



# NORWOOD NEWS

Vol 36, No 12 • PUBLISHED BY MOSHOLU PRESERVATION CORPORATION • JUNE 15-28, 2023

**CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE [WWW.NORWOODNEWS.ORG](http://WWW.NORWOODNEWS.ORG)**

FOR THE LATEST COMMUNITY NEWS AVAILABLE IN ENGLISH, BENGALI, SPANISH, ARABIC, FRENCH AND CHINESE.

## SALLIE CALDWELL

### *Some Woman for One Woman*



Photo courtesy of the family of Sallie Caldwell

**SALLIE CALDWELL, 84**, LONGTIME Tracey Towers resident, board member of the Jerome Gun Hill BID, and honorary member of the 52nd Precinct Community Council, has died.

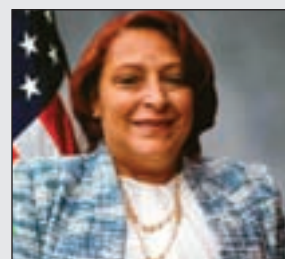
**By SÍLE MOLONEY**

Longtime, beloved Tracey Towers resident, Sallie Caldwell, an active member of the Norwood and Bedford Park communities, a board member of the Jerome Gun Hill BID, and honorary member of the 52nd Precinct Community Council, died on Wednesday, June 7, at the age of 84.

The news was confirmed by Caldwell's daughter, Brenda Caldwell-Paris, president of the 52nd Precinct Community Council, and by president of the Tracey Towers Tenants Organization, Jean Hill. Tributes started to circulate among residents of Norwood, Bedford Park, and among other longtime colleagues of Caldwell, upon hearing the news.

Daniela Beasley, executive director of the Jerome Gun Hill BID, said, "Sallie Caldwell was one of the most passionate, vibrant and caring people I've had the pleasure of knowing. She truly set the standard for what being an active, conscientious Bronxite should look like and her contributions to our neighborhood are immeasurable." She added, "There are no words for how much she will be missed."

*(continued on page 19)*



**Democratic District Leader Sandra Pabon Dies | pg 4**



**Elections 2023: DA Candidate Tess Cohen Profiled pg 14**



**Grandmaster Flash Receives Honorary Doctorate in Music pg 16**

# RASKIN & KREMINs, LLP

Over 75 Years Of Combined Personal Injury Law Experience • Over \$300 Million Dollars Recovered for Our Clients

[www.raskrem.com](http://www.raskrem.com)

160 Broadway (4th Fl.) New York, NY  
Bronx Office - by appointment only

2 3 4 5 A C J Z TO FULTON STREET

**718-878-4858**  
**212-587-3434**

N R W TO CORTLANDT STREET

## Vol. 36, No. 12

Norwood News is published bi-weekly on Thursdays by Mosholu Preservation Corporation (MPC)  
3400 Reservoir Oval East  
Bronx, New York 10467  
Phone: 718 324 4998  
Fax: 718 324 2917  
E-mail: [norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org](mailto:norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org)  
Web.: [www.norwoodnews.org](http://www.norwoodnews.org)

## Publisher

Mosholu Preservation Corporation

## Editor-In-Chief, Norwood News

Sile Moloney  
[smoloney@norwoodnews.org](mailto:smoloney@norwoodnews.org)

## Intern

Sara Martinez

## Regular Contributors

David Greene, José A. Giralt,  
Ariel Pacheco, Miriam Quiñones

**For Display Advertising  
Call Sile Moloney  
(929) 318 6595**

### Support Your Community Newspaper!

The Norwood News is a not-for-profit publication and relies upon the support of its advertisers and readers to produce a quality community newspaper. To support your paper, become a member and receive a subscription for one year.

Simply mail check or money order for \$40 to: Norwood News, 3400 Reservoir Oval East, Bronx, NY 10467.

Norwood News is not responsible for typographical errors. Opinions expressed in signed letters and bylined columns represent the sole opinion of the author and are not necessarily those of Mosholu Preservation Corporation or Montefiore Medical Center. Editorials represent the views of the editor only. The newspaper reserves the right to limit or refuse advertising it deems objectionable. Advertisements appearing in this paper cannot be used without the written permission of the Norwood News. Letters to the editor are subject to condensation and editing. Writers should include their affiliation or special interest if any. Anonymous letters are not published but your name can be withheld upon request.

Mosholu Preservation Corporation is a non-profit support corporation of Montefiore Medical Center.



# MTA, DOT Outline Bx12 Planned Service Improvements on Fordham Road

By JOSÉ A. GIRALT

Regular riders of the Bx12 bus who complain that most days the buses are crowded, and that there are not enough of them can look to the latest findings from both the Metropolitan Transportation Administration (MTA) and NYC Department of Transportation (DOT) for confirmation. Officials from both agencies updated residents and Bronx Community Board 7's Traffic & Transportation committee at the last committee meeting before the summer break on Thursday, June 1.

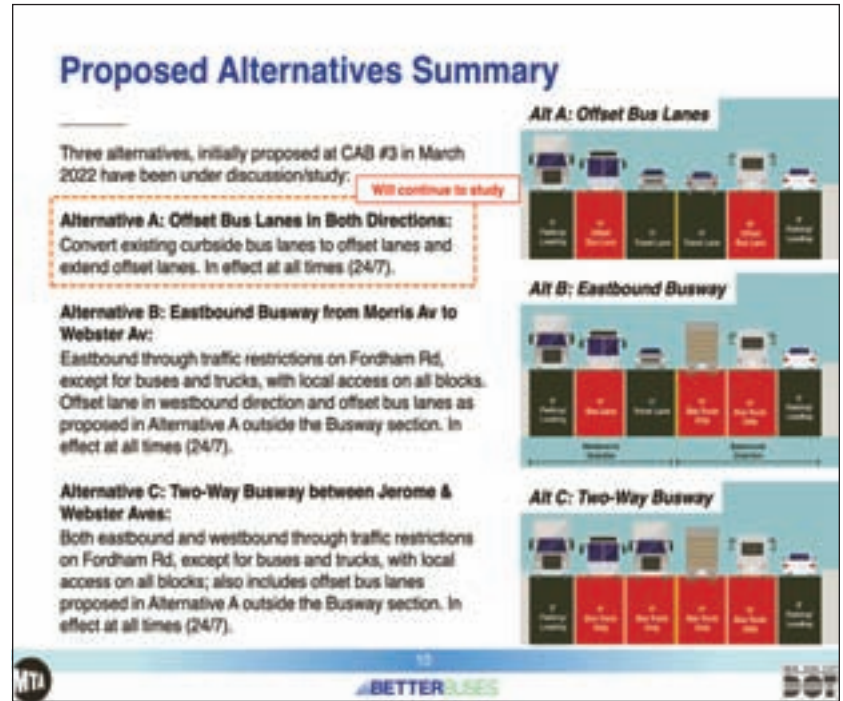
Reading from a slide show presentation, one official said, "The Bx12 is the busiest bus route in The Bronx, and second busiest in NYC after the M15." The M15 travels a north-south route on Manhattan's east side from East 125<sup>th</sup> Street to the Staten Island Ferry. The Bx12 travels an east-west route from Isham Street in Inwood to Pelham Bay Park. This route operates year-round but during the summer months additional Bx12s go all the way to Orchard Beach.

Other bus lines also travel through some of Fordham Road's most congested areas, making matters worse for Bx12 riders. The Bx22 travels eastbound along Fordham Road from Valentine Avenue until it turns south after the Bronx Zoo, and then westbound on Fordham on its return trip. The Bx9 travels along some of Fordham Road's busiest commercial stretch from near the Bronx Library Center before turning south at Southern Boulevard and then back again.

Add to all this private taxi services, delivery trucks, commuters, and residents driving in the area, and it is perhaps not surprising to learn that, sadly, 83 people were killed or significantly injured on Fordham Road between the Major Deegan Expressway and Boston Road from 2014 to 2018, according to the agency officials.

They said that although a dedicated bus lane initially helped buses make better time along Fordham Road, DOT found that traffic conditions have deteriorated because of the non-compliance of commercial trucks in the area. Along some parts of the curbside bus lanes, they said a two-hour window is given to delivery trucks to make their rounds with minimal disruptions to bus services. However, agency officials found that "existing curbside bus lanes are frequently blocked throughout the day."

Also complicating matters are the le-



**PROPOSED ALTERNATIVES SUMMARY** to address Fordham Road traffic congestion. Alternative A has been given the green light.

gal "pick-ups and drop-offs which are allowed at any time regardless of bus lane hours" but which cause "further delays for buses needing to weave in and out of traffic," according to city officials. The MTA's Rob Thompson pointed to statistics tracking the performance of the Select Bus Service for the Bx12, which showed that after initial improvement and growth in route speed and ridership from 2007 to 2012, speeds started declining in 2014, and ridership since 2015.

Thompson said, "[This] continued for several years as the bus lanes became more and more compromised [with] more people parking or stopping in bus lanes, and then ridership also started to decline over the course of a number of years in response to that."

DOT concluded that "the existing condition on Fordham Road does not work for any road user." In March 2022, three alternatives were put forth for possible implementation.

A DOT official said, "Based on all the feedback that we received from the Fordham community, which includes bus riders, businesses, and other stakeholders, as well as the traffic analysis results that we've been going over, we've decided that we will be continuing to move forward with refining Alternative A, and not advancing Alternatives B and C into the next phases of design."

Agency officials said MTA's "Auto-

mated Camera Bus Lane Enforcement (ABLE)" program has proven to enhance bus traffic flows. They said buses have been equipped with cameras since 2019 to take photos of infractions by non-bus drivers in dedicated bus lanes. Originally implemented and limited to Select Bus Service (SBS) corridors in 2010, they said ABLE was used from November 18, 2022, to April 21, 2023, to catch bus lane violators on Fordham Road from Sedgwick to Southern Avenues.

They said with nearly 16,000 tickets issued, they found buses later traveled 4.7 percent faster than before. Impressively, 86 percent of drivers were ticketed with only one violation, 9 percent with two violations, and just 5 percent with three or more. The city points to these statistics as evidence that the ABLE program changed non-bus driver behavior and had a positive effect on bus speeds along Fordham Road.

During the month of June, agency officials said they will continue to present these findings to Bronx Community Boards 11, 5, and 6. The summer will be spent refining the design and taking in feedback from the affected communities. They said City officials hope to start implementing the final plan by fall 2023.

Reaction to the plan was mixed and appeared to be split along the lines of bus riders versus car owners.



# NYBG



***...things come to thrive...  
in the shedding...in the molting...***

**Gardens & Works by Ebony G. Patterson**

Now–Sept 17

LuEsther T. Mertz  
Charitable Trust



Agnes Gund

NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

[nybg.org](http://nybg.org)

# INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By DAVID GREENE



This week, we asked readers for their thoughts on former U.S. President Donald Trump becoming the first former president of the United States to be indicted on federal charges.



"Well, if he did something wrong, he should be indicted. He seems like he's scattered by one thing after another. I think he should be held responsible for it all. Will he be convicted? It's hard to say because he has good lawyers and sometimes, he gets out of some things; it's possible."

**Mazie Robinson,**  
Fordham Manor  
Photo by David Greene



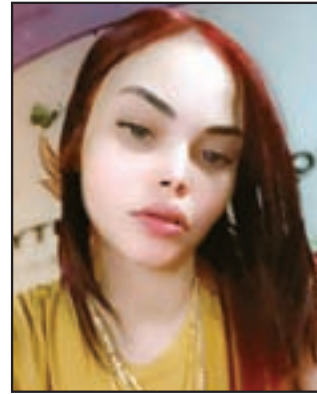
"Donald Trump is a person with every right accorded [to] someone accused of a crime under United States law. He is entitled to every facet of due process under the sixth amendment. These are rights he was very quick to deny the Central Park Five. With that said, the video and photographic evidence that is publicly available seems to make a very strong case against him. Personally, I can't stand the guy and never have, but I want equal justice under the law, even for people I can't take the sight of."

**Mary O'Shaughnessy,**  
Wakefield  
Photo courtesy of Mary O'Shaughnessy



"The two main candidates [U.S. President Joe] Biden and the one that's running, the most popular candidate, are not for the people. I don't trust them. We need to stop believing in the government, and we, the people, should depend on each other, and help and assist just like our heavenly father. No, it's all bull---t, it's all fake; they're both for lies. Yes, [former U.S. President Donald] Trump is pretending that he's for the people, like when he was president. It's like a game they're playing and the ones that are behind them, the puppeteers, which I call demonic, they control them. We freakin' need real candidates."

