties related to the provision of emergency service.

Some of the benefits that highlight the position of Police Communication Technician include:

- Starting Salary is \$35,545 and can increase to \$48,127
- Health benefits for you and your family
- Paid vacation and overtime

**Filing for the PCT Exam is open from February 26, 2016 through April 30, 2016**

There is a \$54 fee payable by money order, credit card, debit card or bank card (cash or personal checks cannot be accepted)



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**NYPDCivilianJobs.com Or call: 212-RECRUIT**

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# NYCHA Launches Public Safety Advisory Committee

**A**S PART OF NYCHA'S NEXT-GENERATION commitment to creating safe, clean, and connected communities for our residents and all New Yorkers, the Housing Authority launched a Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) comprised of NYCHA residents, staff, and agency partners. PSAC will develop a plan to combine current public safety strategies with additional actions to address crime, youth and community engagement, emergency response and preparedness, lease enforcement, and quality of life issues ranging from littering to dog owners that fail to curb their pets.

"NYCHA is serious about changing how we do business at every level, including public safety," said Gerald Nelson, NYCHA Vice President for Public Safety. "Effectively tackling safety and quality of life issues begins with strong collaboration with public housing residents, in addition to NYPD and NYCHA leadership. Together, we can create a strong framework that best serves both residents and the larger community."

PSAC includes Vice President

Nelson, NYPD Housing Bureau Chief James Secreto, and President of the NYCHA Citywide Council of Presidents Ann Cotton Morris. It will also include two NYCHA resident youth. NYCHA solicited applications from interested residents ages 18-25 through Facebook, Twitter, and flyers in developments in March.

Building on the vision of NYCHA's existing Resident Watch Groups, composed of resident volunteers who give their time to improve development security, PSAC will ensure that resident voices continue to be the central focus of NextGeneration NYCHA's safety agenda.

"NYCHA tenant associations are often the first line for information regarding potentially dangerous activity in public housing. We are proud that NYCHA is opening a direct line of communication with our leaders to better ensure a streamlined response, and better protect public housing residents," said CCOP President Morris. PSAC will also seek participation from other city agencies and partners, including the District Attorneys representing each of the boroughs.

**NYCHA's Vice President for Public Safety Gerald Nelson (standing) will help guide NYCHA's new Public Safety Advisory Committee, along with other NYCHA staff, residents, and agency partners.**



When times got tough  
and we couldn't afford  
healthy food,

**SNAP HELPED.**

- KARIMA, GRAPHIC DESIGNER  
Brooklyn

▶ WATCH OUR STORY AT [FoodHelp.nyc](http://FoodHelp.nyc)

Now it's easier to apply online at [FoodHelp.nyc](http://FoodHelp.nyc)

Need help applying for food help or public health insurance, or having trouble making rent? Call 929.221.0050 to reach an Outreach Specialist, available on-site at several NYCHA developments in all five boroughs.

Call 311 for more information

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Human Resources  
Administration  
Department of  
Social Services  
Steven Banks  
Commissioner



# 1400 Apartments at Ocean Bay (Bayside) to Receive Major Renovations

**NYCHA requests proposals from developers for major improvements and upgrades**

**N**YCHA RECENTLY RELEASED a "Request for Proposal" (RFP) for potential developers to upgrade about 1,400 public housing apartments at Ocean Bay (Bayside) Apartments in Far Rockaway through the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program. Proposals from developers are due April 29, 2016.

RAD is a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) program that allows NYCHA to create a public-private partnership with developers to access additional funds for repairs through the Section 8 program. It guarantees that converted units are permanently affordable, enables residents to retain their public housing rights, and ensures that the public housing authority keeps ownership interest in the property. As part of the Authority's NextGeneration NYCHA strategic plan, RAD helps NYCHA protect the affordability of public housing for this and future generations.

"By leveraging the RAD program, we will help improve the quality of life for residents at Ocean Bay (Bayside), ensuring their apartments and buildings receive much-needed repairs and upgrades while preserving affordability and tenant protections," said NYCHA Chair and CEO Shola Olatoye.

NYCHA estimates that the 24 buildings and nearly 1,400 apartments at Ocean Bay (Bayside) need about \$174 million in major improvements and upgrades, such as kitchen and bathroom modernizations, roof replacement, boiler replacements, and safety upgrades. Through the RFP, NYCHA is inviting developers, including non-profit entities and M/WBE firms, to submit proposals for the financing, major rehabilitation and operations of Ocean Bay (Bayside) as a Section 8 property.

The release of the RFP is a major milestone for a process that started back in 2013, when NYCHA first met with residents and community members at Ocean Bay (Bayside) to discuss ways the Authority could renovate, repair, and improve the quality of life at the development through the RAD program. In the past year, NYCHA has hosted 12 monthly meetings with residents to inform them about RAD, tenant rights, jobs and other critical issues related to this program.

Residents will continue to have the same succession opportunities and grievance procedures under the RAD program that currently exist for NYCHA's public housing residents. No resident can be evicted without proven cause. Residents will retain the right to establish and operate a resident organization. Finally, developers will be required to propose a plan to train and hire NYCHA residents, and proactively engage residents on a regular basis as the project moves forward.



# NYCHA Completes \$4.8 Million Lighting Installation at Polo Grounds Towers

**N**YCHA RECENTLY COMPLETED a \$4.8 million lighting upgrade at Polo Grounds Towers in Harlem.

The development's outdated exterior lighting system, installed in the late 1960s, was refurbished with 341 new state-of-the-art, energy efficient lighting fixtures at entrances, walkways, and parking areas to help reduce crime and make Polo Grounds and the surrounding neighborhood safer.

"Lighting is an important aspect of community safety. Following an \$18 million investment in security cameras and modern layered-access doors, we are proud to further our comprehensive security vision through the installation of permanent lighting," said NYCHA Chair and CEO Shola Olatoye. "Improving safety and security in public housing is a key strategy in NextGeneration NYCHA, the Authority's 10 year strategic plan, and these new lights will support a safer environment for both NYCHA residents and the larger community."

NYCHA began the lighting installation project at Polo Grounds Towers in August 2015. The lighting installation is part of the Mayor's Action Plan (MAP)

for Neighborhood Safety, a partnership between NYCHA, the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, the NYPD and other city agencies, to reduce crime and increase neighborhood safety at 15 NYCHA developments with some of the highest crime rates in the City.

Georgia Bishop, Polo Grounds Towers Resident Association First Vice President, is happy about the new lighting at her development. "This means that tenants, staff, and police will have an easier time when walking throughout the development—and can spot bad behavior," Ms. Bishop explained. "These are the kinds of changes we want to and need to see for our community's safety."

New lighting construction has begun at eight other developments — in the Bronx at Butler and Castle Hill Houses; in Brooklyn at Van Dyke 1 and Boulevard and Ingersoll Houses; in Manhattan at St. Nicholas Houses; and in Staten Island at Stapleton Houses. NYCHA expects installation of new lighting to be largely completed at 13 of the 15 MAP sites by the end of 2017. Temporary light towers will remain in place at developments until all projects are completed.



