

Hi, just a reminder that you're receiving this email because you have expressed an interest in BronxWorks.

You may [unsubscribe](#) if you no longer wish to receive our emails.



## April 2021 Newsletter

The graphic is a white arrow pointing to the right, set against a background of blue and white sparkles. At the top center of the arrow is the BronxWorks logo. Below the logo, the event title "Building Better Futures Gala" is written in a large, elegant cursive font, followed by "A Virtual Event" in a smaller cursive font. The date and time "WEDNESDAY, MAY 19, 2021 | 6:30 P.M." are displayed in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. Below this, the word "HONORING" is in a small, blue, sans-serif font, followed by "Our BronxWorks Staff" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. A smaller line of text reads "for their dedication and tireless efforts to the Bronx community during the COVID-19 Pandemic". Below that, the word "AND" is in a small, blue, sans-serif font, followed by the USI logo (the letters "USI" in white inside a blue rounded rectangle). At the bottom, a line of text reads "for their contributions to BronxWorks and the Bronx". At the very bottom of the graphic, a black banner contains the text "TO REGISTER AND BUY SPONSORSHIPS: [HTTPS://BRONXWORKSGALA.GIVESMART.COM](https://bronxworksgala.givesmart.com)" in white, sans-serif font.

**The BronxWorks 2021 Gala is back and will take place for the first time in a virtual format on May 19 at 6:30pm!**

Please join BronxWorks as we honor our amazing staff, celebrate partnerships, and raise funds to Build a Better Future for the Bronx.

For more information about the Gala, or to purchase sponsorship opportunities, please visit our event page!

### **In this Issue:**

**An Insider's Look At The Building Better Futures Gala:**

**Introducing Our Honorees**

**VIP Experiences With MLB Legends Mookie Wilson and Willie Randolph, and Bridgerton Series Author, Julia Quinn**

BronxWorks 2021 Annual Staff Meeting

Staff Profile: Diane Semper

Photo Essay

Thank you to Our Early Sponsors

## Insider's Look At The Building Better Futures Gala

This year, as we gather virtually for the 2021 Building Better Futures Gala, BronxWorks is reminded that through dedication and collaboration, our community was able to withstand the most difficult challenges. While the COVID-19 pandemic is not quite over, BronxWorks is here to help our neighbors recover and rebuild. Perhaps more than any other year, your support is needed as we come together to recognize the amazing efforts that have gotten us here, and to regroup for the work that is still to come.

### Introducing Our Honorees



USI Insurance Services is a long-standing partner of BronxWorks. They not only provide employee benefits, including medical, dental, and flexible spending plans, for our over 900 employees, they are perennial supporters of the BronxWorks mission through event sponsorships and their corporate volunteer program. The USI Gives Back program is an example of the organization's commitment to investing in their communities. Each of USI's offices participate in

local community service, and BronxWorks has been the recipient of that community service in past years. USI volunteers' past projects include painting interiors and exteriors of the Carolyn McLaughlin Community Center, conducting toy drives for BronxWorks children, and spending time at BronxWorks senior centers, serving food and participating in center activities. BronxWorks is grateful to have a partnership with an organization that understands the value of community service the way USI does.

### BronxWorks Staff

It is not easy to express our appreciation for the extraordinary efforts and work that BronxWorks staff have performed this year. Staff in every role, be they case managers, administrative assistants, outreach workers, kitchen and pantry workers, educators, maintenance, security, leadership, and more, in every program in every service area, have embodied the BronxWorks mission amid a global crisis: to **feed**, **shelter**, **teach**, and **support**, to build a stronger community. Despite facing their own hardships, BronxWorks staff have exceeded their duties during this unprecedented time. For these reasons, and so many more, we are honoring our amazing BronxWorks staff.



Pictured above are just a few of the over 900 employees that make up BronxWorks.

## Meet our Special Ambassadors:

# MLB Legends Mookie Wilson and Willie Randolph & Best-selling Author Of the Bridgerton Series Julia Quinn



MLB Legends Mookie Wilson and Willie Randolph will headline the opening VIP experience!

BronxWorks is pleased to announce an amazing group of Special Ambassadors for the 2021 Building Better Futures Gala. MLB Legends Mookie Wilson and Willie Randolph will host a VIP experience before the Gala at 5:30 p.m.

Mookie Wilson was a player and coach for the New York Mets, remembered for his heroics in game six of the 1986 World Series. He is a World Series champion and enshrined in the New York Mets Hall of Fame.

Willie Randolph was a player and coach for the Yankees and the Mets. He had an 18-year Major League career during which he was a six-time World Series champion, six-time All-Star, and the Yankee co-captain for two years.