**Evelyn Torres,**  
Pelham Bay  
Photo courtesy of Evelyn Torres



"I feel like his indictment is stupid. He was one of the greatest presidents. I also feel like they are just mad, after everything they have said about Trump was not true; it can't be. He only wanted to help the world and help his people. He was a great president because he helped us instead of making his country worry or suffer, and he had more concerns and always defended the U.S., and he never disowned us. I think that Trump will win the case and become president again. I'm voting for him."

**Yvette Napoleon,**  
Soundview  
Photo courtesy of Yvette Napoleon



"I think he is guilty and should go to jail. I don't believe in conspiracy theories. I don't care, I want him locked up. The first time he was in the newspaper was because his family violated the law pertaining to housing discrimination, which illustrates that he has never had respect for the law."

**Steve Bobker,**  
Kingsbridge Heights  
Photo courtesy of Steve Bobker

*Editor's Note: A person arrested and charged with a crime is deemed innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law.*

HAPPY  
*father's*  
DAY

**Gaby & Yoly Barber Shop**  
3229 Bainbridge Ave., Bronx, NY 10467

**Professional Barber Shop**  
3136 Bainbridge Ave., Bronx, NY 10467

**Jerry's Hardware**  
296 E 204th St  
Bronx, NY 10467

**Bainbridge Cleaners**  
3187 Bainbridge Ave  
Bronx, NY 10467

**D'Tonty Barbershop**  
2992 Webster Ave Bronx, NY 10458

**Top Nail**  
3187 Bainbridge Ave  
Bronx, NY 10467

**MPC**  
MYSTIC PARK CENTER

## Former Democratic State Committeewoman Sandra Pabon Dies

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Alexandria Arriaga, daughter of the 49th Precinct Clergy Council chaplain and former Democratic State committeewoman and district leader, Sandra Pabon, announced the death of her mother, aged 61, in a social media post on Friday, June 2.

"This is Alex. It's with great sadness to announce to you all that my mother, Sandra Pabon, has passed away." Confirming she would share her mom's funeral arrangements once known, she added in part, "Thank you all for your prayers. She loved you all!"

Pabon was an active member of the community and was frequently seen at local events and community drives, often accompanying former assemblywoman for district 80, now State Sen. Nathalia Fernandez (S.D. 34). The 80<sup>th</sup> assembly district broadly covers some or all of the neighborhoods of Norwood, Bedford Park, Olinville, Allerton, Pelham Gardens, Pelham Parkway, Little Yamen, Morris Park and Van Nest.

The Clergy Council of the 49th Precinct later wrote on social media, "She



Photo courtesy of the family of Sandra Pabon  
**SANDRA PABON JULY 1961 – June 2023**

was dedicated to Christ, the community and cops. Our prayers and condolences are with her family." Meanwhile, Fernandez wrote, "RIP to my dear friend and beloved district leader of the [#Great-est80th](#), Sandra Pabon. You were a fiery force of faith, devotion, joy, and love. I'm going to miss you so much."

The Bronx Democratic Party also  
(continued on page 7)





Photo by Ariel Pacheco

HAKIM & CO. MULTISERVICES storefront on May 31, 2023

## Hakim & Co. Multiservices Inc., Serving the Community's Needs

By ARIEL PACHECO

Located at 3156 Bainbridge Avenue, Hakim & Co. Multiservices Inc. provides the surrounding community with a host of services ranging from home care services to Green Card renewals to tax preparation.

Hakim & Co. Multiservices originally opened in 2017 as a home care service business but Rukon Hakim, owner of Hakim and Co. Multiservices, saw the needs of the community were much larger and so he expanded his business to cater to those needs. "I am in the community for the community," said Rukon. "As I got involved in the community, I saw the need for other items."

Hakim & Co. Multiservices prides itself on helping the community in as many ways as possible. They help people with housing and SNAP applications in addition to worldwide money transfers and immigration services, while charging minimal fees. Hakim & Co. Multiservices can also provide help with specialized tax issues and with applying for licenses for businesses.

In addition to the services pro-



Photo by Ariel Pacheco

HAKIM & CO. MULTISERVICES storefront on May 31, 2023

vided, Hakim & Co. Multiservices works with neighboring non-profit organizations to help give back to the community. That includes distributing free food, phones, clothing, and school supplies to those who need them.

"I love it," said Rukon. "It's a thing that I love and that I enjoy doing. It's a

great opportunity for people to come and know that there is help around the corner. As I provide, I know I will gain back."

One of Rukon's major goals is to not only provide services, but to also educate the community as they receive those services. His hope is that people will pass on that education to

others who need help. The business has also extended its hours of operation in order to provide even more support to the community.

"If I just give the service and I don't educate them, it doesn't help them pass on the message to the next person," said Rukon. "So, what I do every time someone comes for service, I also make sure that I am giving them the education they should know."

Hakim & Co. Multiservices was considered a front-line business during the COVID-19 pandemic because of the home care services it provides. In addition, Rukon says he also helped about 400 people during the pandemic apply for unemployment benefits. "We did whatever we could: video calls, Zoom meetings, anything to help those who needed it," Rukon said.

Come into Hakim & Co. Multiservices today for any and all your needs to receive some of the best service in the Norwood community! The business is open Monday through Friday, and services are available in multiple languages including English, Spanish, Arabic, and Urdu.



# Bronx Teachers Demand New Contract, Higher Pay

By DAVID GREENE

Several hundred public school teachers and NYC Department of Education (DOE) employees gathered in Parkchester on May 24, as other school employees assembled at similar rallies across the City the same day, to demand a new employment contract with the City, a salary increase, less bureaucracy and smaller class sizes.

The United Federation of Teachers (UFT) union held rallies in all five boroughs as Bronx teachers and staff gathered at Virginia Park, located between the Cross Bronx Service Road and Westchester Avenue.

“Lisa,” a District 8 special education teacher, told *Norwood News*, “We’ve been without a contract since the last school year if I’m not mistaken. We’re looking for better pay, we’re looking for better maternity leave for mothers and parents. Overall, we’re just looking for more time to plan and collaborate with our colleagues.” Lisa added, “As a special education teacher, we’re looking for more time to write our IEPs [Individualized Education Programs] and to prepare documents for our students.”

Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson, an invited guest on the day, told



Photo by David Greene

the DOE employees, “You have always been on the front lines. During the pandemic when the schools were open, serv-

**A YOUNG SUPPORTER OF LOCAL TEACHERS HOLDS** a sign in support of a new contract and pay raise during a Parkchester rally held on Wednesday, May 24, 2023.

## Get The Best Pest Control That You Deserve

A&E Safeway Systems Pest Control, Inc.



## PEST CONTROL

WE SPECIALIZE IN CONTROL OF ROACHES, BED BUGS, FLEAS, ANTS, SPIDERS, MICE, RODENTS, TERMITES AND TICKS

## COMMERCIAL • INDUSTRIAL RESIDENTIAL • APARTMENTS

- Removal of HPD Violations and Health Department Violations
- Servicing NYC & Metro Areas
- Monthly, Quarterly, Annual Services
- Licensed & Insured by NYS DEC. Reg. Lic.#17257
- Over 25 Years Experience



**CALL FOR FREE ESTIMATE • 718-220-1410**



189 Schofield Street  
Bronx, NY 10464  
**718-506-2250**  
**Fax: 212-409-8555**  
[www.AEsafewaysystems.com](http://www.AEsafewaysystems.com)

ing meals, many of our teachers, our educators, our administrators were all there because we always show up in the good and bad times, and now it's time for the City to show up for us, to make sure that we get a fair contract now.”

Gibson told the cheering crowd that her office has allocated \$20 million next year that would go to local schools. The borough president told the crowd, “This capital funding is a necessity, and I do it because it's the right thing to do, because if I don't do it as your borough president, then I can't ask for your support of me. It's a partnership; we have to work together.”

Gibson concluded, telling the crowd, “I will go to the end of the earth for our children, if it means wearing sneakers and fighting the good fight, walking with all of you and demanding a fair contract, I will be with you because you deserve that and more.”

“Tammy,” a teacher at P.S. 30 on East 141st Street in Mott Haven, told *Norwood News*, “We want a fair contract with inflation. We're trying to get paid like everybody else. It's not right that cops get paid, everyone else gets paid, but we don't get paid, and we're there every day since the pandemic. Every day, we go in, it's not three days a week, it's five days a week, and we work when we go home too.”

Tammy added, “We need smaller class sizes.”

According to the UFT, DOE employees have been working under a contract that expired on Sept. 13, 2022. On Tuesday, June 13, New York City Mayor Eric Adams announced the City had reached a tentative 5+ year contract agreement with the UFT, covering around 120,000 municipal employees, and bringing the total workforce under contract to approximately 66 percent.

The tentative agreement is retroactive, taking effect from Sept. 14, 2022, and expires on Nov. 28, 2027. UFT officials said it includes annual raises of 3%, 3%, 3%, 3.25% and 3.5% percent, an annual bonus which reaches \$1,000 by 2026, a new top salary for the most experienced teachers of \$151,271 including the bonus, and a new starting salary of \$72,349, including the bonus, by the end of the proposed agreement, up from \$61,070.

The top salary for paraprofessionals would be \$56,761, including the bonus. Under the proposal, all UFT members would also receive a one-time ratification bonus of \$3,000, plus their retro pay, which ranges from \$853 to just over \$4,000 depending on the job title and seniority.

*\*Sile Moloney contributed to this story.*



# NEWS BRIEFS

By SÍLE MOLONEY

## Pilot Program to Allow E-Bikes in Parks

NYC Department of Parks & Creation has announced that effective June 20, the department will launch a pilot program allowing e-bikes and light-weight e-scooters on Park drives and greenways. Officials said the pilot program will allow the same bicycles, e-bikes, and e-scooters that are legal to operate on NYC streets to also operate on park drives, spaces where bicycles are already permitted in parks. They said Class 1, 2, and 3 e-bikes, as well as lighter-weight e-scooters, are already allowed to operate on NYC streets and in bike lanes and will be allowed in parks as part of the pilot program.

In preparation, they said Parks has created a new webpage at [nyc.gov/parks/ebikes](https://nyc.gov/parks/ebikes), with a citywide map of parks showing greenways and drives that are part of the program, as well as a multilingual survey to both hear from and educate New Yorkers on electric micromobility. They said the pilot program does not allow e-bikes on pedestrian paths, and faster, heavier mopeds or motorcycles are not allowed anywhere in parks or on greenways. They said the lat-

ter are also precluded from bike lanes, and their drivers must hold a driver's license. For more information on micromobility devices, visit [nyc.gov/ebikes](https://nyc.gov/ebikes).

## New Bills on Menstrual Health & Products

District 18 City Council Member Amanda Farias recently introduced six bills relating to menstrual health which aim to expand access to menstrual cups, improve the distribution of menstrual products to incarcerated individuals, provide additional information on menstrual products and menstrual health to students, improve NYC Department of Education's reporting on the distribution of menstrual products in schools, and more.

## Coverage 4 All

State Sen. Gustavo Rivera (S.D. 33), chair of the senate health committee, has hailed the passage of his "Coverage 4 All" health care bill in both houses of the State legislature as a major milestone on the path to his ultimate long-term goal of passing the NY Health Act. He said that after receiving clear guidance from the federal government that New York *can* utilize federal funding under the 1332 waiver program to expand health coverage to eligible, undocumented New Yorkers, passing what he described as a "fiscally responsible and commonsense public health proposal" through the legislature will ensure thousands of uninsured New Yorkers can proactively take care of their health, while potentially saving New York State millions in the long-term.

Amid State budget discussions in mid-April, representatives for Gov. Kathy Hochul had said that ex-

panding the Essential Plan [healthcare coverage plan] to undocumented immigrants through the 1332 waiver process carried significant financial uncertainty and risk.

Section 1332 of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) permits a state to apply for a State Innovation Waiver (also referred to as section 1332 waiver) to pursue innovative strategies for providing residents with access to high quality, affordable health insurance while retaining the basic protections of the ACA.

