



The March 2022 Newsletter

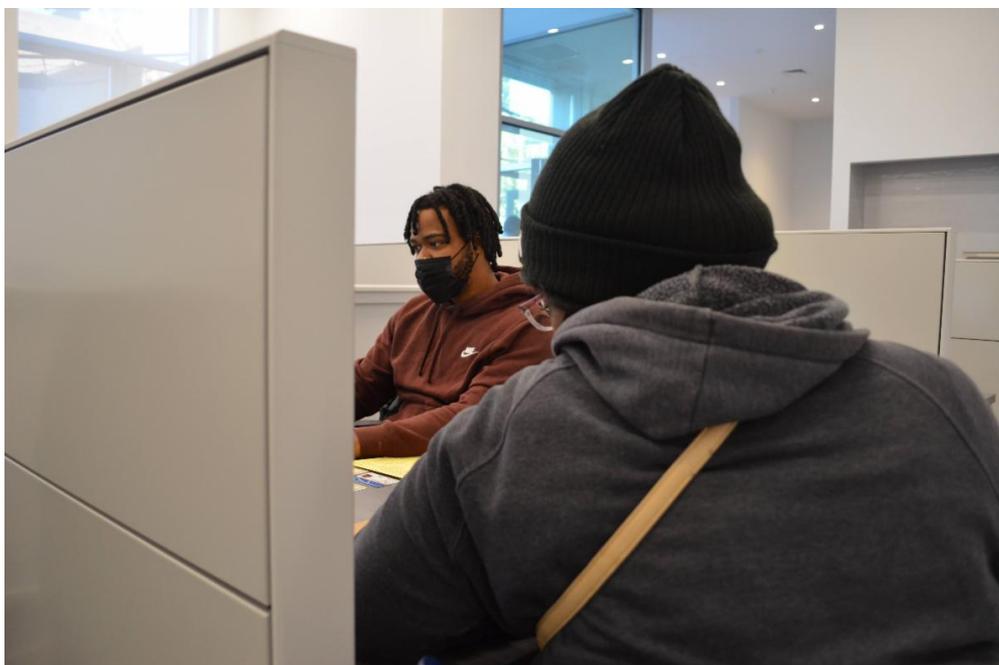


BronxWorks Workforce Development offices assist over 10,000 New York City residents every year.

In this issue:

- **The Expansion of the BronxWorks Workforce Development Department**
- **Staff Profile: Betty Ann Tamaisar**
- **Did You Know? March is Women's History Month and Social Work Appreciation Month**
- **Save the Date! BronxWorks Evening Reception at the Bronx Zoo**
- **Photo Essay**
- **Ways to Give**
- **Announcements**

**The Expansion of the BronxWorks Workforce
Development Department**



A Workforce Development staff person assists a client during tax season.

The BronxWorks Workforce Development Department (WFD) is a collection of programs that prepares New Yorkers that are unemployed, looking for their first job, or need help improving their careers for their employment journey. The department has programs for a range of populations, including young adults, New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) residents, non-custodial parents, and older adults.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, BronxWorks WFD continued to assist our community members with employment assistance. As the New York economy recovers from the effects of the pandemic and New Yorkers return to work, the department has geared up even further to ensure that our communities have the resources they need to achieve gainful employment, financial stability, and a brighter future.

In this month's newsletter, we highlight the growth of the BronxWorks Workforce Development Department and variety of programs that are offered to target the dynamic needs and challenges faced in our communities.

HERO Dads:

The **Healthy, Empowered, Resilient, and Open (HERO) Dads** program works with eligible non-custodial parents (ages 18 and older) who have children ages 24 and younger. The program is a partnership with Montefiore Medical Center that is designed to strengthen positive parent-child engagement, improve social and economic outcomes for parents and their families, improve healthy relationships, and promote healthy marriages. The partnership is built on the idea that it is not enough to simply help people attain employment; it is also crucial to ensure that people are in a good place personally and mentally to sustain employment long-term. Through the program, BronxWorks provides employment assistance, training, and self-sufficiency and parenting workshops, while Montefiore provides mental health consultations and counseling.

Community Service Programs:



A Workforce Development staff person assists community members with employment information.

