

FUREE-OUS

wordz

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 2
SPRING 2008

FUREE IN "THE BIG EASY"

A TRIP TO NEW ORLEANS REVEALS THE CONTINUED EFFECTS OF HURRICANE KATRINA

By Randy Leigh, Board Member, Downtown Brooklyn Campaign



My New Orleans trip was unforgettable. I call it unforgettable because I was happy to be there but also scared, mad and sad--all of them at the same time.

We went to New Orleans for a meeting with Policy Link. It was their 3rd National Summit on Equitable Development, Social Justice and Smart Growth. It was fun, educational and I met a lot of colorful people. We met the Founder and CEO of PolicyLink, Angela Glover Blackwell, a strong and very intelligent woman.

I also hung out with Danny Glover, talked with him and shook his hand. At the conference, Danny Glover showed documentaries on the flood in New Orleans. It was cool. It was a lot to take in and would make you cry.

We met some interesting people that were from California – many of the people who did workshops and classes came from there. The meeting was about instruction on how to do policy work, which was cool.

This one mayor from California told us how they took the money and did the right things. He was told to give 80% to the people that didn't need the money and 20% of the money to the poor. Instead, he gave 80% to the poor and 20% to the people who didn't

need it. He got a standing ovation.

But, most of what I saw was out in the streets of New Orleans. You can't believe what's happening there. The government says they're cleaning up, that everything is good. They're lying to us!

The first night there we went out eating. The food there is so different and so good making my mouth get up and dance. I rode the streetcar down to the City of the Dead and we did lots of sightseeing after the workshops. Theo and I walked down Bourbon Street and had a blast, and I didn't know I had my name tag on the whole time! I heard people yelling "Randy" as we walked by. People were throwing beads and calling out my name. People were walking

please see "THE BIG EASY," page 2

IN THIS ISSUE:

FUREE IN 'THE BIG EASY'
(PAGE 1)

WE'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE
(PAGE 3)

SHOULD THE NEW NAVY YARD MEET OUR NEEDS?
(PAGE 4)

TAKING OUR ACTION TO MIAMI
(PAGE 6)

UNITING ORGANIZATIONS AND UNIONS
(PAGE 8)

YOUTH SPEAK UP!
(PAGE 9)



***FUREE is YOUR Organization:
Get involved in making
FUREE bigger and better!***

Dear FUREE Members,

FUREE is a member directed organization and has been so since our founding.

FUREE is growing and changing. We're almost 7 years old, and the Board of Directors has been working to strengthen and improve our structure. We need your suggestions, input and votes to decide on a few issues.

On Saturday, June 14, 2008, we're holding a meeting for all dues-paying FUREE members so that your voice can be heard in how FUREE does our work for the next 7 years. At the meeting, all members will discuss and vote on several issues:

- The Board is proposing a new process for our Board of Directors Elections. The proposal states that each year, FUREE members will elect Board members through our active campaign committee instead at the Convention. Currently, these campaigns include the Child Care Campaign, Youth Organizing Initiative, and the Downtown Brooklyn Campaign. This proposal was created so that there is more opportunity to meet and hear from Board candidates before voting.
- The Board has proposed some changes to our By-Laws that reflect our growth from when we first started. These changes relate to our Youth Board Members and how our Board Members can be held accountable to the membership.
- The Board is proposing raising FUREE dues from \$24 a year to \$48 a year, to help us build more strength to win our campaigns.

FUREE is YOUR organization, so please get involved in making us the best organization we can be!

FUREE Membership Meeting
Saturday, June 14
1 pm at FUREE
81 Willoughby Street #701
Call (718) 857-2960 x302 to confirm

In Unity,
The FUREE Board of Directors



up and down having a good time. This is what they want you to see in New Orleans. But a short 5 minute car ride in the opposite direction you can see the effect of the flood. It's like night and day.

