



NORWOOD NEWS

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SEE PAGE 8

Photo by Síle Moloney

NEW YORK CITY Mayor Zohran Mamdani visits Bronx Community College Early Childhood Center, located at 2155 University Avenue in the University Heights section of The Bronx, on Friday, March 6, 2026 to highlight that School District 10, which covers Fordham, Belmont, Norwood, Marble Hill, Morris Heights, Riverdale, Spuyten Duyvil, Van Cortlandt Village and Kingsbridge as well as parts of Kingsbridge Heights, Bedford Park, Mount Hope, Claremont- Bathgate & East Tremont, is one of the four initial NYC school districts that will receive free 2-K childcare seats this fall.



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Kingsbridge: NYPD Cop Suspended after Man Shot in Head

By SILE MOLONEY

An NYPD employee has been suspended without pay after allegedly, while off duty, shooting a 30-year-old man in the head in the Kingsbridge section of The Bronx, police said. The victim remains hospitalized and in critical condition.

When contacted on Wednesday, March 18, police told *Norwood News* that on Monday, March 16, at around 9.12 p.m. officers responded to a 911 call regarding a man who had been shot in front of 167 West 231st Street. "Upon arrival, officers were informed that a 30-year-old male sustained a gunshot wound to the head and traveled by private means to NewYork-Presbyterian Allen Hospital in critical condition," a police spokesperson said.

"This incident involved an off-duty UMOS (uniformed member of service)," the spokesperson continued. "This was related to a previously reported stolen vehicle. The off-duty UMOS had an interaction with several males and the off-duty UMOS discharged a firearm. The incident is under investigation by Force Investigation Division. The UMOS duty status is suspended without pay."

When contacted in the early hours of March 17, a few hours after the shooting, a police spokesperson had told *Norwood News* that on March 16, at around 9.12 p.m., police received a 911 call for a report of a man who had been shot in the head at 167 West 231st Street in the confines of the 50th Precinct.

"Upon arrival, officers were informed a 30-year-old male sustained a gunshot wound to his head," the police spokesperson said. "He was transported by private means to New York Presby-



Photo by Sile Moloney

POLICE CONES MARK the location [in the early hours of March 17, 2026] where shots were fired and a 30-year-old man was struck by a bullet to the head on Monday night, March 16, 2026, in front of 167 West 231st Street in the Kingsbridge section of The Bronx.

terian Allen Hospital [in Manhattan, across the bridge from Marble Hill] in critical condition. There are no arrests and it's an ongoing investigation."

The address of the shooting is a multistory residential building. However, police cones marking the shell casings recovered following the shooting were seen in front of 169 West 231st Street and Albany Crescent, which is the location of a driving school.

As reported, Attorney General Letitia James recently announced the conviction of NYPD Sgt. Erik Duran for the manslaughter of Eric Duprey, 30, during a police sting operation in the Fordham Manor section of The Bronx in August 2023.

Police had cordoned off a section of West 231st Street between Bailey Avenue and Albany Crescent while they carried out their investigation which included examining the windows of the Bronx Public House, located at 170 West 231st Street, opposite where the shell casings were located.

One of the windows of the bar was seen cracked by a bullet hole but remained intact. The following day, one of the bar employees confirmed a bullet had indeed been shot through the window while the bar was in operation. She said in the meantime, the glass had shattered completely and had fallen out of the frame. The windowpane was seen replaced the same day and the bar was open for business as usual.

The Temple of Enlightenment is located about 100 feet from the scene of the shooting close to the Bronx Public House, which is located on the corner of West 231st Street and Albany Crescent.

In the early hours of Tuesday morning, a driver in a passing car asked what had happened. When *Norwood News* told him of the shooting and asked if he wanted to comment, he said it was a scary thing but did not wish to comment further.

A group of men walking up West 231st Street from Broadway towards the crime scene and, separately, a local business owner of one of the few businesses which were still open in the early hours of March 17 as the investigation continued, also declined to comment.

Norwood News asked a young man leaving a laundromat on West 231st Street between Broadway and Albany Crescent near the UPS store if he had seen what had happened and he said he had not. When told of the shooting, he



Photo by Sile Moloney

POLICE CARRY OUT an investigation at Bronx Public House located at 170 West 231st Street by Albany Crescent in the Kingsbridge section of The Bronx in the early hours of March 17, 2026, after a 30-year-old man was shot in front of 167 West 231st Street on Monday night, March 16, 2026.

said it was "crazy."

Asked if he felt unsafe in the area generally, he said, "It's the Bronx, and we live in a kind of impoverished area, so I don't want to say it comes as a complete surprise." Asked if there was ever any trouble around the Bronx Public House, he said he didn't believe so.

The following day, *Norwood News* spoke to other business owners in the area, and many said they had already closed before the shooting occurred and said they didn't know what had happened. One business owner surmised it hadn't been a robbery gone wrong for example but something personal between people. He added that the area was generally safe and that there wasn't much trouble.

The latest shooting comes just over a month after 16-year-old athlete and student, Christopher Redding, was fatally shot at West 238th Street and Broadway, also in Kingsbridge, on Feb. 11.

Two other teenagers were also shot during the same incident but survived. One person has been arrested while others are still sought in connection to the incident and Christopher's mother has called on the culprits to turn themselves in. Police said the shooting was being investigated in the context of a possible "gang nexus."

The latest shooting statistics for the 50th Precinct, which covers Kingsbridge, are included in the Crime File section of this edition of the *Norwood News*.

Anyone with information regarding this incident 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 X @NYPDTips.

All calls are strictly confidential.

Health Dept Expands Mobile Food Vending for Vets & People with Disabilities

By SÍLE MOLONEY

The NYC health department announced Friday, March 12, the acceptance of applications to join the mobile food vending waiting list for supervisory licenses for U.S. military veterans and people with disabilities. As the first reopening of a supervisory license waiting list since the program launched in 2023, health department officials said the opportunity expands access to mobile food vending permits while maintaining strong public health standards.

“Street vendor reform is long overdue in NYC, and this is a step in the right direction,” said NYC Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Dr. Helen Arteaga. “The Mamdani administration is proud to support our disabled and veteran street vendors to help ensure they are given a fair shot when it comes to running their own food trucks and providing for themselves and their families.”

According to health department officials, around 1,300 food vendors have supervisory licenses in New York City, which allow them to apply for a permit at any time, including about 100 with supervisory licenses for U.S. veterans and people with disabilities. Beginning on July 1, they said the department will is-



MEMBERS OF BRONX Community Board 7, Bernard Wright, acting chair of the veterans’ committee while Chad Royer recovers from an illness, and Betty Arce, chair of the sanitation committee, make their way along Mosholu Parkway in Bedford Park during the Bronx Week 2025 parade on Sunday, May 18, 2025. Photo by Miriam Quinones

sue 2,200 supervisory licenses each year for five years under recently enacted local laws. With the opening of applications on March 13, they said an additional 300 veterans and people with disabilities will be able to join the waiting

list for a supervisory license.

NYC Health Commissioner Dr. Alister Martin said street food vendors are essential to New York City’s culture and small business economy. “Opening the supervisory license waiting list to more U.S. veterans and people with disabilities ensures that these communities have a clear pathway into the legal food vending system while we continue to uphold food safety protections for New Yorkers,” he said.

For her part, NYC Department of Veterans’ Services Commissioner Yesenia Mata said veterans deserve tangible pathways to economic opportunity. “For veterans interested in mobile food vending, this reopening creates a clear route into a regulated industry that can support financial stability and independence, while opening the door for more veterans to pursue entrepreneurship here in New York City,” she said.

Over 5,800 food vendors have permits to operate in New York City, including about 120 permits issued for veterans and people with disabilities, according to health department officials. They said the supervisory license program was launched in 2023 to implement Local Law 18 of 2021, which changed how mobile food vendors obtain a year-round permit and increased the number of

available permits.

To apply for the new permits, health officials said a vendor must have a supervisory license, which they said is offered only to a person on a waiting list. To join a waiting list, they said a vendor must have a mobile food vending license, which is a type of license allowing a person to work on any food vending unit with a permit.

As reported, City Council Member Pierina Sanchez’s package of street vending bills passed with a supermajority (39/51) on Dec. 18, 2025, marking a historical milestone for the street vending community after years of advocacy and with what was described as a broad coalition of support. Though former New York City Mayor Eric Adams vetoed the bills, along with around 16 others, on the last day of his term on Dec. 31, 2025, the veto was subsequently overridden by the council and they are now law.

