



2016

NORTHWEST BRONX
COMMUNITY & CLERGY
COALITION

ANNUAL REPORT

LETTER FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

February 4, 2017

To NWBCCC members, allies, friends and supporters,

Less than four months ago, the Northwest Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition celebrated our 42nd Anniversary honoring incredible individuals who have helped lead our organization and fight for our community. This past year, these and many other community leaders contributed greatly to developing strong organizing campaigns and prototyping creative models within our educational, housing, energy, and health systems that prioritize our people and planet over profit.

2016 was a year of additional growth, breaking down silos within our work, grounding ourselves in our mission focused on developing leadership and building power for our people. We brought back the Community Leadership Academy, re-launched the Clergy Caucus, expanded our staff and organizing capacity, piloted new alternative models that reflect our mission and performed high level building retrofits through our seasoned Weatherization Assistance Program. We have strong leadership and bodies of work within five issue areas including safe, affordable housing, health justice, energy democracy/climate justice, equitable economic and community development and education reform/dismantling the school to prison pipeline. We also developed new and deepened existing partnerships with a variety of partners and community stakeholders and supported work around LGBTQ rights, police accountability, Black Lives Matter and addressing injustices within the criminal justice system.

There is no doubt we are building power for our people, developing strong leadership and supporting those efforts that address racial justice and economic democracy to transform our Bronx and beyond. This report will detail our accomplishments of 2016 and highlight the valuable partners that make this work possible. We look forward to an even stronger 2017 with your leadership and partnership!

Chhaya Chhoum, Board President

NWBCCC Background and History

The Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition (NWBCCC) is a grassroots, member-led organization that has worked to transform the communities of the Northwest Bronx since 1974. Its mission is to unite diverse people and institutions to work for economic democracy and racial justice through intergenerational community organizing. For over 42 years, the NWBCCC has helped Bronx residents develop visionary leadership, build community power, and revitalize their neighborhoods. The organization was started by local community leaders in response to the wave of arson, abandonment and disinvestment that threatened to destroy the Bronx in the early 1970s. The organization emphasizes community control, direct action, and a pragmatism focused on winning concrete victories and developing new alternative models that change material conditions, build greater community collective governance, shared wealth and ownership, giving people a sense of their own power, and building a broader movement. We work on issues that are of concern to our membership and are aligned with our mission. Over the years we have fought for safe, affordable, and energy-efficient housing; safe, clean communities with green space; high quality public schools where students have the opportunity to learn with dignity; community-led economic development; immigrant rights; and many other issues. In all areas, we work to win local victories and broader policy change that addresses the root causes of these issues. Over the decades we have created a powerful youth wing, Sistas and Brothas United (SBU); established affordable housing corporations, research institutes, and a student-designed public high school; and have won, often in collaboration with allies, major campaign victories including reforming the national lending practices of Freddie Mac to improve housing conditions, the creation of the Community Reinvestment Act with National People's Action, the construction of 6 new school buildings in the NW Bronx to reduce overcrowding, passage of Living Wage legislation in New York City, redevelopment of the Kingsbridge Armory with a comprehensive Community Benefits Agreement, the development of a large Weatherization Assistance Program, and a wide range of other changes in policy and resource allocation. We founded and/or participated in a wide range of successful city, state, and national-level social justice alliances.

Today our work focuses on:

- Ensuring local residents have safe, affordable, and energy efficient housing, and are not displaced by gentrification pressures;
- Building a green, democratic, and locally controlled economy through energy efficiency retrofits, promoting access to renewable energy resources, ensuring the equitable redevelopment of the Kingsbridge Armory, and other projects that create high road jobs and protecting local small businesses to ensure they thrive and contribute to a strong local economy;
- Fighting the school to prison pipeline, building a culture of restorative justice in schools, and ensuring that students are prepared for and have access to a higher education; and
- Addressing the root causes of poor health outcomes through a social determinants of health lens, and by ensuring that local hospitals address upstream causes of poor health and are accountable to local communities.

NWBCCC Mission and Values

The Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition unites diverse people and institutions to work for racial and economic justice through inter-generational community organizing that transforms the Bronx and beyond. It was founded in 1974, and is proudly celebrating over forty years of strong community organizing and leadership development.

