

# QUEST FOR JUSTI(E

### YOUTH ADVO(ATES FOR NUTRITION A((ESS AT BRONX HELPERS

A Project of Bronx Helpers and Community Food Action at New Settlement Apartments

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE IN YANA AND THE BRONX HELPERS?

**Bronx Helpers** is a community service and youth leadership program that began in 1995, with six young people in the Townsend section of the Bronx who were committed to changing the neighborhood they were from — for the better!

Bronx Helpers has grown tremendously and now operates for middle and high school-aged youth. Their motto, "Working for the Community to Better Our Lives," serves as the motivation for everything that they do.

This year, the 6th and 7th graders (Cool Kids Down the Block) planned and put on "Saving The Arts," a multi-cultural showcase. Their showcase consisted of a gallery walk, live performance and fashion show, as well as poetry. The 8th graders, WIFI (With Individuality For Integrity), successfully planned and executed the Third Annual Moon Walking for Change, a community-wide event that was based on healthy living, fitness and dance. Although each



of the groups had separate end-ofthe-year projects, there were many times when the groups united. Service projects such as serving food to home-bound elders, cleaning up their local parks or enjoying one another's company at a spoken word event... Bronx Helpers always have fun!

As a YANA member within Bronx Helpers, the youth were expected to spend time outside of advocating for food justice. Seen above, YANA members advocated for an increase in Summer Youth Employment and also attended a health fair at Morrisania Heights Community Center. All Bronx Helpers are committed to maximizing their potential to serve as many people as possible!

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The Youth Advocates for Nutritional Access (YANA) came to be during the Bronx Helpers' high school year of 2015–2016. With the mission of food justice and youth advocacy as the pillars of their formation, the group spent countless days refining themselves to use their leadership skills as agents for change.

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In the early stages of the year, when the group was still **Teens Influence Community for a Time of Change** (TICTOC), the group spent the program team-building and exploring themselves and their community. In order to impact their communities, they knew they had to begin introspectively and then expand their personal greatness outwards. During the second half of the school year, the group began to do intensive research on food justice and accessibility. They searched the web, conducted interviews and surveys, and had in-depth conversations with their peers, guided by staff.

With their newly attained knowledge, TICTOC transformed into YANA. YANA spent the rest of the school year presenting their findings to the rest of their Bronx Helpers family and the larger community through a week of presentations. They turned their presentations into this ZINE so that their message could reach an even larger audience and be a tangible reminder that young people care about the world around them.

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### YOUTH ADVO(ATES FOR NUTRITIONAL A((ESS PURPOSE STATEMENT

This year, Bronx Helpers / Youth Advocates for Nutritional Access dedicated months to learning about food justice. The youth advocates understood that educating themselves was essential to beginning their road towards advocating for equal accessibility in their community. The next step was to spread the knowledge they acquired. That's what brings us to this zine.

The purpose of YANA's zine is to show the larger world all that YANA has learned thus far about food injustice, both in their Bronx Community and universally. Throughout these pages, they will acknowledge the lack of access to healthy food and discuss the startling obesity and starvation epidemics comsumers face. They will educate others on food miles and also share what they learned about pesticides vs. organic farming and their impact on the earth. They will highlight the diversity within their communities while bringing the lives of producers to the forefront.

Ultimatley, this zine will be a compilation of all the things YANA feels the world needs to know, while celebrating the brillance each member encompasses. We hope you enjoy!

Asamia Diaby

### KEY TERMS

A borough of New York City in southeast New York on the mainland north of Manhattan. The Bronx was first settled by Jonas Bronck (died c. 1643), a Dane in the service of the Dutch West India Company, and became part of New York City in 1898.

Communities exercise their right to grow, sell, and eat healthy food. Healthy food is fresh, nutritious, affordable, culturally appropriate, and grown locally with care for the well-being of the land, workers, and animals.

Permission or the right to enter, get near, or make use of something, or to have contact.

### EMPOWERMENT

BRONX

FOOD

A((ESS

ADVO(A(Y

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To give power or authority to; to authorize, especially by legal or official means.

Public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy.

**Jason Saintilus** 

GIVE US THE HEALTHY FOODS WE NEED SO WE (AN END THE DEATHS (AUSED BY OBESITY AND STARVATION



Caelan Jennessa Harrigan

### YOUTHS MAKING A DIFFEREN(E

### MEALS ON HEELS

For many years in Bronx Helpers, we have participated in a program called **Meals on Heels**. This program allowed us to help homebound elders by delivering healthy meals that they couldn't travel to get. The elders had a lack of access to healthy meals, and we were presented a chance to give back to the community.