Chair and CEO Shola Olatoye at Polo Grounds Towers on March 10 to announce that the development received a \$4.8 million lighting upgrade featuring 341 new lighting fixtures installed at entrances, walkways, and parking areas to help make the development and surrounding neighborhood safer.

# Getting Ahead Through Technology

**“HACK YOUR FUTURE** and get ahead” is the motto of Tech Up, a cutting-edge technology center that opened in February in a former storage area of Manhattan’s Fulton Houses. For the young adults from Fulton, Chelsea, and Elliott Houses who will learn for free how to produce websites, videos, marketing campaigns, and more, it’s not a trivial message. By the year 2020, there will be about 1.4 million tech jobs in the United States, but only about 400,000 candidates qualified to fill them.

Through communications and digital literacy courses that utilize the lab’s 25 laptops, interactive smart board, and recording studio, Tech Up will help about 125 participants every year gain the skills they need to succeed in the 21st century.

“The next Steve Jobs or Ursula Burns could be in this room,” NYCHA’s General Manager Michael Kelly said at Tech Up’s ribbon-cutting ceremony. (Ursula Burns grew up in Baruch Houses and is now the Chair and CEO of Xerox, the first black woman to lead a Fortune 500 company.) General Manager Kelly also said that as

part of its strategic plan, NextGeneration NYCHA, the Authority works hard to develop public/private partnerships like Tech Up to connect residents to educational and career advancement opportunities.

Tech Up started as an idea from Fulton Houses’ Resident Association President Miguel Acevedo and was brought to life with support from Hudson Guild, Jamestown LP, Google, The LAMP, and Girls Who Code.

“This is an excellent opportunity for students to become tech savvy,” RA President Acevedo said. “And the best part is that it’s all free of charge.”

Fantasia Dixon, an 11th grader at the Quest to Learn school, said that Tech Up is “exciting because it’s preparing us for when we go into the workforce, because everything and every job has to do with technology,” whether you’re a bus driver, receptionist, or entrepreneur. “And Tech Up gives you something fun to do!” Rah-Asia Lassiter, a 12th grader at the High School of Fashion Industries, said, “The program is really great and I’m enjoying it. We just started a cool project on remixing videos. I came here to learn

more about graphic design, because I’ll be attending FIT to pursue a career in graphic design.”

Fantasia lives in the nearby Elliott Houses. Rah-Asia lives in the Ocean Hill development in Brooklyn.

New York City’s Chief Technology Officer, Minerva Tantoco, said that Tech Up “is a great example of how the diversity of New York City is its strength and how the tech industry here will be the best in the world because of its diversity.”



**NYCHA General Manager Michael Kelly checks out the computers at Tech Up, the new technology center that opened in Fulton Houses for young NYCHA residents at Fulton, Chelsea, and Elliott Houses to learn how to make websites, videos, and marketing campaigns for free.**

## Keeping the Heat On



**Lillian Hernandez, a Heating Plant Technician, conducts a variety of safety tests on boilers at Whitman Houses to make sure they’re working properly so that residents have hot water and are warm when it’s cold outside.**

**LILLIAN HERNANDEZ IS** one of NYCHA’s nearly 300 Heating Plant Technicians (HPT). They work hard to make sure residents always have hot water and are warm when it’s cold outside by operating and maintaining the

Authority’s approximately 2,000 boilers and 2,400 water heaters citywide.

Each morning when she gets to work, Ms. Hernandez visits the boiler room at her development, Whitman Houses in Brooklyn, to make sure there are no

issues such as floods or leaks. She then conducts a variety of safety tests on the boilers to ensure they’re working properly and performs maintenance on them to keep them running smoothly. She also makes sure that each building is getting the right amount of heat, according to the temperature outside.

Then she checks for any work tickets submitted by residents, the first of four checks throughout the day. “That’s when the day really starts,” Ms. Hernandez said. “Anything can happen—there can be a problem with the building’s hot water tank or a problem in an apartment, like a radiator leak.” In between these repairs, Ms. Hernandez helps out in the development’s storeroom, making sure that other HPTs in the area have the parts they need to do repairs.

The majority of the water heaters at NYCHA are the “instantaneous” type. Ms. Hernandez enjoys working with these because they are environmentally friendly—they consume less water and less energy because they heat water on demand. “We’re heading in the right direction, going green. Having the latest technology allows us to work better, and residents will get what they need and we’ll get fewer complaints.”

Ms. Hernandez has been a proud

NYCHA employee since 2003, starting out as a Caretaker J. In 2009, she spent two evenings a week for seven months learning how to become a Heating Plant Technician, through classes offered by the union. The next year, she took and passed the HPT civil service test, and has been working as an HPT ever since.

Until recently, she was stationed at Red Hook Houses, where she also lived for 15 years. She enjoyed working where she lived “because I didn’t have to drive and I saved money there, which I used to buy my house. I’m Puerto Rican, born and raised, so people who don’t speak English well saw me as the person to go to for help. Even when I wasn’t working, like when I was at the supermarket, someone would tell me, ‘Oh, I have a problem in my bedroom, can you help?’ I really learned the development, inside and out. I love Red Hook Houses; I was there for so long, it will always be my home. I really love my job, working with tools, working with my hands, being busy. I like raising the pipes, replacing radiator valves. When residents have heat and hot water and there are no complaints and everybody’s happy, I’m happy.”

# Lincoln Center Boro-Linc

Free, Family-Friendly World-Class Arts Programming in Your Neighborhood

**L**INCOLN CENTER'S BORO-LINC, launched in 2015, aims to provide greater access to its diverse arts and cultural offerings for all audiences and ages by breaking down geographic barriers. By partnering with arts organizations throughout the City, Boro-Linc provides free performances, workshops, and programs to neighborhoods across New York. Boro-Linc's partners include: Manny Cantor Center (Manhattan), Hostos Center for the Arts & Culture (Bronx), Casita Maria Center for Arts and Education (Bronx), The Center for Family Life in Sunset Park (Brooklyn), Jamaica Center for Arts & Learning (Queens), and Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden (Staten Island). Here's a list of upcoming programs over the next few months. For a complete list, visit [lincolncenter.org/borolinc](http://lincolncenter.org/borolinc)

## LIST OF UPCOMING BORO-LINC PROGRAMS:

### Manhattan

**The Manny Cantor Center,  
197 E. Broadway  
May 15, 2016**

2:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.  
Pre-performance Castanets & Rhythm Workshop with Angélica Negrón  
Build and design your own bird castanets and learn to play simple rhythmic patterns to accompany the band at the 3:00 performance!

**Lincoln Center Education:  
Acopladitos**

3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
This Brooklyn-based band blends curious electronic and folk instruments with original songs in Spanish for an interactive musical experience. Recommended for ages 3-6.

