

The Morrisania Air Rights Tenant Association Unveils a Mural Designed by the Community to Express Why WE ❤️ NYC

NYCHA residents and local artists share what NYC means to them with support from NYCHA, the Public Housing Community Fund, genEquality, and the Partnership for New York City

May 21, 2023 – Today Bronx elected officials joined NYCHA residents and community leaders to unveil a two-story tall mural at Morrisania Air Rights Houses (MAR) which is home to nearly 2,000 New Yorkers. The mural is part of the WE ❤️ NYC civic action campaign, celebrating what makes New York City great. genEquality, a nonprofit organization on a mission to creatively activate social change, organized the project in partnership with NYCHA and the Public Housing Community Fund with support from the WE ❤️ NYC campaign and the Partnership for New York City.

“This new work of public art reflects the love that residents of Morrisania Air Rights Houses - and all New Yorkers - have for this city,” said **New York City Mayor Eric Adams**. “Thank you to genEquality, the Public Housing Community Fund and the Partnership for New York City for helping to celebrate New York City’s continued recovery.”

“Public art reflects the vibrancy and tells the stories of our communities and we’re excited to celebrate the unveiling of this wonderful mural that residents of Morrisania Air Rights helped to inspire and create,” said **NYCHA Interim CEO Lisa Bova-Hiatt**. “Thank you to all of our partners who made this collaboration possible, as this new art not only beautifies the Morrisania campus, but also demonstrates the clear vision and talents of New Yorkers in public housing.”

Dozens of MAR residents helped design and paint the mural, which measures 76 feet wide by 16 feet high. It visualizes the values the MAR community wants to stand for. Bronx-native artists [Andre Trenier](#) and [Marthalia Matarrita](#) served as the Teaching Artists for the mural.

“The Morrisania Air Rights Houses residents would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to Mayor Adams, genEquality, NYCHA, the Public Housing Community Fund, the Partnership for New York City, and WE ❤️ NYC for their invaluable collaboration and support in making this project a reality. Their commitment to enhancing the aesthetic and cultural fabric of our community has truly made a lasting impact,” said **MAR Houses Tenant Association President Tanya Pedler**. “The mural, a true work of art, reflects the vibrant spirit and diversity of Morrisania Air Rights Houses. Through vibrant colors and intricate designs, it captures the essence of our community's identity, serving as a visual representation of our shared values, dreams, and aspirations. Each brushstroke on the mural speaks to the power of collaboration and reminds us of the strength we possess when we come together.”

“This community-led mural portrays the love Morrisania Air Rights residents have for their community and each other. Centered by a tree of life, the mural speaks to inclusivity, respect and love not only for one’s community but for our great city,” **Public Housing Community Fund Executive Director Alex Zablocki** said. “We are thrilled to partner with residents, local artists, NYCHA, genEquality, and the WE ❤️ NYC civic-action campaign to bring this beautiful mural to life in the South Bronx.”

“It’s always a privilege to work with community leaders and residents, like the ones we worked with at MAR Houses, and come together to create a work of art that is designed to inspire and strengthen the community” said **genEquality Executive Director Sherry Hakimi**. “At the heart of genEquality’s work is the mission to creatively activate inclusion, and it’s been wonderful to partner with residents, NYCHA, the Public Housing Community Fund, and the WE ❤️ NYC civic-action campaign to make a mural that visually creates a sense of belonging alongside hometown pride. We look forward to seeing this co-created mural continue to be a source of inspiration at MAR Houses and the City as a whole.”

“The Morrisania Air Rights residents exemplify what WE ❤️ NYC is about: celebrating our city through civic action,” said **Partnership for NYC President and CEO Kathryn Wylde**. “The mural is a positive statement about the values that New York stands for.”

“Over the past 10 years, I’ve realized that mural-making is my favorite form of creation, because it creates something that belongs to the whole community. Rarely do I have the chance to work with so many community members on one project, and I’m thankful for this opportunity,” said **genEquality Teaching Artist Andre Trenier**. “I am thrilled to have heard the voices of the residents who expressed their interest and who provided their input through the process,” added **genEquality Teaching Artist Marthalia Matarrita**. “It’s wonderful to be part of a deeply meaningful mural like this.”

The new mural is part of genEquality’s Inclusive Safety Mural Series, an initiative that harnesses the power of art and community to activate New Yorkers in creating safe and inclusive communities. The program features both community programming and artistic creation.

The mural was photographed by NeOn Photographers - a community of local photographers developed through the NYC Department of Probation, which offers free vocational training and ongoing access to professional photography equipment.

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About WE ❤️ NYC

WE ❤️ NYC is a cross-sector campaign to showcase the city’s strengths and mobilize New Yorkers to make sure this remains the greatest city in the world. The citywide campaign celebrates New Yorkers who are making a difference — the “Do-ers” — and features opportunities for civic engagement that everyone can join. New Yorkers can get involved at weloventyc.ny.gov.

About NYCHA

The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), the largest public housing authority in North America, was created in 1935 to provide decent, affordable housing for low- and moderate-income New Yorkers. NYCHA is home to roughly 1 in 16 New Yorkers across over 177,000 apartments within 335 housing developments. NYCHA serves over 339,000 residents through the conventional public housing program (Section 9), over 29,000 residents at developments that have been converted to PACT/RAD, and over 92,000 families through federal rent subsidies (the Section 8 Leased Housing Program). In addition, NYCHA connects residents to opportunities in

financial empowerment, business development, career advancement, and educational programs. With a housing stock that spans all five boroughs, NYCHA is a city within a city.

About Public Housing Community Fund

Public Housing Community Fund is a nonprofit that forges partnerships to power transformative programs that enhance the lives of over 500,000 residents across NYCHA communities. Our goal is to engage people and partners to build a stronger, more equitable New York City by investing in public housing communities. We invest in programs focused on leadership development, financial empowerment, community health, and workforce training for residents of the NYCHA community. www.communityfund.nyc

About genEquality

genEquality is a 501(c)3 social enterprise on a mission to creatively activate social change. Through our programs, partnerships, and work with leaders in schools and communities, we address broader issues of gender equality, inclusion, and safety in creative ways. Learn more at genEquality.org.