

Community Outreach Peer Exchange Session
September 9, 2020
2:00-3:00 pm

Presentation Slides:

- <https://hpbdb.com/shared/static/487uyhjveqgmvgvt67d5ug7f06leuk34.pdf>

Participants:

- [Shevan Durant](#) and [Indy Li](#) (Project EATS)
- [Caitlin Falvey](#) (NYC Department of Health)
- [Dionne Grayman](#) (We Run Brownsville)
- [Fareen Islam](#) (ArtBridge)
- [Duane Kinnon](#) (Friends of Brownsville Parks)
- [Quardean Lewis-Allen](#) (Youth Design Center)
- [Allison Marino](#) (Bronx Impact/Phipps Neighborhoods)
- [Rosa Marruffo](#) (Edible Schoolyard NYC)
- [Alexandra Mesick](#) and [Lisa Turner](#) (Clinton County Health Department)
- [Siobhan Ollivierre](#) (GirlTrek)
- [Adalgisa Rivera](#)
- [Addie Smock](#) (Brooklyn Public Library)
- [Shawnique Woolfalk](#) (Art in the Park Inc.)
- Jim (NYC)
- [Amy Shire](#) (NYU Langone/Dept of Pop Health)
- [Tamara Greenfield](#) and [Tara Singh](#) (Mayor's Action Plan for Neighborhood Safety, Building Healthy Communities)
- [Nupur Chaudhury](#), [Bronwyn Starr](#), and [Liz Ward](#) (New York State Health Foundation)
- [Casey Allred](#) and [Phil Bors](#) (Healthy Places by Design)

Recording:

- <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/64810612345>
Passcode: 9RV\$vaRx

Agenda:

I. Welcome and Intros

Attendees will learn about Project EATS' resident outreach work in Brownsville from Indy Li, Community Health Advisor, who manages the Farmacy program and edits The Companion weekly neighborhood newsletter. We also welcome ArtBridge's Fareen Islam, Director of Programs and place-making expert, who will share her organization's outreach since the pandemic hit our communities. The session is informal and will be a chance to discuss what's working, new ideas, and challenges with your peers.

II. Brief presentations on community outreach efforts

- *Indy Li, Community Health Advisor, Project EATS*
[Project EATS](#) operates a network of urban farms across New York City to support residents of neighborhoods to access fresh food, provide economic opportunity, and

build stronger communities. Their work is primarily in Brownsville, the Bronx, and the Lower East Side.

Indy shared their community organizing approach that's worked during the pandemic as follows.

- COVID-19 Free Food Distribution Initiative – With the help of staff and volunteers they've been growing vegetables and distributing in three communities over the last few months. To date, they've distributed nearly 1,500 bags in Brownsville alone and reached about 4,000 people. They have partnered with the New York Food Bank to offer pantry items to supplement the fresh vegetables.
- [The Companion](#) is a weekly printed publication filled with pictures, stories, recipes, and art. Each week they offer the newsletter along with vegetables at free food pick-up locations and at farm stands to allow residents to stay connected, share stories from the farms and what communities are requesting. The Companion includes community resources, recipes, notes on how to store produce, and features a vegetable of the week. All issues are also published digitally and located on the Project EATS website.

Follow-up Q&A:

- Can you explain more details more about Farmacy?
 - The Farmacy Program is a relationship with the health care providers in the neighborhoods where Project EATS farms are located. Indy works with the providers so they can prescribe produce for patients with diet-modifiable diseases: a prescription for eating more vegetables. Patients are able to come to the farm stand and get free or subsidized vegetables. They have access to virtual workshops to help with health goals and building skills around healthy eating and living.
 - How long did it take you to produce an issue of The Companion?
 - It takes a lot of time and the turnaround is about a week. The strategy includes developing a timeline with what's happening at the farms and in the world, stories, recipes, and pictures.
 - How do you figure out what to put in each newsletter issue and, without being able to see people in person on a regular basis, how do you to get input?
 - They use personal stories, work with community partners in many of the places where Project EATS distributes vegetables. These partners connect regularly with residents and give real-time feedback; they can also get feedback from residents at the food stands.
- *Fareen Islam, Director of Programs, ArtBridge*
[ArtBridge](#) connects the public through art. They are based in Chelsea and work on public art projects throughout the five Burroughs by transforming locations that are underused or using public infrastructure, such as construction fencing and scaffolding, into neighborhood assets. Their mission is to empower emerging and local artists and bring in the creative process of narrative including engagement with the artist and the neighborhoods they are working in. Fareen shared their community organizing approach that's worked during the pandemic.
 - Active Design in Schools Program – A collaboration with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Building Healthy Communities, and the Fund for Public Health in New York City. This program includes a few nonprofits and

works in schools within the target area of Building Healthy Communities and creates a social network between the school and an artist. Once an artist is selected they workshop with school students and staff to determine what the school is about, what they would like to see, and how to create a mural that activates kids to play in an interactive way. The mural is more than something to look at but one that you can touch, jump across, and interact with, e.g. a maze.

- Bridging the Divide Program – A partnership including the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), Department of Cultural Affairs, Department of Buildings, and the Mayor’s Office. The program brings art to the construction fencing that surrounds NYCHA developments. This is another program that ideally has interactions between artists and community members living in the development. In their first initiative, they received insights from the Mayor’s Action Plan for Neighborhood Safety (MAP) leaders and residents. They were very helpful connecting ArtBridge to local organizations to reach residents. Community outreach strategies included connecting with project partners, local leadership, and local residents using virtual communications (email, telephone, Zoom, Facebook messenger), flyering (physical flyers, social media), and events (artist-run workshops via Zoom, connecting with local communities).

Follow-up Q&A:

- How do you find artists to work on these projects?
 - Open calls online and put flyers in the neighborhoods.
- A question about community outreach strategies on the final slide, : was that an overview summary of how to use different methods or do they relate to specific projects and if so how?
 - Flyering is used for the Bridging the Divide as it’s specific to a neighborhood and their residents. Emails were sent to parents and students for the Active Design in Schools Program. Primarily their strategies are overarching for all projects that are community oriented.
- What platform is used for sending email blasts?
 - Mailchimp
- Examples/methods for connecting with youth?
 - When ArtBridge was participating in physical space activities, they partnered with organizations that had afterschool programs and were able to reach high schoolers but that does not apply to the virtual space as well. They are considering using social media, such as Instagram.
 - Offer monetary incentives. Young people need money.
 - Investments in sponsored contents on social media (Facebook and Instagram) for recruitment. The targeted investment led to 500 young people applying for 70 spaces for a summer tech camp. They are also able to use contact information for other opportunities.

III. Group discussion

- Other organizers’ examples of community outreach
 - Examples of connecting with seniors or older individuals that are not technologically savvy or have access?
 - MAP works closely with the Department of Aging and are fortunate to have community advocates who had relationships with seniors prior to the pandemic and could connect with them regularly by phone and to critical resources. DOA has distributed about 300 tablets to residents

across the developments and their office has linked them to a program called OATS (Older Adults Technology Services) to help them use technology. Tamara and Tara are also building virtual support groups and organizing workshops (Community Resiliency Training) for residents to become personal supports in their community. Tara can share additional information with BHC and HNL organizers.

- [East Harlem Walks](#) – Walks in East Harlem to historical sites are being organized starting on September 18th and will include a tour of the Harlem Renaissance. Dates for additional walks will be forthcoming including incentives for participating.

IV. Next Steps

Please join us for the next Healthy Neighborhoods Learning Collaborative and Building Healthy Communities Peer Exchange Session on **September 23, 2020 at 2:00 pm**.