

Hope Community Appoints New Leadership Team

Hope Community, Inc. held a reception to announce the installation of its new leadership team. Last November, the agency's board of directors appointed Robin LeBaron as Executive Director of Hope Community, and Carmen Vasquez as Deputy Executive Director.

"The Board felt that Hope has been going in the right direction under Robin's leadership, so we decided to offer him a permanent appointment," said Roger Cabán, chair of Hope Community's board of directors. "We are united in our support of the new leadership team and voted unanimously to support them."

The November 27th reception was held at Hope's Ortiz-Wittenberg art gallery and community room at 171 East 109th Street.

"I am tremendously honored by this appointment," LeBaron said during the event. "Leading East Harlem's largest and oldest community development corporation comes with a great responsibility, because Hope's mission to create permanently affordable housing and to support other community development projects that benefit East Harlem's long-term residents is more important than it has ever been."

Mr. LeBaron had been appointed Acting Executive Director in January 2007, and previously worked as Hope's Director of Planning.

Mr. LeBaron has worked for over 10 years in New York City's community development field. Prior to joining Hope he held several positions at the Parodneck Foundation and Community Assisted Tenant Controlled Housing (CATCH).



Deputy Director Carmen Vasquez with Executive Director Robin LeBaron.

He received a Ph.D. in anthropology from the New School for Social Research, and holds undergraduate degrees from McGill University and the United World College of the Adriatic.

as the agency's Acting Chief of Staff for eight months prior to her new appointment.

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Hope's board also appointed Carmen Vasquez, a long-term resident of East Harlem, to the newly-created position of Deputy Executive Director.

Ms. Vasquez left a position as vice president of sales at Master Screens Companies, a leading home fashion textile firm, three years ago to head Hope's community relations department. Ms. Vasquez had served



Hope staff celebrate during executive reception

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"I am dedicated to carrying on with the mission of Hope's founders to build community and improve the quality of life for community residents," Ms. Vasquez said.

"Carmen has a great commitment to the East Harlem community," said Miguel Calderon, vice chairperson of Hope's board. "She brings the perfect blend of business skills and knowledge of the neighborhood to the position."

The event was generously sponsored by Norris McLaughlin & Marcus, Hope Community's general counsel. ■



Nueva Administración en Hope Community

Hope Community, Inc. llevó a cabo una recepción para anunciar la instalación de su nuevo equipo directivo. El pasado mes de Noviembre, la junta directiva de la agencia designó al Sr. Robin LeBaron como Director Ejecutivo de Hope Community y la Sra. Carmen Vásquez como diputada Directora Ejecutiva.

"La Junta Directiva se sentía muy a gusto con la dirección que Hope Community esta yendo bajo el mando del Sr. LeBaron y por esta razón, decidimos darle el mando permanente," dijo el Sr. Roger Cabán, presidente de la junta directiva de Hope Community. "Estamos unidos y seguros que nuestro nuevo equipo es capaz; el voto fue unánime."

La recepción fue el 27 de Noviembre en la galería de arte del Residencial de Ortiz-Wittenberg en el 171 Este de la calle 109. "Me siento honorado," dijo el Sr. LeBaron durante el acontecimiento. "Es una gran responsabilidad estar al mando de una de las más reconocidas organizaciones del Este de Harlem, nuestra misión es de crear viviendas

de bajo costo y mantenerlas para la prosperidad de los residentes que han vivido aquí por tantos años."

La Junta Directiva había nombrado al Sr. LeBaron como Director Ejecutivo temporáneo en enero del 2007, quien estaba, anteriormente, trabajando como Director del Departamento de Planificación y Recaudación de Fondos.

El Sr. LeBaron ha trabajado por más de 10 años en el campo de desarrollo de varias comunidades de la ciudad de Nueva York. Antes de Hope Community, él llevó a cabo varias posiciones en la fundación de Parodneck y Community Assisted Tenant Controlled Housing (CATCH).

Él recibió un Doctorado en antropología de la escuela New School for Social Research, y se graduó de la Universidad de McGill y el Colegio de United World del Adriático.

La Junta Directiva también designó a la Sra. Carmen Vásquez, residente por muchos años de la comunidad como diputada Directora Ejecutiva.

