

NYCHA's Comprehensive Mold Remediation Pilot

NYCHA launched a new pilot program to fight mold at 38 developments throughout

The training of 45 property maintenance supervisors, assistant property maintenance

tools, and mold-killing paint, the program also includes a mold inspection protocol that creates a documented project plan for each mold work order. The plan guides staff through finding the root cause, determining next steps, and selecting appropriate remediation methods.

"can be handled at the development level without requiring capital work," he said.

"I think this program will work," said Reid Apartments Property Manager Toshia Smith, who attended the class and the field training. "We're not looking for a quick fix; we're using the right equipment to find out what's going on to remedy the situation."

Ms. Smith described using a tool to measure air flow in bathroom vents and wall moisture; a micro inspection camera to look for leaks inside walls; and a device to measure air temperature at different locations. "My superintendent and I liked the equipment and so did the staff," she said.

Drew Hamilton Property Maintenance Supervisor Gomillion McKinley said, "The equipment takes the guess work out of checking for moisture and mold. We could easily detect reduced air flow out of the vents, which could allow mold to grow. We also found a leak behind a wall without making lots of small holes to locate the source. This will definitely be a topic of conversation at morning muster and I'll be training my staff."

(cont. p. 3)



Wise Towers PMS Manuel Garcia shows a resident a moisture meter reading that confirms there is no mold present in her apartment.

the city on May 1, 2017. The year-long pilot, called Mold Busters, aggressively combats mold by empowering front-line staff with new training, tools, and protocols to permanently fix the source of the problem.

Developed in consultation with mold treatment experts, the program includes extensive training for property maintenance staff and provides new strategic remedies and protocols—including special work orders that require mold remediation jobs to be re-inspected to ensure that mold doesn't return.

supervisors, skilled trades supervisors, and property managers during April and May included eight hours of classroom instruction in addition to field training at their developments.

Staff learned how to use a moisture meter, which differentiates between surface moisture, such as condensation, and moisture within the walls, which can indicate a leak. They were also trained to use anemometers to measure airflow from vents and hygrometers to measure humidity.

Along with new training,

Uniquely Qualified

"Today's training will give you the physical and analytical tools you need to remediate mold," Professor Francis McGovern told staff at the May 4 training session. "Folks like you, on the ground, have the ability to solve this problem, and you care about the residents."

Assigned as "special master" to oversee NYCHA's mold remediation efforts through a court settlement several years ago, the Duke University professor of law asked mold remediation specialists at Microecologies, Inc., to help develop the mold remediation program.

"NYCHA's employees are dedicated and highly skilled people who are uniquely qualified to solve the problem," agreed Bill Sothern, an industrial hygienist with Microecologies. Eighty percent of mold recurrence problems

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Dir. of Procurement Joseph Schmidt (right) at NYCHA's M/WBE trade fair.

Another great NYCHA event.

See p. 5.

NYCHA Notes

Congratulations on the following appointments and promotions:

Kathie Soroka, formerly Senior Counsel to the General Counsel at HUD, was appointed Vice President for Real Estate Development in April 2017. Responsible for implementation of NYCHA's real estate development strategy as outlined in NextGeneration NYCHA, Ms. Soroka oversees the management of development opportunities on vacant and underutilized NYCHA-owned land and the preservation of NYCHA's public housing portfolio.



Andrea Mata, formerly Senior Manager for Community Health Initiatives, was promoted to Director of Health Initiatives in March 2017. Ms. Mata joined NYCHA in 2012 to oversee a portfolio of projects that include Farms at NYCHA, community health worker initiatives, and smoke-free housing. Under NextGeneration NYCHA, she now leads efforts to leverage partnerships and collaborations that connect residents to preventive health resources, create healthier indoor environments, and cultivate resident leadership in health.



Stacey Charles, Director of NYCHA's former Enterprise Program Management Office, was appointed Director of Customer Operations in April 2017. Prior to joining NYCHA, Ms. Charles worked in the Mayor's Office of Operations 311 Call Center, which changed the way New Yorkers interact with the City for government services. Ms. Johnson now oversees the Customer Contact Center's responses to customer inquiries and concerns, while sharing information with administering departments to develop permanent solutions.