## Clean Slate Act

The Clean Slate Act passed the New York State legislature in both houses on Friday, June 9, and now awaits signature by Gov. Kathy Hochul. State officials said the Act will automatically seal certain conviction records, after a specific timeframe, of people who have completed their sentences and have met eligibility requirements. They said the Act will help prevent discrimination against formerly incarcerated New Yorkers and provide them with greater opportunities through increased job security and access to stable housing.

## Early Voting by Mail-in Ballot

Bronx Assembly Member Karines Reyes, R.N. (A.D. 87) and Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris (S.D. 12), who represents parts of Queens, announced on June 9 that the State Assembly passed their bills to expand existing early voting options to include an early vote by mail choice for all New Yorkers. The legislation passed the State Senate and now heads to Gov. Kathy Hochul's desk for signature.

# Former Democratic State Committeewoman Sandra Pabon Dies

(continued from page 4)

paid their respects to Pabon, writing in part, "She was an inspiration, always striving to make a positive impact. Stay tuned for details on memorial services and ways to honor her remarkable legacy." At her viewing on Friday, June 9, wreaths from representatives of almost every level of government were seen. Pabon was interred on June 10 at St. Raymond Cemetery in The Bronx.

According to her obituary, the daughter of Neftali Pabon and the late Judith Fortyz passed away quietly at her home. "She leaves behind her great love, William (Billy) Martinez, one fearless daughter, Alexandria, and her son-in-law, Michael, three beautiful grandchildren, Micheal (MJ), age 9, Amelia, age 7, and Sophia, age 3. She's survived by her sorrow-filled sisters, Diana and Sonia, and grief-stricken twin brothers, Neftali and Elvis. She will forever live on in the hearts of all her cousins, nieces and nephews."

Friends of Mosholu Parkland executive director, Elizabeth Quaranta, wrote, "Our last conversation together

was in Sandra's apartment, and it was about beautifying the tree pits on her block and around the community. Sandra, I know your soul is listening... We will respect that request – tree pits will be done."

Leslie Froberg wrote, "Condolences to the family. Sandra was a powerful woman. May she rest in peace," while Socrates A Caba wrote, "My sincerest condolences. A true community Advocate!"

Meanwhile, Christy Perez wrote, "My condolences. Love you Sandra. Forever in heart, my love. *Descanza* [Rest]" Ticia DeNise wrote, "So sorry to hear this. She will be missed in DDIPA. We loved her dearly," and Alexander Gray wrote, "My condolences to the family."

Another resident Alicia Rodriguez, later wrote, "Sandra Pabon, you had [helped] me in so many ways. You always [prayed] for me and you loved my beautiful serenity. You are one of a kind. I will miss your laughter, your caring heart. When I saw u on Thursday, you gave me the biggest hug because you always gave me advice, and u said 'I love u.'"

She added in part, "We were together

at the doctors, same one. U gained your wings. I will always have u in my heart. So very [sorry] for your loss. Your mom was the best person in the world. I will miss her, and her beautiful smile gone [too] soon. We need to come together and be kind to one another. Life is so very short. [You're] here one minute and [you're] gone. She's our angel. Love u Sandra."

Fernandez also shared a selection of photos of Pabon seemingly in great spirits in various happy settings, capturing her trademark exuberance for life. The senator wrote in another post, "I love you so much Sandra Pabon. Your loss is so heartbreaking for me and everyone who knew you. I am so grateful [for] our friendship and the work we did together. May your memory and legacy of service live on through all of us. Rest in Eternal Peace."

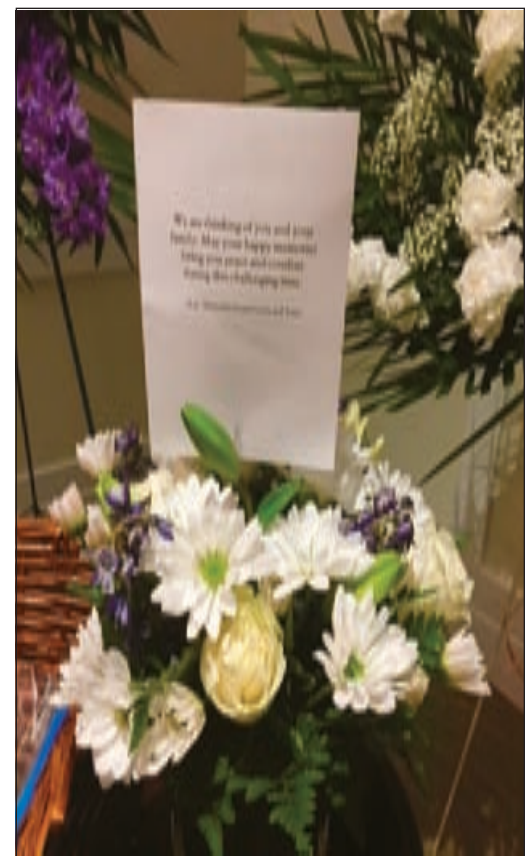


Photo courtesy of the family of Sandra Pabon  
**SANDRA PABON JULY 1961 – June 2023**





## Letters To The Editor

**Editor's Note:** We reserve the right to edit letters for space, clarity, civility and accuracy.

### Support for Sanitation Workers

I have lived on Wayne Avenue between East Gun Hill Road and Reservoir Oval West since 1993, and since my moving into the neighborhood, the conditions have continually declined. Garbage collection is sporadic at best, and when the trucks do come down the street, they go into the middle of the road, never actually sweeping up the dirt. The weeds are overgrown, making matters worse because the weeds hold on to the garbage. Large boxes are left so that rats can easily hide in them, and the mayor's office sends out information, basically blaming the residents for the rats. The situation has grown so grim that the streets are broken, easily causing someone like me to fall.

Last year, I was dodging a car on the Oval and my shoe got stuck in a hole, dislodging my shoe, causing me to fall and break my leg. After going to the hospital and going to the first rehab, I went to another rehab and the ambulance driver told me that when he worked for Sanitation, there were 15,000 workers. Now, there are 7,000. I would be demoralized if I were a sanitation worker now. The job is dangerous, but now it is deadly. There are more people, and thus more rats. I'm wondering if the intention of the mayor is to move working-class people out of the neighborhood, and then move more middle-class people in?

To add insult to injury, I called [District 11 Councilman] Eric Dinowitz' office, was referred to a liaison, and he was unable to affect any change. I called repeatedly and at first Julio was quite cordial, but then stopped calling me back. I think he was stymied by the bureaucracy as well. These people who wish to do well for the people in the neighborhood cannot, because the mayor is unwilling to hire enough workers to do anything meaningful. Unfortunately, the unions have abdicated their responsibility to defend both their workers and the communities they serve.

**Carol Lang  
Norwood**

**Editor's Note:** Norwood News reached out to NYC Department of Sanitation (DSNY) on this matter. A spokesperson said the claims that "collection is sporadic at best" were not realistic, that the trash on Wayne is collected three times a week "like clockwork, every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday."

"After the depths of the pandemic, and the bone-deep budget cuts that came with it, Mayor Adams has invested in giving the Sanitation Department the tools we need to get our neighborhoods clean," the spokesperson wrote, adding:

- We brought back full street sweeping after the mechanical brooms had been basically confined to desk duty.
- We are running the highest level of litter basket service in history – and

getting results, with overflowing litter basket complaints seeing a MASSIVE decrease year over year.

- We cut through a bureaucratic mess that had existed for decades to start cleaning more parts of the City than ever before – long-ignored areas like medians, step streets, and greenways, 1700 of them, in every neighborhood!
- We're now managing the City's graffiti removal program, which had been plagued by backlogs.
- We finally designed a universal composting program that, when it rolls out over the next 18 months, will truly work for all New Yorkers.
- We launched the City's first anti-littering marketing campaign in 15 years, shaming those who steal our public space.
- We have the highest uniformed headcount in 20 years — more Sanitation Workers getting more areas clean, including the first-ever DSNY Highway Unit.
- We are enforcing against the scourge of illegal dumping, using cameras to enforce the law, and issuing \$4,000 summonses.

In addition, in April, the Adams administration and DSNY took a massive, massive swing at the black bags of trash. After decades of "that's just the way it is" thinking, we changed the time trash can go to the curb. The old 4 p.m. set-out [time] was the earliest of any major city, and it meant our trash was often out for more than half the day — sometimes as long as 32 hours.

We moved the time later — AND we moved ALL of our collection earlier. All 24 million pounds of trash are now picked up earlier every day, thanks to the work of 10,000 department employees." They added that if photos of a specific situation are provided, DSNY would be happy to look into and address it.

### MTA \$100 Million Wasted on Platform Gates

There are better ways for the MTA to spend \$100 million than the installation of platform gates at three NYC Transit subway stations. These include the stations serving the 7 train at Times Square, the L train at Third Avenue / 14th Street, and the E train at Sutphin Boulevard-Archer Avenue; worse would be to spend billions more doing the same at even more stations. Only 128 of the 472 stations can accommodate platform gates. According to an MTA report issued in 2019, the MTA estimates it would cost \$7 billion to install barriers at all 472 systemwide stations. With inflation, who knows how many billions more it would cost?

There are many stations that due to curving platforms and other obstacles could not physically accommodate them. It will do nothing to prevent criminals from pushing people down a flight of stairs at street level entrances or inside stations. This expenditure of increasingly scarce capital funding would do little to attract all five million plus pre COVID-19 NYC Transit subway riders. Better to spend these funds for more transit police. They could assist the MTA in

dealing with the far more frequent daily occurrence of muggings, robbery, fare evasion, vandalism, urination, defecation, panhandling and the homeless, taking over whole subway cars or sleeping on platform benches.

This adversely impacts both commuters and NYC Transit employees. Investing \$100 million would go a long way toward paying to assign a transit police officer to ride each train and patrol all 472 stations 24/7. Installation of security cameras on trains at more stations would serve as a better deterrent against crime, fare evasion and vandalism. There is also the need to increase fines and penalties as a deterrent for those who don't pay their fare, commit assaults or vandalism. Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg and other DAs must follow up and prosecute those who commit these acts. End revolving door justice where the same criminals are released without bail. Too many return to our transit system within days to commit the same offenses.

**Larry Penner,  
Great Neck**

### Editor's Note on Richard Warren's Letter "Our 'Justice' System"

In the Norwood News edition dated June 1-June 14, 2023, in the original letter to the editor sent to us by Richard Warren entitled, "Our 'Justice' System," Mr. Warren wrote that Jordan Neely [who was killed in a Manhattan subway after being held in a chokehold by Daniel Penny, a marine, on May 1] "had been throwing garbage at and threatening passengers in a subway car."

I had not personally seen this reported in the immediate aftermath of the incident and Mr. Warren did not provide a source to support the statement, as required. I did not, therefore, include this sentence when we published the letter. As per our disclaimer, we reserve the right to edit letters.

Norwood News did not report on the Jordan Neely story and therefore, I based my knowledge of the incident on the official police press report received and on a cursory overview of what I had read in the immediate aftermath of the incident. In the police report, there was no mention of Neely threatening anyone or throwing trash. I followed-up with the NYPD press team specifically to ask if he had threatened anyone. I did not receive a response.

Because I could not immediately confirm that Neely had allegedly threatened anyone or thrown trash at anyone during the time I had available to me [Mr. Warren's letter was received less than 48 hours before the paper was due to go to press, typically an extremely pressurized and busy time] his letter was amended to say that Neely had been "acting erratically" as had been widely reported.

For context and balance, I included a reference to reports of passengers saying they had been left feeling uncomfortable by Neely's actions, as well as an account by one witness, reported by CNN, who said Neely did not appear to be armed

and was not threatening anyone. Additionally, I reminded readers that a person arrested for a crime is deemed innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law.

Similarly, regarding the Leonard Peltier case referenced in Mr. Warren's letter, no source was provided to support a statement that "the FBI withheld from [Peltier's] trial the results of their own ballistics tests that proved Peltier's innocence." Because I could not immediately find a source for this statement at short notice, I did not include it in the published letter.

Instead, I amended the letter to include another piece of information which I was able to find at short notice [in support of Mr. Warren's overall argument] which stated that the FBI changed their previous statements during Peltier's trial and that this became a highly contentious matter of evidence during the trial. Again, Norwood News did not report on this story or the related legal case on which thousands of words have been written over the intervening 48 years.