Known as the “Street Vendor Reform Package,” Sanchez said last year that the package allows New York City’s smallest businesses to grow within a regulated, predictable, and enforceable system that bolsters the City’s business and hospital-ity sector overall.

Norwood News spoke to some vendors on Fordham Road on Feb. 11, and they weren’t aware of the new legislation. We reached out to the councilwoman’s office to ask about outreach efforts and will share any feedback we receive.

Of the latest announcement regarding expanding more licenses to people with disabilities and veterans, the council member said, “New York City is finally on a pathway toward a balanced street vending system. From the Council’s override of the mayoral veto on my bill, which will expand access to more than 10,000 vending licenses over the coming years, to the NYC Health Department reopening the mobile food vending waiting list for veterans and people with disabilities pursuant to Local Law 18 of 2021, we are beginning to correct decades of exclusion.”

She added, “For far too long, hard-working vendors were forced into the shadows by an outdated system. Expanding access to licenses is an important step toward dignity, order, and opportunity. I look forward to continuing to work with the NYC Health Department

(continued on page 4)



A STREET VENDOR sells produce to a customer on East Fordham Road in the Fordham Manor section of The Bronx on Feb. 11, 2026. Photo by Síle Moloney

INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By **DAVID GREENE**



This week, we asked readers their opinion on the current situation in Iran, and if they think America could be attacked at home in retaliation.



"I don't like it but you have to respect the Iranians. Do you know why? Three thousand years ago, the Greeks and the Persians had a big war, The Battle of Marathon, but then later they became very good friends. Would you like it if I came to your house and moved your furniture? You wouldn't like that, right? I think that he (U.S. President Donald Trump) did the right thing because if they were going to use a nuke on us, he wanted to be prepared. They did knock out the nukes last year, yes. Yes, I believe we could be attacked here."

Tony Apostolos,
Bedford Park
Photo by David Greene



"This war should never have happened. The administration currently in the White House is only milking America and its citizens. This president has only defended dictatorships and is not taking care of America's business. Yes, I think we can be attacked."

Rev. Carmen Hernandez,
Soundview
Photo courtesy of Rev. Carmen Hernandez



"By now, it has every appearance that a few generations of difficult and often contradictory Middle East policies have finally run off the rails. The pot is boiling over. The outcome and the aftermath of all this remain highly uncertain."

Roger F. van Vlissingen,
Parkchester
Photo courtesy of Roger E. van Vlissingen



"President Trump started an unnecessary war without thinking things through. He needs to be removed before nukes are launched. Do I think we could be attacked? Part of me thinks we deserve to be."

Phil Clarke, Jr.,
Norwood
Photo courtesy of Phil Clarke, Jr.



"We could always be attacked at home. I'm concerned about President Trump's motives, which are never good. It's probably about oil, as he makes deals with oil companies regarding Venezuela's oil. Then, he claims that global warming is a 'hoax,' the fact that Iran's nuclear program was a danger and needed to be checked. I am glad that one 'supreme leader' is dead, another may be wounded, [and] the fact that Iran's military has been decimated. I am also glad that Israel has control over Iran's skies."

Ezra Glaser,
Brooklyn via Norwood
Photo courtesy of Ezra Glaser

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Health Dept Expands Mobile Food Vending for Vets & People with Disabilities

(continued from page 3)

to fully implement Local Law 54 of 2026 starting this summer."

Meanwhile, NYC Department of Small Business Services Commissioner Kenny Minaya said street vendors are the smallest of small businesses and a defining part of New York City's economy, neighborhoods, and culture. "Reopening the license waitlist for the first time since 2023 marks an important step forward, and SBS is excited to help spread the word so eligible military veterans and people with disabilities can take advantage of this opportunity," he said.

Minaya added, "I want to thank Mayor Mamdani and Commissioner Martin and look forward to building on this progress through SBS's new Office of Street Vendor Services to ensure vendors have the support they need to succeed in every borough."

Finally, Nisha Agarwal, commissioner of the NYC Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, said too often, people with disabilities face barriers

to employment and entrepreneurship. "Opening the supervisory license waiting list helps expand fair access to opportunity and supports the right of New Yorkers with disabilities to participate fully in the city's economy," she said. "We look forward to continuing to work with our partners to ensure pathways like mobile food vending are accessible and inclusive."

To apply to join the waiting list for a supervisory license, applicants may visit nyc.gov/health/mobile-food, or call 311 to request an application. To join the waiting list, the applicant must be at least 18 years old and hold a current, valid mobile food vendor license, which is different from a supervisory license.

According to the health department, there is no waiting list to obtain a [mobile food vendor license](#). To get one, applicants must submit a license application, pay the required fee (U.S. veterans are exempt from the fee), and complete the [Food Protection Course for Mobile Food Vendors](#).

Families Bonded by Grief Seek “Safer Streets”

By **DAVID GREENE**

A crowd of nearly 100 people, including faith-based leaders, community activists, cure violence advocates, and several family members who have lost loved ones to violence gathered for a “Safer Streets Community Rally” outside the Kingsbridge Armory at West Kingsbridge Road and Reservoir Avenue in Kingsbridge Heights on Tuesday, March 10.

Among the group were members of the cure violence groups, Bronx Rises Against Gun Violence (B.R.A.G.) and Release the Grip / Bronx Connect (R.T.G.). Both groups are part of the city’s Crisis Management System and are programs designed to work with young people, residents, community-based organizations, and the public to promote safer streets and new norms where violence is not accepted.

B.R.A.G. uses the Cure Violence (CV) evidence-based anti-violence model that originated in Chicago, Illinois. The goal is to identify violently injured youth who are at risk of retaliatory violence, work with victims and their families and friends to help prevent future violence and provide links to resources and more. B.R.A.G. also mobilizes residents to raise awareness and promote non-violent norms.

The team mainly comprises credible messengers, people from the impacted neighborhoods who can build a good rapport with youth and other residents due to their prior history of engaging in activities that exposed them to risk of involvement in the justice system.

Other groups represented at the rally included Our Bronx, formerly Northwest Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition, Bronx Community Boards 7 and 8, The 4 Bronx Project, as well as teens from the Kingsbridge Heights Community Center. Bishop Boyd Singletary, senior pastor of the Alpha and Omega Church located in the South Bronx, told the crowd, “We are not just here to point fingers, but we’re here for solutions.” He added, “We’re calling for an end of gun violence, not just gun violence, but all types of violence.”

Event organizer Izaiah “Zeek” Barrow, founder of A Floorman’s Dream

Pre-Apprenticeship Program, co-founder of the nonprofit, Theory 9, and candidate for district leader in assembly district 81, told the crowd, “The bottom line is we have to come to terms on how we’re going to handle this issue with our youth. A lot of youth are dying, a lot of youth don’t have any outlets, there’s no resources, and there’s just pressure. There’s pressure for them to maneuver a system that’s designed to keep them down, that’s designed to keep them out.”

Meanwhile, six months after she lost her daughter to gun violence, Dr. Jennifer Gardener said, “We are gathered here today because something is deeply wrong in our community and we cannot remain silent any longer. Our streets were meant for families to walk safely. Our parks were meant for our children to laugh, play and grow.” Gardener’s daughter, Anthonaya Jada “Ming” Campbell, 17, was an innocent bystander who was shot in the head while attending a basketball tournament in Heffen Park in Baychester on August 23, 2025, and who died on Sept 8, 2025. The shooting also took the life of Jaceil Banks, 32.

Gardener added, “Too many families are grieving, too many mothers are burying their children, and too many young lives are being lost while the problems that lead to violence remain known and unresolved. Millions of dollars have been placed into budgets and initiatives, yet in many of our communities, the violence continues.” Gardener vowed, “I will not stop until our communities are safe.”

Days before marking the first anniversary of losing her son, another attendee, Marisol Miranda, recalled spending most of her teenage years in jail. She told youngsters in attendance, “You’re at home and you don’t like to listen to your parents. You don’t like to adhere to rules and regulations, but when you pick up a gun, and you shoot and kill someone, you’re going to be told what to do [anyway when in prison by the guards i.e. when to eat, when to sleep, etc.]. You’re going to be losing your life [freedom].”

Miranda’s son, Michael Hernandez, 27, was stabbed to death near the Barclays Center in Brooklyn on March 14,

2025. She added, “I want my son’s killer to be accountable for his actions, and the word ‘life’ needs to be behind a lot of these sentences because that’s what you did, was take a person’s life.” Miranda suggested that parents check their children’s bookbags and social media to know what they’re up to.