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Chair Shola Olatoye Responds to the Trump Administration's FY 2018 Budget Proposal

"The Trump Administration's devastating budget is an assault on public housing as we know it in this City.

"The proposed rent increase for 2019 will mean that families barely making ends meet, as it is, will be forced to choose between putting food on the table and paying the rent. These cuts threaten our day-to-day operations and jeopardize the future of New York City's Housing Authority.

"Now more than ever, NYCHA needs your commitment to our NextGeneration NYCHA mission and to working smarter with less on behalf of the one in 14 New Yorkers who depend on us."

FY18 Proposed Cuts

Program	FY17 Funding	FY18 Proposed	National Reduction	NYCHA
Public Housing Capital Fund	\$1.9 billion	\$628 million	\$1.3 billion 68% decrease	\$210 million loss
Public Housing Operating Fund	\$4.4 billion	\$3.9 billion	\$500 million 11% decrease	\$80-130 million loss
Housing Choice Voucher Program	\$20.3 billion \$18.4 billion for renewals	\$19.3 billion \$17.6 billion for renewals	\$1 billion decrease \$800 million decrease for renewals	Loss of 13,000 vouchers

Oliver Osterwind, P.E., formerly Managing Structural Engineer in Capital Projects' Office of Design, was promoted to Director of Capital Projects City Capital Department in February 2017. Mr. Osterwind previously managed scopes of work and objectives for NYCHA's large-scale rehabilitation projects. He now provides leadership and oversight of staff responsible for executing front-line management of more than \$100 million in City capital projects annually.



NYCHANow Online: Changing the Way We Do Business

NYCHA is striving to work smarter in every area of our work, and that includes our publications. Starting with the April issue, we discontinued printing hard copies of NYCHANow. Employees without desktop computers can access the newsletter on computers available for staff use in development offices. Coming soon: an interactive NYCHANow website!

Lessons on Leadership from Rudy Crew

NYCHA held its 10th Senior Leadership Meeting at the Brooklyn Law School on May 5. The theme of the quarterly forum was "Don't Waste a Crisis: Manage Your Risk."

A highlight of the meeting was an interview by Chair and CEO Shola Olatoye with Dr. Rudolph F. "Rudy" Crew, New York City Schools Chancellor under former Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and now President of Medgar Evers College.

Dr. Crew's candid remarks about his experiences working to transform major public education systems contained lessons on leadership that were not lost on NYCHA's senior managers.

Following are summarized remarks from the Chair's inter-



Chair Shola Olatoye interviews Dr. Rudolph F. "Rudy" Crew at the Senior Leadership Meeting on May 5.

what other areas will be upset.

What are some of the challenges in taking on a new position?

The challenge is to withstand the pressure of other people's solutions versus yours. I reject the temptation to accept other people's definition and solution of the problem. If you hire me, I need autonomy to do the job.

What are the risks and expectations of accepting a new position with an organization undergoing change?

Change management requires a perspective in time management. Decide how long a period you need to stay in a job, usually five to seven years. Do it fast and get off the stage. You can make dramatic change but it will cost you.

In a big organization, how do you know where to begin?

You need to pull things apart to create smaller pieces you can deal with. The hardest thing is the redistribution of money. How to disaggregate what you spend where? Some areas need proportionately more money but you have to know

How do you motivate staff to buy into your vision?

First you need to create a compelling vision so people are willing to go there. Generally one third of the workforce will be non-believers in your vision. Let people leave if they want. For those who remain, accountability has to be performance based. Give people their own brush and tell them to start painting.

What were interactions like between public service agencies?

In Miami and here, we were trying to collectively leverage each others' resources. These relationships now are under leveraged; our problems require collaboration among agencies more than ever before. In funding NYCHA and health and education, we should examine economies of scale to better leverage resources interdisciplinarily.

You can view the entire interview by clicking here.

Mold Busters (cont.)

Senior Advisor to the General Manager Shireen Riaz Kermani has been working on the mold initiative for the past two years. "We will test the new tools and procedures for one year at developments affecting 27,000 residents, look at the data on a monthly basis, and talk to staff to see how the pilot is going," she said. The results of the pilot will then be used to modify the program before it's

launched throughout the Authority in 2018.

"We've been working on this project for a long time," said Ms. Kermani, "and we want to make sure we get it right."