Norwood News is a local, nonprofit, community newspaper with extremely limited resources and a full-time staff of one which covers an area with a high incidence of crime. Our goal is of course to always report the news fairly and accurately under highly pressurized circumstances. We are subject to the same libel laws as The New York Times and have a fraction of its resources. Meanwhile, the stories we cover are not inconsequential, and have included alleged child abuse, murders, alleged negligence and more. Our priorities for each edition are therefore on the stories we write, not on letters to the editor written on topics we have not covered. Such letters are, nonetheless, also subject to libel laws.

It is for this reason we require letter writers to always provide sources to support the content of their letters. All statements are required to be fact-checked and this process takes up an extraordinary amount of time and resources that we do not have. Mr. Warren was not happy his letter was amended. We apologize for any upset this caused him and have already contacted him directly on the matter. We hope this explains the rationale for the decision.

A person arrested and charged with a crime is deemed innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law.

**Sile Moloney  
Editor, Norwood News**

To ensure sufficient time for review of all letters to the editor, please send them, along with supporting sources, to [norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org](mailto:norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org) or by mail to Norwood News, 3400 Reservoir Oval East, Bronx, NY 10467, by the Friday before each publication day. If sent by email, please mark them as "Letter to the Editor" in the subject line. Letter writers should aim to write no more than 300 words on local issues or in response to published articles. We do not publish op-eds from political candidates or from elected officials [with some exceptions for health-related matters]. Thank you for reading and for your continued support.



# Zam Zam Drugs Pharmacy, Providing All Your Needs in One Place

By **ARIEL PACHECO**

Located at 3105 Bainbridge Avenue in Norwood, Zam Zam Drugs Pharmacy has all your needs covered from prescribed medicine to basic groceries, and even provides free services like blood sugar checks, weight checks, and blood pressure checks.

Zam Zam Drugs Pharmacy is an independent pharmacy that has been serving the community since 2014, giving residents the best prices for all of their needs. The pharmacy team takes pride in always going above and

beyond for their customers and the business has been a pillar in the community since its opening.

"This pharmacy is unique in that we personalize our service for every client that walks in and not every pharmacy does that," said Nafiul Hoque, a manager at Zam Zam Drugs Pharmacy. "We want to give the best service possible at all times because we value our customers."

Zam Zam Drugs Pharmacy also has additional services like printing, travel services, and money transfers.



Photo by Ariel Pacheco

**ZAM DRUGS PHARMACY** storefront as seen on June 12, 2023



Photo by Ariel Pacheco

**ZAM ZAM DRUGS** Pharmacy staff (left to right) Rifat, Mohammed, Payal, and behind the counter, manager, Nafiul Hoque, on June 12, 2023 Photo Caption 2

They also accept Medicaid, Medicare, and most insurances. Seniors can get a 10 percent discount every day and they offer DMV vision testing. They also speak several languages.

Zam Zam Drugs Pharmacy has also partnered with hospitals in the local area like Montefiore and NYC Health + Hospitals/North Central Bronx, providing specialty drugs for the hospitals. Zam Zam Drugs Pharmacy management takes great joy in being a reliable source of personalized pharmaceutical services for the community. "We want to help out our neighborhood and be there for our customers," said Nafiul. "Our favorite part is being there for the people in need."

Zam Zam Drugs Pharmacy has also created a family-like environment where their main goal is to give

all who walk in the best possible service with the lowest prices in the neighborhood. Accommodating every customer is of the utmost importance. If they don't have a specific item available, the team makes the extra effort to find that item as quickly as possible at the lowest price possible.

"Even if we don't have an item that a customer wants, we try to go and get that item for them so they can get it the next day," said Nafiul. "I can also guarantee prices that are 20 to 30 percent cheaper than anywhere else."

Come in today for all your household and grocery items or to take advantage of any of the free services Zam Zam Drugs Pharmacy provides. Pick up your prescription and get some of the best service that the neighborhood has to offer! Zam Zam Drugs Pharmacy is open Monday-Saturday.



## CRIME FILE

BY SÍLE MOLONEY



### Norwood: Illegal U-Turn Causes Multiple-Vehicle Crash

An NYPD attempted traffic stop in Norwood and subsequent vehicle pursuit apparently resulted in the pursued driver attempting an illegal U-turn which, in turn, resulted in a multiple-car collision. Police said that on Saturday, June 3, at 10.35 p.m. in the vicinity of 2177 Webster Avenue, two police officers in a police vehicle with lights and siren on heading southbound on Webster Avenue were attempting to conduct a traffic stop after seeing a speeding motorist, when a 2012 Scion made an illegal U-turn.

They said the Scion attempted to go northbound from the southbound lane bus, cutting in front of the police vehicle. They said both vehicles collided forcing the police vehicle to strike a parked 2014 Ford, and the Scion to strike a parked 2019 Hyundai. Police said both officers and the male driver of the second vehicle, 42, were removed to St. Barnabas Hospital in stable condition. They said the driver of the Scion was issued a summons for the illegal U-turn.

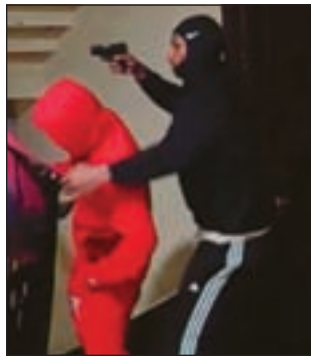
No residents we spoke to were witnesses to the crash. Three of the four damaged vehicles were seen about an hour after the collision between East 204th and East 205th streets in front of the Family Dollar store on Webster Avenue. Among other questions, we asked the NYPD if the 2012 Scion that made the U-turn was the vehicle being pursued by police before the crash. We were informed the information provided was the information that was currently available.

The police vehicle involved in the collision was not marked with a 52nd Precinct indicator though the 52nd Precinct stationhouse is located on the same stretch of Webster Avenue, a few blocks down from where the collision took place. Instead, it had an FSD symbol on the side which symbolizes the NYPD Fleet Service Division, a maintenance and repair shop for the NYPD. Fleet Service Division vehicles are reportedly older vehicles once assigned to NYPD units/divisions, were damaged or taken out of service, repaired by FSD, and later loaned to other NYPD units/divisions.



Photo by Síle Moloney

**A SMASHED-UP POLICE** car and a second damaged car are seen outside the Family Dollar store, located at 3150 Webster Avenue in Norwood, after a crash involving at least four vehicles occurred in the vicinity of 2177 Webster Avenue in Norwood on Saturday night, June 3, 2023.



### Fordham Manor: 68-Year-Old Man Assaulted

The NYPD is appealing to the public for help identifying the person seen in the accompanying photo above who department officials say is sought for questioning in connection to an assault that occurred in Fordham Manor. Police that on Thursday, June 1, at around 8.55 p.m., a 68-year-old male victim was standing in the vicinity of Valentine Avenue and East 194th Street when he got into an argument with another person. The person allegedly punched the victim in the face and body multiple times, police said.

They said the assailant later fled southbound on Valentine Avenue on foot and the victim was treated on scene by EMS for minor injuries. Police said the assailant is described as male, is around 30 years old, has a light complexion, long hair, and was last seen wearing a dark-colored, t-shirt, gray sweatpants, and white sneakers.

### Wakefield: Semi-Decomposed Body of Woman Found

The discovery of the semi-decomposed body of a woman at the end of a quiet residential

block in the Wakefield section of The Bronx triggered a police inquiry. Police said that on Friday, June 9, at around 12.16 p.m., officers responded to a 911 call of "an aided" person at the rear of 4438 Edson Avenue.

Upon arrival, they said officers observed an unconscious and unresponsive female, semi-decomposed inside a plastic bin. They said EMS responded and pronounced the female deceased at the scene. The City's medical examiner will determine the cause of death. The identification of the deceased is pending proper family notification. According to police sources, the woman is estimated to be in her thirties.

The area where the body was discovered is a cul-de-sac of sorts, adjacent to an overgrown pathway / track that runs from Barnes Avenue to Baychester Avenue through Bissel Gardens, a litter-ridden, wooded green area which some residents said they walk through to get to a local store on busier Baychester Avenue. Some said they did not consider the pathway safe.



### Mt. Hope: Straphanger Pushed onto Subway Tracks

The police are appealing to the public for help identifying the person seen in the accompanying photo above who they say is sought for questioning in connection with an assault inside a Mt. Hope subway station. Police said that on Tuesday, June 6, at around 6.10 a.m., the victim, a 42-year-old man, was on the southbound platform at the 174th-175th Street subway station serving the B/D lines when a man approached him from behind and pushed him onto the train tracks.

Police said the victim was helped back up to the platform by a good Samaritan before a train arrived at the station and was transported by EMS to Lincoln Hospital for evaluation. They said the assailant fled on foot to parts unknown.

We asked the NYPD if they

could provide any statistics on the number of straphangers pushed onto subway tracks year-to-date, in 2022, and what percentage of those pushed were killed or seriously injured. They said as of May 21, three people had been pushed onto the tracks versus nine people in 2022.

### NYPD Aide Arrested for Alleged Assault

Police said an NYPD police administrative aide was arrested in the 52nd Precinct, which covers the Bronx neighborhoods of Bedford Park, Fordham, Kingsbridge, Norwood, Bronx Park, and University Heights, on Sunday, June 4, around 10.10 a.m. The employee was named as Jacet Williams, 32. Police said she was charged with alleged assault and harassment. A person arrested and charged with a crime is deemed innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law.

### Kingsbridge Heights: Two Arrested for Robbery

The NYPD said two people were arrested following a robbery and assault which took place in April 2023 in Kingsbridge Heights. Police had previously appealed to the public for help identifying two people who department officials said were sought for questioning in connection with the incident.

Police said that on Tuesday, April 11, at around 8.30 p.m., in front of 235 West Kingsbridge Road, a 64-year-old man was sitting in a wheelchair when two people approached him and demanded money. They said when the victim refused, the two allegedly punched him and stole a cellphone. They said they later fled the location. They said the victim sustained a minor injury to the back of his head and was transported to St. Barnabas Hospital in stable condition.

The first individual sought was described by police as male, has a medium complexion, a medium build, black hair, and facial hair. They said he was last seen wearing a black, hooded sweatshirt with the words "Chinatown Market" on the front, ribbed blue jeans, and black sneakers.

The second person sought was described by police as male, has a medium complexion and a slim build. They said he was last seen wearing eye-

glasses, a black winter hat with a Nike logo, a dark-colored bubble jacket with a light-colored hood, light-colored pants, and black and white Nike sneakers.

Pursuant to an ongoing investigation, on Sunday, June 4, police said two arrests were made in connection to the incident. Anthony Martinez, 20, of West Kingsbridge Road in Kingsbridge Heights was arrested on May 9 and was charged with robbery. Anthony Myrie, 25, of Bailey Avenue, also in Kingsbridge Heights, was later arrested on May 22. He was also charged with robbery. A person arrested and charged with a crime is deemed innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law.



### Bedford Park: Two Sought in Shooting

The police are appealing to the public for help identifying the two people seen in the accompanying photos above who they say are sought in connection with an attempted assault / shooting that occurred in Bedford Park. Police said that on Friday, June 2, at around 5.11 p.m., two people approached 2754 Grand Concourse Avenue, one displayed a gun and fired one round in the direction of a moped.

They said the two then fled southbound on the Grand Concourse and no property damage or injuries were reported. Police said the first person sought is described as male, has a dark complexion, and was last seen wearing blue shorts, a white

(continued on page 15)



# Manhattan College Student Honored During Pride Ceremony

By SARA MARTINEZ

As Bronx residents and elected officials gathered at Bronx Borough Hall on Thursday, June 1, for the annual Pride ceremony to mark the beginning of Pride Month, one northwest Bronx student was among those being honored this year. The annual tradition of honoring selected members of the Bronx LG-BTQIA+ community was also an occasion to witness the raising of the Pride flag, which will fly alongside the American flag and the veterans' Prisoner of War (POW) / Missing in Action (MIA) flag throughout Pride Month (June).

On the day, Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson reiterated New York's commitment to supporting the LG-BTQIA+ community, saying, "New York will always be a haven for all people regardless of their sexuality or gender, and we will continue to fight against violence directed towards the LG-BTQIA+ community."

The borough president later awarded Citations of Merit to Tabytha Gonzalez, associate human rights specialist/transgender communities liaison at NYC Commission on Human Rights, Tony Jermin, surface level podcaster and social justice advocate, and Sandra Perez, executive director of NYC Pride.

