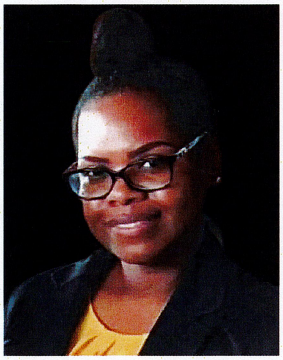
NEWS FROM COMMUNITY BOARD #8

ACROSS THE BOARD

MAY 2025 VOLUME 46, NO. 5



Ms. Fior Ortiz-Joyner

was appointed to the Board in 2021. She most recently was elected as the Third Vice Chair of the Board and is an integral member of the Housing & Land Use; Environment, Sanitation & Transportation; and SLA & Sidewalk Café Review Committees.

Ms. Ortiz-Joyner states, "I joined the board initially to be part of the decision making in the community. Specifically, I felt that changes happening at the time and that continue to happen do not necessarily benefit longtime residents. Affordable housing and the decline in black homeownership are especially concerning to me."

She states that her membership remains driven by what she notes as the continued silencing of marginalized voices and extensive displacement of residents that built this once ignored and forgotten community into the great place to live that it is now. "These stalwarts need to be remembered and their legacy honored by those like me that remember their sacrifice and continue their hard work and efforts," she said.

Ms. Ortiz-Joyner takes pride in her activity with the Board and the ability to share information with her neighbors. She says that she will continue working with CB8 because her goals of bringing voice to marginalized residents and defeating inequitable changes are not complete.

Ms. Ortiz-Joyner states that she lives by the edict that a closed mouth does not get fed. She encourages us all to be proactive, not reactive.

District Manager's Report

Welcome new Community Board 8 members!

We would like to welcome the following new members to Community Board 8:

- Mr. Isaac Andino
- Ms. Barbara Cofield
- Mr. Drew Gabriel
- Ms. Jennifer Jordan
- Ms. Lesley Steel
- Mr. Declan Taintor
- Ms. Dina Tate
- Mr. Ryan Tucker
- Ms. Regina Wilson

May your membership on the board be fruitful and rewarding.

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COMMUNITY BABY SHOWER

Community Board 8 is partnering with the NYPD and Chelsea Piers Prospect Heights on a Community Baby Shower on Tuesday, June 10, 2025 from 9AM to 1PM at Chelsea Piers Prospect Heights (601 Dean Street, Brooklyn).

Registration is required. Scan the QR code below or type into your address bar the following address: https://bit.ly/44vUOfc. (link is case sensitive)
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Municipal Services Update

The following is a summary of the year-to-date CompStat Crime report covering the week of 04/28/2025 through 05/04/2025.

	Year-to-Date		
	2025	2024	%Chg
Murder	0	5	-100
Rape	6	9	-33.3
Robbery	43	55	-21.8
Felony Assault	146	104	40.4
Burglary	45	46	-2.2
Grand Larceny	107	120	-10.8
GL Auto	37	27	37.0

The overall change year-to-date is ***+4.92.***

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MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, an annual observance founded by Mental Health America in 1949 to highlight the importance of mental wellbeing, educate the public, reduce stigma and promote support for those affected by mental health conditions.

Mental health awareness plays a crucial role in reducing stigma, encouraging early intervention and fostering empathy and understanding. By normalizing conversations around mental health, it nurtures a more compassionate society where individuals feel empowered to seek help, leading to improved mental wellbeing. Key objectives of Mental Health Awareness Month include:

- Educating the public about mental health conditions and their impact.
- Reducing stigma by encouraging open conversations and fostering acceptance.
- Highlighting the importance of early intervention and access to treatment.
- Sharing available mental health resources, including support groups and crisis services.
- Building solidarity and reducing isolation for those facing mental health challenges.
- Advocating for improved mental health policies, increased funding and better access to care.
- Promoting mental wellbeing and self-care practices for overall health.