The members of the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition seek social, economic, environmental, and racial justice for our families, our communities, and ourselves. We do this through community organizing that utilizes non-violent confrontation, negotiation, and principled compromise. We conduct our affairs with honesty, integrity, strength, and courage. To build a diverse and democratic organization, we act together to ensure all people are treated equally, with respect and dignity, without regard to their age, race, creed, sexual orientation, language, religion, gender, ability, or class. *These beliefs are the cornerstone of our work.*

- Because we value Love, we envision a community where the well-being of all its members is the first and most important factor when making decisions. We value and support all of the diverse members of our community without exclusion or social division. The outside world is embraced with solidarity.
- Because we value Just Work, we envision a community where everyone has access to respected, self-sustaining employment that taps into their skills, abilities and/or creativity. These jobs generate shared-wealth back into our communities, which builds a stronger Bronx economy.
- Because we value the Collective, we envision a community where people share work, resources, and profit. As a result, diverse and vibrant communities are built off of an inclusive decision-making process. Collective ownership of land and resources should lead to a healthy environment and a sustainable economy.
- Because we value Pride and Dignity, we envision a community where the culture and diversity of our collaborative hands and hearts' work is celebrated freely and builds on our traditional and inter-generational strength.
- Because we value Community Determination, we envision a community where all Bronxites channel our focused, collective power. We envision Bronx residents creating sustainable neighborhoods with resilient economies.
- Because we value Equity, we envision a community where those who have been marginalized are given what they need to thrive, be healthy and happy.

The institutional and individual members of the Northwest Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition work together on campaigns to improve local conditions; change policy at the city, state, and federal levels; and move us toward a more just, equitable, and sustainable society.



CLIMATE JUSTICE AND ENERGY DEMOCRACY

This past year, NWBCCC explored ways to provide our community with real ways to access renewable resources in our day to day lives. In February 2016, NWBCCC sent leaders and a staff member to learn about the processes involved to make community-shared solar a reality in the Bronx. Our Energy Democracy Alliance partner, Alliance For A Green Economy, held a forum on Community Solar in their hometown, Syracuse, NY, and provided vital information around the current pricing of solar and the various models of ownership that could be possible in the Bronx. Over the summer, leaders and staff participated in Commonbound in Buffalo, NY, which held various workshops that looked at alternative economic models which would allow for 'dirty' industries to transition to environmentally conscious ones that could create workforce opportunities and keep wealth in the community. NWBCCC co-facilitated a workshop with our in-state partner, PUSH Buffalo, which highlighted the basics of Economic Democracy and presented our alternative model, the Healthy Buildings Program, that addresses housing, energy, wealth and health.

In November 2016, the NWBCCC held a Faith and Climate Justice retreat that brought together local Bronx clergy leaders to discuss the importance of our faith communities making the connections with our local congregations' ability to play a role as stewards to our people and planet. We hope to continue to engage with these faith institutions in the coming year to organize around important climate justice issues and developing a local fair energy economy in the Bronx. This past December, NWBCCC came together with other Bronx community organizations, youth organizations and laborers to call upon our local councilmembers to support Intro 495a, a bill which proposes a capacity cap of current waste stations by 50% citywide. For the South Bronx, home to all 14 Bronx waste stations, this bill will help cut down truck traffic by almost 100 trips a day, an important right step in improving our air quality in the Bronx and beyond.

Building Power

The NWBCCC continues to conduct energy efficiency retrofits on faith-based institutions through our Building Power Program in partnership with the Bronx Cooperative Development Initiative (BCDI), Bloc Power, and Emerald Cities Collaborative. The Building Power Program, designed to upgrade the physical plant and energy systems of local churches with high levels of local participation, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, saves money for churches and improves their buildings, creates local jobs, and educates congregants on economic democracy and climate justice. We have had four successful energy efficiency projects completed at Tremont United Methodist Church, St. Simon Stock, First Glorious Church and Fordham United Methodist Church. We look forward to keep building with more congregations as altogether we have 72 buildings in the retrofit pipeline from 60 Bronx faith-based institutions .