Citations of merit were also awarded to Dr. Viraj V. Patel (the John Wade honoree), an associate professor and co-director of the Montefiore Prevention Program at the Division of General Internal Medicine, and associate director of the behavioral and implementation science core program at Einstein-Rockefeller-CUNY Center for AIDS Research and Faculty, a residency program in primary care/social internal medicine, as well as to Analia Santana (the youth honoree/GSA), a junior at Manhattan College, Class of 2024.

Santana (she/her) was honored for her youth leadership of Manhattan College's Rainbow Jaspers Club, established in 2014 at the northwest Bronx-based college, located at 4513 Manhattan College Parkway in Fieldston. Santana was accompanied on the day of the ceremony by her colleague, Elliot Babilonia, (he/they) who nominated her as president of the club, and co-faculty advisor Tiffany French (she/her).

Santana told *Norwood News* she was elected to her club role in January 2023, to continue creating and fostering a safe space and accessibility for LG-BTQIA+ students on campus. "We're a Lasallian Catholic school; part of those virtues is to be respectful for all people and [to cre-



Photo courtesy of Analia Santana

**MANHATTAN COLLEGE STUDENT** Analia Santana receives the youth award from Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson during the annual Pride Month flag-raising ceremony on Thursday, June 1, 2023, at Bronx Borough Hall, located at 851 Grand Concourse in the Concourse section of The Bronx.

ate] an inclusive community," she said. "We, as a club, work to make sure that the school upholds those values, and that people respect those ideas."

Santana said in her role she is responsible for organizing LG-BTQIA+-themed events and planning the club's agenda over the academic year from August through June. She said the Rainbow Jaspers coordinate with Manhattan College sororities and fraternities, with the Dean of Students and the VP of Student Life to host such events.

She said she finds it refreshing to be socially active alongside the other clubs and to network with the various sororities and fraternities on campus. "It was kind of like a stereotype that those places [sororities and fraternities] are very heteronormative and closed-minded, but it's actually the opposite, at least in our school," said Santana. "Whenever we *do* host events, especially with our sororities, we get [a] really good turnout."

Santana said last fall, faculty advisors led a task force on campus for LG-BTQIA+ students with the goal of addressing their rights. She said the project resulted in all members of the LG-BTQIA+ community, including students, being given the option to update their names and genders, as appropriate, on various college documents. Community members were also given the option to have their names and pronouns displayed on their student ID cards and software learning platforms like Moodle and Degree Works.

The policies were introduced in February, Santana said. "Professors saw your preferred pronouns and your preferred name, so there was no deadnaming for any students who are non-binary or trans, and had changed their name but just not legally," Santana explained. Deadnaming is the act of calling a member of the LG-BTQIA+ community by a name they no longer use. Often, this is the name they were given at birth.

She said the club has also created various resources and information about systemic support available to the LG-BTQIA+ community on campus. Santana said the club also organizes LG-BTQIA+ Q&A meetings to foster conversation in an academic space. One such meeting called, "Agitating the Charism Lecture Series," facilitated by Jesuit Priest Rev. James Martin and Manhattan College religious studies professor Natalia Imperatori-Lee, Ph.D., was an open conversation on building bridges between the LG-BTQIA+ community and the Catholic Church.

In addition, Santana said the Rainbow Jaspers host annual student Q&A events with LG-BTQIA+ faculty and administration members. She said these events are organized by the Rainbow Jaspers Club executive board and are open to the whole campus population including faculty and students.

In 2021, U. S. President Joe Biden proclaimed March 31 Transgender Day of Visibility to celebrate the trans community across the country and to raise awareness of transgender people. San-

tana said the Rainbow Jaspers celebrated the annual event this year with food and refreshments, in conjunction with Manhattan College's Women's Gender Resource Center (WGRC), while also watching a film about transgender icon Marsha P. Johnson. She said they also discussed different people's transitioning journeys and what gender identities mean.

Santana said the event was part of the "Seeing Yourself in Cinema Series" which aims to create discussion around LG-BTQIA+ representation in film. She said the goal of the series is to "explore the many different aspects of the queer experience seen in a wide range of films." In addition, the club also celebrated Trans Remembrance Day on November 20, a day that honors the memory of transgender people who have died through acts of anti-transgender violence.

Meanwhile, Santana views the yearly, flag-raising ceremony at Bronx Borough Hall as a political statement supporting and celebrating Pride. With much of the country divided on the topic of LG-BTQIA+ rights, Santana said she feels represented by her local government at the annual celebration, especially "now that there are over 600 pieces of [anti-LGBTQ+] legislation across the country, trying to criminalize people living their lives."

As the recipient of the sole youth award on the day, Santana's objective is to continue to uplift and support young people who are part of her community. As the youth honoree, she views herself as someone responsible for uplifting and leading the way for the next generation to come.

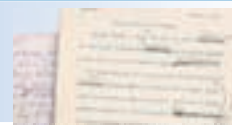
Other resources for LG-BTQIA+ students available on campus include the Manhattan College counseling center, the Lasallian Women & Gender Resource Center, Diversity Equity, and the Title IX Office which is a campus resource to report all gender-based misconduct, and race, ethnicity or other discrimination.

*Norwood News* contacted Manhattan College for a comment on Santana's recent recognition. The vice president for student life at the college, Ronald Gray, duly acknowledged Santana's various contributions as well as the collective efforts of the Rainbow Jaspers club. "As president of the Rainbow Jaspers, Analia works tirelessly for the LG-BTQIA+ community and is a remarkable student leader," said Gray. "We're proud that she is part of our campus community."



# NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

COMPILED BY SÍLE MOLONEY



## New York State Primary Elections June 27 Key Dates

Register to vote and update your address in order to vote in the upcoming June Primary by Saturday, June 17, at <https://nycvotes.turbovote.org/?r=votingnyc>. Early voting runs from Saturday, June 17, to Sunday, June 25. Visit <https://findmypollsite.vote.nyc/> to find your *early voting site* and hours. Request an absentee ballot in person by Monday, June 26. To find your borough Board of Elections office, visit <https://vote.nyc/page/contact-us>.

Polls are open on Primary Election Day, Tuesday, June 27, from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. Visit <https://findmypollsite.vote.nyc/> to find your *Election Day poll site*. Return your absentee ballot by mail (postmark required) or drop it off at a poll site by Tuesday, June 27.

## Bronx CB7 Community Coordinator

Bronx Community Board 7 is hiring a community coordinator. For details, visit [www.nyc.gov/jobs](http://www.nyc.gov/jobs) and search for job ID number 587540.

## Bronx CB7 Resource Fair

Bronx Community Board 7 (CB7) is hosting its Annual Resource Fair in collaboration with Orisha Wholeness on Saturday, June 24, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Poe Park, at Grand Concourse and 192<sup>nd</sup> Street. All are welcome.

## Laborers Recruit Apprentices

The Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee for Laborers Local Union 731 will conduct a recruitment drive from July 10 through July 21, 2023, for 50 skilled construction craft laborer apprentices. Applications will be available online at <https://recruitment.local731.com> from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., Monday through Friday, during the recruitment period. **This is a limited-application recruitment. Only 500**

**applications will be distributed, on a first come, first-served basis. The recruitment will be offered online for 10 business days or until 500 applications have been issued, whichever comes first.** Applicants who do not have access to a computer should visit their local library or their nearest Department of Labor Career Center. Visit [dol.ny.gov/career-centers](http://dol.ny.gov/career-centers). For questions, contact Local 731 on (718) 752-9860.

## Environmental Monday Park Clean-Ups

Friends of Mosholu Parkland (FOMP) remind residents that each Monday is an opportunity to get some fresh air and help with local park clean-ups. The group has gloves, bags, and grabbers and meets at 10 a.m. at the "Welcome Garden" at Bainbridge Avenue and East Mosholu Parkway North corner. They start promptly and end at 11:45 a.m. and say they love to see new faces.

## Funeral Arrangements for the late Sallie Caldwell

Funeral arrangements for the late Sallie Caldwell [Oct. 8, 1938 – June 7, 2023] of Tracey Towers, Norwood, are as follows. A wake will be held on Thursday, June 22, from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the United Christian Baptist Church, 713 East 222<sup>nd</sup> Street, Bronx, NY 10467. The funeral will be held at 6 p.m. the same day. The burial ceremony will be held on Friday, June 23, at 10 a.m. at Woodlawn Cemetery. The funeral procession will commence at McCall Funeral Home, 4035 Bronxwood Avenue, Bronx, NY 10466. Rest in Peace.

## Community Health Fair

District 11 City Councilman Eric Dinowitz and other elected officials and community groups including Bronx Community Board 8 will host the first

ever community health fair on Friday, June 16, from 11 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. in the East Dining Hall of Lehman College, 250 Bedford Park Blvd, Bronx, NY 10468.

## Bedford Park Road Closure

SKF General Contractors LLC will be fully closing Creston Avenue between East 197<sup>th</sup> Street and East 196<sup>th</sup> Street, with use of a crane to erect a new building at 2736 Creston Avenue from May 23 to June 23, 2023, between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday to Friday, one to two times per week.

## Help Save Fordham Evangelical Lutheran Church

Representatives for Fordham Evangelical Lutheran Church, located at 2430 Walton Avenue in Fordham Heights, are appealing to the public to help save the church, described as a cornerstone of the community for more than 105 years, and which is set to close for financial reasons. Representatives said the church provides services like *Head Start*, *Our Sister's Place*, various after school programs, *!Vamos Unidos!*, *Picture The Homeless*, *Common Wise*, *FIERCE*, AA, NA, *Everyday is A Miracle*, a food pantry, free ESL classes, and more.

They said that on Sunday March 26, representatives from The Metropolitan New York Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America came to the church to witness a vote on a resolution to close the church, and that the congregation voted overwhelmingly to keep it open. They allege that on Sunday, June 11, without warning, the congregation was locked out of the church, and that they have been asking to meet with church leadership ever since to implement plans to become financially stable.

They are asking for the public's support, as they allege Lutheran churches

that service congregations of color are not receiving help or support. They question why such churches are closing in low-income areas. Patricia Jewett can be reached on (917) 930-2493.

## DOB in your Community

On June 24, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., NYC Department of Buildings (DOB) officials will be at the Northeast Bronx YMCA at 1250 East 229<sup>th</sup> Street, Bronx, NY 10466 to assist residents with construction project consultation for small properties, general guidance about construction regulations, resolving open violations, and resolving Stop Work Orders.

## Affordable Housing Lotteries

NYC Department of Housing, Preservation and Development (HPD) launched an affordable housing lottery for units at 2441 Crotona Avenue, a 7-story residential building in Belmont with a deadline of June 20. Visit [www.norwoodnews.org](http://www.norwoodnews.org), and search for "affordable housing" for more information.

An affordable housing lottery helpline is available on (212) 863-7990 or via email at [nychousingconnect@hpd.nyc.gov](mailto:nychousingconnect@hpd.nyc.gov). For information on applying for affordable housing for people with disabilities, please call (212) 863-6486 or email [accessibility@hpd.nyc.gov](mailto:accessibility@hpd.nyc.gov). Housing ambassadors can be reached at [ambassadors@hpd.nyc.gov](mailto:ambassadors@hpd.nyc.gov).

## Survey re Parked Overnight Trucks

To help City officials address the issue of overnight parked trucks in Bronx Community District 7 and in other districts, which residents have been complaining about for several months, residents are invited to take a survey and ask others to do the same. The link is as follows: <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/1267646deeb5419284ab98c766ad6d9a>

# Out & About

COMPILED BY SÍLE MOLONEY & DAVID GREENE

## EVENTS

Drishna Wholeness in partnership with Poe Park Visitors Center and other partners will hold a **Veterans Appreciation Day Event** on Saturday, June 24, at 11 a.m. in Poe Park, Grand Concourse between East Kingsbridge Road and 192<sup>nd</sup> Street. There will be food, music, drinks, games, wellness and more. Call Pascale Pierre on (917) 557 1547 for more details.

**The Bronx Pride Festival** sponsored by various community partners takes place on Friday, June 16, from noon to 6 p.m. at Westchester Avenue between Brook Avenue and Bergen Avenue in the South Bronx, hosted by Aja from Ru Paul's Drag Race. There will be live performances and more. All are welcome.