One of the most powerful ways to support Mental Health Awareness Month is by leading by example and prioritizing your own mental wellbeing with a free self-care checklist! Download yours today at https://bit.ly/43lE0Xg. (this link is case-sensitive)

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RANKED CHOICE VOTING EXPLAINED

In 2019, voters in New York City came together to pass a new way to vote called Ranked Choice Voting (RCV). RCV allows voters to rank up to five candidates, instead of choosing only one candidate.

When do we use RCV?

NYC Primary Elections are held to vote for Mayor, Public Advocate, Comptroller, City Council Members and Borough Presidents. You can only vote in a Primary Election if you are registered with a political party holding a primary to choose their candidate for the General Election ballot.

NYC Special Elections are held if an elected official leaves office before the end of their term, and are open to any registered voter regardless of party.

It is not used for District Attorneys. Though responsible for each borough, they are State officials.

Why do we use RCV?

- It encourages candidates to connect with more voters who might rank them in their top five.

- It saves public money (your money!) by not having a runoff election if no candidate wins more than 50% of all votes.

- It gives voters more say because they have multiple choices.

How do you fill out your ballot?
Ballots can have more than five candidates but you can rank only up to five.

You can vote for only one candidate OR you can rank up to five.

Reasons your ballot will not be counted:

- Ranking the same candidate more than once
- Giving different candidates the same rank. They must be different ranks.

How does Ranked Choice Voting work?
To win the election, a candidate must receive more than 50% of the votes.

FIRST ROUND
All votes are counted and one of two outcomes is possible:

1. One candidate receives more than 50% of the total votes.
2. No candidate receives more than 50% of the total votes, so a second round begins.

SECOND ROUND
The candidate with the fewest votes in round one is eliminated. If a voter's first choice was eliminated, then their second choice is counted. If no candidate gets 50%, a third round begins.

THIRD ROUND
The candidate with the fewest votes in round two is eliminated. If a voter's second choice was eliminated then their third ranked vote is counted.

FINAL ROUND
This process continues until one candidate receives more than 50% of the votes and wins!

To learn more about each candidate visit, www.vote411.org and www.lwvnyc.org. Or you can call the League of Women Voters NYC election hotline at 212-725-3541.

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STAY INFOMRED NYC

The NYC Dept. of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) is pleased to announce Stay Informed, NYC: Your Go-To Resource for Housing Solutions. "Stay Informed, Stay Connected NYC" is a new initiative providing New Yorkers with clear, actionable information on tenant rights, landlord responsibilities, and the essentials of maintaining a safe, well-kept home.

HPD will spotlight a specific housing topic each month. These topics include things like reporting issues with heat, hot water, or pests; navigating housing court; or understanding building maintenance rules. Each session will equip New Yorkers with the knowledge they need to take action.

Tens of thousands of housing complaints come into HPD every week. Stay Informed, NYC will bring housing knowledge directly to New Yorkers to keep residents empowered, engaged, and in the know on how they can not only preserve their existing housing, but also protect their neighborhoods.

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PROTECT YOUR SNAP BENEFITS EASILY AND SAFELY

Mobile apps make it easy to manage your SNAP benefits and check your EBT balance, but it's hard to know which is the right choice. Propel, ebtEDGE, and ConnectEBT all offer different features depending on your needs—here's how they compare.

Propel
Propel (formerly known as the Providers app) is a free mobile app that makes it easy to check your EBT balance, whether you get SNAP, WIC, or Summer EBT benefits.

And Propel offers more than just balance-checking, you can also get special offers, discounts, and updates on benefits through the app.

Key features:

- Balance and transaction tracking: Check your EBT balance instantly and view your transactions to keep track of your spending and see upcoming deposits
- Security options: Access security features like out-of-state transaction blocking, EBT card freezing, and monitoring for suspicious activity to help protect your benefits from theft
- Timely alerts: Stay up-to-date on news about government benefits programs including SNAP, Medicaid, and more, and get personalized updates about your benefits
- Exclusive offers: Access curated discounts and coupons, just for Propel users

ebtEDGE

ebtEDGE is an EBT-balance checking app available in Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, District of Columbia, Florida, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Massachusetts (WIC), Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah (WIC), Vermont, Virgin Islands, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

Key features:

- Balance and transaction tracking: View your EBT balance, transaction history, and benefit schedule in one place
- Security options: Freeze your card if it's lost or stolen and block out-of-state transactions to help prevent unauthorized use
- ebtEDGE is available for download from Google Play and the Apple App Store.