### The Bronx

**Casita Maria Center for Arts and Education, 928 Simpson St.  
April 30, 2016**

**Lincoln Center Education:  
Carlos Henriquez Jazz**  
2:00 p.m.

**Presented in collaboration with  
the South Bronx Culture Trail**

The performance takes place at **Monsignor Del Valle Square**, Hunts Point Avenue and Bruckner Boulevard

**May 7, 2016**

**Lincoln Center Education:  
Bertha Hope & Jazzberry Jam!**  
2:00 p.m.

**Presented in collaboration  
with the South Bronx Culture Trail**

This performance takes at Graham Triangle, Lincoln Avenue between East 137th and 138th Streets

**May 14, 2016**

**Juilliard Jazz with  
Samora Pinderhughes**

2:00 p.m.  
This performance takes at Casita Maria Center for Arts & Education

**Hostos Center for the Arts & Culture,  
450 Grand Concourse  
April 16, 2016**

**Lincoln Center Education: Batoto Yetu**  
10:30 a.m. Dance and percussion workshop with company members

11:30 a.m. Performance  
An engaging cultural event for the entire family featuring Batoto Yetu (Swahili for "Our Children") with an ensemble of young performers celebrating the music, dance, and folklore from Angola and the Congo, as well as other African regions. Recommended for all ages and families.

### Brooklyn

**The Center for Family Life in  
Sunset Park, 443 39th St.  
April 15, 2016**

**Chamber Music Society of Lincoln  
Center: Chamber Music Beginnings –  
Classical Categories**

7:00–8:00 p.m. Performance  
Wannabe composer Wolfgang Amadeus Schmutzinberry takes a musical journey through time to check in on musical styles across the ages, guided by the world-class artists of The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Recommended for ages 6-10.

**June 3, 2016**

**Metropolitan Opera Guild: Opera  
in your Neighborhood! Workshop**

7:00–9:00 p.m. Workshop  
In this workshop, explore the magical world of opera including the singing, characters, movement, music, and words, then work together to create a mini-opera about the neighborhood! Workshop space is limited, come early!  
Recommended for ages 6-12.  
No music experience necessary.

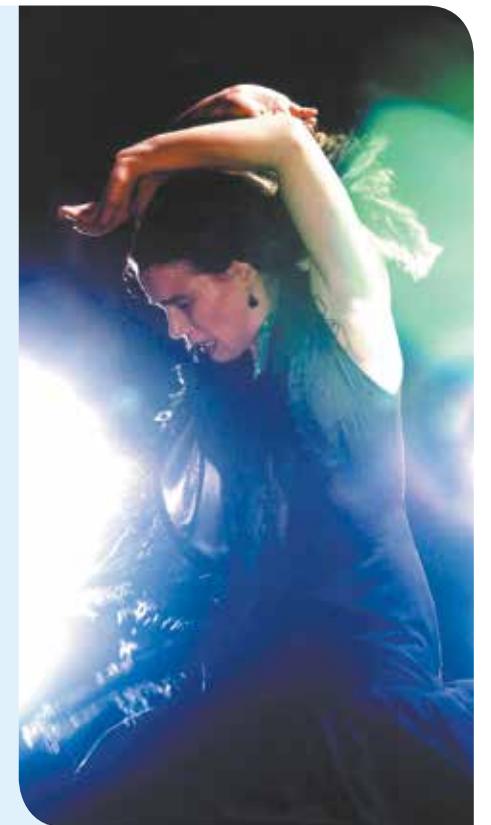
**July 15, 2016**

**Soledad Barrio & Noche Flamenca**

7:00 p.m. Workshop  
Experience the music and dance of Flamenco with company members in a pre-performance workshop for the whole family. Workshop space is limited, come early!

8:00 p.m. Performance

This world renowned company will ignite the stage with deep emotion and beauty in an outdoor concert filled with song and dance from Spain.



**July 29, 2016**

**Lincoln Center Education:  
The Villalobos Brothers**

7:00 p.m. Workshop  
Learn traditional dance steps and songs from Veracruz, Mexico with company members and guest dancers from the Mazarte Mexican dance company.

8:00 p.m. Performance

The Villalobos Brothers' original compositions and arrangements masterfully blend and celebrate the richness of Mexican folk music with the intricate harmonies of jazz and classical music.



RESIDENT SPOTLIGHT

# Miguel Acevedo: The Rainmaker of Fulton Houses

**MIGUEL ACEVEDO'S MISSION** is to create relationships that benefit his neighbors. In his six years as Resident Association President of Manhattan's Fulton Houses, he's done just that, bringing in a variety of partners to host programs and sponsor scholarships for public housing residents of the Chelsea area.

## Can you describe some of the work you're doing with youth?

For the past six years, we [the Fulton Houses Resident Association] have been doing afterschool programs, for reading, homework, and recreation. I've created relationships and partnerships, like the partnership with Jamestown [a local investment company] that created funding for the new technology center at Fulton Houses run by Hudson Guild [a local community organization]. We have art programs with the Whitney Museum, where artists and museum employees discuss art with teens. We have a partnership with the High Line Park, which created an arts and crafts program. For eight years, we've offered a \$20,000 to \$40,000 scholarship for a Fulton Houses resident with a high school diploma or GED who wants to start a career in the culinary industry. This is funded by a fundraiser with the James Beard Foundation and Jamestown. People pay \$200 to \$240 a plate for a dinner at Chelsea Market, where award-winning chefs from across the country cook (it's called Sunday Supper). We're planning to expand this to Brooklyn and the Bronx, so we're looking for a public



**Miguel Acevedo (center), Resident Association President of Fulton Houses, helped cut the ribbon at Tech Up, a new technology center for youth at Fulton Houses.**

housing development to partner with.

We did an OSHA training for 60-plus residents at the resident association office to get residents certified for construction work. We also did some health and small business programs with REES. We used TPA funds to buy a projector, screen, and computers, which instructors use when we do training programs and classes. This TPA funding has created something beneficial for residents.

## What motivates you to do this work?

My mom raised 11 kids. So it was almost impossible for her as a single parent to afford for us to go to college. I don't want

kids to be without the opportunity to get into higher education. My role is to make sure there are opportunities to succeed. That's why I created scholarship programs. I've partnered with the Avenues school, which costs \$50,000 a year. A child from Fulton Houses goes there because I advocated for it, and now we're trying to get more public housing residents into that school. I want to not only get scholarships but also get the student and the parents to understand the value of the scholarship.

Education is first and foremost for anyone. One of my biggest goals now is to create employment, not only through OSHA training, but also electrical and

carpentry training in our office. We want to equip residents with a trade so they're in a position to get a job. I want to make sure that we are not forgotten. If you're not part of the conversation, you're going to be left out of the conversation.

## Why is partnership important?

Corporations like Jamestown will be the first to ask, "How can I help your families?" And that's what you need in communities. We're also working with the NYPD Housing Bureau. I've been doing National Night Out for the last six years. It's like Family Days, but the police actually do the barbecuing, flipping the burgers, giving out the hot dogs. And they're creating relationships with residents of Fulton Houses. Since I've taken over, crime has dropped significantly, and that's because of the events we have and the relationships we're creating.

