



The BronxWorks October 2025 Newsletter



FEATURED STORY

Building a Healthier Bronx Community

This month, BronxWorks held two special initiatives to support building a healthier Bronx community. For the first time, BronxWorks held a free eye clinic for our neighbors to receive vision testing and, if needed, free eye glasses! We also held the annual BronxWorks 5K Monster Mash Hunger Dash, raising money to support our programs that provide access to healthy foods and nutrition education for those facing food insecurity. BronxWorks is committed to supporting our neighbors in every facet of life as we remain dedicated to improving social determinants of health.

Free Eye Clinic In Partnership With OSELF



BronxWorks was thrilled to offer a free eye clinic for our community for the first time! BronxWorks partnered with the OneSight EssilorLuxottica Foundation (OSELF), a foundation dedicated to providing accessible and sustainable vision care to those in need around the world. Community members had the opportunity to schedule a comprehensive eye exam. If corrective lenses were recommended, participants had the opportunity to choose from a wide variety of frames while their glasses were being made in the on-site lab provided by OSELF. BronxWorks hosted the clinic over two days, welcoming almost 300 community members and over 50 volunteers, including optometrists, opticians, and other eye care professionals from across the country.

Among all clinic participants, there was a 95% of need for corrective lenses, and 245 people received free glasses with their prescription.

One attendee heard about the eye clinic after visiting BronxWorks for assistance with eviction prevention. He knew his vision was not the best but had been concerned about the costs associated with obtaining glasses. He was thrilled to hear the eye clinic was free and signed up for an exam. After receiving his prescription, he was then immediately fitted for frames of his choosing and took home a pair of glasses that day. He shared that he is so happy to have improved vision because it will help him find a stable job and maintain his housing.



(L-R) BronxWorks CEO Eileen Torres, Carol Gitune, and Dr. Donna Goukler.

Special thank you to Dr. Donna Goukler, Optometrist/Chief Clinical Director at National Eyecare Associates/EssilorLuxottica and member of the BronxWorks Leadership Council for connecting us to Carol Gitune, Senior Manager of Direct Programs at OSELF, to make this event possible. We are incredibly thankful for their commitment to serving the Bronx community with these vital services, and we look forward to partnering with them again in the future.

BronxWorks 5K Monster Mash Hunger Dash 2025!

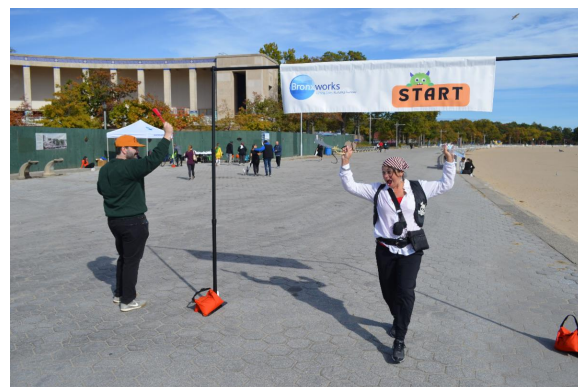
On Saturday, October 18, BronxWorks held our annual 5K Monster Mash Hunger Dash fundraiser event! All proceeds raised at the Monster Mash Hunger Dash support BronxWorks food access and nutrition education programs.

Thank you to everyone who joined us at Orchard Beach for the 5K and all of those who

were unable to join us but supported our cause. **Thanks to your generosity, we raised over \$15,000, which will directly go towards fighting food insecurity in the Bronx!**



Our work to provide access to healthy, affordable food is more important than ever. The need for our food access services continues to grow, as many community members are struggling to afford the essentials during the current economic turmoil. BronxWorks fills the gaps with bi-weekly and monthly pantries at several sites, seasonal farm stands offering local produce and nutrition education, and on-site kitchens that produce hundreds of meals a day, among other programming. Our efforts to fight food insecurity positively impact thousands of Bronx residents every year, and events like the BronxWorks 5K allow us to keep these programs running.



Special thank you to our Major Event Sponsors, SKF Management, BronxCare Health

System, and Ellen Rose Associates, LLC. We are so appreciative of your significant and longstanding support of the BronxWorks mission to feed, shelter, teach, and support our neighbors to build a stronger Bronx community.