It was important that we as youths traveled long distances to deliver meals to elders who didn't know us because it showed our dedication to food availability and food justice. Teenagers are unfortunately stereotyped as reckless and selfish, but by our actions, we showed that we are able to help others and not get anything in return.

We want the elders to know that people care about their needs (their food choice and being able to get their foods). Bronx Helpers believes that accessibility is important because we all deserve the right to healthier foods, regardless of our location.

Lisandra Peña

### YOUTH EMPOWERMENT SUMMIT

Bronx Helper's YANA cohort was invited to attend an event called **Youth Empowerment Summit.** We were able to get together with other youth groups from different boroughs to talk about the food issues we were facing.

We talked about how young farmers wanted to spread the word of their organizations and farms to show how youths can make a difference through youth advocacy. We talked about problems individuals face throughout NYC in regards to food justice. We also talked about what we could do to fix it. It was awe-inspiring how youths from all over New York came together for such a great cause. We came to see how important it was for young people to get together and discuss these social issues because we held the ability to influence people, younger and older alike, to do the same.

We are the new generation, and we need to set a good example. People say teens are nothing but irresponsible and lazy. We must show everyone that there are people doing good, and there are people helping with food justice who are young!

Lisandra Peña

### GARDENER'S ISLAND BY LISBETH PENA

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During my spring break, YANA and I visited a garden located on Governor's Island. The garden is run by the organization GrowNYC. This is my experience of the day.

Good afternoon **Bronx Helpers!** 2--

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"This is our very own garden, where we harvest fruits like blueberries and vegetables like arugula. Many people don't realize you can grow food in New York City, but in fact there are urban farmers across the city, from ours to community gardens in the Far Rockaways and the South Bronx. Wow, it is beautiful. You grew this entire garden yourself?

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be creative and Is it true that you grow this food

without any electricity or water?

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We recently got water access, but we don't have any power here. That's why we have to resourceful, which has th

fresher and more nutritious the foods.

We've learned that the

closer the source, the

п.

It was a team effort. GrowNYC runs

the garden and we also have lots of

volunteers who want to learn to grow

food in the city. Do you know some

of the reasons why we believe in

supporting urban agriculture?

We're now going to make fresh hummus using a blender powered by a bicycle! Do you ever cook? We're Teen **Battle Chefs** so we've got this!

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Prep Time: 40 minutes Makes: 16 servings

#### Ingredients :

4 cups seasonal fruit 2 pints plain whole-fat yogurt 4 cups granola 1/3 cup honey or maple syrup

### PARFAIT? HOORAY!

#### Directions:

- 1. Wash and prepare the fruit as needed
- Spoon 1/8 cup of fruit into the bottom of a clear cup
  Spoon 1/8 cup of yogurt into the cup on top of the
- fruit
- 4. Spoon 1/8 cup of granola or nuts into the cup on top of the yogurt
- 5. Drizzle ½ teaspoon honey into the cup on top of the nuts or granola
- 6. Repeat steps 2-5 so there are two layers of each ingredient in the cup

This recipe stood out to me because it was simple, fun, easy to make, and healthy. It can encourage more teens to eat healthy because it teaches them that they do not need to do too much to eat healthy on their own.

Preparing recipes such as parfaits can be a step in the direction that will help you live a healthy lifestyle because small steps can have strong impacts. Young people need to be introduced to healthier choices which allows them to consume healthy foods that are delicious. This is what we got the chance to experience in Teen Battle Chef.

Caelan Jennessa Harrigan





In the summer of 2015, **Communities for Healthy Food Intern Dejah McGibbon** prepared yogurt parfaits for toddlers at New Settlement's Tot-Lot.

**TEEN BATTLE (HEF** is a family cook productions initiative that trains young chefs in the fields of culinary art and nutrition through multicultural recipes. Two teams battle against one another a week through a live cooking demonstration and nutritional workshop. Four cohorts of Bronx Helpers have successfully completed Teen Battle Chef.



My experience in Whole Foods was an exciting one. While there, we shopped in a particular way. We would split up into our Teen Battle Chef (TBC) groups and shop for the ingredients each group needed for their recipes that week. We made shopping a fun experience as we would have a competition between the groups. Each group would race to retrieve the ingredients needed in order to speed up the shopping process when we didn't have enough time.