## What do you think of NextGeneration NYCHA, the Authority's long-term plan?

I think the plan makes sense. Because you have to work with the community and get them to understand the deficit NYCHA is really in and the ways we can work together to make sure that we understand that NYCHA is not going to displace residents, but is just trying to get funding for upgrades. This really is for the next generation of people. The message is that we're looking for ways to fix the developments so that they don't become useless and have to be torn down.

## PROM POP UP SHOP POPS UP IN BROOKLYN, BRONX AND HARLEM

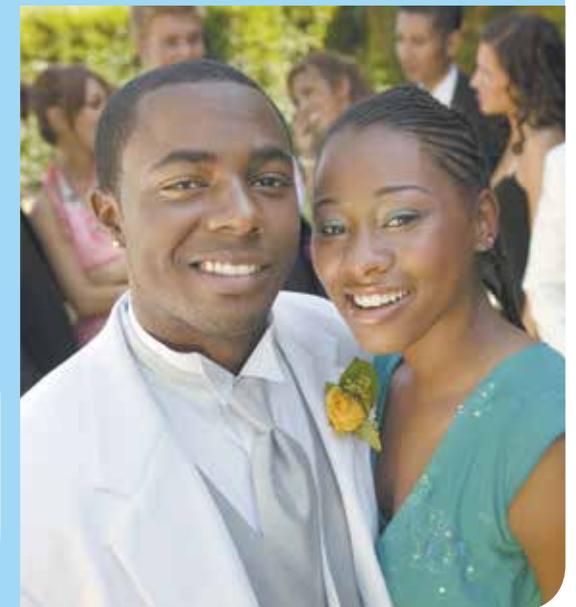
**L**OOKING FOR THE perfect gown or fly-est tie for this year's prom? Check out the Prom Pop Up Shop events organized by S Cubed Productions, LLC, and co-sponsored by NYCHA. Each event features time to "shop" for dresses, accessories, and bowties, as well as free haircuts and styling and cosmetic makeovers. They're free and open to all high school students with a school ID who pre-register online at <http://www.scubedproductionsinc.com/future-events.html>.



**BROOKLYN**  
**April 16, 2016**  
Noon – 4 p.m.  
Bushwick-Hylan  
Cornerstone  
Grand Street Settlement  
50 Humboldt St.  
Brooklyn,  
New York 11206  
718.453.8116

**BRONX**  
**April 23, 2016**  
Noon – 4 p.m.  
Children's Arts & Sciences  
Workshop  
Bronx River Cornerstone  
Community Center  
1619 East 174th St.  
Bronx, N. Y. 10472  
718.589.0553

**HARLEM**  
**April 30, 2016**  
1 p.m. – 5 p.m.  
Clinton Community Center  
120 East 110th St.  
New York, N.Y. 10029  
212.876.1240



# NRTA Graduates: “They’re Going to the Top”

**P**RIDE RAN HIGH at the graduation ceremony for 27 job-bound public housing residents on March 4. The hard-working students successfully completed a rigorous four-week janitorial training program at the NYCHA Resident Training Academy (NRTA) that prepares them for employment as NYCHA caretakers. To the cheers of family members, fellow graduates, and dedicated staff from NYCHA and its program partners, each resident stepped forward to receive his or her certificate, cameras flashing.

“You should all be very proud of your accomplishments,” NYCHA Office of Public and Private Partnerships Director Rasmia Kirmani-Frye told the graduates. “You are joining more than 1,300 NYCHA residents who have already completed the Resident Training Academy, and you’ll be glad to know that more than 1,170 of them have been placed in jobs.”

“This is just my first step,” said Tiphany Malloy, 35, who traveled from Richmond Terrace Houses in Staten Island to the training location at Ingersoll Houses in Brooklyn “by boat, bus, and train and never missed a day.” In addition to learning skills, “the instructors, who were wonderful, taught us a lot about ourselves and the experience really gave my self-confidence a boost.” After beginning work as a caretaker, Ms. Malloy plans to apply for training to become a heating plant technician.

Reginald Benton, age 23, a resident of Breukelen Houses in Brooklyn, addressed the gathering on behalf of the graduates. Like many of the students, Mr. Benton had other responsibilities to meet while attending the full-day training sessions, including working full time at Shake Shack. Mr. Benton thanked NYCHA and NRTA for providing the skills and training that will allow him to “give back to the community” and

thanked the Fifth Avenue Committee, one of several partners in the training initiative, “for help in reaching my financial goals.”

The Fifth Avenue Committee and Brooklyn Workforce Initiatives (BWI) are NYCHA’s Training Academy partners, enhancing the training and providing participants and graduates with continuing support through financial coaching, access to benefits, and other services to succeed in work and life.

“You are now part of a larger family that will be supporting you,” Fifth Avenue Committee executive director Michelle de la Uz told the graduates, who have access to the comprehensive package of financial support services through New York City’s first Financial Opportunity Center, operated by the Fifth Avenue Committee.

Wade Tlumak, a trainer at BWI, said of the graduates, “This is a very special group, very motivated. They’re going to the top. We train to do the job well but also to be ready to advance. I am very proud of them.”

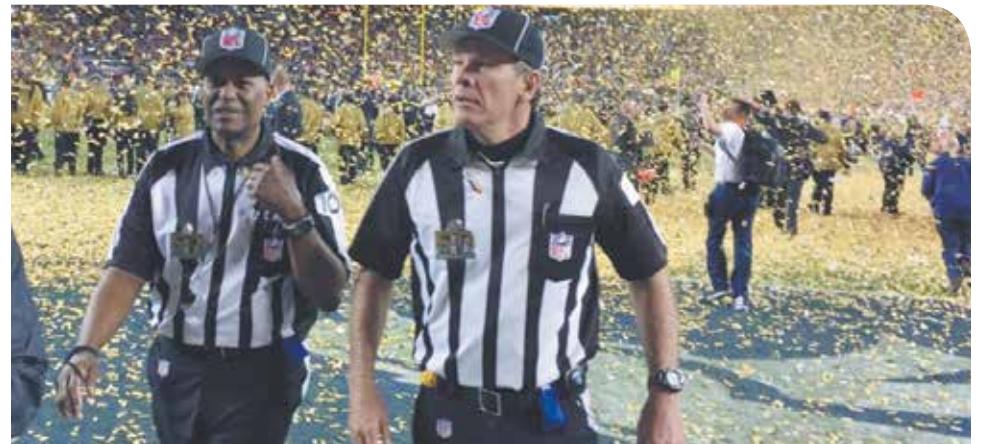
Launched in 2010, NRTA is one of the City’s premier workforce development initiatives, preparing NYCHA residents for careers as caretakers, pest control technicians and maintenance aides, and for work in construction-related positions with NYCHA contractors.