Ellen Rose Associates, LLC & The Blauner Family

[Click here for more photos from the BronxWorks 2025 5K!](#)



STAFF PROFILES

Alaysia Fulton-Hodo

Program Director, Access to Benefits Department



Alaysia Fulton-Hodo, a Bronx native, joined BronxWorks in search of a new and more impactful career. She discovered BronxWorks through a recruitment event, where she was hired as an Administrative Assistant for the BronxWorks Homelessness Prevention and Access to Benefits department. Alaysia is now a Program Director, overseeing comprehensive case management and benefits access for two community districts. She also oversees a bi-weekly food pantry serving up to 60 families. Alaysia says her favorite thing about working for BronxWorks has not changed since she first started - seeing community members happy and thriving with the organization's support.

"The work I'm doing here, it makes me so happy that I'm showing clients how to put themselves in the best position to then advocate for themselves in the long term."

[Learn More About Alaysia](#)



DID YOU KNOW

October is Italian Heritage Month!

BronxWorks Staff Member Francis Palazzolo Recognized



Francis Palazzolo, BronxWorks Activity Coordinator and Artist-in-Residence, was recognized by Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson at the BBP's annual Italian American Heritage and Cultural Month Celebration! The Bronx has a rich and longstanding Italian culture, and we are so proud of Francis' recognition.

We profiled Francis last year as part of our story **'BronxWorks Artists Featured in Culture of Belonging Exhibition at Boricua College Gallery'**.

[Click here to learn more about Francis.](#)



PHOTO ESSAY



Summer Rose Castillo Visits BronxWorks

BronxWorks was thrilled to welcome a special guest, Summer Rose Castillo! Summer is a young actor from the Bronx who came to visit our younger youth participants. During her visit, Summer read a book to the children and then led a Q&A, where she discussed balancing life and school while also acting and enjoying other hobbies. She also showed clips of her work, including the trailer for her new movie, *Brownsville Bred*. Thank you to Summer and her family for joining BronxWorks! We are so proud to have a young Latina actress from the Bronx share her experiences with our students during Hispanic Heritage Month!



PwC Throws Halloween Party for BronxWorks Students

BronxWorks youth enjoyed a fun Halloween party thanks to PwC! Every year, PwC supports BronxWorks after-school youth with a party featuring various activities, including face painting, pumpkin decorating, mummy wrapping, and much more! We

are so grateful for our continued partnership with PwC and for their generosity towards Bronx youth this time of year.



The Jr. Knicks Clinic Returns to BronxWorks!

Once again, the Jr. Knicks Clinic returned to BronxWorks for our middle school participants! Dozens of middle school students were joined by coaches from the Jr. Knicks for warm ups, running drills, and various basketball circuits. Knicks legend John Starks also attended to share some valuable lessons with the students. Thank you to John Starks and everyone at the Jr. Knicks for bringing such a wonderful experience to our students for the third year in a row!



BronxWorks Staff and Participants Construct a Mural and Host a Celebration of Life

BronxWorks staff and participants came together at The Living Room Drop-In Center to put together a mural titled 'Where We Love Is Home'. The mural shows a large tree featuring participants' artwork as the fruit of the tree. Leaves, photos, and other elements were also added in honor of clients who have passed. Staff and community members held a Celebration of Life event to commemorate the completion of the mural and in recognition of those honored on the wall. The mural brings a unique personal touch and a strong sense of unity to the reception area, further welcoming anyone who enters the building.



REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

The BronxWorks 2024 Report to the Community is OUT NOW!



REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



BronxWorks is proud to share this edition of our annual Report to the Community, highlighting our accomplishments and major milestones. Thank you to everyone who supported us last year and continue to believe in our mission to feed, shelter, teach, and support our neighbors to build a stronger Bronx community.

[Click here to read the BronxWorks 2024 Report to the Community.](#)



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Support #TeamBronxWorks in the TCS 2025 NYC Marathon! BronxWorks is proud to once again be a charity partner for the TCS NYC Marathon this year. As a charity runner, members of #TeamBronxWorks each have a goal of raising \$3,000 for BronxWorks Children and Youth programs. [Support our runners 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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