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Near Whole Foods was a farmers market at Union Square where we would frequently shop. We would look for fresh ingredients and speak to farmers. We would also have competitions there and whichever team finished first would help the other team finish their list of ingredients. Sometimes we would run out of time because we had to travel a far distance in order to get to 14th Street. It also took some time to travel back.

We traveled to Whole Foods because our community lacked the healthy and fresh products we would need for our recipe. It also took time to pick out the products that did not look like they've gone bad. This posed a challenge because we had to get back at a certain time. Overall, it was a great experience to do healthy shopping and have some fun while we're at it.

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Caelan Jennessa Harrigan

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Food Miles How well travelled is your dinner?

### JOURNEY FOR 1,000 MEALS

Bio DE JANEN

BAT WICK

Food miles is a concept that many in our society are oblivious about. We fail to realize the importance in its role determining the amount of the nutrition we actually get in food. Food miles is the unit measurement used to determine the distance traveled in the transportation of food from one location to another. When bringing to attention the freshness of food, one has to take into account when the produce was harvested as nutrition fades over time. If we don't know the origin of our food, we can't guarantee it was produced somewhere with strong oversight like the United States.

Food miles essentially determine whether the food we eat is beneficial to our health or not. One of the abundant number of issues we face is the interval that incorprates when the food is produced and harvested and when it arrives. Over time, the nutrients start to deteriorate and makes the food less nutritious the more time it isn't consumed. If citizens continue to be ignorant towards this issue, it will not matter if foods are available as they are not in the best condition.

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Another factor in food miles is the creation of importation pollution. The farther away foods are imported the larger the carbon emissions, which only add to the worldly problem of global warming. Ulitizing vehicles that are used for long distance travel, such as airplanes, will only add more to the greenhouse effect and threrefore impact the environment in a way that soiciety doesn't intend to. It will only add to the world the worldwide dilemma known as global warming.

In order to increase the awareness towards this issue, young teenagers and adults alike are encouraged to to use the different social media sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, to promote the importance of food miles. People, such as classmates, may be interested in the medical field and might be intrigued by how the food miles could possibly affect personal health. If they are to enter the field, they need to learn the causes of sickness, which can persuade teachers and professors to teach their students about it.

There are many other topics that others may discuss about food miles. For example, one may check the origin of where food is conceived by checking the food label on the back of their products. This way, we may ensure the quality of the food by way of its origin and see if it had strong oversight in its maintenance.

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If we put our minds to it and increase awareness of food miles, people can strive to put an end to the issues that arise and become advocators in resolving this issue. We must ensure the safety of every individual, so join the cause for food mile advocacy, support local grown foods and prevent global warming.

Christopher Rodriguez

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### where the food comes from

When people want to ask

There is a lack of transparency in regards to where our food comes from. Consumers don't often know about the impact their food might have on the environment or whether their food was handled properly because that information isn't easily available.

Jabez Quarshie

People struggle everyday to access food. The inability to access healthy food leads to starvation and obesity. Many people can't afford healthy food and die of starvation yearly.

Caelan Jennessa Harrigan -->

### far to get these healthy foods

Aintnobodygottimetogo

This meme shows how people feel. The Bronx is a food desert, which means the neighborhood is surrounded by fast food and other unhealthy restaurants. Nobody has time to travel far to get the best food!

Lisbeth Peña



I feel that food workers work really hard to support communities and they do not get the recognition and respect they deserve.

### What do we want?

## This is a picture from fightfor15.org which is an initiative where workers from all over the United States mobilize in their states towards the fight for a minimun wage increase of \$15. We're pleased to announce that they have succeeded in their fight for 15!

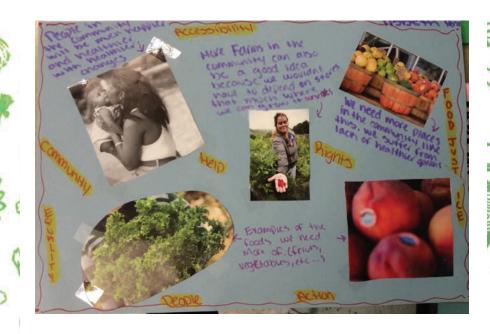
Lisandra Peña

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This quote shows that people in the community can make a change in their neighborhood. If they believe it can happen, it will... You never know until you try. You can go to stores and request for more of a certain fruit or vegetable, and they would listen to you because they want you to buy from them. Or at least have a conversation with the manager of a store.