Ms. Kirmani-Frye thanked NYCHA’s committed partners, including the MetLife Foundation and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation, which fund the Financial Opportunity Center; the Fifth Avenue Committee, and Brooklyn Workforce Initiatives for their essential support.

*For information about NYCHA’s Resident Training Academy and other opportunities through NYCHA’s Department of Resident Economic Empowerment and Sustainability (REES), call 718.289.8100.*



NYCHA celebrated the latest cohort of NRTA graduates at a ceremony held on March 4.



Wayne Mackie (left), formerly of Linden Houses, walks off the field with fellow NFL official Scott Edwards after officiating his first Super Bowl, Super Bowl 50 in Santa Clara, California where the Denver Broncos beat the Carolina Panthers.

## SCORE! FORMER NYCHA RESIDENT OFFICIATES SUPER BOWL 50

**M**ORE THAN 111 million people saw former Linden Houses resident Wayne Mackie run through his moves on Super Bowl Sunday when the Denver Broncos played the Carolina Panthers. Mackie didn’t score any points or make any tackles but he did make quite a few important maneuvers: as one of the game’s officials, he refereed the third most-watched program in American television history.

Though Mackie has been an NFL official for nine years, this was his first Super Bowl. When the NFL called him he said, “I was ecstatic. It was a great feeling to know that you’ve reached the pinnacle of success at something you strove for your entire career.” He previously attended as an alternate official at Super Bowl 46 in 2012 when the New York Giants beat the New England Patriots in Indianapolis.

The best part about Super Bowl 50: “My 82-year-old father was able to attend in person,” he says.

Mackie was one of nine officials chosen from a group of 121 to referee the big game. Qualifications include five years of experience as an NFL official, ranking in the top tier—Mackie is Head Linesman—penalty accuracy, and test scores.

Was he nervous to be officiating the sport’s biggest game? Mackie said that though there is a lot of hype surrounding the game, “once they kick the ball off it’s just another game.”

Mackie got into officiating after graduating from Colgate University in 1982. While playing basketball in different semi-professional leagues around the City, he heard from several referees that

he should think about becoming one because “I was always needling them.” Football officiating allowed Mackie to referee on the weekends. In 1992 he began officiating sand lot and junior varsity high school games. In 1996 he began officiating Division II and III collegiate games. Over the next decade he moved up the ranks in collegiate football, arena football and games with NFL Europe. In 2007 he joined the NFL and officiated the Arizona Cardinals at the San Francisco 49ers on Monday Night Football.

What Mackie loves most about officiating is the challenge of the game and the relationships he’s built over the years with other officials. “Some of these people are people I would have never met. I know I can go anywhere in the country and know someone and have the relationships and the camaraderie that we’ve developed.” Mackie also likes being able to give back to his community. He was one of the first officials involved with the NYCHA/NFL Football Officiating Academy, launched in 2010. The eight-week co-ed program for NYCHA residents 17 to 30, teaches participants the skills needed to become a football official. [For more information about the NFL’s Football Officiating Academy, visit [www.nflofficiating.com](http://www.nflofficiating.com).]

“I lived in Brooklyn and I also grew up in housing. I am the example, that if you focus, concentrate, and go to school, this is what you can do,” Mackie says.

When he’s not traveling across the country to officiate games, Mackie works full-time for Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) as the Director of Operations for the Division of Neighborhood Preservation.

# Free or Inexpensive Spay or Neuter Services for Public Housing Residents and Section 8 Renters

**F**REE OR LOW cost spay and neuter services are available for your dog or cat, through the City's Animal Population Control Program. The NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has partnered with the ASPCA to provide the services for free to public housing residents and Section 8 renters in Manhattan, Queens or Staten Island. In Brooklyn and the Bronx there is a \$5.00 fee for NYCHA residents and Section 8 renters. The ASPCA brings high-quality spay or neuter services directly to your neighborhood on its Mobile Spay/Neuter Clinics. Services include spay/neuter surgery, vaccinations (rabies plus FVRCP vaccine for cats/DA2PPV vaccine for dogs), a nail trim if required, a small tattoo at area of incision, and an e-collar.

In addition to avoiding unwanted pregnancies, spaying or neutering your pet has several health and behavioral



benefits. Your female pet will live a longer, healthier life as spaying helps prevent uterine infections and breast tumors, which can be malignant or cancerous. Neutering your male companion prevents testicular cancer and some prostate problems. In addition, neutering male cats makes them less likely to spray and mark territory, and spayed females will not go into heat. Your neutered dog might be less likely to harass other dogs,

people and inanimate objects after he's neutered. Some aggression problems may also be avoided by early neutering.

To find a mobile clinic near you and to learn how to prepare your pet for surgery, go to <http://www.aspc.org/nyc/aspc-mobile-spayneuter-clinic> or call 877.772.9692.

When you visit the mobile clinic, you must bring (1) photo identification with a New York City address showing you are over 18 years of age, as well as (2) one of the following documents as proof of receiving public assistance (a) a NYCHA rent bill or Section 8 voucher or (b) Medicaid or Health Plus, Medicare, SSI, Welfare, TANF, or Food Stamps.

If you will be seeking spay/neuter services in Manhattan, Queens or Staten Island you may also visit [https://www.aspc.org/sites/default/files/upload/files/msnc\\_doh\\_nyc\\_flyer\\_2016\\_01.pdf](https://www.aspc.org/sites/default/files/upload/files/msnc_doh_nyc_flyer_2016_01.pdf) to print and bring the provided optional voucher for completely FREE services.

## NYC CHILDREN'S CABINET PRESENTS NYC BABY SHOWERS

**ARE YOU EXPECTING** a child? Or was your child born in the past year? If so, you're invited to a Baby Shower thrown by NYC Children's Cabinet.

The Baby Showers will be hosted by NYC First Lady Chirlane McCray and Deputy Mayor Richard Buery and will feature food, entertainment, and educational activities for children, parents, and caregivers. There will be also information provided about how to raise healthy and happy New Yorkers.

RSVP here:

<http://www1.nyc.gov/site/childrenscabinet/initiatives/baby-showers.page>

**APRIL 23**  
**(NYC Baby Shower)**

10 a.m.–1 p.m.

**Brownsville**

**Recreation Center**

1555 Linden Blvd, Brooklyn, NY 11212

**MAY (DATE TBD)**  
**(NYC Baby Shower)**

10 a.m.–1 p.m.

**Rockaway YMCA**

207 Beach 73rd St, Arverne, NY 11692

ED REED/MAYORAL PHOTOGRAPHY OFFICE



**MAY 21**  
**(NYC Baby Shower for Young Parents)**

10 a.m.–1 p.m.

**Children's Aid Society, Next Generation Center**

910 E172nd St, Bronx, NY 10460

**JUNE 25**  
**(NYC Baby Shower for Spanish Speakers)**

10 a.m.–1 p.m.