Interfaith Clergy Leadership

The NWBCCC re-launched the Clergy Caucus on February 2, 2016, an interfaith space that develops clergy leadership connected to our mission and campaign work. Rev. Janet Hodge, Pastor Edwin Pierce, Fr. Thomas Lynch, Rev. Addie Banks and Pastor Joe Hernandez helped led the Clergy Caucus made up of diverse denominations which met every two months for interfaith fellowship, relationship building between clergy leaders across faith backgrounds and developing a strong theological foundation for our justice work. Clergy leaders learned about our campaigns and helped engage their congregations around important issues impacting our communities.

Particularly powerful, Clergy leaders brought out their congregations for our Public Launch, Roadmap from Displacement, where we engaged residents around the current realities displacing our tenants, young people from schools, small businesses, and vital health services from our community and invited participants to consider the ways we can build an alternative Bronx that works for all. Clergy Leaders also took leadership in a variety of important event and campaigns, including supporting our young people's restorative justice work, speaking at SBU's End the School to Prison Pipeline March and Rally in May 2016.

Equitable Economic and Community Development

The NWBCCC believes that economic and community development benefits to local residents should outweigh its costs. Our work around equitable economic and community development in 2016 lifted up our collective belief that residents should be deeply engaged in the visioning and decision-making around development of their community and benefit directly and indirectly by the wealth it generates.

Our work around the development of the Kingsbridge Armory focused on ensuring that community members stayed informed and engaged around the Kingsbridge National Ice Center Project in monthly meetings, understood the precedent setting Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) in information sessions and worked to create a base of support for its implementation by reaching out to local institutions and community organizations. NWBCCC conducted a strategic retreat with KARA core leaders where the group clarified its goals, created sub-committees to address the various components within the CBA and articulated its commitment to expand our work to include resisting and gentrification around the development, including housing and small business displacement. and gentrification around the development, including housing and small business displacement.

Although the KNIC project has yet to break ground, our small merchants along the Kingsbridge corridor began experiencing ever increasing landlord harassment including rent increases and loss of services essential to running their businesses. The NWBCCC began reaching out to these small businesses in March 2016, working to understand the issues they faced and began to organize the commercial corridor in partnership with the Kingsbridge Merchant Association. These businesses, many of whom have been in our community for twenty or thirty years and so essential to the fabric of our neighborhood, lost their previous 5 or 10 year leases for one year, month to month or no leases. The NWBCCC joined a city-wide coalition of community groups and legal service providers, United for Small Business NYC, convened by ANHD, to pass the City's first commercial tenant anti-harassment legislation. A number of our small businesses and lead staff organizer attended Mayor De Blasio's signing of the bill in September of 2016.



Recognizing the importance of just work, the NWBCCC launched the Working People's Initiative, focused on creating a pipeline of high road jobs, supporting Bronx-based businesses and developing efforts that create shared wealth and ownership for our Bronx community. The NWBCCC launched this initiative with a forum that brought real opportunities for our community to connect with living wage jobs that lead to long term sustainability for themselves and their families. The forum brought together programs and resources meant to share employment opportunities that are often not accessible to our community members. We believe that programs and investment that advance job skills and education, and provide living wage jobs and employment benefits are at the foundation of promoting economic sustainability for our community. We are building partnerships with Bronx and City-wide partners to create a strong local Bronx economy that works for all of our residents.

SAFE AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Over three years after our local partner and affordable housing experts, University Neighborhood Housing Program, declared the affordability crisis in their report, "A Crisis of Affordability in the Bronx" in 2013, decent, safe and affordable housing remains a serious issue in our community. Many of our residents continue to pay over 50% of their incomes on rent, living in substandard housing, often without heat and hot water, cooking gas, and basic repairs, with rodent and pest infestations and other environmental factors that often contribute to and exacerbates their poor health. Our work in 2016 focused primarily on addressing the predatory equity investments that destabilized affordable housing in our community and throughout NYC worsening the already existing poor housing conditions with a level of harassment of low-income and rent stabilized tenants we have never seen before.

Building Tenant Power Through Tenant Associations

The NWBCCC continued local tenant organizing through a deep leadership development approach to win local, city and state-wide housing campaigns. With tenants leading the way, the NWBCCC has built strong tenant associations, conducted know your rights trainings and partnered with supportive elected officials to hold landlords and banks accountable. Tenants were supported and developed to take on leadership within borough-wide coalitions as well as city and state-wide efforts. The NWBCCC expanded to 4 full-time housing organizers working with 35 buildings in the Northwest Bronx.





