



Michael Bolus, Cornerstone Journalist

Our Very Own Mike Bolus, Cornerstone Director and Community Advocate speaks about his Canarsie community in a Canarsie Courier Letter to the Editor, which was published on November 10, 2011

"Back in my day" or "When I was your age" ... those phrases are often accompanied by stories from our elders that lets the current generation know how easy they have it. Well as a man that has recently embarked on his 30's, who has always heeded the words of his seniors and wishes the DeLorean; equipped with a "flux capacitor" were more than fiction, would love to know how the Canarsie of yesteryear actually was.

I've heard numerous stories from those that live in Canarsie; "unity, family, involvement, passion and pride" are the words normally associated when long time Canarsiens reminisce on their glory days. Not to say that these facets don't exist today, but I believe it's safe to say that what was once the majority is most certainly in the minority.

As we search for answers there are always questions that precede them. Where did the aforementioned sentiments of Canarsiens go? How do we return Canarsie to the shining beacon of South Brooklyn? Who's to blame?

Well when it comes to blame, how can we NOT point the finger at ourselves, the average Joe? Who better to serve as your voice or advocate other than you? Our self-sufficiency at best can be labeled a farce. Think about it, as a majority, we blame our educational system for students not being on par with their grade level. We blame After School programs when children don't complete their homework. We blame NYCHA or DSNY for garbage in our communities. We blame NYPD for crimes in our area. We blame our elected officials because the laws and policies we desire aren't in place.

Instead we should aid our teachers that average 25+ per class by working with our children at home. We should pick up our own litter and let others know it is NOT OK to plague our sidewalks with garbage, urinate in our staircases and elevators or smoke marijuana in our parks or lobbies. We should speak when daily crowds of disruptive youth are stationary at our local stores, or when screams are heard on the opposite side of our walls, yet we promote the "no snitch" code that has led to countless horror stories. We should attend these meetings that involve elected officials that allow us to use a proper platform to vent our concerns.

This is what separates us from our elders. To them, there was no greater accomplishment than one self achieved. They knew the strongest entity they could ever rely on were themselves. While they fought to ascend from survival to thriving... we merely strive to survive.

Cornerstone Goes Global



Youngest Elected Female Legislator from the Philippines Visits the Chinatown YMCA Program at Two Bridges

By Jeannette Corey

Congresswoman Sandy Ocampo, 6th District, Manila, Philippines, visited the Chinatown YMCA's Cornerstone Program on November 2, 2011. She was accompanied by Zaldy Patron, Consul, Philippine Consulate General, and representatives from DYCD.

Congresswoman Ocampo met with Chi Yung, Cornerstone Director, Jeannette Corey, Chinatown Y Executive Director, Glenn MacAfee, Chinatown Y Senior Program Director, and Cornerstone staff to discuss the unique work our Cornerstone program is doing to meet the needs of low income children and teens including after school programming, weekend and evening programs for teens and community-building events.

Congresswoman Ocampo was the Philippines youngest elected female legislator. She has focused a great deal of energy on issues facing the Filipino family including services that address educational advancement and health and wellness. The Y staff was honored to have such an esteemed leader visiting us to discuss the depth of services the Chinatown Y's Cornerstone Program offers.



Staff Shout-Outs



JAZIEL

Jaziel always goes above and beyond her title and offers everyone her love and support. She also creates fun and engaging activities for the kids. She is an amazing spirit and brings the light to our program!!



BARBARA

Barbara has been an exceptional member of our staff since day one. Besides being the epitome of professionalism, She is patient and calm at all times, as well as prepared for anything. Barbara is an asset to our program, and I think that all of the children recognize how wonderful it is to have her as a part of our Betances Community.



CHEF B

Special thanks and recognition go out to Chef B of the Bayview Cornerstone Program! He has been an amazing staff member who has taught several teens not only cooking, but life skills! He is an extremely valuable member of our team & our community!



KEIMISA & JOE

Congratulations to both Night Center Director, Keimisa Larrier, and Cornerstone Director, Joseph Vereen, received their Family Development Leadership Credentials as part of the scholarship program of DYCD's Professional Development Program.