Van Cortlandt Park Alliance and Bronx Arts

Ensemble invite the community to celebrate **Juneteenth** on Monday, June 19, from 6 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. at Van Cortlandt Golf House Deck, Van Cortlandt Park South & Bailey Avenue, Bronx, NY 10463. The program will begin on the back deck of the Van Cortlandt Golf House with musical performances and spoken word, followed by a drum procession to the Enslaved African Burial Ground for a libation ceremony, honoring the memory of the enslaved African people who built the park. Register to attend as space is limited on [www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com) and search for "Third Annual Juneteenth Celebration."

The 52nd Precinct, Puzzlelife Voice, and partners will host an **Autism Acceptance Day** event on Friday, June 16, at noon at 3016 Webster Avenue, Bronx, NY. All are welcome.

A **Caribbean Heritage Celebration** event will be hosted by Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson on Thursday, June 22, from 5.30 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Code Red, 1320 Gun Hill Road. Please email [smalave@bronxbp.nyc.gov](mailto:smalave@bronxbp.nyc.gov) for more details and to confirm attendance.

## ART

Williamsbridge Oval Recreation Center, 3225

Reservoir Oval East in Norwood, is seeking images of artists' work for a community gallery as part of the **Feel Free Art Festival** which takes place on Saturday, June 17, from noon to 4 p.m. For more information, email [Marcus.Riley@parks.nyc.gov](mailto:Marcus.Riley@parks.nyc.gov), [Ana.Torres@parks.nyc.gov](mailto:Ana.Torres@parks.nyc.gov) or [Malc.pinckney@parks.nyc.gov](mailto:Malc.pinckney@parks.nyc.gov).

## MOVEMENT

The **Annual Family Fitness Festival** takes place at the Williamsbridge Oval park, located at 3225 Reservoir Oval East in Norwood, on Saturday, June 24, 2023 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. There will be fitness challenges and sports competitions. All are welcome to this free event. For more information, call (718) 543 8672 or email [Sarah.Bishop@parks.nyc.gov](mailto:Sarah.Bishop@parks.nyc.gov).

**New York City's public beaches opened** on Saturday, May 27, and remain open through Sunday, September 10. NYC Parks reminds all beachgoers to be safe in and around the water this summer, and only swim when lifeguards are on duty, daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; swimming is unsafe and strictly prohibited at all other times. NYC Parks outdoor pools will open on Wednesday, June 29.



# Millennium Cigars, The Ultimate Cigar Experience

By **ARIEL PACHECO**

Millennium Cigars is a one-of-a-kind cigar shop located at 388a Bedford Park Boulevard in Bedford Park. Millennium Cigars offers various products for all to enjoy, including handmade cigars and an assortment of options to choose from.

The cigars are mostly imported from the Dominican Republic where the owner, Digna Guzman, grew up and learned about the cigar industry. Digna has a lifetime of experience in the tobacco industry which led her to start Millennium Cigars. She was first introduced to the industry by her father, who also worked in the cigar business when Digna was young. Digna opened Millennium Cigars in 2020 at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"My brother had his own cigar shop and was one of the first to open this kind of business in the area before he passed away," said Digna. "He inspired me to open my own cigar shop and now I am doing the best I can."

Digna has fostered a family-like atmosphere at Millennium Cigars where customers feel like they're at a second home. Customers can select the cigar of their choosing in the humidor, where all the cigars are stored. Millennium Cigars also has a lounge area where clients can relax, watch sporting events, and interact with one another, in a cultivated, warm atmosphere.

Millennium Cigars hosts private events like karaoke nights, holiday parties, and cigar-rolling shows. Millennium Cigars does not sell alcoholic beverages, but clients can bring their own for a small fee. It's an accommodating environment where all are not only welcomed but invited.

"My favorite part about my shop is being able to interact with the community and provide them with good service," said Digna. "I try to give the best service possible and make connections with people."

While there are different types of cigars, Digna says the most popular cigar is the Jaime Garcia. For beginners, Digna tries to find the right cigar for the client by learning about their preferences and helping to guide them to one that suits them the best. "This business means everything to



Photo by Ariel Pacheco

**THE OWNER OF** Millennium Cigars, Digna Guzman, displays an assortment of cigars available at the store on June 12, 2023.

me," said Digna. "This really is like a second home to those who come. I really try to make everyone comfortable and make sure they are enjoying themselves."

Millennium Cigars is open 7 days a week from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Whether you are new to cigars or have a familiarity with them already, Millennium Cigars is ready and waiting for you to come in today!

**Health Notice: Cigar smoking can cause lung cancer and heart disease.**



Photo by Ariel Pacheco

**SOME OF THE** selection of cigars available at Millennium Cigars as seen on June 12, 2023



# Elections 2023: Tess Cohen Profile, Candidate for Bronx District Attorney

By SILE MOLONEY

A criminal defense and civil rights attorney who has represented victims of sexual assault, among others, both in civil and criminal court, Tess Cohen is challenging incumbent Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark for the role she has held since 2016 in the upcoming Democratic Primary on June 27. Cohen is broadly running on a platform of reforming criminal justice policy and prioritizing prevention over punishment.

Before working as a defense attorney, Cohen worked for 8 years at the NYC Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor, where she held doctors accountable for prescription drug crimes, and worked to improve coordination between law enforcement and public health officials “to prevent further harm to those suffering from substance abuse.” She has also drafted policy documents and legislative improvements which seek to simultaneously end mass incarceration and protect public safety.

Given the existing laws governing criminal justice are made by legislators, not district attorneys who must follow such laws, we asked Cohen what her motivation was in running for the role of Bronx district attorney and how much influence or leeway was available to the person holding that office in determining the outcome of cases.

“It’s true that you’re applying the laws that are made by other people but it’s that you have actually an enormous amount of discretion as to *who* you apply those laws to, *how* you apply them, and what *the outcomes* are afterwards,” Cohen said. She said alternatives to incarceration were working “very successfully” in Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Monroe County, where prosecutors have the discretion to consent to people going into programming to address the reasons why they commit crimes, rather than going to jail.

“That’s all within the power of a prosecutor because of how the laws are structured in New York State,” she said. “For me, I very much want to be helping solve problems in the very immediate sense, getting people in need services, helping victims who need help, focusing resources on prosecuting the crimes that are hurting people

the most.

When we spoke with Clark, she told *Norwood News* she created a Community Justice Bureau which seeks to address much of the issues Cohen references. Clark said there are issues that are “forcing people into the criminal justice system in the first place like poverty, lack of jobs, unstable housing or school conditions, mental health, and substance use disorders.”

Cohen, meanwhile, said the DA also gets to set priorities and where resources are spent, saying it isn’t as though *every* City crime gets prosecuted. She said this was particularly the case with powerful people who “tend to hurt others, like landlords, employers.” She said “no one really pays attention” to what these people are doing because such cases do not typically stem from arrests, and have to be sought out and that it was up to the prosecutor to do that.

When we asked Clark for comment on white-collar crime, she told *Norwood News* that in addition to the resources, preparation and willing complainants needed to prosecute such cases, “It takes time to build those kinds of investigations. We *do* prosecute those kinds of cases; it’s not just easy. Anybody who does this work would know that.”

To Cohen’s point about prioritization, Clark said, in part, “We have a high incidence of gang gun violence that I have to put resources in, we have domestic violence, sexual assault, and drugs; these are the kitchen table issues that people deal with each and every day.”

*Norwood News* put it to Cohen that while we assumed nobody was opposed to crime prevention measures, her critics would argue that when legislators are soft on low-level crime, it emboldens criminals, which they believe leads to a cycle of criminality and recidivism.

She replied, “I think what we have to think about is, ‘Is what we’re doing now working?’” She said people should ask what the alternative is - an endless cycle of poverty, trauma, incarceration, and convictions? “What we’re proposing is an alternative that is going to work better,” she said.

Cohen added nobody was being asked to justify the current norm but they should be “because it’s not working,” add-



Photo by Miriam Quiñones

**TESS COHEN, CANDIDATE** for Bronx District Attorney, at 161st Street and Grand Concourse at the Joyce Kilmer Park on Friday, Feb. 24, 2023.

ing that solving the root causes of crime was not an unachievable thing. “It’s not that people need every problem that they have solved to make different choices.”

She said it can start with small things like “dismissing very, very low-level misdemeanors,” which she said made a person far less likely to be re-arrested in the subsequent three years. She said arresting people for such crimes decreased stability in their lives, when increasing stability was what was needed.

Cohen said some people feel that if legislative reforms are made, people won’t be held accountable, and that if they’re not held accountable, they will commit more crimes. “That’s just not what science really tells us happens,” she said. “What matters most in deterring someone from committing a crime is how likely they are to get caught, not what the consequences are longer term, because people don’t want to get arrested.”

She added, “If they think that they can deface all the property and knock out windows and cars and do all these things and never even get arrested.... we’re going to deter that not by saying, ‘If you get caught doing this, you’re going to jail for this amount of years.’”

She continued, “We deter that by saying we need to figure out who is doing this. We’re going to intervene with that person, whether [it’s] through an arrest and sending them to a program, or an arrest and going to jail, if that’s what the right outcome is, given the se-

verity of the case.”

When we had asked Clark what her achievements were since taking office, she highlighted her support of such recent legislative reforms. “I instituted reforms even before the legislature had changed them,” she said in part. “So, my philosophy on bail [...] was that if we are not seeking a jail term for someone, we should not be seeking bail.”

She said her office does look at the root causes of why somebody is coming before the judiciary in the first place and “determining what justice looks like in that case for the victim, for the community, as well as for the person accused, and doing what [is] right in that particular case. So now it’s not bail ‘em and jail ‘em. It’s who is this person, and what is the best outcome for justice for all those involved?”

On the topic of science and data that has been a bone of contention between different factions when it comes to the intersection of policy and recidivism, we asked Cohen which data she was basing her analysis on.

“The one about not prosecuting someone who did a low-level crime, that comes out of Boston,” she said. “The Boston DA’s office changed their policies, and they had data scientists on board who examined what the outcomes were when they shifted this policy and started declining to prosecute, and I heard the scientists interviewed and she said that they reran the numbers over and over and over again because they couldn’t believe their eyes in terms of how positive the outcome was by not prosecuting.”

In 2020, bail reform legislation took effect in New York State, eliminating the use of cash bail for most misdemeanors and some non-violent felony charges. It was driven by the State seeing mass incarceration of mainly Black, brown, and low-income people who could not make bail and an acknowledgement that a person’s freedom should not be decided based on their wealth. These changes have since been rolled back and tweaked during 2022 and 2023 to give judges more discretion when it comes to setting bail.

Cohen said the NYPD, Mayor Eric Adams, and others “blamed bail for the rise

in crime a lot.” While there have been reported instances of crimes committed by people released on bail, *Norwood News* reached out to both the NYPD and the Bronx District Attorney’s office to request any compiled data available on this topic. We did not receive an immediate response.

According to a March 2023 article by Gothamist, John Jay College’s Data Collaborative for Justice study showed that the 2020 bail reform laws eliminating judges’ ability to impose bail for low-level crimes reduced the likelihood that someone would get arrested again. They found that the one exception was for bail-eligible people who were released following recent violent felony arrests. The rate of rearrests for *that* cohort of offenders increased slightly, according to the report.

Last year, *Norwood News* reported on a case involving a Bronx male sex offender who was sentenced to 10 years in prison in May 2022, who had been released on bail in January 2021 despite having been hit, as a co-defendant, just four months earlier with 22 charges. These included sex trafficking of a child, promoting prostitution, and separately, for rape, a criminal sex act, unlawful imprisonment, and attempted strangulation. Upon release on bail, he attempted to traffic a previous victim, and was rearrested the following month.

Meanwhile, Cohen said shootings went up all over the country in recent years during the pandemic and not just in New York City and that that spike could not, therefore, be attributed to New York’s 2020 bail reform policy. “So, when we blame bail for this, that means we’re also probably not focusing on the right solutions,” she said in part.

We mentioned that NYPD data for both victims of shootings and shooting incidents showed a decrease during 2022 and the trend seems to be continuing in 2023. We said her critics would say the latest bail reform roll backs in 2022 and 2023 have contributed to this drop.

She said in part, “It was already true that for every violent crime, someone could be held on bail before this change in the bail law...like the tweaks that were done were some like

(continued on page 16)





BY SÍLE MOLONEY

## CRIME FILE

(continued from page 11)

T-shirt, and white and red sneakers. They said the second sought person is described as male, also has a dark complexion, and was last seen wearing a white tank top, light blue shorts, white socks and was carrying a bag.