Lisbeth Peña



This collage shows a happy family. That's how everyone would be with the right food choices. We can have the right food choices by having enough access to healthier options. The other pictures of food show the types of food we want and need. The Bronx is a food desert which means there's a lack of healthier options, and these pictures show what we want more of.

Lisbeth Peña





#### Halloween Block Party History

We are the Bronx Helpers Teen Battle Chefs. We participate in the Halloween Block Party to inform the community about healthy recipes as an alternative to eating things that can cause harm to their body, like candy. We distribute healthy samples of snacks that people enjoy. Some alternatives to snacks are fruit kabobs. There are also homemade snacks with nuts, cereal or fruits to make at home for your sweet tooth. You don't need to eat candy.



TBC make a Crunchy Autumn Salad and they have a positive attitude.



TBC make fruit kabobs in 2015.

Kandace helps out one of the activities for the kids at the block party.

#### What did we do?

The Halloween Block Party has been happening for 20 years at 172nd and Townsend. NSA programs come together and contribute activities that are fun and make a successful block party. In 2014 and 2015 we provided fruit kabobs at the block party as a healthy alternative to all the candy that will be consumed that day.



People wait patiently while their fruit kabobs are being made.



A kid enjoys a fruit kabob.

### Preparation for Halloween Block Party

1. We washed our hands and any necessary equipment.

2. Mise en place (French for putting in place): We set up the table and prepared our cooking station.

3. Chopped, sliced, diced all of our ingredients.

4. Assembled our fruit kabobs.

5. Distributed samples and recipes to inform people about the delicious snack they were eating!



Leeza cuts and prepares the Crunchy Autumn Salad for distribution.





Asamia and Diashawn distribute fruit kabobs.



Jabez and Leeza get ingredients and supplies for the Crunchy Autumn Salad.

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#### SWEET LIKE HEALTH BY ANABEL PEREZ

VS.

#### HEALTHY OPTIONS

#### (ANDY

They are a good source of:

- vitamins
- minerals
- antioxidants
- dietary fibers

Veggies and fruits give you more than candy. They keep your digestive system happy and reduce the risk of getting diseases.

We tell the Bronx Helpers to always try new things, even when you think you're not going to like it! • Americans purchase 600 MILLION pounds of candy each year for Halloween

- The average American consumes 3.4 pounds of candy over Halloween
- Kids consume up to 7,000 calories on Halloween
- Cavities
- High Cholesterol which can cause diabetes

Kids can't get used to eating candy because it will affect them a lot later on in life.



### What does this have to do with our mission of food justice?

We're trying to inform the community about the healthy, quick and tasty alternatives that can be made with fruits and vegetables. We want to inform the community that nutritional food can be accessible in their communities.

### YOUR OWN WORLD

Vegetables and fruits are among the tastier healthy lifestyle choices, but most people tend to purchase unhealthy options when given the choice. Since there is a tendency to buy unhealthy foods, people don't know they can make tasty food with healthy produce. If they knew how possible this was, I could see more people eating healthier and living healthier, too.

In my neighborhood, junk food is very cheap in corner stores, but I know it is very unhealthy. Youths coming out of school rush to the bodega to get a snack instead of buying bite-size vegetables. I think youths are not well-educated on food options so they think they don't have any choice.

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Last year, the high school group was a part of Chefs For Change, which was a program designed to bring about healthier options to local stores. Bronx Helpers high school group held cooking demonstrations in front of C-Town and fredalet with healthy produce we found in store. We taught the community that instead of always getting junk food in the corner store or supermarket, you can choose things that are healthier and accessible and make it at home. Since the community saw youths who were interested and advocating for food justice, they were more open to exploring the other options we introduced them to!

Lisbeth Peña

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BREAKFAST

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DINNER

SHANAE'S	MARGARET'S	
Food diary	Food diary	
Egg whites, pepper jack cheese on whole wheat toast served with orange juice, all purchased from the local bodega	Fruit salad, yogurt parfait and whole wheat toast with lemon tea	
Tuna and cheese	Grilled cheese	
sandwich paired	sandwich with	
with a salad and	baked potato	
water	chips and water	
Whole wheat pasta	Grilled chicken	
with baked fish	with salad	

I wanted to convey the reality that although access may in certain areas more than others, we can take steps towards healthy eating. Both of these girls were able to eat healthy all by consuming what was available in their communities. It's not always easy, but it isn't impossible.

Shayla Hill-Kendley

YANA learned about food justice through analysis of the Real Food Wheel. Within the food wheel, there is a correlation between all four of the subgroups of issues. Everything is an interconnected cycle. Issues that affect the earth affect the producers. Issues that affect producers affect the consumers. Issues that affect consumers affect the community. And the issues of the community are the issues of the earth.