LGBTQ Pride Month Celebration is June 19

NYCHA's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) Employee Organization will celebrate LGBTQ Pride Month on June 19 in the Ceremonial Room at 90 Church Street, 5th floor, from 6:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m. The theme of the event will be LGBTQ Advocacy.

"We will explore the many forms of advocacy, from trailblazers who galvanize a movement, to supportive

parents, to family and friends creating safe spaces. But more often than not, it's the LGBTQ individuals carving out paths to be their authentic selves," said Association President D'Andra Van Heusen.

All are welcome. For additional information, please contact Ms. Van Heusen by [email](#) or call 917-613-5316.

Meet the New Employee Engagement Committee



Orlando Arroyo
Supervising
Grounds-
keeper
*Stapleton
Houses*



Verna Ferguson
Admin.
Housing
Super-
intendent
*Emergency
Services*



Lesha Pair
Housing
Asst.
*Betances
Houses*



Robin Singletary
Property
Manager
*Customer
Contact
Center*



Gwendolyn Bell
Super-
intendent
*Cypress Hills
Houses*



Yolanda Johnson-Peterkin
Chief
*Family
Services*



Bridget Price
Heating
Plant Tech.
*Boulevard
Houses*



Claudia Tejeda
Asbestos
Handler
*Technical
Services*



Ava-Gay Blagrove
City Planner
*Capital
Planning*



Bianca Jones
Housing
Assistant
Taft Houses



Melissa Renwick
Attorney
Level III
Law Dept.



Elena Tenchikova
Project
Manager
*Manage-
ment Svs.*



Zulenmi Castillo-Martinez
Program
Manager
*Safety and
Security*



George Jones
Housing
Assistant
East 28th St.



John Rubbo
Housing
Assistant
East 28th St.



Jaritza Vasquez
Secretary
IIIA
*Tompkins
Houses*



Stanley Davis
Super-
intendent
*Tompkins
Houses*



Shavelle Knox
Caretaker
*LaGuardia
Houses*



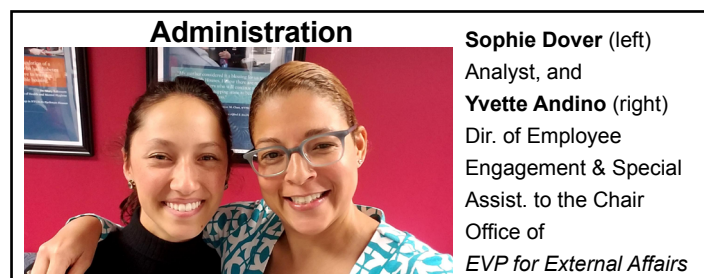
Jenise Santana
Housing
Assistant
*Bx. Prop.
Mgmt.*



Lisa DeSheers
Super-
intendent
*HR Training
Center*



James Ortiz
Community
Coordinator
*Resident
Engagement*



Administration

Sophie Dover (left)
Analyst, and
Yvette Andino (right)
Dir. of Employee
Engagement & Special
Assist. to the Chair
Office of
EVP for External Affairs

Up Close: NextGen NYCHA Progress

To celebrate the two-year anniversary of NYCHA's strategic plan, the Department of Communications organized a week of media events from May 15-19:

Monday, May 15

Our resident board members published a [letter](#) in the Gotham Gazette discussing NYCHA's accomplishments to date and the threats we face if our budget is cut by the Trump administration. [At Baruch Houses we announced Mayor de Blasio's \\$355 million commitment to façade repairs and highlighted our \\$17 billion capital deficit.](#)

Tuesday, May 16

We showcased our [resident employment opportunities](#) and highlighted the achievements of our very dedicated Community Engagement & Partnerships team at the NYCHA Resident Training Academy.

Wednesday, May 17

We announced the developer selection for our first NextGen Neighborhoods site, Holmes Towers. [The new buildings will bring in a badly needed \\$25 million for repairs at Holmes and throughout the Authority.](#)

Thursday, May 18

[At Ravenswood Houses, we announced new one-stop customer service kiosks and toured Ravenswood Houses to highlight the many operational initiatives the dedicated operations and property management teams launched throughout NYCHA.](#)

Friday, May 19: NextGen Anniversary

To celebrate the anniversary of NextGen, we broke ground on new Sandy recovery and resiliency work at Coney Island Houses and released a list of [our accomplishments in the last two years.](#)



EVP for Capital Projects Deborah Goddard (right) meets with contractors performing façade repairs at Baruch Houses.



