



The
BronxWorks
April 2025
Newsletter



FEATURED STORY

BronxWorks Workforce Development Encourages Financial Empowerment This Tax Season



The BronxWorks Workforce Development Department (WFD) provides a myriad of services to help our neighbors obtain gainful employment and further their careers. In

addition to workforce training and employment assistance, the department also offers financial literacy and resources to assist community members as they increase their financial knowledge, understand budgeting and banking options, and obtain assistance with filing taxes and securing credits.

With April being Financial Literacy Month and the 2025 tax season coming to a close, BronxWorks WFD programming has been in full swing to support our neighbors as they file their taxes and pursue financial security.



A BronxWorks NYC Free Tax Prep staff member assists a client with filing their tax return.

Free Tax Preparation

In partnership with the NYC Department of Consumer and Worker Protection (DCWP)'s NYC Free Tax Prep program, BronxWorks has offered free tax preparation services to individuals and families who qualify since 2007. Each year, BronxWorks dedicates dozens of staff members and volunteers, all of whom are IRS-certified VITA/TCE tax preparers, to support our neighbors in need of assistance with their tax returns. During the 2025 tax season, BronxWorks assisted over 8,300 residents in filing their taxes and maximizing their returns.

Financial Empowerment

Another key program providing financial literacy resources to the Bronx community is the BronxWorks Financial Empowerment Center (FEC). This program, also in partnership with the DCWP, offers free one-on-one financial counseling to residents of the borough, with a focus on low- to moderate-income households. FEC staff assist participants in strategies to reduce debt, strengthen credit scores, develop routine savings practices, create budgets, and much more.

"We provide personalized financial counseling to help our clients make informed decisions, maximize tax refunds, and achieve long-term economic well-being. Whether they're looking to create a budget, manage debt, build savings, or navigate the challenges of tax preparation, our experienced team is here to help. We support them every step of the way toward a stronger, more confident financial future."

*- Karla Velasquez, Program Director, FEC,
NYC Free Tax Prep, FSS, RH Taxes*



*BronxWorks Financial Empowerment Center Staff;
Herbert Green (left), and Karla Velasquez (right).*

Collaboration Across Programs and Departments

Collaboration among the various programs and departments at BronxWorks has always been a core tenet of the organization. For example, FEC staff often facilitate financial workshops for our Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) participants, which is a program that connects young individuals with career exploration opportunities and paid work experience throughout the summer. In addition to collaboration among WFD programs, FEC staff work with our family shelter staff to provide financial counseling workshops in multiple languages to families residing in our shelters.

Income Support Services After Job Readiness

BronxWorks is proud to offer a variety of workforce development programs that support

our neighbors through their journey to financial stability. To assist with finding employment, participants receive job readiness services such as resume workshops, interview preparation, workplace etiquette, adult education classes, sector-focused occupational skills training, and more. After participants find employment, BronxWorks also provides income support services through our Financial Empowerment Center and NYC Free Tax Prep services. Income supports are an important aspect of workforce development at BronxWorks because they equip our neighbors to maintain stable income for their household and find financial success as they plan for the future. Additionally, participants in need of further wraparound services are connected to other BronxWorks programs that may fulfill their needs. For example, a participant in the Workforce Development department could be referred to our Children & Youth department for after-school support, our Benefits Access department to apply for benefits to which they may be entitled, our Community Health department for food and nutrition access, and more.

[Learn More About Financial Empowerment at BronxWorks](#)



STAFF PROFILES

Jose Ramos Porter, Workforce Development



Passion for uplifting our neighbors is a common thread among all BronxWorks staff. Jose Ramos, Porter at the Workforce Development Office, embodies this passion and dedication to the community in his work every day. Jose is known among his colleagues to go above and beyond his position to help others. In addition to thoroughly maintaining the cleanliness, and therefore the safety, of the BronxWorks Workforce Development office, Jose goes out of his way to help his fellow staff with whatever they need, without being asked.

"The work my department does is very important, I am happy to be a part of something that helps the community."

[Read More About Jose](#)



DID YOU KNOW

BronxWorks Is Accepting Donations For Our Annual Prom and Graduation Clothing Drive!



Did You Know? BronxWorks holds an annual Prom and Graduation Clothing Drive in the spring to assist our participants in preparing for upcoming milestone events! We are accepting donations at select BronxWorks locations until May 23. **BronxWorks will accept any new or dry cleaned formal attire, including dresses, suits, ties, and accessories. *No shoes please!***

We are also happy to accept donations of new and packaged cosmetics and personal care items to be distributed to the students along with their chosen attire.

[CLICK HERE](#) to learn more about the Prom and Graduation Clothing Drive! If you have any questions, please contact info@bronxworks.org.



PHOTO ESSAY



Carmen's 100th Birthday Celebration!

BronxWorks participant Carmen Oliveras Huertas recently celebrated her 100th birthday! Carmen's friends and family came together at the BronxWorks East Concourse Older Adult Center (ECOAC) to celebrate this milestone birthday! Carmen welcomed many visitors during the celebration, including Assemblymember Yudelka Tapia, and representatives from Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson's office and City Council Member Oswald Feliz's office. Carmen regularly attends ECOAC, where she enjoys various recreational activities and socializing with her peers.