Julia Quinn is the best-selling author of the *Bridgerton* novel collection, which has been adapted by Shonda Rhimes into the popular television series *Bridgerton* streaming on Netflix. Her novels have been translated into 29 different languages and appeared on the New York Times Bestseller List 19 times. Julia will host a VIP experience immediately following the Gala program at 7:15 p.m.



Best-selling author of the Bridgerton novels Julia Quinn will host a special Q&A during our closing VIP experience.

A special thanks to Bruce Eagel from Eagel Sports Promotions for arranging our ambassador's visit.

## Marysol Castro, Mistress of Ceremonies

BronxWorks is thrilled to welcome Marysol Castro as the Mistress of Ceremonies for the 2021 Building Better Futures Gala. Marysol is a broadcast journalist and PIX11 Morning Show Features Anchor & Sports Nation Anchor. She is also the Citi Field Public Address Announcer, Voice of the Mets.

Marysol previously worked as the Traffic Reporter for PIX11 Morning News in 2001 and then as an anchor in 2013. She has also worked as a weather anchor at Good Morning America and CBS The Early Show as well as a on-air Host at ESPN and Sideline Reporter for sporting events such as the Little League World Series, Invictus Games, and Premier Boxing Champions.

Marysol earned her B.A. from Wesleyan University and her M.A. in Journalism from Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism.



Marysol Castro joins as the Mistress of Ceremonies for the BronxWorks 2021 Building Better Futures Gala

---

***Click here to join us at  
The BronxWorks 2021 Building Better Futures  
Gala***

**RSVP**

---

**BronxWorks Annual Staff Meeting**



BronxWorks staff joined each other virtually for the 2021 Annual Staff meeting.

This month, BronxWorks hosted our Annual Staff Meeting for the first time in a virtual format. Four sessions were held over two days, during which hundreds of BronxWorks staff tuned-in to recognize their efforts to support the communities of the Bronx through the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. We also celebrated staff who have reached significant milestones in their careers with BronxWorks. A special guest to the meeting was U.S. Congressman Ritchie Torres who spoke to our staff about his experiences growing and working in the Bronx and his goals as the Representative for the NY-15 District.

The meeting included cameos by actors and actress Anthony Anderson, Daniel Franzese, and Gina Torres, and WNBA star Lisa Leslie, who joined to give our staff their well-wishes. BronxWorks Executive Director, Eileen Torres, and other senior leaders, shared stories of how the organization rallied to provide critical services in the face of rising needs that occurred as a result of the COVID crisis. We are so thankful to have such a dedicated staff who consistently went above the call despite facing hardships of their own.

## Staff Profile: Diane Semper



Diane Semper, Teachers Assistant, Early Childcare Learning Center

To dedicate 35 years to any one organization, cause, or mission is to dedicate a lifetime. For Diane Semper, this year marked her 35th dedicated to the Children & Youth programs at BronxWorks -- 35 years and still counting. We spoke to Diane to see what lay behind that level of commitment, and she made it immediately clear that it's all about the kids.

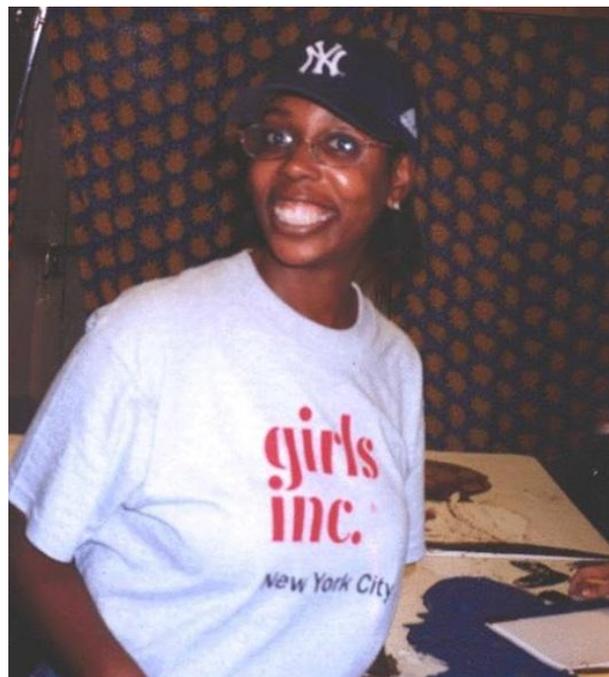
---

***"I'll probably be here until I'm 65, or until NYC says you can retire," Diane says.***

---

Diane was raised in the Melrose section of the Bronx. She grew up knowing the building at 1130 Grand Concourse as a YWHA. In 1985, as a 16 year old, Diane took a summer job at the Girls Club of New York at 1130 Grand Concourse working for a summer youth program, and she has basically stayed every since. In 1995 when BronxWorks, then the Citizens Advice Bureau, merged with the Girls Club of New York, she stayed on through the merger.