Speaking directly to the youngsters from the Kingsbridge Heights Community Center, Carmen Ramos, another attendee, said, “If you have a situation at home, speak to your parents. Bond with your parents. If you don’t have communication with your mother or father, you have other elders. You have family members to talk to.” Ramos lost her brother, Emilio Rosas, who was shot and killed near his Belmont home on Feb. 17, 2025.

Meanwhile, Councilmember Pierina Sanchez (C.D. 14) said, “What we do in The Bronx when we have tragic events, we turn that into purpose. We turn around and we show who we are. We are resilient people. So, I am so proud to, and will always, support you in everything that you do for this neighborhood.”

In efforts to convince local youth that their circumstances do not have to define them, at a prior rally held Friday, March 6, beside St. James Park in Fordham Manor, in response to a nonfatal shooting at that location on March 3, in which a young man was hospitalized, Sanchez spoke about growing up in the area, which experiences a high proportion of gun violence. Speaking in both Spanish and English, she said despite this, she had gone on to attend prestigious universities, had worked in the White House, and was elected to public office. Other cure violence groups traveled from Brooklyn and elsewhere for the same event in solidarity with their Bronx counterparts.

At the Kingsbridge rally, members of B.R.A.G. and R.T.G. provided information on various programs available to individuals and families in need of assistance. The rally was held nearly one month after Christopher “C.J.” Redding, 16, was shot and killed on Broadway and West 238th Street in Kingsbridge. Redding’s father, Bryan Corley, was scheduled to attend but an attendee said it was reportedly too much finally for the still-



Photo by Miriam Quiñones

CARMEN RAMOS, WHO lost her brother, Emilio Rosas, to gun violence when he was shot and killed in Belmont on Feb. 17, 2025, urged teens attending a “Safer Streets Community Rally” outside the Kingsbridge Armory in Kingsbridge Heights on March 10, 2026, to speak to family members if they were having trouble.

grieving dad.

One person has since been taken into custody in connection with Redding’s death, while several others remain at large. The rally also came several weeks after hundreds of teens caused a riot in Co-op City, breaking store windows and destroying store property.

On Monday, March 2, the NYPD announced that in the first two months of 2026, the city experienced the fewest city-wide homicides, shootings, and shooting victims in recorded history, reporting 32 killings and beating the previous low of 38, set in 2018. However, year-to-date boroughwide murders in The Bronx are up 26.7%, the year-to-date boroughwide shooting victim count is up 35.7%, and year-to-date shootings are also up 29.7%. Check out our latest Crime File in this edition of the *Norwood News* for more specific year-to-date statistics for local precincts.



Photo by Miriam Quiñones

BISHOP BOYD SINGLETARY (2nd left) places a hand on the shoulder of Marisol Miranda during a “Safer Streets Community Rally” held outside the Kingsbridge Armory on Tuesday, March 10, 2026.



Video still by Síle Moloney

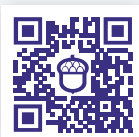
COUNCILMEMBER PIERINA SANCHEZ (C.D. 14) addresses a rally organized by various cure violence groups, including Bronx Rises Against Gun Violence on Friday, March 6, 2026, beside St. James Park in Fordham Manor, following a March 3rd shooting at the location.

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NEWS BRIEFS

By SÍLE MOLONEY

New 15 mph Slow Zones at Eligible NYC Schools

NYC Mayor Zohran Mamdani and NYC Department of Transportation (DOT) Commissioner Mike Flynn announced Monday, March 16, that DOT will reduce the speed limit to 15 mph at every eligible school location across the five boroughs by the end of Mamdani’s first term. City officials said the move is designed to protect children and their families on city streets and represents the largest increase to date in the city’s use of the existing “Sammy’s Law” to reduce speed limits across the city.

They said more than 800 additional school locations will see speed limits reduced to 15 mph this year, bringing the total school locations with 15 mph speed limits to 1,300 by the end of the calendar year. The administration plans to expand the 15 mph-school slow zones, where eligible, at all 2,300 citywide school locations by the end of Mamdani’s first term.

They said these 2,300 school locations house 3,200 schools citywide, with some schools co-located and said implementation will be prioritized based on available safety data and other planned street safety improvements. Mamdani announced the news at Flushing International High School in Queens.

“Families spoke up after unimaginable loss to fight for Sammy’s Law and deliver our city the power to make our streets safer for New Yorkers,” said Mamdani. “Today’s expansion of Slow Zones for schools across all five boroughs is just the beginning. Lower speeds save lives, and we will use every tool at our disposal to protect our neighbors as they move about our city.”

Bipartisan Coalition Suing OneMain for Predatory Lending

NY Attorney General Letitia James announced March 16 that she is leading a bipartisan coalition of 12 other attorneys general in suing OneMain Financial (OneMain) for illegally misleading its consumers and trapping tens of thousands of borrowers in expensive loans with hidden costs.

She said OneMain advertises itself as a lender that provides loans to consumers in need, including those with poor credit. James and the coalition allege OneMain exploits its “vulnerable” customers by loading their “already high-cost loans” with expensive and “often useless” additional products like insurance policies. They allege OneMain adds these products to consumers’ loans without their knowledge or by misleading them about the products’ terms and costs. As a result, they said customers are charged hundreds or thousands of dollars more for their loans than they expect. They said that in a vicious cycle, consumers are often forced to refinance into more expensive loan packages in order to keep up with payments to OneMain, at which point, they said, OneMain misleads them again and packs more products into their loans. James and the coalition are seeking court orders to stop what they said were OneMain’s misleading and abusive practices and to collect restitution for consumers who were cheated.

New Animal Welfare Caucus Formed at City Council

City Council Speaker Julie Menin (C.D. 5) and Council Member Harvey Epstein (C.D. 2) announced March 6 that a new Animal Welfare Caucus has been formed at the City Council. “Pets are family. That’s why the Council is forming its first-ever Animal Welfare Caucus, to make pet ownership more affordable and build a more compassionate city for every New Yorker, whether they have two legs or four,” they said.

Experts who work in the area of domestic violence have said that pet abuse can form part of coercive control and domestic abuse. In 2023, Gov. Kathy Hochul signed a groundbreaking law banning wildlife hunting contests statewide. The law shields wild animals from being slaughtered for sport, and marks a major turning point for animal welfare and wildlife protection in the state, according to animal rights activists.



Norwood: Two Injured in Fire on Decatur Ave

By SÍLE MOLONEY

There were two injuries reported following a residential fire in Norwood on Friday, March 13, FDNY officials said. Department officials said the FDNY received a call at 7.39 a.m. for a report of a fire in Apartment 4D at 3345 Decatur Avenue, a 5-story multiple dwelling located between East 209th Street and East Gun Hill Road.

They said 21 emergency units, comprising 79 fire and EMS personnel responded to the scene, one civilian and one firefighter incurred minor injuries and were transported to local area hospitals for treatment. FDNY officials said their condition and descriptions were unknown and added that the fire was brought under control at 8.10 a.m., and the cause is under investigation.

The Red Cross of Greater New York later said that it registered two households (two adults and one cat) for emergency assistance, including temporary lodging, financial support and comfort supplies following the fire. A spokesperson added, "Any residents impacted by this fire who need help with their recovery and have not already connected with the Red Cross should call 1-877-RED CROSS (877-733-2767) and select Option 1."

There were no injuries reported after a fire broke out in Kingsbridge at 2698 Bailey Avenue on March 5, and on March 6, several small businesses were damaged, after a commercial fire broke out on East Gun Hill Road in the Laconia section of the East Bronx. NYC Mayor Zohran Mamdani shared his reaction to the latter fire with *Norwood News* later the same day at an unrelated event, saying, "We continue to be focused on keeping New Yorkers safe. I'm so appreciative of the work of our first responders, the incredible men and women of the FDNY who run towards these fires when we're asking New Yorkers to run away from them."

He added, "We also know that there were a number of cars that were illegally parked by fire hydrants, and that continues to be something that we inform New Yorkers of the fact to avoid, as it's not only against the law, it also impedes the ability of first responders to respond to fires of this nature."

Last month, on Feb. 7, U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, held a press conference in Brooklyn to celebrate the \$632,000 in federal funding she secured for Friends of Firefight-



Photo courtesy of the Citizens' App

SMOKE BILLOWS FROM the roof of 3345 Decatur Avenue in the Norwood section of The Bronx on Friday morning, March 13, 2026.

ers for its FDNY mental health and wellness programming, along with the full funding of the World Trade Center Health Program (WTCHP), in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 funding package that passed into law earlier the same week.

She said the funding will support mental health counseling for current and retired FDNY firefighters and their immediate family members, general wellness programming, peer support, community building, outreach, and de-stigmatization of mental health services. The latter topic had been highlighted as a major concern by Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson in recent years due, in part, to the large numbers of fires experienced across The Bronx, which continue to stretch FDNY resources.