So much property destroyed remains destroyed. What we see on TV is a lie because the government is not doing what they are supposed to do. They are not fixing up the damage in poor neighborhoods where people of color live! These are people's homes, their communities and way of life. We saw some neighborhoods where houses are still bent around trees looking like sad modern art. It's almost 3 years later after hurricane Katrina hit and they have not cleaned up the houses in these areas.

We also saw a Tent City where so many people are living because they have no homes. There's a place for people to wash there, but it closes at 5 pm even though so many people are working and don't get home until 7 or 8. Right across from Tent City there are brick buildings that didn't get damaged by the flood, but they're still tearing them down. All these homes – public housing – are just being demolished even though there's nowhere for people to live. They are throwing people out of perfectly good houses. Ninety five percent (95%) of the people there live below the poverty level. Average wages down there are \$15,000 a year. Before the storm, people could get by in housing for \$250-\$400 a month, but now

it's more like \$2,000 a month and no one can afford it.

All that money that was collected from places like the Red Cross is not going to the victims of the flood. The Red Cross collected \$2 billion but people in New Orleans are not seeing that money.

What we saw in New Orleans was really bad. And all of us have to support the struggle of people there to keep New Orleans from kicking out all the people of color.

But we have our own New Orleans here in New York City. They're trying to kick us out here, too.

They are trying to turn New York into New Orleans. We were recently in Miami and saw it's like Katrina too – they're trying to kick us out of there. We went to the Social Forum in Atlanta and saw that Atlanta is a new Katrina. People told me Chicago is too.

Displacement of poor people of color is a national problem. We need to come together from all parts of the country and fight for the people in New Orleans, New York, Miami, California, Chicago and everywhere else.

We won't be pushed out! United we stand and divided we will be homeless.

Join FUREE on the fight to end displacement here in New York and anywhere poor people of color are being pushed out. For more information, call Cynthia or Talia at (718) 852-2960.

WE'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE!!!

OUR FIGHT TO SAVE PUBLIC HOUSING

By Diana Smith, Board Secretary & Member of the Downtown Brooklyn Campaign

I live in public housing – in the Farragut houses. Public housing is home to a lot of low-income families in this city. The fate of public housing is experiencing some hard times, because the government is giving more money to rich developers and putting less into housing. It feels like they're trying to put off their lack of money onto us, the tenants. The rent goes up and we have to pay more money for services. Now they're talking about cutting hundreds of maintenance workers' jobs to save money. How can you get rid of maintenance people??!! We can't live without the maintenance. If they do, things in our houses will only get worse.

It seems like they're doing this to make us all leave so they can turn NYC Housing Authority (NYCHA) housing into private housing and luxury condos. This city only cares about the rich knowing that we can't afford to live in these condos. This is wrong. We are part of the human race. We deserve our rights and shouldn't be put out to make way for high rise condos and rich people. We're not going anywhere! So, it's time to protest.

On Thursday, May 1st, I went with FUREE to go to City Hall to fight for public housing.



We went on 3 full buses with many community members from Ingersoll, Whitman and Farragut Houses as well as Reverend Taylor and the Church of the Open Door.

There were thousands of people there! It felt good to know how many people care about their homes, about their jobs, and willing to come out and fight for public housing. The rally was sponsored by the Teamsters Local 237, the union that repre-

sents NYCHA maintenance workers. There were also other organizations representing NYCHA tenants from all over the city.

We listened to different people speak – union members, residents, Council Members and Fort Greene's own Reverend Taylor and Mr. Carter. Everyone talked about how we have to fight for our housing and demand federal state and city funding back in public housing. Many speakers said if we don't get what we want, we should shut the city down. (Which, we can and we should!)

We were chanting "Housing is a Human Right. Fight Fight Fight." Also, "They say cutback, we say fight back!" That's the truth.

We have to keep fighting on behalf of our families and we need to unite – other organizations in other parts of the City, the Tenants Associations, all of us need to get together because we're fighting the same issue – saving homes and saving jobs.