Like so many BronxWorks employees, Diane embodies the spirit of giving back and uplifting her community. Throughout her decades at BronxWorks, Diane has worked with hundreds of children and students of all ages. She continued to stay because she felt that the programs offered so many wonderful things to the children. Currently, she is a Teachers Assistant with the Early Childcare Learning Center at the Carolyn McLaughlin Community Center working with our youngest learners.



***Diane takes pride in the activities they do with children in her programs. "It feels good to know that you were a part of a child's life where you helped them develop into productive, responsible, and loving adults," she says.***

---

BronxWorks summer and afterschool programs utilize thematic work to address learning loss, organizing lessons like Explorers of the Grand Concourse, where counselors take students through the Bronx and give them a history of the borough through writing, reading, poetry, and arts and crafts. Diane said that, "We can take play and use it in a way to help children improve in academics, social

skills, and other relationships they will have in their lives." Counselors are also keen to celebrate every accomplishment of their students, such as graduations, strong report cards, or special awards, to show that they are just as excited by these success as their students.

These are the qualities that make Diane so beloved among her students and their families. Years later she still keeps up with several of her students and she speaks about them with joy and pride for what they have made of themselves as young adults. There are even examples of some of Diane's students who are now employees of BronxWorks. Outside of work, Diane likes to travel, read, and cook for others. She and a close group of friends who have all worked at BronxWorks at some point in time have a book club called Sisters on the Go Book Club. The group, which includes the beloved and missed Suzette Walker, have been friends for over 20 years.

# Photo Essay



## Spring STEM Holiday Camp

The BronxWorks COMPASS after-school programs, thanks to the support of their funders, offered the Spring STEM Holiday Camp. Children attending the camp learned about a variety of topics, including magnetism, electric current, and light filtration.



## The BronxWorks Leadership Council Present the Second Virtual Paint & Sip

Thank you to everyone who attended the second #BronxWorks Virtual Paint & Sip, hosted by the BronxWorks Leadership Council and led by Artist, Tania Dirks! It was a fantastic event raising much-needed funds for the BronxWorks Building Better Futures Fund, helping the Bronx's neediest residents recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.



## ASPCA Donates Cat and Kitten Food to Jill Chaifetz Transfer School Students

The ASPCA kindly donated hundreds of cans and bags of cat and kitten food to the BronxWorks program at the Jill Chaifetz Transfer School (JCTS)--an alternative high school for older youth. Many students must work to support their household while trying to finish their high school education. These ASPCA donations are an invaluable resource for these students and their families.



### **Immaculate Conception School in Tuckahoe Donates Easter Baskets to Community Food Pantry Participants**

The Immaculate Conception School (ICS) in Tuckahoe, NY once again brought holiday smiles to the participants at the BronxWorks Community Food Pantry. ICS sent hundreds of colorful wrapped Easter baskets that were distributed the weekend before the holiday.

**Thank You to our Early Gala Sponsors!**

BronxWorks sincerely thanks the following donors for their generous and continued support of our mission at the BronxWorks 2021 Building Better Futures Gala.

as of April 28, 2021

## PLATINUM SPONSOR



## GOLD SPONSORS



*Bruce Phillips & Joan Feeney*

## SILVER SPONSORS

Roger Begelman & Fern Goldstein ~ Marene Jennings  
Simon Stanaway & Veronica Nkwodimmah

## BRONZE SPONSORS

Joan Rosenthal & Frederick Schiff ~ Janice & Rudy Hart  
Adele Ursone & George Matteson ~ Emily Menlo Marks  
Stan Freilich & Carol Marquand ~ Barrett Feldman & Glenn Halpern

## FRIEND SPONSORS

Marc Kemeny & Clare Cosslett  
Tom & Beryl Watson ~ Douglas & Suzanne Tween

## NEIGHBOR SPONSORS

Angel Cardoza Jr.

*Support our Mission!*

Purchase sponsorships and donate at [bronxworksgala.givesmart.com](https://bronxworksgala.givesmart.com)

For more information about the Gala  
or to purchase tickets or sponsorship opportunities,  
please visit our [website](#)  
or contact Andrew Lin at  
646-393-4004 or [llin@bronxworks.org](mailto:llin@bronxworks.org)

## STAY CONNECTED:



 Forward to a Friend

[Donate Now](#)

# BronxWorks | [www.bronxworks.org](http://www.bronxworks.org) | Email

Did you get this e-mail forwarded? Subscribe below to receive BronxWorks updates.

[Sign Up Now](#)

For Email Marketing you can trust.