Gillibrand's office said the WTCHP was established in 2011 as part of the *James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act* and was originally funded for five years at \$1.6 billion. They said the updated funding secured this year continues that commitment to ensuring 9/11 responders and survivors receive the care they need, now and in the years ahead.

On Wednesday, March 4, fire officials from across New York State held an emergency press conference at the New York State Capitol in Albany, warning that a historic collapse in volunteer firefighter staffing has created a public safety crisis. They said volunteer firefighter numbers have fallen to their lowest level in more than 40 years, reaching a critical breaking point that

could leave firehouses unmanned and emergency calls unattended.

They said nearly half a dozen firehouses across the state shut down last year because of a lack of volunteers. Fire chiefs are calling on New York State legislators to pass legislation allowing nominal compensation for mandatory, on-duty fire personnel staffing firehouses, a step, they say, that is necessary to protect residents, firefighters, and first responders and stabilize the volunteer ranks.

They said fire service leaders point to alarming incidents in which fire companies have gone unmanned due to insufficient volunteer staffing, a situation they warn will continue to spread without immediate state action.

A day earlier, on March 3, State Sen. Robert Jackson (S.D. 31) joined New York Gov. Kathy Hochul and New York City firefighters and fire officers to celebrate the signing of the senator's bill, S4727, into law, guaranteeing that members of the New York City Fire Department Pension Fund can retire with full benefits after twenty years of service, regardless of age.

Jackson said that for years, firefighters and police officers hired under Tier 3 were required to serve longer than their Tier 2 colleagues to receive the same retirement benefit, despite working side by side, facing identical risks, and carrying the same responsibilities. He said bill S4727 ends that disparity and establishes a single, fair standard, adding that twenty years of service earns the right to retire with dignity.

The new law takes effect immediately and applies to police and fire members of the NYC Fire Department Pension Fund, which he said reinforces equity within the system and strengthens recruitment and retention across New York City's public safety workforce.

"Justice in public service must be measured not only by what we ask of our workers, but by what we honor in return," said Jackson. "I was proud to sponsor and fight for S4727 because twenty years of courage and sacrifice protecting New Yorkers should earn the right to retire, regardless of age or tier."

He added, "Firefighters and police officers who stand shoulder to shoulder in service deserve equal treatment under the law. With this bill now signed into law, I thank Gov. Hochul for standing with us to correct a long-standing disparity, strengthen recruitment and retention, and make clear that fairness in our pension system is not a privilege; it is a promise."

According to Jackson's office, by aligning retirement eligibility across tiers, S4727 restores parity, boosts morale, and sends a clear message: New York honors those who dedicate two decades of their lives to keeping our communities safe.

Visit <https://www.fdnysmart.org/> to read FDNY's fire safety tips. "During a fire, always close the door behind you!" fire officials say. "It helps contain smoke and flames, giving you precious time to escape."

Norwood First For Free Childcare

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

In what was described as a major step toward universal childcare for children aged six weeks to five years of age, NYC Mayor Zohran Mamdani and New York Gov. Kathy Hochul announced March 3 the first four communities to receive free 2-K seats this fall, and included among them is The Bronx's School District 10, which covers Fordham, Belmont, Norwood, Marble Hill, Morris Heights, Riverdale, Spuyten Duyvil, Van Cortlandt Village and Kingsbridge as well as parts of Kingsbridge Heights, Bedford Park, Mount Hope, Claremont-Bathgate & East Tremont

City officials said the 2-K program is a cornerstone of the mayor's universal childcare initiative and will provide free childcare for two-year-olds in New York City to any family who needs it, regardless of zip code, income or immigration status. They said the program will launch with 2,000 free seats this fall and expand to full universality within four years.

They said earlier this year, the governor committed more than \$1.2 billion to support early childhood care and education in New York City, including \$73 million to fund the first set of free 2-K seats. State officials said that investment will grow to \$425 million next year, and by fall 2027, 2-K is expected to serve around 12,000 children across all five boroughs, with the goal of reaching every two-year-old in the city at full implementation.

"Raising a child takes a village – and it takes a city government willing to step up and tackle the childcare crisis head-on," said the mayor. "On Day 8, we moved closer to making universal childcare a reality. This fall, 2,000 New York City two-year-olds will have a brighter future because of it. Launching free 2-K in these four neighborhoods is just the beginning of our work to put money back in New Yorkers' pockets, strengthen our entire economy and help more families build their lives here."

For her part, the governor, a mother and grandmother, said raising a family in New York shouldn't feel like a luxury. "Today, we're taking another significant step to deliver universal childcare. Earlier this year, Mayor Mamdani and I stood together to announce the state's

historic investment in New York City's 2-K program," she said in part. "This is how we make New York the best place to start a family and build a future – and we're just getting started."

Schools Chancellor Kamar Samuels said the launch of 2-K reflects the city administration's commitment to reaching families with the greatest need and building a system that grows to serve every child in every community.

"We are opening the doors for thousands of two-year-olds and their families, delivering free, full-day care and early learning and paving the way for bright futures from our students' earliest ages," he said.

State Assembly Speaker Carl E. Heastie welcomed the news, saying New Yorkers had witnessed a significant rise in the cost of quality childcare, which put immense stress on families. "Affordable, reliable childcare is essential for families as they maneuver their day to day, making today's 2-K announcement a step in the right direction," he said.

"Initiatives like Universal 2-K and similarly 3-K [enable] more community members to enter or re-enter the workforce, launch businesses, and sustain employment," he added, thanking the mayor, governor, and the legislature for their efforts. "When we work together, we bring forth positive change, keeping the families of New York first," he said.

For her part, Council Speaker Julie Menin, also a parent, said the initial launch of 2-K in neighborhoods across the city was a critical next step toward full universal childcare, and also thanked the governor and mayor for what she described as their leadership in moving the initiative forward.

"Together with the City Council, we are expanding opportunity for our youngest New Yorkers and delivering real support for working families across our city," she said. "I have long championed universal childcare as essential to making New York more affordable and equitable. From advancing the council's Universal Childcare Act in 2022 to advocating for the opening of a new early education center on the East Side of Manhattan, we are laying the groundwork to lead the nation on childcare."

Local Councilman, and another par-

Out & About

COMPILED BY **SÍLE MOLONEY**

EVENTS

Kingsbridge Library, 291 West 231st Street, Bronx, NY 10463, will host a series of free **Karaoke Nights** on March 19 and 26 at 5.30 p.m. Singers of all levels are welcome to join and sing in a safe and supportive space.

KIDS

Assemblyman John Zaccaro Jr. (A.D. 80) is hosting an **Easter Egg Hunt** on Saturday, March 28, at 11 a.m. at Pelham Parkway Greenway at Williamsbridge Road, Bronx. Call (718) 409 0109 for more information.

MUSIC

The Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford Park Boulevard West, Bronx, NY 10468, presents **Lavoe en Sinfónica**, a spectacular one-night-only theatrical concert honoring the life and music of salsa legend Héctor Lavoe, starring Raul Carbonell, reprising his iconic role on Saturday, March 28, at 8 p.m. and joined by the Héctor Lavoe Band, Pablo "Chino" Nuñez, Eddie Montalvo, Jose Mangual Jr., and Ray Martinez, and a full symphonic ensemble for a powerful, once-in-a-lifetime musical experience.

Tickets can be purchased by calling (718) 960-8833 or (718) 960-8835 in Spanish Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and beginning at 4 p.m. on the day of the concert, or through online access at <https://www.lehmancenter.org/events/eddy-herrera-returns>.

THEATER

To mark America250TheBronx, the Bronx County Historical Society, with the Kingsbridge Historical Society, Van Cortlandt House Museum and

From the Bronx present a free public performance of "**Cato: A Tragedy**" performed by Live History on Sunday, March 22, at 2 p.m. at Edgehill-Kingsbridge Historical Society, 2570 Independence Avenue, Bronx. Register at www.bronxhistory.org/cato. The event is sponsored by Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz (A.D. 81).

ART

Bronx River Art Center (BRAC), 1087 E Tremont Avenue, Bronx, is **hosting Spring 2026 Art Classes** from April 13 to June 27. Registration will open later this month, with courses in painting, drawing, ceramics, and more. Visit www.bronxriverart.org for more information, including class times, descriptions, and pricing.

Those who wish to register for art classes but require financial aid can apply for one of BRAC's Community Access Scholarships, which offers partial and full scholarships to weekly classes, plus other discounts.