BronxWorks WFD provides a suite of **Community Service Programs** based in NYCHA residences across the Bronx. The three centers are located at the Bronxchester Community Service Office, providing services to the residents of the Bronxchester Houses and surrounding neighborhoods; The Cross Bronx Preservation Community Service Office, providing services to the residents of Baychester and Murphy Houses; and the Twin Parks/Highbridge/Franklin Community Service Office, providing services to the residents of Twin Parks, Highbridge, and Franklin public housing developments. Each of these centers offers a multitude of programs including job readiness preparation, vocational trainings, financial counseling, literacy, educational workshops, health and wellness education, and benefits screenings and assistance.

Similarly, the **Family Self-Sufficiency Program** gives HPD Section 8 participants free services like job training, job placement, training, and education, and also provides financial rewards to participants through a free savings account, resulting in successful graduates earning a stipend. The goal of these programs is to help residents improve their skills and assist them in seeking long-term employment opportunities.

Youth Workforce/Summer Youth Employment Program

Last year, BronxWorks Youth Workforce services were shifted under the WFD umbrella. The collection of programs provides both school and community-based job-readiness training and education programming focused on youth and young adults. Programs include the **EXCEL Program** for youth ages 16-24 to explore a variety of employment options and prepare them for the world of work through resume building workshops, interview practice, computer skills training, and financial literacy, as well as high school equivalency classes. The **Neighborhood**

Development Area (NDA) Opportunity Youth Program works with youth ages 16-24 who are out of school and unemployed that reside in NDA 4 or 5. The program shepherds participants through a course of work readiness trainings, counseling, and a paid 14-week internship.

BronxWorks WFD also manages the **Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)**. SYEP connects over 1,300 New York City youth ages 14-24 with career exploration and a six week paid work experience every summer. Each year leading up to the summer, WFD prepares by hiring 50 seasonal staff to oversee and manage the placements of the 1,300 participants at hundreds of different work sites and partner organizations throughout the Bronx. The entire department comes together to help with the hiring logistics. The subsequent **Work, Learn, & Grow Employment Program (WLG)** builds off of the work experiences gained through SYEP and provides participants with follow-up career readiness training and paid employment opportunities for up to 25 weeks during the school year from October to March.

Taxes, Financial Empowerment, and More



BronxWorks Workforce Development offices assist over 5,000 New York City residents with tax filing preparation every year.

Every tax season, BronxWorks WFD offers a free income tax service for New York City residents through the **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA)**. Qualifying individuals must have an annual income below \$50,000 and households must have an annual income below \$72,000. The **Bronx-PEACH** Program is another collaboration with Montefiore Medical Center to provide tax preparation assistance to residents in targeted zip codes of the north Bronx who are disproportionately at risk of adverse childhood experiences. Known as the **Bronx Promote Earned Income Tax Credit to Support At-risk Children (PEACH)**, the goal of the program is to provide VITA services to secure the Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC) for these households.

In addition to tax preparation services, BronxWorks WFD provides a number of

services to assist New York residents with low incomes through the **Financial Empowerment Center (OFE)** Program. OFE offers high quality financial education and counseling, resources to promote access to safe and affordable banking, and assistance with securing tax credits and other income-boosting benefits and savings. The program is designed to help low-income households reduce debt, strengthen their credit score, develop routine practices to increase savings, balance household budgets, and connect with financial resources like opening bank accounts.

All of these programs have been layered on top of the foundation of more traditional job preparation and assistance programs like Jobs Plus. **Jobs Plus** combines employment-related services, financial incentives, community support for work, and financial counseling into a single workforce development program that supports various NYCHA residents. While WFD continues to offer Jobs Plus as a core assistance for individuals seeking employment, the department has expanded to offer comprehensive wraparound services to support households in other areas that create stability and self-sufficiency.

A New Home for Workforce Development: Park Haven



In the fall of the 2021, BronxWorks relocated the Workforce Development Department to Park Haven a mixed-use residential building, located at 550 East 142 Street. The 10-story building houses 178 residential units, including affordable and supportive housing units, as well as BronxWorks offices for Supportive Housing and Workforce Development.

Staff Profile: Betty Ann Tamaisar

To celebrate Women's History Month,

we wanted to highlight one of the many women leaders at BronxWorks. Throughout our storied 50 years of providing services to the Bronx, we have benefited from countless women visionaries, each of whom have contributed to the growth of this organization. This month, we are excited to highlight Betty Ann Tamaisar, Department Director of the BronxWorks Workforce Development Department.



Betty Ann Tamaisar, Department Director,
Workforce Development

“I am so proud to work for a nonprofit organization like BronxWorks, with some of the smartest people I have ever met. I have such an admiration for all of my colleagues, people who have such passion. It gives me the confidence to do anything.”