Addressing Housing Health and Wealth: The Healthy Buildings Program

The Bronx Healthy Buildings Program is a cross-sector initiative to promote holistic community health by addressing the upstream causes of asthma-related emergency department visits, hospitalizations, missed school or work days while also improving poor housing conditions and supporting the local Bronx economy. This program builds upon our four decades of housing organizing experience and over thirty years of weatherization experience, working collaboratively with the landlord and tenants to make the building energy efficient, safe and healthy. In 2016, NWBCCC, in partnership with collaborators including Montefiore Medical Center, Bronx Cooperative Development Initiative, Emerald Cities Collaborative, the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Councilman Ritchie Torres, NYLPI, Bloc Power and several others developed the major components of the program including tenants materials, Integrative Pest Management resources, trained surveyors, a.i.r.nyc home-based asthma management referral access, building energy audits, identifying local Bronx contractors and more. In December, NWBCCC program launched with 3 buildings in this pilot phase leveraging Weatherization expertise and dollars to address the building needs. We are working to establish tenant associations with each building as well as providing important trainings on topics such as the social determinants of health, Tenant Know Your Rights trainings, etc. Tenants that suffer from asthma within these buildings, no matter the age, will be able to have a Community Health Worker make a home visit to help them avoid asthma triggers in the home. The various issues that this program looks to impact will be surveyed as well to collect data from tenants to improve the methods that the program can provide to the community. We're excited to learn from this pilot stage and bring this program that aims to improve poor housing conditions, reduce asthma triggers, reduce energy bills and greenhouse gases, while creating high road jobs and supporting local Bronx contractors to scale in the coming year.

Bronx and City-Wide Housing Coalitions

Stabilizing NY

The Stabilizing New York City coalition, made up of fifteen grassroots organizations from across the city in collaboration with the Urban Justice Center and the Urban Homesteading Assistance Board, developed a city-wide powerful campaign addressing predatory equity, tenant harassment and gentrification. In 2016, the Stabilizing NYC Coalition coordinated strategy across boroughs and within boroughs to target landlords listed on the Public Advocate Leticia James' Worst Landlord List. Within the Bronx, the NWBCCC partnered with CASA to take the lead on targeting Ved Parkash, who was named #1 worst landlord in 2015. Bronx tenants

from across 22 Parkash buildings came together to form the Parkash Tenants Coalition (PTC) to address issues they faced and strategies they could take to address them. Parkash tenants organized a protest in front of Bronx Housing Court to highlight the poor living conditions, the harassment, threats and frivolous court cases they were facing and hand delivered a letter to Ved Parkash requesting a meeting to discuss their demands. 120 Parkash tenants came together and pressed their landlord at a gathering at Concourse House to change his practices and address the major housing issues present across all of his buildings. Parkash publicly agreed to a set of improvements and

NWBCCC organizers are working with tenants to ensure that all demands are met.

Tenant Rights Campaign

The NWBCCC is a part of the Tenant Rights Coalition, in partnership with legal partners Legal Aid Society and Legal Services as well as other community groups meant to address illegal displacement of low-income tenants in Bronx zip codes most impacted by landlord harassment, primarily 10452 and 10453. NWBCCCC works with the Legal Aid/Legal Services lawyers, helping to support individual tenant cases as well as building-wide cases. Many buildings that NWBCCC is organizing have gotten this essential support that has brought the necessary legal attention to buildings that have been without gas for months including 1776 Davidson Avenue and 2200 Aqueduct Avenue, and without heat, hot water and other basic needs like 1821 Davidson Avenue.