MOVEMENT

Sign up for a **5K or 3K family, fun run/walk** at the Bronx Zoo on Saturday, April 25, and help save red pandas and other amazing wildlife. Enjoy a day at the Bronx Zoo with 10,000+ animals. Race day also includes free Bronx Zoo admission, star attractions and rides like Wild Asia Monorail, a DJ, music and cardio dance, games, activities and face painting, photo booths and wildlife characters, red panda T-shirts and medals, and free parking. Register here: <https://bit.ly/3OlgAN>.

Bronx River Alliance and Transportation Alternatives are hosting the **Bronx River Greenway Bike Ride** on Saturday, April 4. Meet up at 10.30 a.m. at Shoelace Park, 227th Street Playground. (Enter the park near Bronx Blvd & 226th St.). Wheels down at 11 a.m. The bike ride ends at Concrete Plant Park at 1 p.m. Sign up at www.bit.ly/greenway-bike-ride.

ent, Eric Dinowitz (C.D. 11), also welcomed the news, saying, "Expanding access to free, high-quality early education is one of the smartest investments we can make as a city." Dinowitz, chair of the education committee, added, "I'm proud that District 10 is among the first communities to receive 2-K seats this fall. Universal childcare strengthens working families, supports our youngest learners at a critical stage of development, and helps ensure that a child's zip code, income level, or immigration status never determines their opportunity."

He said he looked forward to working with the administration and local providers to make sure the rollout was strong, equitable, and delivered for

Bronx families.

Murad Awawdeh, president and CEO of New York Immigration Coalition, said in part, "Access to childcare allows New York families, local communities, and our city's economy to function. Children – regardless of immigration status – need access to nurturing and quality care to thrive, while families rely on childcare to allow them the freedom to work, go to school, and so much more."

Meanwhile, Rebecca Bailin, executive director of New Yorkers United for Child Care, said the announcement demonstrated a clear commitment to tackling New York City's affordability crisis. "Thousands of parents

(continued on page 15)

Lawyers Announce Release of Marble Hill Student Dylan Contreras from ICE Detention

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Lawyers for detained Marble Hill high school student Dylan Josue Lopez Contreras said Wednesday, March 18, that the student has been released from Moshannon Valley Processing Center, the Pennsylvania facility run by U.S. Department of Immigration, Customs & Enforcement (ICE), where they said he had been “unjustly imprisoned for nearly 10 months.” His release follows Dylan’s highly publicized courthouse arrest outside a scheduled immigration hearing at 26 Federal Plaza in Manhattan last May, as reported.

Reacting to the news, Raiza Contreras, Dylan’s mother, said, “All glory and honor belong to God, who opened doors and made the impossible possible. I am grateful to everyone who, in one way or another, played a part in offering support and strength, and were always there. Very soon, my son will be back with his siblings and me. It is both a relief and a blessing.”

In May 2025, Dylan, 20, had been attending English Language Learners International Support Academy (ELLIS) in Marble Hill, before he was detained by ICE during a scheduled court appearance. He later became subject to a deportation order. Several rallies held both locally and in Manhattan had been held over the last year during which advocates and elected officials alike called for his release.

Kate Fetrow, associate supervising attorney at New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG)’s special litigation unit, and a member of Dylan’s legal team, said, “We are overjoyed that Dylan is finally able to return home, where he should have been for the last nearly 10 months he’s spent unjustly detained for simply following the rules.”

She added, “Nothing can undo the injustice of denying Dylan even a modicum of due process, stealing his liberty and personal autonomy, and snatching away the precious time, education and experiences he’s been forced to miss for nearly a year of his young life. His release today is a momentous step in the right direction as we continue to fight to restore justice for Dylan and his family.”

As reported, and as stated by U.S.



Photo courtesy of the family of Dylan Josue Lopez Contreras via Northwest Bronx Indivisible
DYLAN JOSUE LOPEZ-CONTRERAS, seen here with his siblings, has been denied asylum and is subject to deportation according to The New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG).

Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, a Democrat, Dylan entered the country legally and was following the law. Despite this, Schumer said he was still targeted and detained by ICE after attending the mandatory court hearing. At that hearing, Schumer said ICE officers followed Contreras out of the courtroom and arrested him in the lobby. Dylan was detained in an ICE detention facility, and his mother Raiza, and his attorneys have since been fighting to bring him home.

Schumer said Dylan was the first New York City public school student detained under the Trump administration’s mass-detention and deporta-

tion campaign implemented by ICE, a campaign, which Schumer says, is terrorizing communities across America. He recently invited Dylan’s mother as his guest to U.S. President Donald Trump’s State of the Union address in Washington D.C.

Reacting to news of Dylan’s announced release, the minority leader said, “Thank God Dylan Contreras is coming home. He will soon be back in New York reunited with his mother Raiza, his family, and the Bronx community that loves him. I sat with Raiza as she cried in my office the night of the State of the Union and told her I would do everything in my power to

help bring her son home, and I am thrilled they are together once again.”

He added, “Dylan did everything right. He entered legally, worked to support his family and enrolled in school, and he should have never been detained like this. I am glad the administration has heeded my calls and righted this wrong, but there are many more families like Dylan’s that have been torn apart because of ICE. The chaos experienced by so many communities and families at the hands of ICE must end.”

For her part, Melissa Chua, director of New York Legal Assistance Group’s immigrant protection unit, said, “Dylan’s legal team and all those who have supported him are deeply grateful to finally secure his release and bring Dylan back home to his family and community.”

She added, “We want to thank Sen. Schumer, Mayor Mamdani, and the many elected officials who have offered their unwavering advocacy and vocal support over the past year. As legal advocates, we know all too well just how many more people are still out there, remain unjustly detained, risk separation from loved ones, or spend each day living in fear and uncertainty under this current political climate. That is why we remain committed to fighting day after day on behalf of Dylan and so many others like him to restore justice by keeping families together and upholding the rights of all people, regardless of immigration status.”

Asked during her visit to D.C. what she would say to the president regarding her son’s situation, Contreras had said at the time, as reported, “I am that silenced voice of my son. I would tell him that there are things we sometimes believe we are doing right, but that are not turning out that way, because what may appear to be an achievement, can also be destruction, that he truly put himself in our place, even if only for a moment, that he truly try to have some feelings and realize that we are suffering.”

Tearful at times, she added, “What crime could many of these people have who are only working and striving to help their family, that he truly be a little more empathetic. This is what I would ask of him.

NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

COMPILED BY SÍLE MOLONEY



Job Fair

Assemblyman John Zaccro Jr. and NYS Department of Labor will host a job fair on Saturday, March 21, at 11 a.m. at 149 East Mosholu Parkway North, Bronx, NY 10467. For more information, call (718) 409 0109.

Clothing Prom Drive for Bronx Teens

Bronxworks is hosting a clothing prom drive for Bronx teens. Drop off donations of new, unworn, or freshly cleaned (and in dry cleaning bags) dresses, suits, and ties on weekdays, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 1130 Grand Concourse, Bronx, NY or at 60 East Tremont Avenue, Bronx. Learn more at <https://bronxworks.org/prom2026>.

2027 Cultural Development Fund

NYC Cultural Affairs has announced its fiscal year 2027 cultural development fund application for NYC not-for-profit arts and cultural organizations. The department will consider proposals in every cultural discipline, and from every area of the City, for services that are provided in the five boroughs and within the City's fiscal year 2027 (July 1, 2026-June 30, 2027). Find out more at <https://tinyurl.com/y638as9w>.

Yankees Youth Leadership Award

Bronx Community Board 7 and The New York Yankees are inviting youth leaders aged 14 to 18 to apply for the Yankees Youth Leadership Award by March 22, at noon for a chance to win a stipend of \$750 and be recognized on the field at Yankee Stadium at a pre-game ceremony. For more information, visit bit.ly/4sBACIG.

First Annual Basketball Showdown

The 50th Precinct will host the first annual basketball showdown between the NYPD and the Riverdale Y Youth on March 24 at 5 p.m. at the gym at 5625 Arlington Avenue, Bronx. For more information, call Det. Jamsheer at (929) 375 6048.

Butler Summer Camp

NYC Department of Youth & Community Development and Directions for our Youth will host a free Butler Summer Camp at 1368 Webster Ave., Bronx from July 6 to Aug 28, Monday to Friday, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. for children aged 5 to 12 years of age. Activities

include arts & crafts, trips, games and more. Call (718) 303 8997 to speak to Ms. Kim or Ms. Kimberly. [NYCHA Priority Week runs from April 6 to April 17.]