### Bedford Park: Man Sought for Store Robbery

The police are appealing to the public for help identifying the person seen in the accompanying photo at right who they say is sought in connection to a robbery that occurred in Bedford Park. Police said that on Tuesday, June 6, at around 1.50 a.m., a man entered a gas



station located at 2947 Jerome Avenue and struck a store employee in the head with a can, simulated a gun and stole a sum of money from the register. They said the person fled southbound on Jerome Avenue and

added that the victim did not require medical attention. Police said the person sought was described as male, has a medium complexion, and was last seen wearing a black jacket, green camouflage pants, and a backpack.

### Fordham Manor: Man, 41, Robbed at Gunpoint

The police are appealing to the public for help identifying the two people seen in the accompanying photo at right who they say are sought in connection with an armed robbery that occurred in Fordham Manor. Police said that on Thursday, May 18, at around 10.45 p.m., a male victim, 41, was walking in a common area inside his apartment building in the vi-



cinity of East Kingsbridge Road and Morris Avenue when he was approached from behind by two people unknown to him.

Police said one of the two displayed a gun while both stole the victim's wallet. They said the two fled the location in an unknown direction. Police said the

victim was not physically hurt. They said the two got away with \$300 in cash, a debit card, and ID documents, the contents of the victim's wallet. After fleeing the location, police said the two used the victim's debit card at two different businesses and added that the total approximate value of the charges made on the victim's card was \$395.

*Anyone with information regarding these incidents is asked to call the NYPD's Crime Stoppers Hotline at 1-800-577-TIPS (8477) or for Spanish, 1-888-57-PISTA (74782). The public can also submit their tips by logging onto the CrimeStoppers website at <https://crimestoppers.nypdonline.org/>, or on Twitter @NYPDTips. All calls are strictly confidential.*

# TO REPORT A STORY TO THE NORWOOD NEWS CALL US AT (929) 318 6595

## Stay Healthy on Medicare

Talk to your doctor about preventive services covered by Medicare

- Annual wellness visits
- Bone mass measurements
- Colon and breast cancer screening
- Diabetes screening and self-management training
- Counseling to help you stop smoking
- Flu and pneumonia shots
- Counseling to help you stop smoking
- Depression screening

For free and impartial Medicare counseling, contact HHCAP at 212-AGING-NYC (212-244-6469) or visit us online at [www.nyc.gov/aging](http://www.nyc.gov/aging)





# 2023 Lehman College Commencement Celebrates Diverse Paths to Higher Education

By JOSÉ A. GIRALT

More than 3,450 graduates gathered on the athletic fields of Lehman College in Bedford Park on June 1 to participate in the school's 55<sup>th</sup> Commencement ceremony. With sunny blue skies above them, and surrounded by family and friends who filled the outer banks of the fields and took up more than half the playing field, graduates received some inspirational advice from academic leaders, honorary degree recipients, and fellow graduate and valedictorian, Alesha Alli.

"What you want to be is not the same as what you want to do," Alli said during her address. "In the real world, *who* we choose to be is far more important than *what* we choose to do." The first-generation college graduate grew up in Guyana and is graduating magna cum laude with a bachelor's degree in clinical psychology. She moved to New York with her parents and one sibling.

"My parents worked tirelessly with little to no days off, with the underlying motivation that I, their daughter, would be able to achieve higher education and make all of their sacrifices worth it," she said. Crying tears of joy, Alli later thanked her parents from the podium. She plans to pursue a bachelor of science in nursing.

Meanwhile, Liz Carpio graduated with cum laude honors and a bachelor of arts degree in Spanish and Spanish Literature. She was excited because her mother made the trip from Spain for the occasion, and as she explained to *Norwood News*, "[I'm] the first-generation [college graduate] from my mom's side. It's a huge achievement for me and my family too."

Commuting to Lehman was not a big deal for Carpio, 35, as she lives in the

Kingsbridge/Van Cortlandt Village area and was able to walk to school on some days. She felt loving support immediately after the ceremony from her husband Danny Sanchez and their 7-year-old daughter Megan.

Carpio got a head start on her academic journey back in her homeland. "I have [a degree] in business administration from back in my country, Colombia," she said. Carpio was able to transfer 51 credits to Lehman making her academic journey towards a bachelor's degree just a little less longer than it could have been, at two and a half years.

However, her life's story has been filled with different challenges. "It wasn't easy because I'm also a mom, a full-time student [with] a full-time job," she said. "So put all that together [and] it was hard when you [prepare] for finals, the final exam. It was tough, [especially] during the pandemic."

For Steven Cruz, 23, the day marked the completion of his bachelor of science degree in business administration. His academic journey started downtown at the Borough of Manhattan Community College, where he studied business management, and where he received an associate degree. During the pandemic, he looked for a school that offered more online courses and decided on Lehman College. He also felt the need for online courses because he had started full-time work at JP Morgan.

Cruz spent his early childhood in the Kingsbridge/Riverdale area, but his family moved to Yonkers by the time he was in high school. He has commuted from the Westchester suburb for all his on-campus college classes. "It's been an insane jour-



Photo by José Giralt

**DJ GRAND MASTER** Flash speaks at Lehman College on June 1, 2023.

ney," he told *Norwood News*. "After four years of doing full-time schoolwork during college and working full time, I decided to go part time for two years, and so [far], this degree has cost me six years of academic work. At this point, it's more of a celebration and an honor towards my family. I feel like it means more to them than it means to me, because I'm already working full time."

Unlike some of the other graduates, Cruz is not the first in his family to graduate from college. His sister graduated from Lehman before him. He chuckled when saying, "You can say I'm a legacy at Lehman College." Cruz credits his family with the desire to attend college. "It's always been instilled in me since I was a kid," he said. "My mom and my siblings would always say, 'Hey you're the smart one! You're the one that's going to go to college.' Hearing that, kind of programmed me mentally to actually want this to be a part of my goals and aspirations."

Unlike most of the graduates, one degree recipient never imagined being a college student, much less being conferred with an honorary doctor of music degree. Joseph Saddler was born in 1958 on the Caribbean island of Barbados but became known in the '70s to the world as DJ Grandmaster Flash. Recognized as one of the pioneers of the hip hop musical genre, through his innovative use of "scratching," "cutting," and "transforming," Grandmaster Flash and his group the Furious Five were inducted in 2007 into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame.

"I come from the projects," he told the graduates. "I come from The Bronx. I live in The Bronx. I love The Bronx." During his speech, Grandmaster Flash paused to gather his emotions several times and expressed gratitude to Lehman College for the honorary degree. "Musically, I got every award that you can possibly have, from Grammys to Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, but this one, right here, because it comes from right here, is the most important. My name is Grandmaster Flash. Thank you."

Meanwhile, also receiving an honorary degree on the day was former State assemblyman for district 78, José Rivera, the long-time Bronx politician who also represented the borough in the City Council. In 2000, he was chosen to lead the Bronx Democratic Party. Rivera shared with the graduating class of 2023 the same advice his mother gave him. "Seek and fight for the well-being of others, even as you seek your own success," he urged them. "For in the end, the measure of your success will [be] determined [by] how well you served the community."

## Elections 2023: Tess Cohen Profile, Candidate for Bronx District Attorney

(continued from page 14)

high-level drug stuff and then this sort of harm provision that mostly was at people who stole repeatedly."

She continued, "I don't see any evidence that it was the change in the bail law that caused a decrease in shootings, but I think it's more a sign of the stability that's starting to take place as the pandemic starts to quell."

We later put it to Cohen that notwithstanding the Kalief Browder case which Clark has acknowledged could have been handled better, the incumbent has worked to provide alternatives to prosecution, helped the formerly incarcerated with resources, including organizing job fairs, supported those wishing to exit the sex industry by declining to prosecute them, and instead provided them with

resources, and has organized various events to raise awareness about gun violence prevention, child safety and domestic violence.

In response, Cohen said the Bronx DA's office had the highest rate of turnover among prosecutors at any of the DA's offices, which Cohen put down to "mismanagement," though she acknowledged this was true before any of the most recent legislative reforms, which have added to prosecutor's workload. She said conditions had deteriorated greatly to the point where prosecutors had threatened to walk out on the job.

The NY Post reported in November 2022 that during a City Council hearing, Clark testified that rising crime and stringent discovery reform, implemented alongside cash bail overhaul, had led to a "marked increase

in attrition."

The Post reported that Clark managed to stave off a potential walk-out at the time and responded in a staff-wide letter, acknowledging the workers' complaints and promising a hybrid workweek and salary increases.

We asked Clark for comment on this point and others raised by Cohen. Her spokesperson replied, saying Cohen was "not a candidate with any real support." He added, "Tess Cohen's complete disregard for truth, data, and facts is much like the rest of her campaign, sad and pathetic. The criminal justice issues our city faces post COVID are serious and real."

He added, "While Tess Cohen spends her time making up facts and hurling accusations, Darcel Clark has rolled up her sleeves to make sure that safety

and justice are being served in The Bronx every day."

Meanwhile, in summary Cohen said, "I feel very strongly that The Bronx is so consistently overlooked and left behind compared to other boroughs. That we don't have these alternative mechanisms that are working in other counties, that keep communities safer when we need them the most, it's really disturbing. We have the highest rate of violence in the entire State. We have the highest rate of overdose in the city. We need these programs more than anyone else, and we don't have them. I think there's an opportunity here to make a real significant change in The Bronx by bringing in these proven reforms to make our communities much more safe, and increasing justice more generally is sort of a bigger pic-

ture idea of what I believe."

Register to vote and update your address in order to vote on Primary Day by Saturday, June 17. Early voting takes place from Saturday, June 17, to Sunday, June 25. Visit <https://findmypollsite.vote.nyc/> to find your *early voting site* and hours. Request an absentee ballot in person by Monday, June 26. To find your borough Board of Elections office, visit <https://vote.nyc/page/contact-us>.

Polls are open on Primary Election Day, Tuesday, June 27, from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. Visit <https://findmypollsite.vote.nyc/> to find your *Election Day poll site*. Return your absentee ballot by mail (postmark required) or drop it off at a poll site by Tuesday, June 27.

*Editor's Note: The interview with Tess Cohen was conducted on Feb. 24, 2023.*



# Construction Workers Burned in Accident Sue Stagg Group & Others

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Three migrant construction workers in their twenties, one from Ecuador and one with a young family, who were seriously burned following a workplace accident / flash fire in the Williamsbridge section of The Bronx have filed a negligence lawsuit against BE Bronx Builders, LLC, Stagg Group, and Mark Stagg. The accident occurred at 737 East Gun Hill Road, a new building under construction, on Monday, May 15, as reported.

The suit alleges that the named entities are liable for failing to protect their employees from danger while using flammable waterproofing materials, and causing severe burn injuries to them, according to Jacob Fuchsberg Law Firm, a civil rights and personal injury law firm based in Manhattan, which filed the lawsuit on behalf of three of the four workers injured on the day. The FDNY told *Norwood News* three workers were hospitalized and four were injured.

According to Jacob Fuchsberg Law Firm, three workers brought the suit against "BE Bronx Builders LLC and the Stagg Group for third-degree burn injuries sustained from the workplace fire and explosion at a new apartment construction site 737 East Gun Hill Road, Bronx, near White Plains Road, on May 15th."

The suit is filed against "BE Bronx Builders LLC, Stagg Group, and Mark

Stagg for their negligent, careless, and reckless behavior by failing to protect their employees from danger while using flammable waterproofing materials." It continues, "The explosion took place at a construction site on the first floor when these three men were waterproofing a storm water retention tank. While putting the sealant on the water tank in the basement of the building, the glue-like material caught fire and exploded."

According to the suit, "The three men suffered third-degree, deep blistering burns to their hands and face. They were brought to Jacobi Hospital, admitted to the burn unit where they continue to be patients. The fire was so strong that it also melted the light fixtures in the area where they were working."

One of the attorneys on the case, Alan Fuchsberg, said of the case, "This tragedy was avoidable if only there had been professional quality supervision, following the safety instructions for using this hazardous flammable material. Unfortunately, laborers too often are unable to have a say in the conditions of their work environment."

*Norwood News* spoke with Fuchsberg on June 1 and asked if criminal charges were also expected to be filed, in addition to the civil suit brought by the three workers, Fuchsberg said he didn't know anything about that side of things. *Norwood News* has reached out to the Bronx District Attorney's office for comment.