Jerome Avenue Rezoning & The Bronx Coalition for Community Vision

The NWBCCC increased its efforts organizing around the proposed Jerome Avenue rezoning in partnership with CASA, Banana Kelly, the Building Trades and others in the Bronx Coalition for Community. We have been pushing for a participatory process that engages community members about the future of their neighborhood, good jobs and local hire for any development proposed and real affordability for our current residents that includes 30% Average Median Income of the Jerome neighborhood. Department of City Planning release the neighborhood study and to the community's dismay, it did not address any of the community's concerns nor the basic principles within the Bronx Coalition for Community Vision Platform. Although the City is investing millions of dollars to help prevent illegal displacement through various efforts throughout the NYC which we applaud, the study projected that less than 500 residents would be



legally displaced and did not mention *illegal displacement*, which is currently rampant in our neighborhoods at all. After months and months of organizing and base building, on September 29, 2016 nearly 500 community members marched into the public hearing on the Jerome Avenue rezoning at Bronx Community College. Community members, Auto workers, laborers, and faith leaders had a chance to speak directly to the Department of City Planning. Most community members voiced their concerns about the rezoning of Jerome Ave. and the effects it will have on the community. The hearing lasted near midnight with speakers waiting to speak for hours. We expect that the City will release another second draft plan for the Jerome study area which we hope captures the concerns of the community. Although the ULURP process is scheduled to begin in March of 2017, we are hoping to delay this process until our basic demands are met.



Tenant Association Profile

2205 Davidson Ave

Tenants from 2205 Davidson Ave, with the support of NWBCCC and Legal Aid Society and Legal Service, organized against what became a downward spiral of neglect and disinvestment. With over 360 open violations, falling into HPD's Alternative Emergency Program (AEP), two years without functioning elevators and no

communication from their landlord, tenants sought a way out of their situation by coming together to organize a tenant association. With the support of NWBCCC, tenants were able to change three years' worth of neglect within the span of 8 months. With the management company to the building in bankruptcy and David Sutton, the landlord, growing increasing

distant from the building, tenants were able to move powerfully with demands when David Kornitzer took possession of the building. Since then the new landlord regularly meets with the Tenants Association, and in October of 2016, Assemblyman Victor Pichardo, Senator Gustavo Rivera and Councilmember Fernando Cabrera joined tenants and building management at the ribbon cutting to reopen their newly functioning elevator.

Tenant Power In Action

The Bronx Parkash Tenant Coalition (PTC) had a very successful rally in front of the Bronx Housing Court on June 2, 2016. Many of our tenant leaders spoke out with powerful and moving testimonies about their experiences of living in buildings owned by Ved Parkash, named #1 worst landlord in 2015 in the hopes of putting public pressure on the landlord to address the hundreds of violations registered to his buildings. We were joined by Public Advocate Letisha James and Council Member Rafael Salamanca. The event was covered by *DNA Info*, *City Limits*, *The Riverdale Press*, *Bronx News 12*, and *ABC 7*. Later on December 12, 2016, PTC tenants held another rally at Housing Court targeting banks that continue to lend to landlords like Parkash with a poor track record and who purchase over-leveraged buildings in the hopes of pushing out low-income tenants for higher paying ones.

Right to Counsel

Although the City is making important investments in programs that provide legal support to tenants facing eviction in housing court, there is no right to counsel. For tenants who do not know about these programs, and who cannot afford a lawyer or understand how housing court functions, homelessness and displacement is a grave reality. The Right to Counsel Coalition is made up of organizing groups, advocates, legal providers and others in support of right to counsel for low-income residents at 200% at or below the poverty line. Intro 214-A, currently supported by 41 councilmembers, and the Public advocate was announced at a press conference at the steps of City Hall on December 13, 2016 in the hopes of putting pressure on additional councilmembers. NWBCCC joined hundreds others in supporting this important bill.

Health Justice

Root of Community Health Training

This year, the Health Justice Committee expanded its work to educate and organize community members around the root causes, or social and economic determinants, of health. Our Root of Community Health workshop connects poor health outcomes and racial health disparities to structural root causes beyond individual choice and invites participants to organize to address those issues. Three Health Justice leaders led this workshop for 30 members of the Tremont community at Tremont United Methodist Church on April 30th, and invited them to create their own local health action plan and to become leaders in our health justice campaigns .