Free Legal Services NYC

Those in need of free legal services covering immigration and asylum, rental and housing assistance, tax issues, domestic violence, student debt, and more can call (917) 661-4500 Monday to Friday from 9.30 a.m. to 4 p.m. for help. The service is also available in Spanish.

Bronx Walk of Fame People's Choice Culinary Arts

The Office of Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson, The Bronx Tourism Council, The Bronx Economic Development Corporation and the Business Initiative Corporation are seeking nominations in the context of Bronx Week 2006 for the Bronx Walk of Fame People's Choice Recipient in Culinary Arts. For more information, visit www.ilovethebronx.com/bronx-ball-2026.

State Department Travel Updates

The U.S. Department of State has issued updated travel risk warnings following recent overseas military actions by the U.S. and other countries. They advise American residents not to travel to Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria or Yemen; to reconsider travel to Bahrain, Israel (West Bank: Level 3, Gaza: Level 2), Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates; and to exercise increased caution in Egypt.

NYC Parks Lifeguard Qualifying Test

All potential lifeguards must pass the Lifeguard Qualifying Test, which includes a vision and swim exam. To qualify, you must be at least 16 years of age by July 18, 2026, have at least 20/30 vision in one eye and 20/40 in the other, without corrective lenses. (Glasses and contact lenses may not be worn during the eye exam.) and be able to swim 50 yards in 50 seconds or less, with proper form. For more information, visit the Become an NYC Parks Lifeguard page here: <https://www.nycgovparks.org/opportunities/jobs/lifeguards>.

Upcoming Union Apprenticeships

Union apprenticeships taking

place in March / April 2026 include LU#12 Heat & Frost Insulators (opens March 27), DC9 Structural Steel Painters (opens March 30), and LU#7 Tile, Marble & Terrazzo Workers (opens April 13). Visit www.bandana.com/b/nyunion for more information.

Domestic Violence Community Conversation

Bronx Community Board 7 and Council Member Oswald Feliz (C.D. 15) are hosting domestic violence community conversations in the near future (dates TBC) to help plan, develop and execute DV awareness, prevention and support programming in the district. Be part of the conversation and sign up at bit.ly/4akOkSQ.

Primary Elections Key Dates

The change of address deadline so you can vote at the correct polling location is Monday, June 8. The voter registration deadline is Saturday, June 13. The mail ballot request deadline (requested online or by mail) is Saturday, June 13. Early voting begins Saturday, June 13.

The in-person mail ballot request deadline is Monday, June 22. The mail ballot postmark deadline is Tuesday, June 23. Primary Election Day is Tuesday, June 23. Only voters enrolled in a political party can vote in that party's primary. The mail ballot receipt deadline is Tuesday, June 30, meaning this is the last day by which the Board of Elections can receive your mail ballot and have it counted.

When to Contact 988

Call or text 988, or visit nyc.gov/988 for free, confidential mental health support in the following situations: if you or someone you know is worried about the negative impact drugs or alcohol is having; if you are feeling stressed, overwhelmed or struggling with daily activities; if you are looking for mental health or substance use providers in your area; if you are having thoughts of hurting or killing yourself; or if you are concerned about changes in the behavior of someone you care about.

Free Haircuts

SUNY Bronx Educational Opportunity Center, 2467 Jerome Avenue, Bronx, is giving free haircuts (walk-ins welcome) Monday to Thursday, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the center

in Room 3036, 3rd Floor. Call (718) 530 7043 for more information.

Girls Self-Defense Classes

NYC Department of Youth & Community Development, MS 117 Beacon and Dear Black Girl are hosting Girls Self-Defense classes March 27, at 4 p.m. at 1865 Morris Avenue, Bronx in Room 140. This is open to all girls and no experience is needed. Call (718) 466 1806 for more details.

Free Pest Control Services

NYC health department offers free services on pest control for children with asthma living in The Bronx. For more information, call (718) 508 0643.

Pet Food Pantries of NYC

Pet Food Pantries are available in The Bronx at the following locations: Strong Paw Rescue at www.strong-pawrescue.org/pet-pantry, Animal Care Centers of NYC on (212) 788 4000 or at info@nycacc.org, and at Church of Saint Helena on (718) 892 7713 or at sthelenarc@yahoo.com.

NYC Public Interest

Technology (PIT) Pop-Up

The NYC PIT Pop-Up will be open January through April, Tuesdays–Thursdays from noon to 6 p.m. at the Oculus World Trade Center Transit Hub in Lower Manhattan, continuing to host interactive exhibits, demonstrations, and community programming. Plans are in the works to host CUNY-based, open data projects at the Pop-Up in support of Open Data Week in March 2026, and a week focused on Sonic Spaces in April 2026. The NYC PIT Pop Up is organized by the CUNY PIT Lab in partnership with BetaNYC, with support from the Public Interest Technology University Network (PIT-UN) and the CUNY Office of Research. For more information visit: <https://nycpitpopup.org>.

Affordable Housing Lotteries

NYC Department of Housing, Preservation and Development (HPD) has open, affordable housing lotteries for housing units in The Bronx. Visit <https://housingconnect.nyc.gov/PublicWeb/searchlotteries> for more information.

Bronx Day in Albany Returns

By **SÍLE MOLONEY**

Bronx Day in Albany returned to the Capital Region for the first time in nearly a decade, bringing together business leaders, entrepreneurs, nonprofits, cultural institutions and policymakers to highlight the borough's economic impact and opportunities for growth across New York State.

Hosted by the Bronx Chamber of Commerce in collaboration with the New York State Senate and Assembly Bronx delegations, the full-day event featured policy discussions, business workshops and a cultural showcase highlighting the borough's businesses, cuisine and creative community. New York Gov. Kathy Hochul and State Comptroller Tom DiNapoli attended the event, which Bronx officials said underscored growing attention on the Bronx's economic role and potential.

The day began with the Leadership Luncheon, which featured two panels

focused on key economic issues affecting both the borough and the state: "Building the Bronx: Real Estate & Housing Solutions in a High-Cost Environment," and "Doing Business in New York: Costs, Constraints, and Competitiveness." Discussions explored the capital conditions needed to unlock development while preserving existing housing, as well as how rising costs and regulatory pressures affect employers, small businesses and long-term economic competitiveness.

Participants included Sen. Nathalia Fernandez (S.D. 34), Sen. Jamaal Bailey (S.D. 36), Assemblymembers Chantel Jackson (A.D. 79) and Landon Dais (A.D. 77), along with housing and development leaders and representatives from statewide business organizations.

Bronx Day in Albany also featured state agency workshops and AI for business training, connecting attend-



Screenshot by Síle Moloney

THE BRONX DELEGATION OF elected officials and other Bronx representatives join various Bronx award recipients on stage at the Albany Capitol Center at the end of the "Bronx Day in Albany" 2026 edition on March 10, 2026.

ees with resources including grants, procurement opportunities, certification programs, compliance training and clean energy initiatives.

The event concluded with the Business & Cultural Showcase, where attendees explored exhibits from nearly 50 Bronx businesses and organizations spanning tourism, healthcare, entertainment, nonprofit services and cultural institutions. The showcase featured tastings from Bronx restaurants, bakeries and breweries, artisan vendors offering art, clothing and

accessories, and live music by Bronx's own DJ MadOut.

The evening also featured the inaugural Change Maker Awards, recognizing community leaders nominated by Bronx elected officials for their impact across the borough. Among those honored were Laura Levine-Pinedo, executive director of KRVC. Finally, Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson announced that despite a planned pause this year for cost reasons, Bronx Week 2026 is finally going ahead.



Screenshot by Síle Moloney

GOV. KATHY HOCHUL and State Comptroller Tom DiNapoli join the Bronx delegation of elected officials and other Bronx representatives on stage at the Albany Capitol Center at the end of the "Bronx Day in Albany" 2026 edition on March 10, 2026.

CRIME FILE

BY SÍLE MOLONEY


Fordham Manor: Man Sought for Assault on Police Officer

The NYPD is asking for the public's help locating the person seen in the accompanying photo who they said is wanted in connection with an assault that occurred in Fordham Manor. Police said that on Thursday, March 5, at around 5.18 p.m., two uniformed police officers were on the mezzanine of the "B/D" Fordham Road subway station, when they observed a person wanted for questioning regarding a previous assault.

Police said that as the officers approached the person, he struck one of them in the head with an unknown object and caused a laceration to the head. They said the suspect then exited the subway station and fled on foot to parts unknown. They said the officer was transported to St. Barnabas Hospital where he was listed in stable condition.