Betty grew up in Trinidad and came to the U.S. as an international student, earning her Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from the New Jersey City University. She then completed her Master's Degree in Human Rights with a focus on Women's Rights at Columbia University.

Betty joined BronxWorks in 2010 as an Operations Coordinator for the Workforce Development Department. As the Operations Coordinator, she provided administrative and operational support to the entire department, assisting with whatever was needed. In 2012, she joined the Access to Benefits Department as a Program Coordinator to oversee the Healthy Families and Housing Programs and Bedford Walk-In-Office, and then in 2013 was promoted to Program Director of the Navigator Program. It was during these years that Betty worked closely with Eileen Torres, John Weed, and Julie Spitzer, who have all become senior leaders at BronxWorks. Betty credits these working relationships with much of her professional growth.

In 2014, Betty would rejoin the Workforce Development Department as the Assistant Department Director before she was eventually promoted to Department Director. In 2015, Betty was named as one of New York Non-Profit Media 40 Under 40 Rising Stars, and currently sits on the New York City Employment and Training Coalition's (NYCETC) Strategy and Policy Council.

“There were tough moments when I thought I bit off more than I could chew , but I always had a strong support system in the form of the Executive Team as well as Marie Edwards, the Assistant Department Director.”

In her time at WFD, Betty has overseen the growth of the department, originally overseeing four programs to now managing a portfolio of fourteen programs and serving close to 10,000 participants per year. True to fashion, Betty credits her team

for providing the foundation for the growth and success of the department.

Betty said that the root of her motivation to work in human services grew from her own mother. "I saw the struggles she went through as an immigrant, working 3-4 jobs, to ensure that she could put me on a path to success. She is one of the strongest women I know and inspires me to help others to become self-sufficient.

Outside of work, Betty loves to travel and is excited to start traveling again. She loves to sing and recently purchased a karaoke machine. She is also an avid gardener, wife and mother of two. Unsurprisingly, she loves to give her step-son advice on his own employment journey.

Did You Know? March is Women's History Month and Social Work Appreciation Month



March is Women's History Month! All month long, BronxWorks has celebrated women history-makers on social media, including Mary Higgins Clark, bestselling author born in the Bronx and known as the Queen of Suspense; Vivian Vazquez, filmmaker and former BronxWorks staff member; Keechant Sewell, the first woman to serve as Commissioner of the NYPD; and Bessie Coleman, the first African American and Native American woman pilot.

We are also celebrating our very own Kiesha Roberts, Assistant Department Director of Cornerstone Programs, for her nomination by the Office of Assembly Member Chantel Jackson recognizing outstanding women from the local community for Women's History Month. Kiesha has been recognized for her years of contributions to the 79th District, and we could not be more proud! Congratulations Kiesha!





March is also Social Work Appreciation Month. BronxWorks is grateful to our Social Workers for the integral role they play in our communities and advancing our mission alongside all of our dedicated staff to improve the economic and social well-being of our Bronx neighbors.

Social workers have been an integral part of our nation for decades. Social workers played key roles in the Civil Rights and Women’s Rights movements and pushed for social programs we now take for granted, including the minimum wage, a 40-hour work week, Social Security, and Medicare. Read more about Social Work Appreciation at our [website](#).

Save the Date! BronxWorks Evening Reception at the Bronx Zoo

Save the Date!

Celebrating the Resilience
of the
BRONX!

An Evening Reception
With BronxWorks

Bronxworks
Lifting Lives Building Futures

Bronx Zoo,
Schiff Family Great Hall

Wednesday, June 15
6:00 p.m.

Cocktails, Hors D'oeuvres,
Buffet

BronxWorks is excited to announce that our annual fundraiser is returning in-

person and back to the Bronx! Join us for a wonderful evening reception on June 15 at the Schiff Family Great Hall at the Bronx Zoo. Cocktails will be served next to the sea lion pool followed by an amazing program celebrating the resilience of the Bronx. More information to come!

For sponsorship inquiries, please contact Gianna Dell'Olio at gdellolio@bronxworks.org.