ConnectEBT

ConnectEBT is another app offered in certain states to help users manage their EBT benefits securely. It allows you to monitor your EBT balance, view deposits, and manage your account.

ConnectEBT is available in Arkansas, Delaware, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, and Virginia.

Key features:

- Balance checking and tracking: Check your available balance, recent deposits, and transaction activity
- Security features: Lock your EBT card when not in use to help prevent unauthorized transactions, and select or change your PIN directly through the app
- ConnectEBT is available for download from the Google Play Store and the Apple App Store.

State-specific EBT apps

While many people use Propel, ebtEDGE, or ConnectEBT to manage their EBT card, some states have their own state-specific apps to help residents manage their EBT and other benefit programs.

These locally-available apps can be helpful, especially if they offer users more options for managing their benefits or accessing local programs.

New York (NYC only): ACCESS HRA. NYC residents, check your SNAP balance, submit documents, recertify benefits, and get alerts

Yes, Propel is safe to use. The Propel app will never steal your benefits or share your information, and using Propel to monitor your EBT card doesn't make you any more likely to become a victim of theft.

The truth is, EBT theft can happen to anyone—whether you use an EBT app or not. Most EBT theft happens through card skimming or other tactics that target benefits-recipients, not because of the EBT app you use to check your account. If a thief gets both your card number and PIN, they can use your benefits, even if you've never used an app to track your EBT balance.

Apps like ebtEDGE, ConnectEBT, and Propel are all options for managing your benefits, and you should use whichever one you feel most comfortable with, but it's important to take advantage of any available security features and change your PIN each month before your deposit arrives.

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NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS GRANTS

Citizens Committee for New York is currently accepting applications for their Community Leaders Grants. The deadline for submitting applications is July 25th.

CitizensNYC, founded in 1975, is one of the nation's oldest micro-funding organizations, providing financial and capacity building support to thousands of neighborhood leaders across New York City who are making their communities more connected, resilient, and healthier.

They believe that small businesses are the backbone of local communities, preserving and sustaining local culture, serving as anchors and meeting places where community members make connections, share values, strengthen culture, and support local leaders. As a small business leader, when you get involved in your local community, you both create enormous goodwill and set up your business for greater success.

Citizens NYC supports small businesses who are "doing well by doing good" in their neighborhood by making annual grant awards of up to $5,000. These awards can provide funding to support the wide range of initiatives your business undertakes to positively impact your community in the areas of arts and culture, education and youth, environment and climate, health and wellness, economic development, and public safety.

Applications are scored on a number of areas, including: Need, Relevance, Urgency, and Quality of Life Impact.

Please remember projects must take place between October 2025 and September 2026.

The application is intended to be accessible. It is estimated that it will take 2 to 3 hours to draft a thoughtful submission. Please submit your application by Friday July 25, 2025 at 5pm. If you have any questions, please email businessgrants@citizensnyc.org.

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BEDFORD LEARNING CENTER

After five long years closed for repairs, the Bedford Learning Center has re-opened! BLC offers the following:

- Adult Basic Education classes
  Enroll: www.bit.ly/bedfordlearningcenter
- High School Equivalency/GED classes
  Enroll: www.bit.ly/virtual-hse
- GED testing (dates TBD)
- Young Adult Literacy Program (ages 17-24)
  Enroll: www.bklynlib.org/eyalp-form
- Digital literacy classes and workshops
- Case management and student support
- Citizenship assistance
- Workshops and events

For more information, visit: www.bklynlibrary.org/adult-learning.

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FREE TIME FOR WELLNESS PROGRAM

Free Time for Wellness (FT4W) is a free community program for moms that's improving physical and emotional well-being through exercise and connection.