Spotlight on Affiliate Member, Mary Mitchell Family and Youth Center

Coming out of the Social Determinants of Health workshop the Health Justice Committee leaders facilitated at the end of 2015 at the Mary Mitchell Family and Youth Center, they re-launched the New Crotona Community Coalition and initiated a youth-led community design process for the Austin Jacobo Baseball Field and Community Center. Over a several-month process lead by youth and other residents with Designing the WE, they continued to map the Crotona community's assets, examined historical and current political forces that shape its challenges, and surveyed residents about their vision for the space. On December 3rd, they

presented their proposals to community members and got commitments from local electeds to begin fundraising to make them a reality. Their blueprints include a Makers Space, a Food Lab, a music studio, space for recreation/art/dance, a green roof with a rainwater capture system, and a people's university shared classroom/office space for intergenerational programming. We aim for other communities to use the social and economic determinants of health curriculum as a tool to catalyze further collective planning and action to make our communities more sustainable and holistically healthy.

Community-Led Health Planning

The Health Justice Committee met with key officials in our health system, including Director of the Center for Health Equity Dr. Aletha Maybank, DOHMH Assistant Commissioner and Director of the Bronx District Public Health Office Jane Bedell, and Assistant Vice President of Montefiore Medical Center Nicole Hollingsworth to discuss our vision and goals around participatory community health planning between the community, hospitals, and our Department of Health. As a result, NWBCCC partnered with DOHMH and the Hester Street Collaborative to develop a model for community-led health planning in the Fordham, Kingsbridge, and University Heights communities, as part of the Take Care NY 2020 initiative to address health disparities and inequity in NYC.

NWBCCC worked with St. Nicholas of Tolentine Catholic Church and a team of community residents to facilitate three community health convenings, in which over 130 youth and adult residents, leaders of community organizations, members of faith-based institutions, and city officials participated. Over the course of those sessions, residents identified violence as a top health barrier in their community, mapped community health assets, and researched and developed proposals for 6 different community-led initiatives to address root causes of violence. At the end, community members voted on the top two initiatives (1) inclusive pipelines for jobs with dignity for Bronx residents and (2) collaborative models for community conflict resolution.



Growing up in the West Bronx, I've seen first hand the effects of government policies like redlining and how that intentionally created a lack of resources and economic opportunity. This lack creates an underground economy where violence thrives. And it criminalizes people who feel trapped--like they have no other option but to get money in the streets by any means necessary which leads to jail time or the cemetery. If we can address the root cause of violence by developing a workforce development pipeline for us and by us we can economically empower our youth and save the future of our communities of color from the violence that poverty brings.

Sean Butler, Health Justice Committee leader and Social Determinants of Health trainer

In 2017, community residents will finalize their community health action plan in order to address to the economic roots of violence. All too often, Bronx residents are left out of job creation initiatives in our community, so we will begin by conducting outreach, skills screening, and placement in healthcare and construction apprenticeship programs by the end of 2017. Given that apprenticeship programs are proven strategies for ensuring long-term employment and sustainable development of industry and the key role that community based organizations can play in screening, connecting and supporting community members to succeed in these programs, we believe we are well-positioned to build this pipeline in our community. Given the growing healthcare industry and demand for new construction and retrofitting of existing building stock, we will specifically target apprenticeship programs in these sectors to ensure Bronx youth are prepared to secure careers with living wages, benefits, and job protections. We will also align and build existing coalitions of community-based organizations to develop a coordinated set of demands and approach to ensure new development projects in the Bronx benefit local residents holistically, including high-roads job creation.



The Health Justice Committee deepened its partnerships with key allies, like the Commission on the Public Health System, the New York State Nurses Association, and the Brooklyn Perinatal Health Network to advocate for equitable community engagement in the NYS Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) Program. The NWBCCC successfully worked with the Bronx Partners for Healthy Communities Performance Provider System to leverage DSRIP investments in asthma hospitalization prevention towards providing Community Health Workers for asthma patients in the buildings we organize to give tenants direct support around how to better manage their asthma and prevent attacks. However, across the State’s program, only hospitals have received funding to design the priorities and outcomes of DSRIP, while still relying on the expertise of community-based organizations. NWBCCC joined Communities Together for Health Equity to successfully secure \$2.5 million in strategic planning funds to engage community in DSRIP planning and implementation. We look forward to working as an active member of the coalition to ensure the community is at the table across the city to ensure Medicaid reform happens with poor and working-class people of color driving decision-making.