**El Museo Del Barrio**

1230 5th Ave, New York, NY 10029



## CITY HARVEST MOBILE MARKET ON STATEN ISLAND: Free & Healthy Food

**MOBILE MARKET IS** a City Harvest event held twice a month year-round that provides free fruits, vegetables, and recipes to supplement your family's diet. Go early to sign up and bring proof of address and a matching photo ID. Each household can register once. You can call the Mobile Market Hotline the day before for updates at **866.444.0244**.

The **Mariner's Harbor Mobile Market** is held every first Wednesday and third Saturday in the basketball court directly in front of the Senior Center at 22 Roxbury Street from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

### Upcoming Market Dates:

Saturday, April 16

Wednesday, May 4

Saturday, May 21

Wednesday, June 1

Saturday, June 18

Open to residents of:

Mariner's Harbor Houses

Arlington Terrace Apartments

10302, 10303, 10310 or 10314 zip codes

The **Mobile Market on Staten Island** is held behind 75 Hill Street, in the tennis



courts at Stapleton Houses, the first Tuesday and third Saturday of each month from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

### Upcoming Market Dates:

Saturday, April 16

Tuesday, May 3

Saturday, May 21

Tuesday, June 7

Saturday, June 18

Open to residents of:

Stapleton Houses Senior Center

10301, 10304, 10305, or 10310 zip codes

# CUNY Fatherhood Program:

## Preparing new dads for the role of a lifetime

**WHEN RAJIB GONZALEZ** saw the flyer in the lobby of Chelsea Houses, he thought the program sounded too good to be true but called anyway. Though he had just been laid off and was looking for work, he didn't imagine that he'd find a job training opportunity that would enable him to not only become financially stable, but a better father and more responsible parent too.

Yet that's the mission of the CUNY Fatherhood Academy (CFA), free 16-week program at LaGuardia Community College in Queens is for fathers ages 18 to 24, which aims to strengthen families through education, employment, and personal development. It helps participants gain their High School Equivalency and prepare for college; prepare for college, assists with work experience through employment or internships; provides workshops on building healthy relationships, conflict resolution, financial empowerment, and child development; and offers a safe and supportive men's discussion group, as well as mentors.

Since the CFA began at LaGuardia Community College in 2012, 136 men have graduated, 80 have been placed in jobs, 61 received their High School Equivalency diplomas, and 21 have enrolled into CUNY community colleges.

"The biggest thing I hear is how important it is for these young men to be able to provide a better life for their children. They want to provide both financially and emotionally to their children, not just be a disciplinarian, but to sit down with their children and say, 'Let's read together,'" says Raheem



Jorge Perez

Brooks, Program Manager of the CFA at LaGuardia. "Not only did they get an education from this program, but they learned how to have conversations about fatherhood in a safe environment so that they could begin to have different conversations with their children." Through CFA Gonzalez returned to college and became a part-time math tutor for fellow fathers preparing for their High School Equivalency. He graduated from LaGuardia in 2015 and currently works full-time as a recreational associate with Women in Need. He has three children, Tyler, 10; Laila, 9; and Rajib, 6.

Though he completed the program in 2012, Gonzalez says he joined a lifelong brotherhood. "A lot of minority young men, we're taught that it's not good to ask for help, but in this program we learn that it's okay. It allows us to have faith in the program. A lot of young men see that it's possible to have hope and aspirations."

Jorge Perez, another 2012 graduate of the program, agrees with Gonzalez's sentiments. Through CFA Perez, formerly of Marlboro Houses, received his GED. He is currently attending City Tech majoring in Human Services.

"This program was a stepping stone; it made me become a better father, made me become a man. When I had my children I was still a baby in people's



Rajib Gonzalez

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1) CREATING CHANGE

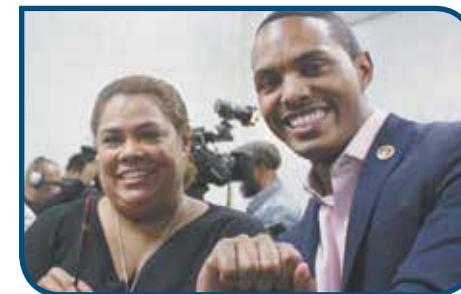
creatively tell the individual stories behind public housing," said Council Member Torres. "Art is an incredibly powerful and important tool that can transform lives and inspire change. The murals created through 'Public Art/Public Housing' will be a symbol of what is possible in public housing developments when we engage youth and the community."

Participating developments were identified from the Mayor's Action Plan (MAP) for Safety, and include Castle Hill Houses (Bronx), Queensbridge (Queens), St. Nicholas Houses (Manhattan), Stapleton Houses (Staten Island), and Tompkins Houses (Brooklyn). All youth will be paid as apprentice artists for their participation.

"Public art is a powerful way to reflect the vibrancy of our communities and people," NYCHA General Manager Michael Kelly said. "Thanks to the leadership of Council Member Ritchie Torres and this innovative, artistic partnership with Groundswell, we are empowering and elevating the voices of NYCHA residents and the community—for all to see."

NYCHA Resident Associations will guide the creation of the murals, for a total of 15 new public artworks throughout the city. These mural projects will demonstrate how art, public housing, and Groundswell's youth development model can be aligned to support long-term, community-driven change.

At Castle Hill, Groundswell will employ 40 young adult residents to collaborate on the research, design, and creation of three mural projects spotlighting the unique assets of the Bronx community; the final mural in the series



Council Member Annabel Palma (left) and Council Member Ritchie Torres (right) helped Castle Hill youth paint the new mural at the senior center.

PHOTO CREDIT GROUNDSWELL



Castle Hill Resident Association President Geraldine Lamb.

will be completed in August 2016.

"I joined this project because I like art, a lot," said youth artist and Castle Hill resident Brenda Rodriguez, age 20. "I paint at home and I wanted to be a part of something in my community. Our mural theme is unity, which to me means everyone coming together so that we can all succeed. I feel some people do succeed but don't help others out. It is important to pay it forward. Through this project we can send out this important message."



eyes, but I gained a lot of maturity in the program," he explains. "It was an awesome experience and I am so proud of myself that now I can provide a better future for my kids; I'm someone they can look up to."

The CFA is made possible through New York City's Young Men's Initiative and Center for Economic Opportunity. To provide more opportunities for fathers

across the City, CFA was recently expanded to Hostos Community College in the Bronx and Kingsborough Community College in Brooklyn. To learn more about the CFA, please call **718.730.7337** or visit the website at [www.cuny.edu/cfa](http://www.cuny.edu/cfa), or Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/CUNYFatherhood>, or Instagram at **CFA\_LAGCC**.



# NYCHA Recycles!

## Everything You Need to Know About Recycling

### What is recycling?

Recycling is the process of collecting materials that would otherwise be disposed of as trash and transforming them into new products.

### Why is recycling important?

Recycling helps us conserve natural resources (e.g. trees, oil) and prevents usable materials from being wasted. It improves the cleanliness of our environment and creates green jobs. By recycling, NYCHA plays an important part in helping the City achieve its goal of sending Zero Waste to landfills by 2030.