While caring for everyone else, many moms are left without the support they need to care for themselves. It takes a village, and we're building one with moms who can support each other on their shared journey towards better health. Backed by free, year-round classes and the power of
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community, FT4W is a path to improve and maintain wellness even after the program ends.

FT4W includes programming in English and Spanish, free weekly exercise classes through ShapeupNYC, up to $150 in gift cards, $100 for 2 surveys and wearing an activity watch for 1 week + $50 more for an interview. Some sites offer free childcare during class and grocery delivery. You can also get a guide with free and affordable resources to support moms & families.

Mothers over the age of 18 with children under the age of 12 can join. You must own a mobile phone and be fluent in either English or Spanish. To enroll, call 347-460-7589, text 917-574-7512, or visit https://bit.ly/4jcHobT. (link is case sensitive)

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NEWS AND UPDATES FROM BROOKLYN BOTANIC GARDEN

Summer evenings are back! Come with family and friends and picnic in the park on designated late evenings. Limited numbers of free community tickets are available to visit the garden each day. Simply select the community ticket from the ticket dropdown menu.

Gather your neighbors and enter your block in Brooklyn's friendliest competition! The Greenest Block in Brooklyn contest is free and open to all residential blocks, commercial blocks, and community gardens in Brooklyn.

Participants can attend a free workshop, How to Green Your Block, at Brooklyn Botanic Garden, and host a free interactive, walk-and-talk block visit, led by BBG staff, to learn about their block's greening opportunities on May 29th. Register at www.bbg.org/learn/community. Contest winners are revealed in August, and dozens of prizes are awarded for greening efforts.

Garden together to make your block more beautiful, friendly, and green!

The Brooklyn Urban Gardener (BUG) application is now open! BUG certificate program is a free, multi-session course that covers the basics of urban gardening and community greening. Upon graduation, participants are certified BBG BUG volunteers who support greening projects at schools, senior centers, block associations, community gardens, and more.

If you have a passion for gardening in community, please contact BUG@bbg.org and visit www.bbg.org/community/bug for more information. The application deadline is June 1, 2025.

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TWO BRIDGES DREAMS YOUTHBUILD

DREAMS Youthbuild helps youth ages 17.5 to 24 years old obtain their GED/HS equivalency, free job training, college and career placement. The program is currently enrolling for the spring and summer cohorts! All participants should be able to attend the program 35 hours per week to help prepare them for life after completion. Court involved youth are accepted.

The program is free, but only serious applicants are encouraged to apply. Call 646.450.8214 for more information and to enroll.

DREAMS Youthbuild is located at 1615 St. John's Place, Brooklyn.

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ATLANTIC AVENUE ART WALK

From May 10 through 18, 2025, enjoy Brooklyn's Free Public Art Exhibit! Atlantic Avenue Art Walk is a self-guided 1.5 miles of art exhibit from 4th Avenue to the Brooklyn Waterfront. More than 65 businesses, storefronts, and galleries featuring greater than 125 artists in a wide range of media have signed up this year.

For more details, visit www.atlanticave.org.
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AFRICA DAY 2025

Assemblywoman Stefani Zinerman and the African Affairs Heritage Committee are pleased to present Africa Day 2025: Justice and Reparations for People of African Descent.

The event will be held on Friday, May 30, 2025 from Noon to midnight at Bedstuy Restoration Plaza, 1360 Fulton Street. RSVP at https://bit.ly/AfricaDayBedStuy.

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CARLOS SILVA OLDER ADULTS ART ALLIANCE

About Access is Medicine (AIM), an initiative created by Marilyn The Chef Inc. for the Carlos Silva Older Adults Arts Alliance. They blend creative arts with civic engagement to address public health themes around nutrition, entrepreneurship, and housing.

Express yourself through creative performances and culinary sessions; learn tools for advocacy and lifelong wellness; be part of a final showcase amplifying older adult voices across NYC.

All older adults are invited to join the alliance and take part in workshops and performances. To learn more, email marilyn@marilynthechef.com.