Pursuant to an ongoing investigation, detectives identified the suspect as 41-year-old Sergio Santiago and said he was last seen wearing a black jacket, a gray sweatshirt, blue jeans, and black and white sneakers.

Norwood: Two Sought for Armed Robbery

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying the two people seen in the accompanying photos who they say are wanted in connection with a robbery that occurred in Norwood. Police said that on Thursday, March 5, at around 00.20 a.m., a 19-year-old female victim was approached by two people in the vicinity of East Gun Hill Road and Webster Avenue.

"One of the unidentified individuals, displayed a black firearm and demanded the victim's property while the other individual removed the victim's purse containing approximately \$5,000," police said. "The unidentified individuals then fled the location with the victim's property on foot to parts unknown." Police said there were no reported injuries following the incident.


Fordham Manor: Man Wanted for Assault that Left Victim Hospitalized

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying the person seen in the accompanying photo who they say is wanted in connection with an assault that occurred in Fordham Manor. Police said that on Wednesday, March 11, at around 6.23 p.m. inside 6 West 190th Street, a person approached a 32-year-old male victim and got into a verbal dispute with him. "The unidentified individual grabbed the victim and shoved him down multiple flights of stairs," police said.

"The individual then began punching and kicking the victim about the body and struck him in the face with an unknown object," police added, saying the suspect then fled on foot westbound on West 190th Street. They said EMS responded and transported the victim to St. Barnabas Hospital in critical but stable condition. They said the suspect is described as male, has a dark complexion, a slim build, a braided hairstyle, and facial hair. They said he was last seen wearing a black shirt, black jeans, and white sneakers.


Kingsbridge Heights: Person Sought for Groping Woman

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying the person seen in the accompanying photo who they say is wanted in connection with a groping incident that occurred in Kingsbridge Heights.

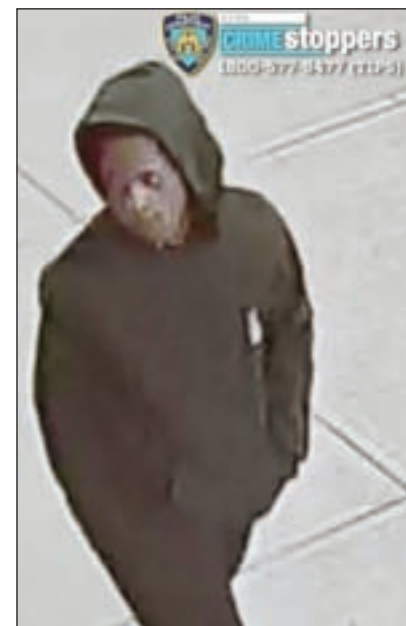
Police said that on Tuesday, Feb. 17, at around 7.27 p.m. in the vicinity of Albany Crescent and West 231st Street, a 37-year-old female victim was walking when she was approached by an unidentified person who engaged her in conversation. "The individual continued to follow the victim from behind and grabbed her buttocks over her clothing," police said.

They said the suspect then fled the location on foot, traveling northbound on Albany Crescent toward West 231st Street to parts unknown. Police said there were no physical injuries reported following the incident and added that the suspect is described as male and has a light complexion.


Fordham Manor: Four Sought for Armed Assault on Older Man

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying the people seen in the accompanying photos who they say are wanted in connection with a gang assault that occurred in Fordham Manor. They said that on Sunday, March 1, at around 5.42 p.m. in front of 2685 Grand Concourse, four unidentified people approached a 69-year-old male victim.

They said one of the four displayed a machete while two others punched and kicked the victim multiple times, causing injuries to his left eye and left pinky. Police said the group fled the location on foot, traveling southbound along the Grand Concourse. They said the victim sustained minor injuries but was not hospitalized.



(continued on next page)

CRIME FILE - MAJOR CRIME STTISTICS

BY SÍLE MOLONEY



Patrol Borough: Bronx Precinct: 046

ComptStat Book	28 Day			Year to Date			
	% Chg	2026	2025	% Chg	2026	2025	% Chg
Murder	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	2	0	- %
Rape	100.0 %	4	2	100.0 %	7	5	40.0 %
Robbery	-25.0 %	28	26	7.7 %	73	70	4.3 %
Felony Assault	-43.8 %	62	52	19.2 %	148	136	7.2 %
Burglary	0.0 %	13	15	-13.3 %	37	28	32.1 %
Grand Larceny	-18.2 %	48	48	0.0 %	105	115	-8.7 %
Grand Larceny Auto	150.0 %	9	11	-18.2 %	28	36	-22.2 %
Total	-15.8 %	164	154	6.5 %	400	392	2.0 %
Patrol	-21.6 %	156	150	4.0 %	360	365	-1.3 %
Transit	- %	5	2	150.0 %	11	2	450.0 %
Housing	100.0 %	3	2	50.0 %	9	5	80.0 %
Shooting Victims	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	2	1	100.0 %
Shooting Incidents	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	2	1	100.0 %
UCR Rape*	0.0 %	5	3	66.7 %	10	6	66.7 %
Other Sex Crimes	500.0 %	6	2	200.0 %	17	10	70.0 %
Petit Larceny	83.3 %	80	59	35.8 %	194	153	26.8 %
Misc. Assault	133.3 %	81	68	19.1 %	179	143	25.2 %
Hate Crimes	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %
Traffic Fatalities	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %

All figures are preliminary and subject to further analysis and revision. Cash Surveys as of 6/13/17. Unless otherwise noted, crime statistics reflect New York State Penal Law (NYSP/L) definitions. * Uniformed Crime Reporting (UCR) Rape consists of all crimes defined in the FBI UCR definition of rape.

Source: NYPD

MAJOR CRIME STATISTICS for the 46th Precinct for the 28-day period ending March 8, 2026, compared to last year (left), and year-to-date major crime statistics for the 46th Precinct as of March 8, 2026, compared to last year (right). This precinct covers some or all of Fordham, University Heights, Morris Heights and Mt. Hope.

Patrol Borough: Bronx Precinct: 050

ComptStat Book	28 Day			Year to Date			
	% Chg	2026	2025	% Chg	2026	2025	% Chg
Murder	0.0 %	1	0	- %	4	0	- %
Rape	0.0 %	2	0	- %	5	4	25.0 %
Robbery	100.0 %	7	9	-22.2 %	21	21	0.0 %
Felony Assault	0.0 %	18	14	35.7 %	37	39	-5.1 %
Burglary	-100.0 %	4	7	-42.9 %	16	24	-33.3 %
Grand Larceny	12.5 %	34	33	3.0 %	79	67	-9.2 %
Grand Larceny Auto	133.3 %	24	14	71.4 %	50	38	31.6 %
Total	11.1 %	91	77	18.2 %	212	213	-0.5 %
Patrol	12.5 %	84	72	16.7 %	200	199	0.5 %
Transit	- %	3	0	- %	4	2	100.0 %
Housing	-100.0 %	4	5	-20.0 %	8	12	-33.3 %
Shooting Victims	0.0 %	3	0	- %	7	0	- %
Shooting Incidents	0.0 %	1	0	- %	3	0	- %
UCR Rape*	0.0 %	2	0	- %	5	5	0.0 %
Other Sex Crimes	0.0 %	9	2	350.0 %	27	5	440.0 %
Petit Larceny	57.1 %	69	65	6.2 %	166	157	17.8 %
Misc. Assault	50.0 %	37	25	48.0 %	70	61	14.8 %
Hate Crimes	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	1	0	- %
Traffic Fatalities	- %	1	0	- %	3	0	- %

All figures are preliminary and subject to further analysis and revision. Cash Surveys as of 6/13/17. Unless otherwise noted, crime statistics reflect New York State Penal Law (NYSP/L) definitions. * Uniformed Crime Reporting (UCR) Rape consists of all crimes defined in the FBI UCR definition of rape.

Source: NYPD

MAJOR CRIME STATISTICS for the 50th Precinct for the 28-day period ending March 8, 2026, compared to last year (left), and year-to-date major crime statistics for the 50th Precinct as of March 8, 2026, compared to last year (right). This precinct covers some or all of Kingsbridge, Fieldston, Riverdale, Marble Hill, and Spuyten Duyvil.

CRIME FILE - CONTINUED



(continued from previous page)



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 Crime Stoppers website at <https://crimestoppers.nypdonline.org/>, or on Twitter @NYPDTips. All calls are strictly confidential.

