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**COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMISSIONER PARVIZI ANNOUNCES 17 GRANTS FOR
COMMUNITY NUTRITION PROJECTS THROUGH *CHANGE BY US NYC***

*Grants Will Go Toward Community Projects Involving Healthy Food Access and Awareness,
Food Security and Food System Sustainability and Infrastructure*

*Community Groups Applied for Grants to Support Projects Posted on the City's Community
Collaboration Platform*

Nazli Parvizi, Commissioner for the Mayor's Community Affairs Unit, today announced that *Change by Us NYC*, New York City's online platform for residents to develop volunteer-driven initiatives in their neighborhoods, has awarded grants to 17 New York City community groups to pursue projects that will improve their surrounding communities and the city through neighbors working together. The awardees are selected in partnership with the Office of the Food Policy Coordinator and Citizens Committee for New York City and with support from the New York City Department of Education's Office of School Wellness Programs and the New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene. The mini-grants were awarded for project proposals that support the City's food policy agenda including improving healthy food access and awareness, promoting food security, and improving food system sustainability and infrastructure throughout the five boroughs. This year's grant winners represent a diverse range of New York City neighborhoods and approaches to building a healthier city, from community gardens to nutrition workshops.

"It is very exciting to congratulate all of this year's Change by Us grant awardees," said Commissioner Parvizi. "Year after year, we are impressed by the creativity and passion of our residents when it comes to improving their neighborhoods. The projects selected this year hold great promise to increase access to healthy food and improve the quality of life in communities throughout the five boroughs."

The following groups and projects will receive Change by Us grants:

- **462 Halsey Community Garden (Bedford-Stuyvesant):** will expand the garden's offerings by introducing weekly potlucks using produce from the garden to promote healthy eating and shared family meals while further building community ties in the neighborhood. (\$1500)

(more)

- **64th St Community Garden (Sunset Park):** will renovate and enhance its greenhouse, shed, and plant beds to increase opportunities for neighborhood families to grow their own fruits and vegetables. (\$1000)
- **Baychester Middle School Healthy Initiative (Edenwald):** will expand its Cornell Cooking Program, administered in partnership with the Cornell University Cooperative Extension, to offer more students the opportunity for hands-on activities that promote healthier food choices and physical activity. (\$2500)
- **Community Center of Immigrants (Washington Heights):** will start a community vegetable garden to provide more fresh vegetables and herbs to the CCI food pantry, which serves more than 3,000 local families every month. (\$2000)
- **Crown Heights Farm Share Healthy Food Ambassador Program (Crown Heights):** will increase the number of low-income and African-American Crown Heights residents participating in the farm share by engaging community members in outreach and expanding assistance for low-income households. (\$1900)
- **Crown Heights/Prospect Heights Food Allies (Crown Heights/Prospect Heights):** will host “Food Sovereignty: From Venezuela to Brooklyn,” an interactive event that will educate residents on global food systems and their impact on health and hunger in the local community and encourage them to participate in neighborhood gardens, join farm shares, or grow food at home. (\$1675)
- **Dutch Kills Community Garden (Long Island City):** will turn a northern Dutch Kills vacant lot into a community garden featuring composting, a children’s plot, and chicken coop. (\$1500)
- **Green Ramadan NYC (New York City):** will sponsor Iftar dinners with locally-farmed food during the month of Ramadan. Based at mosques throughout the Bronx, the dinners will feature student-led presentations on healthy eating, the importance of supporting local farmers, and instruction about composting and recycling. (\$2500)
- **Hattie Carthan Community Garden (Bedford-Stuyvesant):** will re-launch its innovative juicing program offering free juicing and smoothies, as well as fresh vegetable bundles available for purchase in its farmers market. (\$2200)
- **Maggie’s Garden (East Harlem):** will hold workshops for neighborhood residents on sprouting, juicing and ethno-botanical uses of the community garden’s crops. The garden will also create raised plant beds to make gardening more accessible for older residents and people with physical disabilities. (\$1990)
- **PS 9 PTO Gardening Committee (Prospect Heights):** will add more plant beds and a rain collection system to its garden so that students can grow produce for the school’s CookShop Classroom, which uses hands-on exploration and cooking activities to promote healthy food. (\$700)