Don't wait for them to take that away, get involved today!

For more information, contact Cynthia Butts at cynthia@furee.org or Talia Reyes at talia@furee.org. You can also call them both at (718) 852-2960.

MY STORY

A MESSAGE FROM A COMMUNITY ELDER

By Mozella McCadney, Downtown Brooklyn Campaign Member

My name is Mozella McCadney. I've lived in Ingersoll Houses for over 43 years and I am a long standing resident of Fort Greene. This has been my home for all of these years. My grand-daughter was born



here in Cumberland Hospital, the same hospital that has saved my life through the grace of God. All of my children and my grand-daughter went to P.S. 67, a long standing institution here in Fort Greene. I would take my children to the Walt Whitman Branch Library, where they got their first library cards. At one time I got the understanding that this place was called the projects, but since I've been here so long it's no longer the projects, it is now called NYCHA housing.

Now with all that said, I understand that there are changes to come, but even though changes come and go this is still my home. And, I don't feel that I should have to leave. I don't know of any place else other than Fort-Greene being here for

a very long time. This is me.

This is one of the reasons I joined FUREE because they are fighting for some of the same things that I'm fighting for—to save where I live, to save my home.

I love this place and of course, when you love something you are going to fight for it. FUREE and I are family. I know in my heart that there is no place like home. When you are at peace you don't want your peace taken away from you. Again I say I know there are always changes to come but, not at the loss of our homes.

Get involved in saving our communities and our homes. Contact Cynthia Butts or Talia Reyes at (718) 852-2960 for more information.

SHOULD THE NEW NAVY YARD MEET OUR NEEDS?

FUREE MEETS WITH DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION TO EXPLORE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

By Nicole Brown, *ACTIVATE Intern, Downtown Brooklyn Campaign*

The Brooklyn Navy Yard has become a hotly debated topic over the past year for Fort Greene residents. It is a historic location since the establishment of Brooklyn as a city in the late 1680s through the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, expanding greatly during World War II. In 1966, the U.S. Government closed the yard along with other national military bases and ports. It was then placed under the control of the Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation (BNYDC). The BNYDC oversees the daily functioning of the yard.

The conflict is over the future use of space and for Fort Greene residents within the surrounding area, many of which are from low-income and working class families. Because of business and luxury housing development, this population has lost numerous services, including quality supermarkets. There is currently concern and conflict over the desired use of space at the yard to accommodate the needs of the community that resides nearby. In addition, the development of the land located at Officer's Row (mistakenly referred to as "Admiral's Row") is not owned by the city but rather, the federal government. The BNYDC is in fighting to get the land under the city's control so that they can develop it, further complicated by the fact that this may be a court battle that ends two years from now.

FUREE recently met with Richard Drucker, Senior Vice President of BNYDC, to discuss the corporation's plan for the Navy Yard. FUREE was four strong, with two members and two staff (Diana Smith, Ernest Richardson, Nicole Brown and Theo Moore) and asked honest and direct questions to Drucker to determine whether we could support BNYDC and to push for greater community involvement.

We learned a few things from our meeting and tour of the Navy Yard:

- The BNYDC plans to build a supermarket accessible from Flushing Ave. on the land where Officer's Row is located (sometimes mistakenly called "Admiral's Row".)
- Stores will be at the ground level of the supermarket for non-food shopping
- There will be a historical center within the yard--the only site where people from outside the gates are permitted to visit once inside.

This should dispel the many different myths floating around such as a movie theater, open fish market and other services available to the Fort Greene community. To be clear, FUREE has not offered support for or against the BNYDC--in our meeting, we restated that our goal was to ensure that community members within Fort

Greene are made top priority in any planning of the Navy Yard. In addition, residents should be included in planning committees that are established and should be notified of all meetings that will occur so



that all our voices are heard.