Photo Essay



#JustPay Rally at City Hall

Dozens of BronxWorks staff from across the agency joined hundreds of human services workers and supporters at City Hall to demand an end to low wages in human services contracts. The government is both the predominant funder of human services as well as the main driver of human services salaries. Current New York City and State contracts have resulted in the essential human services workforce being some of the lowest paid workers in New York's economy. It is unacceptable that human services workers are given inadequate pay, inadequate benefits, and inadequate opportunities for career advancements. [Learn more about this event.](#)



BronxWorks HIPPY Celebrates Dr. Seuss's Birthday

The BronxWorks Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) Program celebrated Read Across America day and Dr. Seuss's birthday on March 2. Parents and children had fun making Dr. Seuss-related arts and crafts and reading some of his books. There were also fun games to play as well as refreshments and a raffle. HIPPY is a home-based early childhood development and parent education program that gives parents the tools to be their children's first teachers. [Learn more here.](#)



Distribution Event For Families of Twin Parks Fire

Families affected by the tragic January fire at the Twin Parks North West housing

complex and an opportunity to come to BronxWorks for a special distribution event. Families received toiletries, clothing, household items, pantry bags, and gift cards. We are so grateful to our partners and the community whose donations made this event possible!



Girls from BronxWorks Cornerstone Programs meet with beauty business mogul Angela Simmons.



A young boy and a goat come face-to-face at the Queens County Farm Museum.

Pressure Makes Diamonds Event For Girls

Girls from BronxWorks Cornerstone Community Center programs came together for a confidence-building event called Pressure Makes Diamonds. Children worked together on building self-image and self-esteem, sharing with each other who and what inspires them. The girls made jewelry and met with beauty business mogul Angela Simmons, who shared words of encouragement with the girls.

Cornerstone Programs Visit Queens County Farm Museum

The BronxWorks Betances, Classic, and Saint Mary's Park Cornerstone Community Center After School Programs visited the Queens County Farm Museum to meet some farm animals and learn more about the history of farming. Children met goats, chickens, llamas, and cows, also went on a hayride and learned about farm equipment.



2022 Teen Battle Chef

Participants in our [Youth Food Justice Corps Program](#) took part in the 2022 Teen Battle Chef Challenge virtually! The Youth Food Justice Corps is a year-long program designed to help Bronx youth learn about nutrition and how to cook many different recipes. For the battle, participants filmed themselves cooking a dish and presented the videos virtually to a team of judges.

Help Support BronxWorks



Support #TeamBronxWorks at The TD Five Boro Bike Tour Sunday, May 1, 2022

The **TD Five Boro Bike Tour**, America's largest cycling event, is back!

On **Sunday, May 1, 2022**, cyclists will ride over 40 miles of car-free streets through all five boroughs in New York City.

Riders for #TeamBronxWorks at the Bike Tour are raising money and awareness for **children's programs at our shelters for homeless families**. All our riders have committed to raising a minimum of \$750.

Email Digital and Content Manager Aaron Cipollina at acipollina@bronxworks.org if you have any questions about the bike tour!

Support our team!
[Meet our riders here!](#)



There are many ways you can support BronxWorks.

- Make a contribution. [Donate Now!](#)
- Purchase essential items for our participants from our [Amazon Wishlist](#)
- Set up an Amazon Smile account and [choose BronxWorks](#) as your charity and Amazon will donate on your behalf every time you make purchase

[Visit our Website](#)

Announcements



text "HERO" to
917.886.2512



@herodadsnyc



IRB NUMBER: 2021-12757
IRB APPROVAL DATE: 3/22/2021

Montefiore
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UNIVERSITY BEHAVIORAL ASSOCIATES

Are you...

- ✓ 18 or older?
- ✓ A Non-Custodial Parent with a child younger than 24?
- ✓ Trying to improve your parenting skills?
- ✓ Unemployed or looking for a better job?

Join HERO Dads!
You can earn up to \$450!



Dads can do hair.
And a lot of other cool things.

HERO Dads can help you strengthen your relationship with your children and build your family's financial security. And best of all, it's FREE.

This program is supported by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the United States (U.S.) Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$7.3M with 100% funded by ACF/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official view of, or an endorsement by, ACF/HHS for the U.S. Government. For more information, please visit the ACF website, Administrative and National Policy Requirements. These services are available to all eligible persons, regardless of race, gender, age, disability, or religion.

Are you or someone you know 18 or older? A Non-Custodial Parent with a child younger than 24? Trying to improve your parenting skills? Unemployed or looking for a better job? BronxWorks and Montefiore have partnered for HERO Dads! Go to <https://bronxworks.org/HERO> for more information or text "HERO" to 917.886.2512.

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