La Sra. Vásquez dejó una posición como visé presidente de ventas en la compañía Master Screens, una corporación importante de textil, hace tres años para dirigir el departamento de las Relaciones Publicas en Hope Community. La Sra. Vásquez ha servido como gerente de personal temporal por más de ochos meses antes de su nombramiento.

"Estoy dedicada a continuar con la misión de los fundadores de Hope Community para reconstruir la comunidad y mejorar la calidad de vida de nuestros residentes," dice la Sra. Vásquez.

"Carmen es una gran señora dedicada a servir la comunidad del este del Harlem," dijo el Sr. Miguel Calderón, vice presidente de la junta de Hope Community. "Ella trae una mezcla perfecta a su posición con habilidades de manejar el negocio y la sabiduría de nuestro vecindario."

El acontecimiento fue patrocinado por Norris McLaughlin y Marcus, el concejal de Hope Community. ■

Anti-Displacement Task Force Takes to the Streets



Hope staff joined Council Member Melissa Mark-Viverito and hundreds of local residents in a Three Kings Day march on January 6th.

Under the leadership of Council Member Melissa Mark-Viverito, the El Barrio/ East Harlem Anti-Displacement Task Force held a number of public rallies during the holidays to draw attention to the housing crisis. "In the midst of the season's festivities, we thought it appropriate to organize an act that would force us to reflect the urgent need of permanent housing," explained Mark-Viverito.

Composed of individual constituents, tenants associations and local organizations such as Picture the Homeless, Community Voices Heard, and Hope Community, the Anti-Displacement Task Force has met regularly to devise

strategies to shed light on the issue of affordable housing.

"It's an exciting time in East Harlem," said Hope Deputy Director Carmen Vasquez. "It's great to see so many difference constituent groups coming together in this way. Let's hope we can turn the momentum into viable solutions for future affordable housing development."

In a recent study, Picture the Homeless reported that, "The total volume of empty housing units in abandoned buildings exceeds the number of homeless households in shelters and on the streets. In East Harlem, volunteers cited 387 empty lots and buildings

well suited for permanent, affordable housing.

"Our neighbors are living on our streets, under our bridges, in vacant lots and buildings, caught up in the tangles of the shelter system, and living in the overcrowded apartments of generous friends, families and even strangers," added Mark-Viverito. "These are the ones we are mindful of tonight as we should be every night."

The Anti-Displacement Task Force meets the first Monday of every month. For more information, please contact the Office of Council Member Melissa Mark-Viverito directly at (212) 828-9800.



Annual Membership Meeting

Hope Board, staff and residents attended the 38th Annual Meeting of Members held Thursday, November 15th at Carlos Rios Senior Residence.



During the event, Board members Roger Cabán and Stacy Crawford were sworn in to serve additional two-year terms, while reports were presented regarding various departmental accomplishments.



First Annual Garden Tour

Last Fall, Hope staff participated in Council Member Melissa Mark-Viverito's "First Annual East Harlem Community Garden Appreciation Day" (see photos below).

"We were delighted to have our gardens open throughout the day to the community," said Carmen Vasquez. "We hope to do this on an ongoing basis and look forward to furthering the use of all our open spaces."

The day-long tour included stops at several Hope community gardens and ended with a barbeque at the 103rd Street Garden. Other participants in the September 29th event included Harlem United Gardens, and the New York Restoration Project.



Holiday Events at Hope



On Friday, December 14th, Hope Community held a holiday luncheon for the agency's field staff at its Carlos Rios Senior Residence (above/below).



In addition to a delicious Caribbean meal, the employees were each given a bottle of complimentary dinner wine as a parting gift.

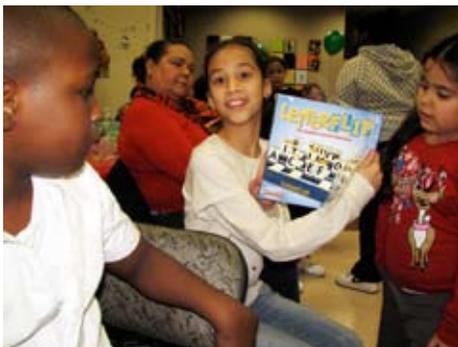
Dozens of Hope tenants and neighbors came out to celebrate an early Thanksgiving dinner at Carlos Rios Senior Residence on Tuesday, November 20th. Guests were treated to homemade dinner and desserts prepared in part



by Marisa Fundora, Awilda Pratts, and other Hope staff. Guests included officers from the 23rd Precinct and Manhattan Borough President Scott M. Stringer.