Sistas and Brothas United (SBU)



Sistas & Brothas United (SBU), the youth organizing arm of the NWBCCC, works with middle and high school students in the Northwest Bronx fighting to change conditions in their schools, neighborhoods and beyond. SBU focuses on leadership development, political education, campaign organizing and providing safe space for youth to address the various forms of systemic oppression we encounter in our communities including racism, homophobia, sexism, ageism and more.

Restorative Justice Work

SBU continues to focus most of its local, city, and state-wide work on ending the school to prison pipeline and investing in restorative justice. Although there is an ever growing body of work that documents the negative impact of zero tolerance educational policies, and racial disparities in school discipline and connects restorative justice approaches with improving academic achievement, school attendance and graduation rates, our public schools still lack the investment and resources necessary to fully implement these practices. Our young people, especially our youth of color and LGBTQ youth who are most impacted by policies like the Department of Education's B21 Infraction, are pushed out of schools through suspensions for non-violent minor incidents like chewing gum or wearing a hat in a classroom. Instead of providing structures and resources to support our young people to thrive and overcome many of the social and economic challenges they face, our educational system continues to push our already struggling youth out of school. In 2016, SBU deepened our restorative justice work in existing local schools and worked to elevate the importance of restorative justice across our borough, engaging young people, parents, clergy leaders and local faith based institutions, developing additional leadership to join our city and state-wide campaigns.

SBU Leadership Across Campaigns

SBU developed strong leadership in 2016, having a core group of young people participate in and lead in an effort to engage and activate their peers on a variety of issues. In October of 2016, SBU led a civic engagement day at Marie Curie High School on NYC's Voter Registration Day, aimed at supporting young people to learn about the ways in which they have a voice and take action, including but not limited to registering to vote. More than in previous years, SBU youth leaders participated in a variety of campaigns across NWBCCC, demanding real affordability within the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing initiative proposed by the Mayor, helping to identify the #1 health priority in our community through the Take Care New York initiative led by NWBCCC's health justice committee, and standing up for Black Lives Matter leading local marches and actions meant to connect with community members. Taking a lead in the Bronx, in May 2016 SBU youth leaders, with the support of over 50 clergy leaders, and community members marched from the former detention facility to a partner school, Validus Prep Academy, which is implementing restorative justice practices. The march culminated in a rally where youth demanded that the Department of Education and City Council members allocate additional funding towards restorative practices and end the punitive practices that push our young people out of school and into the prison system.

ELLIS Preparatory Academy

English Language Learners and International Support Prep (ELLIS), located at the Kennedy Campus, serves “16-21 year-old newly arrived immigrant English language learner student body, many of whom have interrupted or otherwise limited formal educations.” Given the many learning obstacles these newcomers face, many of the students, particularly the Latino male youth, who enroll at ELLIS rarely graduate in four years or at all.

In fact, in June of 2014 and 2015, nearly half the ELLIS juniors scored between 65-75% on their English Regents Exam, nearly failing. Committed to supporting our local youth, SBU partnered with Ellis to help address



educational and social gaps by helping students organize around that which is most important in their lives. As a part of the ELLIS internship program, SBU staff worked with 20 young people to address the challenges they faced as immigrant students. With the support of SBU staff, Ellis students developed an educational proposal aimed at increasing graduation rate, increase English Regents scores, and improve positive communication between students and staff. These courageous youth leaders presented their plan which included Peer

tutoring, a Student Leadership Committee, and Reading and Listening Club, to the principal in March 2016 and negotiated a timeline of implementation for the following year.

Grace Dodge Campus

In 2016, SBU supported existing youth leadership and staff at the schools within Dodge campus, including Crotona International, High School for Energy and Technology and Bronx Academy for Software Engineering to address the violence and conflicts happening

on the campus. SBU staff helped the leadership team conduct outreach for and facilitate a campus-wide event that addressed ongoing internal conflicts taking place between youth across the three schools on campus. In addition, SBU worked with the core Dodge leadership team of 15 leaders to organize several healing circles and community circles throughout the year focused on dialoguing around racism and cultural difference, given the challenges the campus was facing.