Photo by David Greene

**THE BUILDING UNDER** construction at 4180 Carpenter Avenue in Wakefield is seen on Tuesday, June 6, 2023. NYC Department of Buildings (DOB) said a worker fell 30 feet from the building on Thursday, June 1, 2023. His condition is unknown.

We also spoke with one of the workers who was burned who, speaking in Spanish, said he had been working in a pit with others at the time of fire broke out. Asked if the fire had been big, he said, "How can I explain? It was a fire that appeared just suddenly and then it went out, and then, I felt heat and there was no ventilation, and there was only a small door, but there was no ventilation." Describing his surroundings, he said, "It was in a divided room, and then when all

this began, we all shifted to one side to get away from the fire but we couldn't escape the smoke because it took over the room and there was no ventilation."

As reported, following a separate Bronx construction accident in 2019, three building contractors were indicted on Wednesday, April 12, in the first Bronx case to bring charges of manslaughter and criminally negligent homicide. It related to a construction fatality which took place, as reported by *Norwood News* at the time, at 94 East 208th Street in Norwood in 2019.

In the meantime, it was revealed by NYC Department of Buildings (DOB) that a construction worker fell 30 feet from the 4th floor of a construction site in the Wakefield section of The Bronx and has been hospitalized. Department officials added that safety violations were identified at the site run by BE Bronx Builders LLC, which is owned by the Stagg Group.

DOB officials said the latest accident in Wakefield occurred on Thursday June 1 at 4180 Carpenter Ave., a five-story building under construction. "At the scene, DOB inspectors determined that while the worker was sitting on a vertical safety netting system on the 4th floor, the netting broke, and the worker fell approximately 30 feet to ground level," a DOB spokesperson added. "The worker was transported to a local hospital for treatment."

## SATURDAY, JUNE 24 9:30AM

CITI FIELD  
SEAWER ENTRANCE

**REGISTER  
BY SCANNING  
THE QR CODE**

PRESENTED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

Join us on June 24, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. for the NY Mets Military Transition Summit in partnership with NYC Department of Veterans' Services. The theme of the Summit is "Tools & Resources for Hacking Your Transition" and will feature discussion panels on education, employment, financial security, housing, health and emotional wellness and more... Lunch & refreshments will be provided, along with a chance to meet Mr. & Mrs. Met, a tour of the New York Mets Clubhouse, giveaways, and more. Scan the QR Code to Register! Space is limited! RSVP to secure your spot! Admission will be granted on a first-come, first-served basis





**Shop local  
and Save !**

Small businesses and big  
savings await at the  
Jerome Gun Hill BID.

[jeromegunhillbid.org](http://jeromegunhillbid.org)  
BID hotline 718-324-4946

@jeromegunhillbid  
 @jghbid



# Classifieds

## Professional Directory

### COMPUTER SERVICES

#### Computer Repair

Computer Repair Upgrade, troubleshooting, lap-top overheats, cracked screen, broken power jack, virus removal, data recovery. Call James (646) 281-4475, (718) 324-4332.

## Public and Community Meetings

The 52<sup>nd</sup> **PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL** meetings usually take place on the third Thursday of the month at 7 p.m., sometimes in person and sometimes online. Call the 52nd Precinct Community Affairs office at (718) 220-5824 to be added to the email distribution list.

The next **BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 7** general board meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 28, at 6.30 p.m. on Zoom. The Meeting ID is 859 4776 2187, or to join by phone, dial (646) 558-8656. Contact [KCabreraCarrera@cb.nyc.gov](mailto:KCabreraCarrera@cb.nyc.gov) to be added to the distribution list. All meetings are being held virtually, via Zoom, until further notice.

The next **BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 8** full board meeting will be held on June 29 at 7 p.m. via Zoom. Contact [BX08@cb.nyc.gov](mailto:BX08@cb.nyc.gov) to be added to the distribution list.

The **BEDFORD MOSHOLU COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION** meetings are usually held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m., sometimes in person and sometimes online. The next meeting will be held in September. For details, please contact [bedfordmosholu@verizon.net](mailto:bedfordmosholu@verizon.net).

### CORRECTONS

In the Norwood News edition dated June 1-June 14, 2023, in our page 17 story, "Final Kingsbridge Armory Workshop Held," we incorrectly referenced the location of Walton High School as being in Norwood. In fact, Walton High School is located in Kingsbridge Heights. We apologize for this error.



Photo courtesy of the Children's Hospital at Montefiore  
**NEW YORK YANKEES** first baseman Anthony Rizzo (center) is teaming up with the Children's Hospital at Montefiore and its marathon runners to raise funds for children battling illness.



# APARTMENTS FOR RENT

**LANGSAM PROPERTY SERVICES CORP., AMO®**  
A COMPREHENSIVE REAL ESTATE SERVICE ORGANIZATION

1601 Bronxdale Avenue • Bronx, NY 10462 • T 718 518 8000 • F 718 518 8585  
[www.langsampropertyservices.com](http://www.langsampropertyservices.com)



# Sallie Caldwell, Some Woman for One Woman

(continued from page 1)

Local graffiti clean-up group, Guerinos against Graffiti\*, wrote in a social media post, “We are [absolutely] heartbroken to learn today that Brenda Caldwell-Paris, president of the 52nd Precinct Community Council’s mother, Sallie Caldwell, had passed away. It was just the other week we were smiling, laughing & dancing together at Councilmember Oswald Feliz’s Senior Brunch. She was an absolute delight, fun, and a wonderful person to be around. We are in shock to hear this news. Our condolences to her family & friends.”

Norwood News had spoken frequently to Caldwell over the years as she advocated for herself and other tenants on various issues affecting Tracey Towers, whether it was security concerns about broken doors, broken elevators, broken intercoms and who exactly was being given access to the building, safety issues following two substantial fires which broke out in recent years at the twin tower complex, or concerns over potential changes to the onsite Tracey Towers voting center during elections.

An active tenant, she always spoke passionately on behalf of her neighbors about any issue which might affect them. At last year’s fall festival, she spoke of the most recent rent hikes at the complex which she said residents were told were down to an increase in insurance costs. However, she said tenants were required to purchase their own insurance to cover the contents of their own apartments. She said there was a feeling, therefore, among some residents that such a rent hikes were unwarranted.

We recently spoke to Nelson Dankwa, a fellow resident of Tracey Towers, who said he’d known Caldwell for over 20 years from seeing her in the building. “She kind of goes in and out all the time. I see her, I greet her. I think at one point she was head of the tenants’ association, something like that. She was very active, you know, in community affairs.” Dankwa added, “I see her in the park, all over the place. I was sad to hear that she passed away. I never thought about that. I hadn’t seen her in a couple of days.”

On Thursday, June 8, Caldwell-Paris took to social media to reflect on her mother’s legacy, writing, “Oh my God, I never could have [imagined] sharing what I am about to share with you all right now. My heart is in so much pain - filled with much sadness of sharing with you the passing of my mother, AMAZING, AWESOME Sallie Caldwell, who is a community legend. After a full life of living, love, laughs, friendship, and community activism that touched countless individuals, my mother went home to glory early Wednesday morning, June 7, 2023.”

The 52nd Precinct Community Council president continued, “As many of you know, my mother has lived in the Norwood section well over 30+ years and has been a long-time, loyal, and devoted community activist who always gave back, and helped her neighbors and commu-



Photo by Adi Talwar

**THE ANNUAL JEROME** Gun Hill BID board meeting convened at the Keeper’s House, located at 3400 Reservoir Oval East in Norwood, on Thursday, May 25, 2023. It was a hybrid meeting with some attendees joining virtually and others in-person. The gathering saw discussions on various matters, including crime prevention, the rise of marijuana-related business establishments, homelessness concerns, and measures for improving street cleanliness within the BID. The occasion was catered for by Father and Son BBQ. Pictured (seated in the foreground) is board member, Sallie Caldwell, who died in June 2023, as she speaks to Jerome Gun Hill BID executive director, Daniela Beasley, and other attendees.

nities nearby. My mom was a member of Community Board 7, and later on served as their first vice-chair until 2007, under then-former district manager Rita Kesler.”

Caldwell-Paris added, “I believe there is not anyone who didn’t know Sallie, for everywhere I went, there was always [someone] asking me how she [was] doing. Mom was known as Ms. Sallie Mama, Mother Caldwell, Community Mayor but [was] mostly known as a woman who always [maintained] a real, upfront, straightforward, fighting spirit and often spoke her mind.”

She continued, “Sallie worked with the 52nd Precinct Community Council well over 30+ years, starting with positions: recording secretary, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, [and] ending with the corresponding secretary. She was totally devoted [to] the Precinct Council, loved the officers of the precinct, and saw many rise up to higher ranks. She attended and worked at every meeting and community council event. Due to her health, [she] became one of our honorary members. Many of you know she really did not like stepping back.”

Caldwell-Paris said the Council was very blessed to have had such a trailblazer as her mom who, she said, cared so much about the community, her local precinct relationships, and the com-

munity being able to address their concerns.

Former District 15 City Council candidate Kenny Agosto, who now works for the Office of the Bronx Borough President, also paid a heartfelt tribute to the “Mayor of Tracey Towers,” describing Caldwell as “the original, the indomitable, the unsinkable Ms. Sallie Caldwell, proud mother to all of our community, God-loving Christian, [a] bona-fide NYS legislative public servant, [a] super NYC municipal worker, [and] powerful Tracey Towers resident advocate.”

Agosto went on to describe Caldwell, among her many other roles, as a one-woman Herculean Bronx activist, a strong, retired DC 37 union member, an NYC Board of Elections coordinator extraordinaire, a member of the Bedford Mosholu Community Association, a loquaciously frank and fired-up Democrat who, he said, became the legendary first president of the Liberty Democratic Association, and most of all “a loyal friend.”

“Ms. Sallie, you have saved me in every possible way,” Agosto wrote. “I have been blessed to know you. I will always be eternally grateful to you. Thank you for your friendship, your mentorship, and most of all, your LOVE.” He added, “May the almighty God anoint your soul with his perpetual light and may he con-

tinue to bless and comfort your beautiful family, friends and community. Rest in Peace & Power, my queen mother. You were simply The Best.”

In perhaps a reference to Caldwell’s fairly sudden death, her daughter appealed to neighbors and colleagues to remember to spend time with their loved ones and friends. “It is so, so precious. Let’s not waste time,” Caldwell-Paris said. “Tomorrow is not promised.”

She continued, “As I close, Mom always said she was taught no matter where you live, you should pitch in and try to help make a change. Mom had touched so many people along her community journey. She might have had a different kind of way of showing it, but she cared and loved the friendships [with] many of you.”

The council president concluded, “Thank you all for being mom’s friend, going down the community roads and back again with her.” She quoted from Colossians 3:14. “And over all these virtues, put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.” Caldwell-Paris added, “Rest in Peace, Mom. May the work you have done speak for you. What a legacy you left behind.”

Funeral details for can be found in our Neighborhood Notes section on page 12.



# Injured Construction Workers & All Other Accident Victims

*We Fight for the Money You Deserve  
Regardless of Your Immigration Status*

- Construction & Workplace Accidents
- Car & Truck Accidents
- Negligent Building Security
- Slip, Trip & Falls
- Elevator / Escalator Accidents
- Medical Malpractice
- Nursing Home Negligence
- Police Brutality
- Civil Rights Violations
- Victims of Sexual Abuse



## Our **GUARANTEE**

**There is NO FEE Unless We Win**

Our firm has recovered over  
***Three Hundred Million Dollars***  
in verdicts and settlements  
for our satisfied clients

## **FREE CONSULTATION**

**Call 24 Hours • 7 days a Week**

## *Some Recent Verdicts & Recoveries for Clients*

Construction Accident - \$19,500,000 • Truck Accident - \$10,000,000  
Police Misconduct - \$28,000,000 • Elevator Accident - \$1,400,000  
Car Accident - \$1,600,000 • Slip & Fall Accident - \$2,650,000

**If You Can't Come to Us...We'll Come to You**

*Expenses payable upon conclusion of case. Prior results do not guarantee a similar outcome*

# **RASKIN & KREMINS, LLP**

*Over 75 Years Of Combined Personal Injury Law Experience*

**[www.raskrem.com](http://www.raskrem.com)**

160 Broadway (4th Fl.) New York, NY  
Bronx Office - by appointment only

**718-878-4858**  
**212-587-3434**

**2 3 4 5 A C J Z** TO FULTON STREET

**N R W** TO CORTLANDT STREET