BronxWorks Hosts Annual Staff Meeting

Earlier this month, BronxWorks hosted our annual staff meeting, where the entire agency came together to celebrate the year's accomplishments and look towards the future. The Staff Meeting featured a special appearance from Rocky Bucano, the CEO of the Hip Hop Museum! Rocky shared some of his experiences growing up in the community and why the Hip Hop Museum is such an important project to the Bronx.

During the meeting, we also recognized those celebrating milestone career anniversaries at BronxWorks, including several who have been with the organization for 25 years! BronxWorks is so grateful for our staff and we are immensely proud of their commitment to the BronxWorks mission and the communities we serve.



Middle School Career and Wellness Day

BronxWorks Middle School students recently participated in a Career and Wellness Day. Workshop topics included financial literacy, career exploration, and wellness. The day ended with a Be Vape Free presentation and poster contest offered in collaboration with NYC Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD). The presentation and posters highlighted the dangers and long term effects of vaping.



Participants Visit NYBG Orchid Show

BronxWorks participants recently visited the New York Botanical Garden to see the Orchid Show! Attendees took in the beautiful views of the flowers inside the Conservatory and also had an opportunity to make their own plant specimen diagram. We are so appreciative of the ongoing support of the New York Botanical Garden!

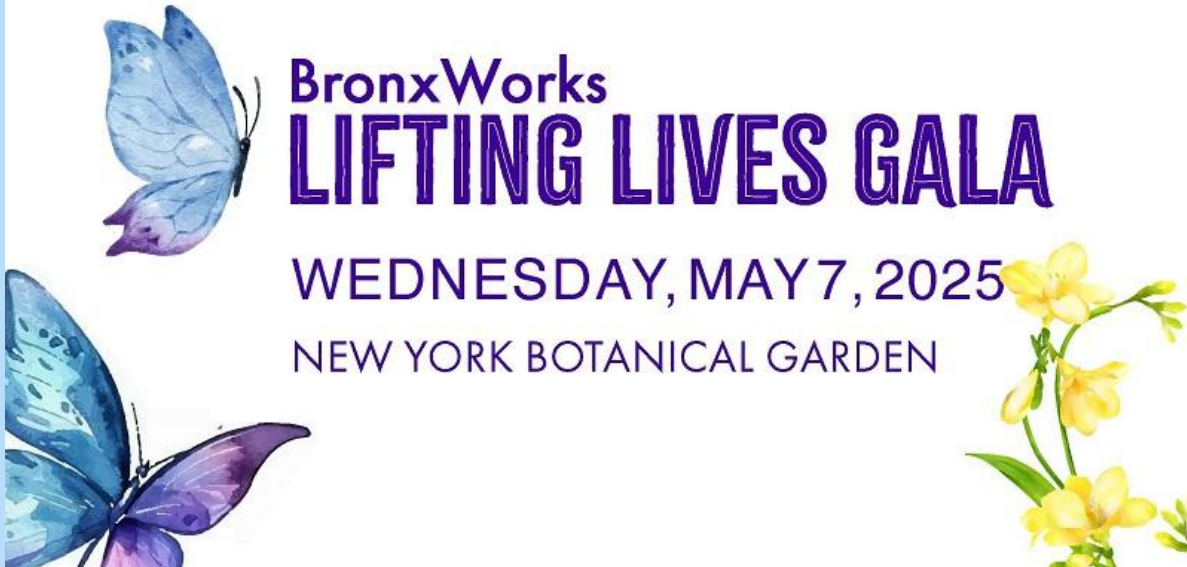


Twin Parks West Easter Egg Hunt

BronxWorks Workforce Development Staff at Twin Parks West hosted an Easter Celebration and Egg Hunt for building residents! All in attendance made crafts, enjoyed refreshments, and played outside together before hunting for eggs. BronxWorks offers workforce development, among other services, to the residents in the building.



UPCOMING EVENTS



The BronxWorks 2025 Lifting Lives Gala is right around the corner! Join us on May 7 at the New York Botanical Garden to celebrate our Bronx community and the dedication of our staff and stakeholders. Proceeds raised will benefit some of the most in-demand programs we offer, such as workforce development, services for older adults, eviction prevention, education for all ages, and more. Your generosity funds transformative programs uplifting our Bronx neighbors!

This year BronxWorks will once again have a silent auction! The auction will be open to bids before and after the event and we are excited to feature several unique items and experiences!

[CLICK HERE](#) to learn more about how you can support the Lifting Lives Gala!



WAYS TO SUPPORT



There is still time left to support our incredible TD Five Boro Bike Tour team! Riders for #TeamBronxWorks **commit to raising \$750** for children's programs at our shelters for homeless families. Support our riders and donate to their mission [here](#).

Here are some other ways you can join BronxWorks and support our mission this year:

- [Make a Monetary Gift.](#)
- Donate essential goods directly to Bronx residents in need through our [wishlist](#).

You can also follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Bluesky](#), and [X](#) for exciting updates.

For a full list of ways to give to BronxWorks, [visit our website](#).

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