### Why is NYCHA recycling?

As a landlord, NYCHA is responsible for complying with the City's recycling law by providing bins and recycling education to our residents. Recycling also benefits NYCHA employees by creating safer and more efficient waste collection conditions.

### Why should I recycle?

Responsible waste disposal helps reduce rodent and insect infestation in and around your apartment and building. Deposit recyclable materials in designated bins and dispose of trash in trash chutes or other designated receptacles. Recycling makes your community safer and cleaner.

### Where can I recycle in my community?

Bring your recyclables to the outdoor recycling containers. Recycling containers should be clearly labeled and show what recyclable materials should be placed inside. Place non-recyclable waste in trash chutes and bring large objects to designated locations. Signs should be posted above each trash chute to provide information about proper waste disposal. The NYCHA Recycles! website is also a helpful resource for recycling information.

[on.nyc.gov/nycharecycles](http://on.nyc.gov/nycharecycles)



### What can be recycled?

The following materials should be deposited in the **green bin**.

- **Paper and cardboard** – Flattened boxes. If you can rip it, you can recycle it.
- NO:** Hardcover books, food-soiled or waxed paper

The following materials should be deposited in the **blue bin** (empty and rinse them before recycling).

- **Metal** – Cans, foil, and anything mostly metal
- NO:** Batteries
- **Glass** – Bottles and jars only.
- NO:** Light bulbs, drinking glasses, windows, mirrors
- **Plastic** – All rigid plastics
- NO:** bags, wrappers, flexible pouches/tubes, foam
- **Cartons** – Milk, juice, soup, wine, etc.

For more information on what to recycle, visit [on.nyc.gov/what-to-recycle](http://on.nyc.gov/what-to-recycle) or go to your development's management office for print materials.



### What education is NYCHA providing on recycling?

NYCHA is working closely with the NYC Department of Sanitation and GrowNYC to provide educational activities, workshops, and events to promote recycling. To request a recycling workshop or event in your community, contact:

**GrowNYC:** [recycle@grownyc.org](mailto:recycle@grownyc.org), 212.788.7964

**NYCHA's Resident Engagement Department:** [Marvin.Jean-Jacques@nycha.nyc.gov](mailto:Marvin.Jean-Jacques@nycha.nyc.gov), 718.707.5401

### How can I get more involved?

Help keep it clean and green by becoming an Environmental Ambassador! Environmental Ambassadors are NYCHA residents who are trained by GrowNYC to become community recycling experts. After completing two recycling workshops, Environmental Ambassadors conduct 12 hours of local outreach at their development to encourage their neighbors to participate in the NYCHA Recycles! program. For more information about becoming an Environmental Ambassador please visit: [grownyc.org/recycling/NYCHA](http://grownyc.org/recycling/NYCHA)





# NYCHA Recycles!

## Ambassadors for Planet Earth

**W**E'VE ONLY GOT one planet and taking better care of it requires fresh thinking and unique partnerships. Our NYCHA Recycles! program, created in partnership with the NYC Department of Sanitation, is making sure that all 328 developments are recycling by the end of this year. We've also collaborated with GrowNYC, a non-profit organization that works to make New York City a cleaner and healthier place, to create a new and exciting program for residents, NYCHA Environmental Ambassadors.

As Ambassadors, these residents will become volunteer community experts on recycling and will help their fellow residents learn the ins and outs of the City's recycling program.

GrowNYC will provide two interactive recycling workshops to Ambassadors in training to teach them why recycling is important, what items to recycle, and how to encourage their neighbors and community members to recycle. During training, residents will also attend field trips to various New York City recycling centers to see the City's recycling program behind the scenes. After completing their training, Ambassadors will spend at least twelve hours on recycling efforts at their developments. To learn more about the Environmental Ambassador program, please visit:

[GrowNYC.org/NYCHARecycles](http://GrowNYC.org/NYCHARecycles).

### Meet two NYCHA residents who volunteered to become Environmental Ambassadors:

#### JOY JUNIOUS

Brownsville Houses resident Joy Junious, 20, says her interest in the environment began when she was a high school student at The New York Harbor School—an aquatic-themed academic program. After high school, Junious joined Green City Force and worked on numerous projects, including removing weeds from a garden at Lillian Wald Houses and working on home reconstruction with the Friends of Rockaway organization.

After Green City Force, she decided to make it her mission to teach people about the importance of taking care of the environment. She joined NYCHA as a Recycling Project Outreach Coordinator and worked to engage residents and helped organize recycling kick-off events at NYCHA developments citywide. But Junious wanted to do even more in her community, so she signed up to become an Environmental Ambassador.

"Taking care of the environment is a community effort and it begins at home. I want to be more involved and focused on the people in my own community," she says.

Through the program, Junious is interested in learning new ways to be more environmentally friendly. "I decided to do this program so that I can inspire someone in my neighborhood, someone my age, older, my little sister—to really take pride in their neighborhood. My goal is to make it a better place, make it cleaner and more visually appealing for current and future generations. Recycling and healthy environments go hand in hand and with proper trash disposal you see the benefits immediately."

#### PAMELA AZORE

"To be honest," Pamela Azore says, "I didn't recycle before 2010." That year, she learned about the importance of recycling after she joined the Resident Green Committee (RGC) at Pomonok Houses. She's a proud recycler now and says "This green thing is kind of infectious! If recycling is the least thing I could do to help out the planet, then I'll do it. Just think, if a fraction of us do it, we'd be surprised at how much we could change."

Azore signed up to be an Environmental Ambassador because she wants to "immerse myself in how to better get the word out about recycling. I know I don't have all the tools yet but a program like this can help me."

She says the blue and green recycling bins at her development are a beautiful sight and hopes that through the program she becomes "really proficient in delivering the message to residents and neighbors that we're going green! I want to try to help them do this as simply



**Pamela Azore, a Pomonok Houses resident for 23 years and a member of the Resident Green Committee, is excited to learn more about recycling through the Environmental Ambassador program.**



**Taking care of the environment is a 24/7 role for Joy Junious. Not only is she getting ready to become an Environmental Ambassador, but her work with Green City Force opened the doors for a new job as a Field Technician in energy management with the Association for Energy Affordability, Inc., a provider of technical services for energy efficiency in buildings. This new position builds on the energy auditing skills she developed as a Green City Force trainee and could lead to a career in weatherization, solar thermal technology, and other green technologies.**

as possible, I know that they care about the planet and want their children and grandchildren to grow up in a healthy environment."

A resident of Pomonok Houses for 23 years and leader of the RGC, Azore has helped plan special projects and events;

educated fellow residents show to take care of trees and planted gardens; and is currently planning Pomonok's Third Annual Resident Green Committee Palooza, a major community event that combines recycling, green activities, and fun for the whole family.