Residents Enrique Arrazola (left) and Elliott Byran (right) prepare to solder a copper supply line at the Resident Training Academy.

Say Hello to the Employee Engagement Committee

by Ava-Gay Blagrove, City Planner, Capital Planning

Employee engagement is not measured by how happy or satisfied you are with your job. It is the emotional and functional commitment employees make to their employer and its goals. Ask yourself these questions: Do I have a clear understanding of how NYCHA fulfills its mission and how my work contributes to its success? Do I take pride in my work by going the extra mile? Do I feel loyal to NYCHA and promote our successes publicly? If you answered "Yes!" to any of these questions, then you are among an exceptional group of American workers (30 percent) who describe themselves as "engaged."

NYCHA's efforts to become

a more efficient and effective landlord depend on the commitment of all employees to our goals. With this in mind, Yvette Andino, Director for Employee Engagement and Special Assistant to the Chair, established NYCHA's first Employee Engagement Committee (EEC). Eighty employees applied to be members; 21 employees representing a cross section of departments and roles were selected.

On May 3, Chair and CEO Shola Olatoye met with the group at its first meeting, explaining that the EEC is critical to: increase employees' awareness and understanding of NextGen NYCHA; identify how NextGen NYCHA impacts staff operations and

responsibilities and promotes a culture of inclusiveness; and strengthen relationships between NYCHA staff across departments, levels, and titles. After opening remarks, introductions and ice breakers, EEC members jumped right in, outlining common goals and discussing the importance of core values.

This year, EEC members will partner with NYCHA leadership to create and support a cohesive, collaborative organization. Founding members are tasked with establishing a solid foundation and structure for future EEC members to build on. Through monthly meetings and strategic initiatives, the EEC will seek to:

- Help employees be more

productive and creative in their work;

- Enhance professional development among its members;
- Assist NYCHA in achieving its strategic goals and initiatives; and
- Serve as ambassadors for NextGen NYCHA.

NextGen NYCHA aims to meet the urgent housing needs of one in every 14 New York City residents through a more efficient and effective organization. The EEC will cultivate an organizational culture to achieve this goal.

Stay tuned for more information about how you can support the work of the EEC and our NextGen NYCHA mission.

NYCHA's Trade Fair Levels the Playing Field

More than 200 vendors, contractors and consultants attended NYCHA's 2017 Minority-and Women-owned Business Enterprise (M/WBE) and Section 3 Business Concerns (S3BC) Trade Show at BNY Mellon in Manhattan on May 4.

"Our trade show features representatives from New York City and New York State agencies who, like NYCHA, want to benefit from your expertise in a competitive process that brings the best value, goods, and services to their customers," Chair and CEO Shola Olatoye declared.

CHA or companies with large NYCHA contracts, as well as other agencies and firms.

"City procurement is a strong, effective tool that we can use to level the playing field and create opportunities for the City's small businesses," said EVP for Administration Kerri Jew.

This is the second year that the procurement fair reached out to Section 3 business concerns, which are at least half owned by Section 3 residents or employ more than 30 percent Section 3 residents. And this is the first year that several M/WBEs already doing



Chair Shola Olatoye welcomes business firms anxious to bid on procurement contracts to its trade show.

“We have the credentials, but we needed somebody to say, ‘We believe in you.’”



**Kishor Majithiya
Neelham Construction**

As a major economic engine for the City and the region, NYCHA purchases \$6 billion of materials, supplies, and services each year. The business owners and representatives attended the procurement fair to learn how to transact business with NY-

business with NYCHA were among the 28 agencies and six prime contractors offering contracting opportunities.

Kishor Majithiya, a manager with Neelham Construction, a minority-owned business firm, remarked: "When we started attending NYCHA's fairs, we

were looking for work with a prime contractor. But now we've grown to become a prime contractor ourselves, and we're looking to hire others," he said. "Knowing that agencies like NYCHA are ready to help gives you extra comfort and encourages you to be an entrepreneur."