Summer Leadership Program

SBU ran its annual Summer Leadership Program with 30 new youth participants and 10 SBU alums and current leaders as trainers. This year's theme was **True Bronx** which utilized different forms of media to showcase the beauty and struggles of living in the Bronx. Youth participants underwent several political education workshops to learn about the history and current state of the Bronx. They also participated in small group discussions that helped them unpack and express their own struggles, academically, socially and politically. Pulling from these dialogues, the participants were invited to translate what they learned about themselves and their peers into expressions in the form of Fashion, Photography, Art, Spoken Word or Theater. The SBU end of the summer culminating event brought together over 30 community members, parents and young people.



Integrating Organizing with Academic Success

There are hundreds of programs in the Bronx that offer some kind of academic support and/or college access for middle and high school students. On the flip side, there are very few youth organizing programs in our borough including important partners like The Point's A.C.T.I.O.N or Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice. Even rarer, however, are youth programs that address the individual needs of a young person socially and academically AND deepen their civic engagement while developing their leadership to organize for systemic change. Although SBU has had both components for over a decade, for the most part (although not exclusively) our young people haven't often overlapped between the two programs. We have been supporting young people to graduate high school and move on to college without having connected their challenges and successes with the larger educational system or developing powerful youth leaders organizing around a variety of issues while struggling in school socially and academically. This year, SBU intentionally worked to bridge that gap and create a new model that integrates these important components. We believe that our young people should be supported to develop in a holistic way. Students enrolled in the academic success center and receiving college search and application assistance also participated in monthly SBU membership meetings learning about ongoing organizing campaigns and upcoming events with which to engage. Our Academic Success Coordinator also worked with youth leading our campaign work to assess areas of support and ensure

they were connected to academic support and college access resources. SBU provides a comprehensive set of resources to help young people excel in school, overcome challenges and become community leaders. In 2016, SBU continued to work with the Walton Young Adult Borough Center (YABC), Teaching and the Professions High School and the International School for Liberal Arts (ISLA) and Discovery High School in the Walton campus to host a series of workshops for parents and students. SBU worked in collaboration with Good Shepherd Services to train students on the college process and to reinforce the college culture in schools.

Community Leadership Academy

This year we celebrated the re-launching of our Community Leadership Academy to support our commitment to go deep with leadership development in our campaigns. By the close of this year's training cycle, we had engaged 35 leaders in trainings and honored 17 graduates who completed the entire program. At CLA leaders learn the skills, tools, and political analysis to bring their talents into the public arena and to build a campaigns to transform our Bronx to make racial justice and community control of decision-making and resources a reality.

Members have the unique opportunity to work collectively and with experienced trainers to build bonds of support and challenge each other to become well-rounded and powerful community leaders. We began this year's training cycle with a day-long retreat with 20 core leaders and staff to re-design the program to ground it the core values of our recently adopted mission--racial and gender justice, economic democracy, and intergenerational organizing. Teams of core leaders prepared themselves to train around introductions to six topics: NWBCCC History and Mission, Fundamentals of Community Organizing, Relationship Building and Outreach, Speaking Truth to Power, Systems of Oppression, and Economic Democracy.

Leadership and staff workshopped their training curricula to reflect principles of:

- * Popular education & interactivity
- *Real-world application of concepts to our lives and campaigns
- *Artistic & cultural expression
- *Collective storytelling & healing
- *Building self-awareness to be our most powerful selves



We supported members to continue their political and skills-based development through other spaces with grassroots leaders from across the city, state, and country. Two leaders graduated from the Bronx Cooperative Development Initiative's Economic Democracy Training Series, 5 leaders graduated from the Center for Community Change Grassroots Ambassadors Program, 1 leader graduated

from to People's Action weeklong training, and 1 leader participated in People's Action national political education series design retreat.

CLA, as with all our campaigns, is designed for and by leaders in order to support the next generation of organizers to emerge from our community. We hold the key to that future in the individual gifts and collective assets and vision of residents. We have a commitment to ensuring that our organization is not only lead by members of the community but that our staff also reflect our community.

We know this requires investing in leadership development pipelines targeted at building the capacity in members to become organizers in all ways and to take on high levels of leadership through our campaigns. This year alone, we hired four new staff who were all formerly members in our organization and have embodied inspiring leadership in our organization and in the community -- Claude Copeland, Evy Viruet, Brigida Valenzuela, and Ruvi Lopez. We know they will invest in the next generation of leaders as they were invested in!