From the food wheel, I learned that I didn't know much about food problems, and my ignorance placed me in an unsafe position. But with what I learned from the food wheel, I can disrupt the cycle of issues.

#### Earth -> Producers

Farmers are heavily reliant on the earth. The soil must be rich and fertile for the agriculture to be bountiful. Large scale agriculture does not restore the land so the earth suffers. Abuse of the earth's resources can leave land unusable for future generations.

> Consumers Farmers who raise fruits vegetables low profit margins, which means that for the money they put into their farms, they don't make high Profits. Large agriculture companies make a lot of money off of cheap, processed foods. When consumers cannot afford the healthier, more expensive produce, consumers invest in products that don't hurt their pockets but are <sup>unhealthy.</sup>

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Producers ->

Shayla Hill-Kendley

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Consumers -7

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Community

When consumers do not

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ues, uns can read to cre-ues, uns can read to cre-ation of a junk food reliant

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healthy



The world is on lettuce, which means the world would revolve around healthy foods. At the bottom right corner are some fruits that are good. On the left, a man is excited to have food justice in their community. This is how the world would be if we had food justice – people everywhere would be excited like the man on the left!

Lisbeth Peña

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Bronx Helpers went to a local bodega to see what the chef had to say about food and food justice...

"Food and culture are directly connected in a tropical mess."

-Benjamin Nuttin, chef at local bodega

### YANA BIOS



Hola! My name is **Anabel Perez**.

I am from the Dominican Republic and I am 15 years old. I have been in Bronx Helpers since the summer of 2013 and I see myself as a veteran within the program. I see my leadership style as a take charge attitude with tons of energy. In a just world, I feel there should be equal opportunities and real love! An interesting fact about me is that I love art and you will always see my personality in my work.

**Favorite quote**: "You have to love yourself because no amount of love from others is sufficient to fill the yearning that your soul requires from you." —Odinsky



Wa gwan? My name is **Caelan** Jennessa Harrigan.

I am from Antigua St. Thomas and I am 15 years old. I have been in Bronx Helpers for a year and after Bronx Helpers I see myself in school. My leadership style is openminded and creative. In a just world there should be equality and fair laws. One interesting fact about me is that I hate high-pitched sounds.

**Favorite quote**: "The truth is, everyone is going to hurt you. You just go to fine the ones worth suffering for." —Bob Marley



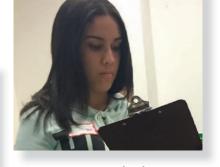
**Denisse Castillo** 



Whatsup? My name is Daishawn Edwards.

I am 16 years old and my family is West-Indian and African American. I have been in Bronx Helpers for 5 years and I see myself as a revolutionary. My leadership style is typically quiet, but I can push people to work harder by motivating them to see their true abilities. In a just world I feel there should be no violence, a socialized civilization where the voice of the people is at its core. An interesting fact about me is that I am not what people view me as.

Favorite quote: "Never watch the hand that feeds you, always watch the hands that's cooking."



Hey. My name is Lisbeth Peña.

I am from the Dominican Republic and I am 16 years old. I have been in Bronx Helpers for 4 years and after Bronx Helpers I see myself in college. I describe my leadership style as independent. In a just world, there should be equality where people don't discriminate. An interesting thing about me is that I am extremely clumsy.

Favorite quote: "If you believe it, you can achieve it."



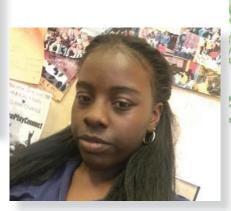


#### Hi. My name is Lisandra Peña.

I am 14 years old and my family is from Santo Domingo. I have been in Bronx Helpers for about 5 years and within Bronx Helpers I see myself as a leader. I describe my leadership style as unique because I am friendly and nice to everyone I work with. In a just world I feel there should be equality for homosexuals and free college. An interesting fact about me is that I have never broken a bone.

Favorite quote: "When nothing goes right, go to bed." ---Katie Ganon





#### My name is Zanobia Deas.

I am 16 years old and my family is from Trinidad. I have been in Bronx Helpers for about 9 months and after Bronx Helpers I see myself helping my family. My leadership style is described as extremely loyal where I always encourage those around me not to give up. In a just world, everyone would be happy; they stay in school and are able to get a job. An interesting thing about me is that I like to test my limits and see how far I can go.