Anu Kumar, a director of ITT, also credited NYCHA with helping to grow his business. "We were invited because we helped provide IT staffing services for NYCHA since 2012," Mr. Kumar said. "We have the credentials, but we needed somebody to say, 'We believe in you.' NYCHA gave us a chance to grow our business in the New York City area," he said.

Angelo Curto, with Adam's

European Contracting, Inc., a woman-owned firm, was seeking to hire NYCHA residents to meet NYCHA's Section 3 bid requirements. "Some people we hired for our first project in 2015 for Ravenswood Houses are still working with us now as full union members," he said.

Standing amid the hubbub of business conversations and friendly networking, Senior Deputy Director in Supply Management Ester Tomicic-Hines, who works for months each year to organize the trade fair, said, "This is what it's all about: People making connections and expanding their business opportunities. It's truly a labor of love."



Shreyas Vijay Kumar and Kishor Majithiya, with Neelham Construction, were seeking to hire staff for NYCHA-contracted jobs.



Deputy Director for Procurement Damir Galzina with an attendee at the trade fair.



Deputy Director for NextGen Operations Carl Walton with Elle Williams, PAA, a fair organizer, in the Procurement Department.



Director of Procurement Joseph Schmidt (right) with an attendee wanting information about NYCHA contracting opportunities.

IT News and Notes *A monthly series on technology in the workplace*

Vishing Is the New Phishing

Watch out for telephone scams—don't be a victim of a VISHING attack.

A vishing ("voice phishing") scam is when an attacker contacts you by phone pretending to be from a trusted organization, such as the IT support department or your bank. The caller might say that they need access to your computer in order to fix a problem or to perform routine maintenance.

Recently, a NYCHA employee received a telephone call from someone claiming to be from our IT Department.

He said he wanted to fix her computer and asked for her user ID and password.

After the employee provided that information and saw caller take control of her computer and look through her files, she became suspicious. She logged out of the PC, hung up the phone, and reported the incident NYCHA's Information Security Hotline at 212-306-8006.

General tips:

- Do not trust unsolicited calls.
- If you believe a call is fraudulent, hang up the phone.

- Do not provide any business or personal information.
- Never share your user ID and password with anyone. (IT staff have their own administrative access and will never ask you for that.)
- If you suspect a scam, call the Service Center at 212-306-7000 immediately.

Reduce your risk

For email and text messages:

- Do not respond to and do not click on any links or open attachments in suspicious-looking emails or texts.
- Delete messages that

Report IT security concerns to NYCHA's IT Information Security Hotline at 212-306-8006.

appear to be fraudulent.
For mobile phones:

- Ignore instructions to text "STOP" or "NO." This is a common trick by scammers to confirm that they have reached an active phone number.
- Use up-to-date security software on your phone and computer, such as anti-virus, anti-spyware, and anti-malware.

SafeNYCHA *A monthly series on employee safety issues*

Safety: A Call to Action

NYCHA's safety program has now been in effect for four years. In that time, much has been accomplished: Every property management department has its own safety congress that meets once a month; most developments and skilled trades have identified a safety associate; "Make It Safe" activations are taking place; numerous safety-related standard procedures have been published; and our fourth Safety Symposium will take place in late June.

While these accomplishments are great, we still need more employee involvement in promoting safety at NYCHA. There are three areas in which this can be achieved:

- Safety awareness—identifying what's safe and what's not in your workplace and finding the solutions to make it safe;

- Safety teams—working with your department or development's safety associate to identify and eliminate hazards; and
- Safety training—attending scheduled safety training and implementing safety practices.

Safety Awareness

Are the extension cords in your office frayed? Is there a constant stoppage in your basement? Is the safety switch on the compactor not working properly? Are you using a swiveling desk chair to get to the files on the top shelf?

All of these scenarios can result in an on-the-job injury. Although some solutions require an outside vendor, many safety solutions can be quickly addressed by meeting with your supervisor and co-workers to find solutions to hazards.



Irving Anglada (left), Security Manager in the Office of Safety and Security, was one of six subject matter experts who spoke to employees at the last safety symposium. This year's safety symposium will be held on June 29 at the Johnson Houses Community Center.

Safety Teams

Most developments and some departments have a safety associate to help identify hazards, meet with staff to hear their safety concerns, and articulate those concerns to supervisors and at monthly safety congresses. Consider helping the safety associate establish a safety team for your location.