# NYCHA Recycles!

## Recycling Kicks Off at Sotomayor Houses

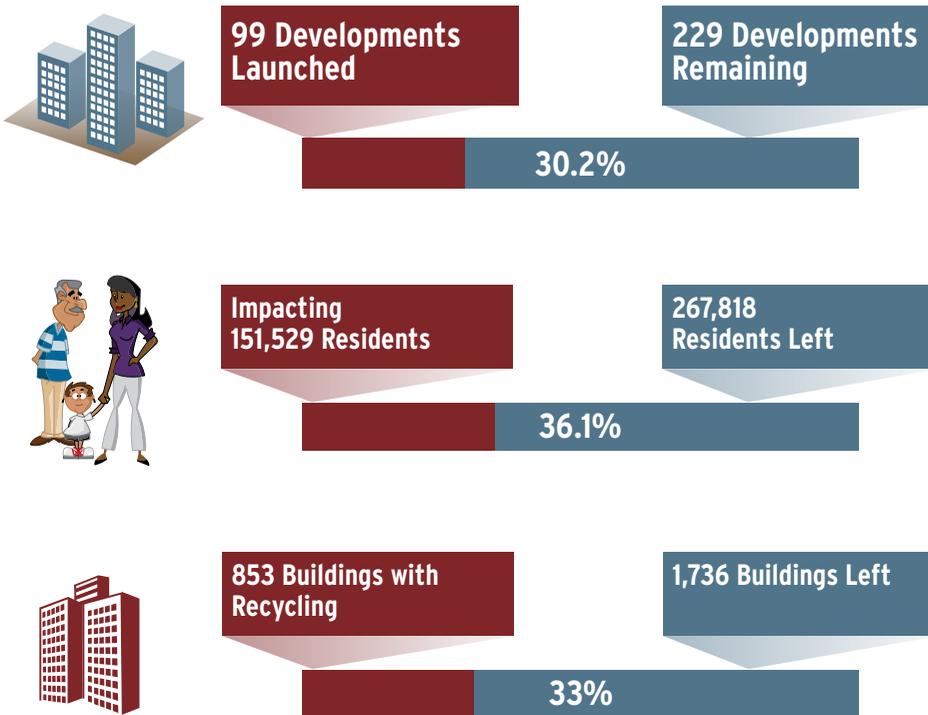
### SOTOMAYOR HOUSES RESIDENTS

are ready to recycle! At their Recycling Kick Off on February 23, they learned about the history of recycling at NYCHA, as well as how NYCHA is implementing recycling at all developments. A GrowNYC representative explained why people should recycle, what to recycle, and how to recycle. Residents played an interactive game, choosing from different materials on a table, such as empty cans and cartons, hangers, a Styrofoam egg carton, and cardboard boxes, deciding where they should be stored to be recycled: in color-coded bags, blue for metal, glass, plastic, and cartons; green for paper and cardboard; black for trash.

All residents received Sort and Store stations — blue and green reusable bags that feature photos of the recyclable items that can be placed in them — which helps make recycling easier: they can sort their recyclables using the bags in their apartments and then dump the bags in the corresponding color recycling bin at their development. Earlier that day, 19 young people attended a kids-only recycling meeting, where they played recycling games and received plush DSNY Binnie Babies as prizes. A kick-off meeting for seniors at Sotomayor will be held on April 21. For more information about Recycling Kick-Off Meetings, contact Resident Engagement at **718.707.5401**.



## NYCHA RECYCLES IMPLEMENTATION



LAST UPDATED: FEBRUARY 18, 2016

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# Residents Join the Board of the Fund for Public Housing

**T**HE FUND FOR Public Housing (The Fund), an independent non-profit organization that will raise funds to provide increased opportunities and services to NYCHA residents and to help repair NYCHA's buildings, is a key part of NYCHA's NextGeneration NYCHA 10-year strategic plan to make NYCHA communities safer, cleaner, and more connected. Its Board of Directors includes two residents, one specifically between the ages of 18-24 to help develop leadership among young adult residents.

## Diatre Padilla, age 24, Soundview Houses

Thinking of ways to improve public housing has been in Diatre Padilla's mind for a long time. He and his grandmother — who has lived at Soundview for 40 years — often have conversations about what could be done to improve their development. As an undergraduate at Columbia University, Padilla majored in urban studies. He is interested in cities and how the physical environment affects people living in those cities.

Currently, he is the Executive Assistant to the Director at The Architectural League of New York. In this position, he juggles several different roles, including administrative/office duties and editing the New York Architecture Diary, an online listing of architecture, design, and urbanism-related events.

When Padilla heard about the opportunity to become one of the first resident board members for The Fund for Public Housing he thought, "It's time for me to get out there. This is an opportunity that I could be involved with in an authentic way, a way to really be able to enact some changes." Being a member of the Board will help him dive deeper into urban studies and planning. One of his dreams has always been to go to law school and he is currently looking into dual J.D./Master's in Urban Planning programs that combine both his interest in urban studies with his interest in law.

"I'm very interested in urban planning and the physical transformation of the city. To be a part of these adaptations, the planning, overseeing, and effecting the change . . . I want to see some real changes — a project or program go from brainstorming to seeing a NYCHA campus with physical changes, to seeing a new community center open up. I know it takes a long



time but I didn't sign up for a one-shot deal."

Padilla believes The Fund could be "an amazing tool for transforming this agency . . . private funds are essential to creating the long-term and innovative transformation that NYCHA really needs."

## Latiya Stanley, age 33, Breukelen Houses

Breukelen resident Latiya Stanley believes that the right to safe, clean affordable housing is one of our most important rights. One of her main goals after she graduates from Hunter College's master's program in social work this May is to find a position working with families living in the homeless shelter system.

Stanley says that the shelter system is about housing and is connected to employment and education services, something with which she has first-hand experience: she and her eight-year-old daughter lived in a homeless shelter before moving into Breukelen Houses in 2011. Now she wants to give back.

Though she moved in more recently, Breukelen has been part of her life since she was born. Her grandmother has lived at the development for more than 40 years and her parents used to live there as well. "Some of my fondest memories from childhood are etched into this property," Stanley says. Her grandmother's apartment has always been home base for the family.

Stanley wanted to get involved with the Resident Association at her development but the meetings never fit in with her work and school schedule and her daughter's schedule, so when she learned about the opportunity to become a Resident Board Member with the fund for Public Housing, she jumped at the chance: "Instead of being one of those people that just complains, this

board position is my chance to offer the resident voice and perspective to the real decision makers."

As one of the first resident board members, Stanley says she will "use my voice and my position to improve the image of residents of public housing. For too long people have regarded residents of these properties as second-class citizens, criminals, drug addicts, uneducated, unemployed, etc. Truthfully, this is not the case. My neighbors are hardworking adults, retired seniors, people living with disabilities and bright children. We need to move past the stigma and save public housing."

Being on the board has helped



her understand the full scope of what NYCHA is facing, that it's not just her development that needs assistance but the entire Housing Authority due to years of underfunding.

"I think the Fund will help provide NYCHA communities

with resources, referrals, and sustainable improvements which will directly benefit residents as well as neighbors in the surrounding communities," she explains. "I want to see this institution reinforced so that future generations of families will be able to use this service to further their goals."



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