Favorite quote: "Don't cry over someone making someone else smile."

Jarie Cotto



#### Hey, my name is Jason Saintilus.

I am from the streets of The Bronx and I am 17 years old. I have been in Bronx Helpers for 4 years and I see myself as getting prepared to head to college. My leadership style is one of individuality - I like to be my own person. In a just world there should be equal rights and opportunity. One interesting fact about me is that I like pizza.

Favorite quote: "All I do is win." -T-Pain

#### Hi! My name is Christopher Rodriguez.

My family is from the Dominican Republic and I am 16 years old. I have been in Bronx Helpers for 2 months and after BH I envision myself going to college. I describe my leadership style as selfdetermined and I motivate my peers to complete the task. In a just world everyone can live freely without the fear of calamity. One interesting fact about me is that I want to live a life filled with selfless acts.

Favorite quote: "The will to win, the desire to succeed, the urge to reach your full potential, these are the keys that will unlock the door to personal excellence."

### ABOUT STAFF

EDITING (OMMITTEE

Educator

Action staff.

Asamia Diaby: Lead Community Food

A graduate of the program Asamia joined

Bronx Helpers for 5 years as a teen leader, a community food educator and then a lead.

As a LCFE, Asamia worked with the group directly to guide them through the various stages of the year and support them in

all areas. A long with Jabez, both YANA

program under the guidance of the Director,

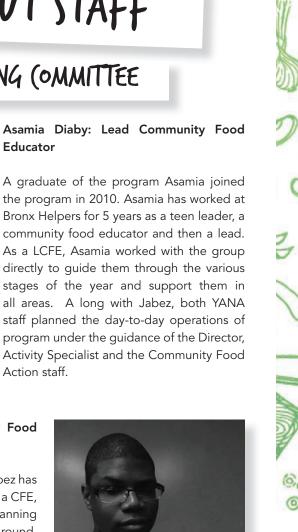
Activity Specialist and the Community Food

#### Jabez Quarshie: Community Food Educator

A graduate of the program, Jabez has been a member since 2007. As a CFE, Jabez assisted the LCFE in planning and facilitating program year round. He also worked closely with YANA to ensure each stage of the year was successful. Jabez also served as the technical manager throughout the project.



Petronia Harrison: Bronx Helpers **Program Director** 





### **Diana Sambula: Activity Specialist** A graduate of the program as well,

Diana returned to Bronx Helpers during her senior year of college at Potsdam and quickly rose up from a Lead Facilitator to Activity Specialist. Diana assisted YANA throughout the entire year, not only as a member of the editing committee but also as a visual arts consultant.



Jenina Podulka: Community **Engagement Specialist** 

Jenina started working with Community Food Action at New Settlement as an Americorps member two years ago, and now serves as the program's Community Engagement Specialist. She has created a video highlighting Bronx Helpers' Teen Battle Chef program, assisted with lessons and cooking demos as part of the Chefs for Change healthy retail project, and served on the editing committee for this zine.



Taisy Conk: Director, Community **Food Action** 

Taisy has been running New Settlement's food initiative for almost three years. She has had the pleasure to work with the Bronx Helpers on several projects, including introducing Teen Battle Chef to the program, piloting a healthy retail project called Chefs for Change, and working closely with staff on creating YANA by providing coaching, resources, and overseeing the zine project.

YANA is coordinated through a partnership between Bronx Helpers and **Community Food Action at New Settlement Apartments.** 

#### **About Community Food Action**

Community Food Action at New Settlement Apartments advances community well-being in the Mt. Eden neighborhood of the Bronx by integrating healthful, sustainably sourced, and fairly produced food into the food environment, embedding holistic education around food issues into local institutions, and developing community leadership.

Community Food Action at New Settlement is one site of LISC New York City's Communities for Healthy Food NYC initiative.

#### **About New Settlement Apartments**

New Settlement Apartments is community development organization based in the Mt. Eden community of the Southwest Bronx. Grounded in our commitment to affordable housing and a thriving neighborhood, we collaborate with community residents and develop partnerships to create services and opportunities that celebrate the inherent dignity and potential of individuals and families.

#### **Our Supporters**

YANA is generously supported by the Levitt Foundation. Communities for Healthy Food NYC is grateful to our support from the Levitt Foundation, New York City Council and the Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund.

#### Thank you!

Thanks for reading! If you like our zine, please share it with at least two friends or family members.



growing stronger together IN MOUNT EDEN. BRONX

Zine Designed by Jessica Y Lee