Safety Training

The Office of Safety and Security now provides safety training. The first required classes

being scheduled are New Employee Safety Orientation, Safety Refresher for Supervisors, and the Confined Space program. One way you can participate in safety enhancement is by attending the classes as scheduled. You can also further safety by implementing and practicing the safety protocols shared during these training classes. Passing on safety knowledge is a powerful tool in helping to eradicate or minimize workplace hazards.

News to Use

Reasonable Accommodation Policy and Procedures

The New York City Housing Authority has a reasonable accommodation policy and procedure. The function of this policy/procedure is to provide a reasonable accommodation to a qualified employee or job applicant who has a disability, except when such accommodation would be unduly costly, extensive, substantial or disruptive or would fundamentally alter the nature or operation of the Authority or any of its programs. Per the reasonable accommodation policy, a qualified employee or job applicant is one who fulfills the requisite skills and other job-related requirements and can perform the essential functions of the job with or without a reasonable accommodation.

Please be reminded that medical documentation can be requested to determine if the employee has a disability and can perform the essential functions of the job with or without a reasonable accommodation. However, any requested medical documentation must be limited to the disability for which the employee is requesting the accommodation.

The Reasonable Accommodation Request Form (SP015.208) and the policy and procedure (SP 007011) are available on NYCHA's Intranet in the Forms and Reference Library. To obtain further information regarding the reasonable accommodation policy and procedure, you may contact Sharda Shrestha, Employee Reasonable Accommodation Coordinator, at 212- 306-3996.

Free Financial Planning Seminars

The NYC Office of Labor Relations offers a variety of free financial planning seminars that are presented by certified financial planners. Seminars are available on the following topics:

- College Planning
- Deferred Compensation Plan Basics
- Distribution Planning
- Estate Planning
- Health Benefits for Active NYC Employees
- Insurance Planning
- Retirement Planning
- Social Security & Medicare
- Tax Planning

For more information on these and other seminars or to register for a seminar, please click on the following link:

<http://www1.nyc.gov/site/olr/financialplanning/financial-planning-seminars.page>.

You must register to attend a seminar.

Please note that the Health Benefits Program seminar is held at 40 Rector Street, 3rd floor. All other seminars are held at 22 Cortlandt Street, 12th floor.

Seminar attendance is permitted during normal working hours, with approval from your supervisor. However, the time used is chargeable against available annual leave.

Keep Track of Your Retirement Future

Open a free, online Social Security account

Social Security is a critical part of your retirement income. The guaranteed monthly payments your contributions bring will help ensure your financial security and freedom to enjoy your leisure years. You can now keep track of this vital resource by opening a free, online Social Security account. All you need to access Social Security's many online services is a valid email address, a U. S. address, and a Social Security number.

Once you open your account by visiting www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount, you can conveniently:

- Access your Social Security statement to check your earnings and get benefits estimates;
- Apply for Social Security retirement benefits;
- Apply for spousal benefits;
- Check the status of a Social Security application;
- Get information you need to file your tax returns;
- And more.

To find out more about the ease and benefits of opening an online Social Security account, [click here](#).

Advance Your Career at CUNY's Murphy Institute



Applications for the fall 2017 semester of the City University of New York/Department of Citywide Administrative Services (CUNY/DCAS) Public Administration program are now being accepted.

Offered in partnership with participating unions, the innovative degree and credit-bearing certificate programs on both the undergraduate and graduate levels prepare City employees to deliver effective services to residents of New York City.

You can meet with admissions representatives for CUNY's Murphy Institute for Worker Education at an information session on June 14 in the Citywide Training Center (CTC), located at 1 Centre St., 24th floor south side, from 5-6 p.m. To reserve a seat, contact J. Valentine at jvalenti@dcas.nyc.gov. Please include in the email your first and last name, agency, phone number, email address, and date of the information session you wish to attend.

The Murphy Institute offers working adults an opportunity to study with dynamic and supportive faculty who are both renowned scholars and practitioners in the field. Students deepen their knowledge of the challenges and opportunities faced by our cities, communities, and workplaces by pursuing study in either urban or labor studies.

For more information, you may call the Murphy Institute at 212-827-0200.