



Photo and News from Citizens Committee for New York City

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## Citizens Committee for New York City and Assembly Member Dinowitz Celebrate Grassroots Groups Working to Improve the Quality of Life in the Bronx

**HARLEM** – Citizens Committee for New York City (CCNYC) and Assembly Member Jeffrey Dinowitz gathered on Monday evening in Brust Park with members of resident-led community groups to highlight and celebrate their efforts to improve their corner of the Bronx. Citizens Committee CEO Peter H. Kostmayer and Assembly Member Dinowitz were joined by members of Stewards of Brust Park, Stewards of Henry Hudson Park and Coqui the Chef to learn more about their grassroots projects' impact on the community and their efforts to bring their neighbors together towards a common goal. Each group has received small grants and planning assistance from CCNYC in recent years to support their community improvement projects.

"The strength of our community is in the power of the people who live here, working every day to make our neighborhoods a little bit better for everyone. I am proud to have numerous groups throughout my district who have amazing ideas for projects to accomplish just that. Thank you to Citizens Committee for their support of these incredible projects, and also to the people behind those projects who will turn grant money into tangible results for our community," **said Assembly Member Jeffrey Dinowitz.**

"These New Yorkers are showing just how big an impact a group of dedicated residents can have on their neighbors and community. I am so proud of the groups we support and the amazing work they are doing to improve the quality of life across the Bronx and the entire city. It's also a pleasure to work with Assembly Member Dinowitz to make sure these groups have the resources they need. Citizens Committee supports grassroots groups through small grants and project assistance, but at the end of the day it's the residents who are putting in the work to change their neighborhood for the better," **said CCNYC CEO Peter H. Kostmayer.**

Stewards of Brust Park have led beautification projects in the neighborhood green space, including planting native flowers, restoring the lawn and adding signage to educate and inform visitors. Neighborhood children are being introduced to local flora and fauna through educational programs and the group holds regular weeding sessions to promote community stewardship. Their efforts have focused on the park's upper section, which was in poor shape due to lack of maintenance over the years. The group received a \$2,500 award this year from CCNYC's Neighborhood Grants program.

"It was great to host Citizens Committee and Assembly Member Dinowitz in Brust Park. With our grant funds we planted a new bed with the help of local volunteers, which included Mr. Dinowitz and his

family. Since making improvements to our park, we have seen improved community use and engagement,” **said Joanne Nolan of Stewards of Brust Park.**

Stewards of Henry Hudson Park received a \$3,000 Neighborhood Grant from CCNYC last year, after first receiving funding from the organization in 2016. In addition, CCNYC hosted a Love Your City volunteer day with members of Henry Hudson Park and Google earlier this year. The group was formed in 2015 and meets every Saturday to weed, mulch, empty trash cans and perform other routine tasks. This year alone, the residents have planted 3,000 spring tulip and daffodil bulbs.

“The Stewards of Henry Hudson Park are grateful for the support that we have received from Citizens Committee. It is because of CCNY’s support and the support of our community volunteers and Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz that we have been able to move forward with the renovation and restoration of our local park. A heartfelt thanks from each of us,” **said Mark Mason, co-founder, Stewards of Henry Hudson Park.**

Coqui the Chef aims to bridge cultural and educational gaps by teaching local children and families about food, nutrition, cooking and the environment. Their programs include recipes that encourage children to engage in hands-on food-related activities and allow parents and children to share in the learning process. They focus their work in low-income communities that have poor access to healthy food and where residents often suffer from high rates of diet and environment-related diseases like diabetes, obesity and asthma. Coqui the Chef has received four Neighborhood Grants awards from CCNYC since 2012 in support of its work to reach families and children across the Bronx.

“The belief and support from Citizens Committee and Assembly Member Dinowitz for my community initiatives in the Bronx has helped my small organization be part of something bigger. I’m very happy to be honored,” **said Coqui the Chef founder Tania Lopez.**

All resident-led volunteer groups are encouraged to apply for grants and funding through Citizens Committee for New York City. Please see [here](#) for more information.

#### **About Citizens Committee for New York City:**

Citizens Committee for New York City’s mission is simple: to help New Yorkers – especially those in low-income areas – come together and improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods. Residents are uniquely situated to define and act on the issues affecting their communities. When provided with modest support, neighborhood and school groups can effectively mobilize with the assistance of grants, skills-building workshops, project planning assistance and an equipment share library. In 2018, we provided 523 projects with \$2.1 million in grants and services, mobilizing more than 10,460 residents in 130 different neighborhoods across the five boroughs. Since 1975, we have promoted the spirit of volunteerism, local engagement, and social justice that drives our work. Visit us online at [citizensnyc.org](http://citizensnyc.org).

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