- **St. Nicholas Miracle Garden (Central Harlem):** will create the St. Nicholas Miracle Garden Schoolhouse to provide the communities of Central and West Harlem with a full menu of engaging outdoor workshops this summer on topics from sustainability and green living to gardening and nutrition. The group will also add a rainwater system to improve water supply for its vertical bottle gardens. (\$485)
- **South Brooklyn Children’s Garden (Columbia Waterfront):** will establish an educational outreach program and strengthen the garden’s infrastructure by improving irrigation and soil health. (\$2000)
- **Sprout Farms (East Williamsburg):** will work with GrowNYC to start a summer Youth Market operated by high school student interns under the guidance of a market manager. The market will sell food supplied from Sprout’s Gaynor Campus vegetable garden and fresh, local produce purchased wholesale from area farms and will also offer cooking and nutrition demonstrations. (\$1000)
- **Transforming Our Health by Eating Healthy Community Garden Project (Central Harlem):** will plant herbs, flowers, fruits and vegetables in a plot of the Skyward Community Garden of the Fred Samuel Association Inc. and offer shared meals and nutrition classes that encourage families to adopt healthier eating habits and activities. (\$700)
- **The Urban Rebuilding Initiative’s Urban Community Food Project (Mott Haven):** will build a second greenhouse at its first farm location in order to provide healthy, organic produce for neighborhood food pantries and soup kitchens. The farm will also host “Healthy Living is Healthy Eating” workshops on nutrition and finding resources for healthier eating. (\$2000)
- **Williamsburg Preparatory High School (Williamsburg):** will expand its Cardinal Garden to create more opportunities for the school’s students, who hail from the Bushwick and East New York communities, to participate and learn about the importance of healthy eating. (\$2000)

“Through our work advancing the Administration’s food policy agenda, we know that there is great community interest in improving access to affordable, nutritious food for all New Yorkers as well as the sustainability of our food system. We are excited to be a part of the Change by Us grant process which will make projects promoting food access and urban agriculture possible,” said Food Policy Coordinator Kim Kessler.

“The Office of School Wellness Programs is thrilled to support Change by Us and its projects’ efforts to help promote wellness in New York City,” said Lindsey Harr, Executive Director of the Office of School Wellness Programs. “These projects have developed a wide range of ways to encourage healthy eating and healthy lifestyles that are essential to the success of children and their families.”

“Supporting efforts to bring neighbors together to meet the needs of local communities is vital to our city’s future,” said Peter H. Kostmayer, CEO of Citizens Committee for New York

City. “Change by Us has been a valuable resource for New Yorkers looking to improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods on a grassroots level, and we look forward to seeing the achievements of this year’s grant recipients.”

“There are great challenges to accessing healthy foods in many of New York’s neighborhoods, and vast disparities in diet-related diseases,” said Laurie M. Tisch, President of the Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund. “We believe that progress will come from empowering communities to identify their own areas of need and providing the tools to implement change. Change by Us is an exciting way for community members to take leadership in addressing these critical issues.”

Funding for this year’s grants was provided by the Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the Case Foundation. Grant applications were reviewed and recipients selected by a panel composed of representatives from the Mayor’s Community Affairs Unit, the Office of the Food Policy Coordinator, Citizens Committee for New York City, the Office of School Wellness Programs, the New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene, the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City, GrowNYC, Karp Resources and a previous Change by Us grant recipient.

Created in 2011 by national urban advocacy non-profit CEOs for Cities and designed by New York-based firm Local Projects, Change by Us NYC (nyc.changeby.us) is administered by the Mayor’s Office and serves as New York City’s online platform for community groups to develop volunteer-driven projects that strengthen their neighborhoods. Change by Us NYC members can use the site to create opportunities to meet and work with other individuals and organizations, as well as City agencies, to achieve their goals. The initiative’s two previous grant cycles in 2011 and 2012 provided thousands of dollars in funding to more than 40 grassroots initiatives helping to make New York a greener, greater place to live through tree stewardship, community-supported agriculture, composting and other efforts.

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