Patrol Borough: Bronx Precinct: 052

ComptStat Book	28 Day			Year to Date			
	% Chg	2026	2025	% Chg	2026	2025	% Chg
Murder	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	1	0	- %
Rape	-100.0 %	3	6	-50.0 %	7	14	-50.0 %
Robbery	-54.5 %	28	25	12.0 %	79	62	27.4 %
Felony Assault	26.6 %	73	57	28.1 %	158	137	15.3 %
Burglary	-60.9 %	6	18	-66.7 %	24	41	-41.5 %
Grand Larceny	-29.4 %	64	66	-3.0 %	142	156	-9.0 %
Grand Larceny Auto	-26.6 %	14	26	-46.2 %	31	49	-36.7 %
Total	-32.8 %	186	198	-5.1 %	442	459	-3.7 %
Patrol	-32.2 %	186	193	-3.6 %	429	449	-4.5 %
Transit	-50.0 %	2	5	-60.0 %	10	10	0.0 %
Housing	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	3	0	- %
Shooting Victims	- %	1	0	- %	2	1	100.0 %
Shooting Incidents	- %	1	0	- %	2	1	100.0 %
UCR Rape*	-100.0 %	4	7	-42.9 %	8	15	-46.7 %
Other Sex Crimes	-100.0 %	3	9	-66.7 %	12	15	-20.0 %
Petit Larceny	42.9 %	160	118	35.6 %	334	294	13.6 %
Misc. Assault	78.6 %	78	56	34.5 %	182	119	52.9 %
Hate Crimes	0.0 %	1	0	- %	1	0	- %
Traffic Fatalities	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %

All figures are preliminary and subject to further analysis and revision. Cash Surveys as of 6/13/17. Unless otherwise noted, crime statistics reflect New York State Penal Law (NYSP/L) definitions. * Uniformed Crime Reporting (UCR) Rape consists of all crimes defined in the FBI UCR definition of rape.

Source: NYPD

MAJOR CRIME STATISTICS for the 52nd Precinct for the 28-day period ending March 8, 2026, compared to the same timeframe last year (left), and year-to-date major crime statistics for the 52nd Precinct as of March 8, 2026, compared to last year (right). This precinct covers some or all of Bedford Park, Fordham, Kingsbridge, Norwood, Bronx Park, and University Heights.

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Public and Community Meetings

The next 52nd PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL meeting will take place on Wednesday, March 25, at 7 p.m. at St. Brendan's Church, 260 East 207th Street, Bronx. 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 (CB7) general board meeting will be held Tuesday, March 24, at 6.30 p.m. at KIPP Jerome Campus, 2720 Jerome Avenue, Bronx. Contact KCabreraCarrera@cb.nyc.gov to be added to the distribution list. All meetings are in person unless otherwise notified by Bronx CB7.

The next BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 8 (CB8) general board meeting will be held in April (date TBC). To join via Zoom or phone, visit <https://us-02web.zoom.us/j/2114033690> or call +16465588656, and enter the Meeting ID 2114033690#. Contact BX08@cb.nyc.gov to be added to the distribution list, and check <http://www.nyc.gov/bronxcb8> for any updates.

The BEDFORD MOSHOLU COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION monthly meetings are usually held on the first Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. at 400 E. Mosholu Pkwy. South in Apt. B1 (lobby floor). For more details, please contact bedfordmosholu@verizon.net.

All Ireland Camogie Champs, Galway, Visit The Bronx



Photo by Síle Moloney

SOME OF THE team members of winning All Ireland Camogie team, Galway, pose for a photo with their cup in Gaelic Park in the Kingsbridge section of The Bronx on Feb. 21, 2026.

By SÍLE MOLONEY

All Ireland Camogie champions, Galway, visited Gaelic Park in the Kingsbridge section of the Bronx, along with their winning cup on Saturday, Feb. 21, ahead of the beginning of Irish American Heritage Month in March. Camogie is a highly popular, highly competitive, and highly physical amateur team field sport played

widely across the Emerald Isle and is somewhat similar to field hockey. The 15-member, all-female team took time out during their trip to New York City to practice some drills with young, local camogie players, offering advice on how to improve their game. Camogie is similar to the Irish amateur sport hurling, played by men. The latter is the fastest field sport in the world.



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Norwood First For Free Childcare

(continued from page 8)

throughout the city can breathe a sigh of relief, knowing they will save tens of thousands of dollars each year once their child turns two,” she said. “This announcement is also a testament to the power of organizing. Parents and would-be parents, desperate to build a city they can afford to raise their families in, came together to demand free childcare for two-year-olds and now, we’re seeing that vision become reality.”

Suz Kroeber, parent leader with New Yorkers United for Child Care and a mom of two in Washington Heights, said, “When our oldest was ready for 3-K last year, we couldn’t get a seat, and we had to literally pay the price for it with private day care.”

She said this year, things were completely different. “Mayor Mamdani’s administration has shown up for parents in a way we haven’t seen in years,” she said. “Applying for Pre-K was easier, and knowing that 2-K will be there in our neighborhood when our youngest turns two will be a game changer. Instead of pinching every penny just to cover daycare, we can start thinking about saving for college or retirement. All we want to do is raise our kids in New York City. 2-K makes that possible.”

The initial four communities were selected based on economic need, projected childcare demand, existing access gaps, provider capacity and readiness. These first 2,000 seats are designed to serve families in high-need neighborhoods while ensuring programs launch responsibly and sustainably, with inclusive access for children with disabilities and families in temporary housing, including shelters.

Services will begin in September 2026, with rolling enrollment throughout the fall to accommodate children turning two at different points in the year. In the coming days, the City will begin planning efforts with childcare centers and family childcare providers in these four communities. Additional details on participating providers will be released in the weeks ahead.

The other three communities are School District 6, which covers Washington Heights, Inwood and Hamilton Heights as well as parts of Manhattanville, School Districts 18 and 23, covering Canarsie, Rugby-Renssen Village, Brownsville and Ocean Hill as well as parts of East Flatbush- Farragut and Prospect Lefferts Garden-Wingate, and



Photo by Sile Moloney

NEW YORK CITY Mayor Zohran Mamdani is presented with some artwork made by the students at Bronx Community College Early Childhood Center, located at 2155 University Avenue in University Heights, The Bronx, on Friday, March 6, 2026, during his visit to highlight that School District 10 is one of the four initial NYC school districts that will receive free 2-K childcare seats this fall.

School District 27, which covers Ozone Park, South Ozone Park, Richmond Hill, Woodhaven, Howard Beach and Rockaways as well as parts Lindenwood and Springfield Gardens North.

To highlight the announcement, Mamdani paid a visit on Friday, March 6, to the Bronx Community College Early Childhood Center located at 2155 University Avenue in the University Heights section of The Bronx. Arriving, armed with two gold “2” and “K” helium balloons, Mamdani played with the children for a while, and was later presented with a piece of their artwork which he said he would hang in his office. Later, the mayor spoke to *Norwood News* one on one on the topic of childcare.

Given the sentencing on State charges two days earlier of the daycare manager and her husband for the death of one-year-old Nicholas Feliz Dominici at El Divino Niño daycare center in Kingsbridge Heights in September 2023, due to a fentanyl overdose, *Norwood News* asked the mayor if he wanted to say anything on the

topic or to Nicholas’s parents.

“I think what I would say is we are focused on the safety [and] wellbeing of every single child across our city,” he said. “It’s the cornerstone of everything that we do, and even today, when we’re here to speak about the expansion of universal childcare in our city, we do so knowing that we are looking to deliver high quality, safe childcare for every single family, and so as part of increasing access, and part of tackling an affordability crisis, it’s also a focus on ensuring this is the very kind of environment that any family will feel safe sending their child to.”

As reported, Silfredo Castillo Martinez, the owner of a former Bronx licensed children’s daycare facility, Lina’s Garden Daycare, located at 3525 Decatur Avenue in Norwood, was sentenced in federal court on June 27, 2024, to 25 years in prison for producing child pornography with a minor victim who was under his watch at the daycare center. Castillo Martinez had previously pleaded guilty.

In light of recent press conferences

held by the mayor in which he talked at length about a funding gap in the City’s budget and the options available to address the gap, we asked him if he was confident there would be sufficient money to fund the announced free childcare program. Mamdani responded, saying, “Yes, and we are absolutely confident in the promise we’re making to New Yorkers, which is that we’re going to serve 2,000 children by the end of this year, 12,000 children by the end of next year, and then before providing any seat for every single 2-year-old by the end of Year 4.”

He added, “This is part of what it means to deliver universal childcare in our city and to be here, in District 10 in The Bronx, is one of many school districts that we’re delivering these 2,000 seats to here, it’s a chance for a family no matter their income, their profession, their immigration status, to take what would otherwise be more than a \$20,000 a year expense off of their back, and make it that much easier to live in this City.

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