Activities Coordinator Jaritza Taveras visited the offices of Banco Popular on December 13th to pick up a donation of 100 toys from Dawn Carrillo, Metro Marketing Manager for the bank's New York offices. The toys were handed out to Ortiz-Wittenberg youth at a holiday event (see below).



Hope Community, Inc. Board of Directors

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- Miguel Calderon, Vice President
- Ann C. Henderson, Treasurer
- William Ofenloch, Secretary
- Haydee F. Areizaga
- Stacy Crawford
- Lisa Otterbeck
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Highlights of Hope Community Events



Hundreds turned out for Hope's Annual Fall Festival last October 8th along East 104th Street. The event included performances by the Impact Dance Troupe and the Harlem Drummers, an outdoor art gallery and children's chalk festival led by artist Angelo Romano, face painting by clown Paola Mojica, raffle drawings, and free hot dogs and hamburgers for youth.



On November 8th, interns from City Year's "Young Heroes" once again visited Hope Community's Lexington Avenue garden to begin a cleanup campaign in conjunction with garden caretaker Aresh Javadi of More Gardens. The youth then spent the next few weeks sprucing up the vest pocket park and planting seeds for a spring blossom.



Hope recently donated turkeys to several tenants (above) during the holiday spirit. Carmen Vasquez and Jaritza Taveras, along with Property Management staff Louis Arevalo and Iris Marines delivered the turkeys to Denise Johnson (pictured below), and other tenants on December 18th, 2007.



On October 30th, Hope greeted students from the "Williams in New York" program as they toured East Harlem. The Massachusetts Arts College youth were joined during the tour by Professor Philip Kasinitz, Chair of the Doctoral Program in Sociology at CUNY's Graduate Center.



Volunteers from Citibank visited East Harlem on Saturday, November 17th to help clean up several community gardens located within Hope's Ortiz-Wittenberg and Carlos Rios apartment buildings. The volunteers were accompanied by Rei Perez, Citibank's Vice President for Community Relations.



On Friday, October 12, 2007, over one dozen members of the Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic Development (above) met with staff and board members of Hope Community as part of their New York tour. Led by JPC-SED's Sam Watanabe, the business



delegation visited Hope's Ortiz-Wittenberg building to learn about the agency's programs and development projects as part of its research into business practices in the United States.

In Memory of Felix Luis Rivera (1957-2008)



**In Memory of
Felix L. Rivera
January 03, 2008**

O Gentlest Heart of Jesus, ever present in the Blessed Sacrament, ever consumed with burning love for the poor captive souls in Purgatory, have mercy on the soul of Thy departed servant. Be not severe in Thy judgment but let some drops of Thy Precious Blood fall upon the devouring flames, and do Thou. O merciful Savior, send Thy angels to conduct Thy departed servant to a place of refreshment, light and peace. Amen.

May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Modesto Flores," said Hope Chairman Roger Cabán. "It just won't be the same without him in the garden."

Hope Community mourns the loss of Felix Luis Rivera, 50, the cousin of community garden volunteer Yvonne Pacheco.

Born March 3rd, 1957, Mr. Rivera passed away on Thursday, January 3rd, 2008. "Felix was always there for me," said Yvonne. "He was always willing to help out in Modesto Flores

community garden."

Felix had recently been instrumental in the installation of Lina Puerta's fountain sculpture (above), helping to attach hundreds of mosaic pieces and to clean up the park before and after every Poetas Con Café performance.

"We will certainly miss Felix in

Upon learning of his passing, Hope Deputy Executive Director Carmen Vasquez paid a visit to Felix's mother, Carmen Rivera, in the nearby Clinton Houses and presented Mrs. Rivera with photographs of her son in the community garden that Felix so loved (below).



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