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NEWS AND UPDATES FROM COUNCILMEMBER CHI OSSE

The office of Councilmember Chi Osse is pleased to present the following:

Family Law Clinics: June 6th from 10AM to 4PM

Individual and confidential legal consultation on issues ranging from child/spousal support; custody/visitation; orders of protection; assistance and options for victims of abuse; issues regarding consumer debt and identity theft; much more.

Free Immigration Legal Advice 10AM to 5PM on Wednesdays, May 14th and 28th, and June 11th and 25th. Consult with an experienced civil attorney. Appointments encouraged but walk-ins welcome.

Free legal services (general) May 15th and 29th, from 10AM to 5PM. Appointments encouraged but walk-ins welcome.

Churches United for Fair Housing (CUFF) Housing Assistance every Tuesday from Noon to 4PM. Get housing help including Housing Connect applications. No appointment necessary.

Unless otherwise stated, all services will be offered at the member's office located at 1360 Fulton Street, 5th Floor, Suite 500. To register for legal advice, call 718-919-0740.

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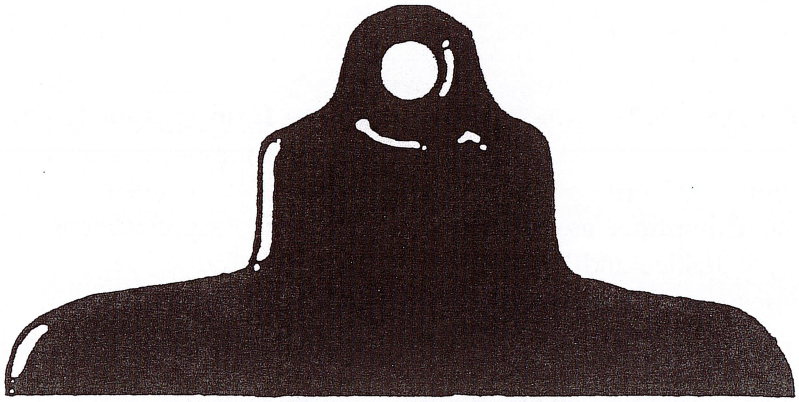
NEWS AND UPDATES FROM COUNCILMEMBER DARLENE MEALY

Councilmember Darlene Mealy is pleased to present "HPD in Your District, Council District 41." Join HPD and the member to learn about housing-related issues.

Programming will be available on Friday May 16th from 10AM-5PM on the following dates and locations: at the intersection of Utica Avenue and Eastern Parkway; Thursday, July 10th at the intersection of East New York Avenue and Rockaway Parkway; Friday, July 11th at the intersection of MacDonough Street and Ralph Avenue.

You will receive assistance in applying for affordable housing, understanding your rights and responsibilities, filing a housing complaint, financing improvements and repairs, registering your building, remedying a violation, and much more.

Finally, the member reminds everyone that her Advisory Board meeting will be held on Saturday
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May 31, 2025 at 11 AM at the member's office located at 400 Rockaway Avenue, ground floor.

Invited attendees include the Dept. of Veterans Services, CUNY Immigration Services, and NYS Office of Mental Health (in honor of May being Mental Health Awareness Month).

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We send our heartfelt condolences to Ms. Sharon Alexis-Pierre for the loss of her niece.

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We extend get-well wishes to Mr. Meredith Staton and Ms. Gail Branch-Muhammad.

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We wish the happiest of birthdays to Ms. Dian Duke, Mr. Kwasi Mensah, Ms. Deborah Young, Mr. Edward Delman, and Ms. Anika Roach, who will all celebrate birthdays in the month of May.

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The next 77th Precinct Council meeting will be held on Monday, May 12, 2025 at 7PM at Friends of Crown Heights, 671 Prospect Place (between Bedford and Franklin Avenues).

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The next **Community Board 8 general meeting** will be held on **Thursday, June 12, 2025 at 6:30 PM at** Weeksville Heritage Center located at 158 Buffalo Avenue, Brooklyn. All are invited to attend.

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ACROSS THE BOARD is a monthly publication:
Irsa Weatherspoon, Chairperson
Michelle George, District Manager/Editor
Julia Neale, Community Coordinator
Zoie Moses, College Aide

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