Not all members of the Fort Greene community are thrilled about a supermarket being built in the space that is currently occupied by the historic Officer's Row buildings. Many people who were asked about the Navy Yard have argued that those buildings represent Fort Greene's history and the history of veterans. Members of The United Veterans for Restoration of Military Facilities are fighting to save the buildings in hopes of having them used as space for job training, rehabilitation and other services for war veterans including those who are now returning from the war in Iraq.

MY STORY ABOUT MY SMALL BUSINESS

BY Maisha Morales, *Member, Downtown Brooklyn Campaign*

Hello, my name is Maisha Morales and I am the owner of Gallery Religious Supplies located at 66 Willoughby St. Bklyn, NY 11201. I am one of many displaced business owners at the Gallery @ Fulton St. Mall, formerly known as Albee Square Mall.

My story began in 1989 when I became an employee of Albee Square Religious. This was an after school job for about 2 years, and then I went off to college. When I would return home for holidays, spring break, and summer vacation I always had my job to return to. Eventually I went off to pursue my career.

I returned to Albee Square Religious in 1998 until it closed in Feb. of 2001. It later reopened a few months later due to the demand for it. At this time I was unemployed and the store was offered to me at a



great price. Being a single parent and wanting a better future for my son, I purchased the store.

I reopened the store which was now

renamed Gallery Religious Supplies. In the end of 2001 Joseph Sitt, of Thor Equities, purchased the mall. He did not give or renew leases to anyone. He promised that he was going to remodel the mall and work with tenants in extending leases. Obviously he lied. He only fixed the front entrance, brought in Forever 21 and sold the mall for over \$120 Million.

The new developers, Acadian Realty & McFarland Group, promised at a public hearing that they would work with the small businesses. They lied. Instead we received 3 and 9 days eviction notices.

I was one of the very few stores who were able to find a location. Now my rent has tripled and the fact that we had to leave so quickly from the mall meant that I lost a

please see SMALL BUSINESS, page ?

BEING PART OF THE STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE

REFLECTIONS FROM A NEW MEMBER

By Heather Squire, Member, Downtown Brooklyn Campaign

Hello! My name is Heather Squire and I am a new FUREE member. I grew up in New Jersey (near Atlantic City) and moved to Brooklyn in 2005 to finish my degree in sociology at Brooklyn College. I am an activist that has been involved with campus organizing (against the war, for global justice issues, justice in New Orleans, anti-racism, etc.). I am all over the place, but in general just feel that things are messed up on so many levels and I want to be part of the struggle for justice in all capacities.



I first learned about FUREE last spring in an urban sociology class. My professor had some contacts with FUREE and invited someone to come speak to our class about Fulton Mall – the subject of study for

the entire class (all 6 of us). I was very excited to learn about the work FUREE was doing and through the course of the class, became even more interested in the race and class dimensions of Downtown Brooklyn “development.”

Through my research, I learned about the history of Fulton Mall and asked, “Who are the rightful stewards of urban structures after the original owners have long since disinvested?” It seemed to me that many of the more “white” anti-gentrification groups in Brooklyn saw themselves as the rightful stewards and only saw gentrification in terms of their own displacement.

As much as I wanted to be a part of FUREE, I still didn’t have enough time – between work, school, and moving, I was beat! I was reminded that I needed to contact FUREE again at the US Social Forum this past summer. I was running to catch up with the big march in the beginning and I ran into (not literally) a young woman wearing a bright red FUREE t-shirt who was also trying to catch up with the march. We only talked for a minute while running, but she put FUREE in my head again. I kept checking the website after that but never had the time to get to a meeting.

I finally was able to hook up with FUREE this past March at the Left Forum, at the Right to the City Panel. The entire panel was great but Nahyshene really blew me away – I couldn’t believe how young and

confident she was up there (I was pretty shy at that age)! I ended up talking to her afterwards and she invited me to the next Downtown Brooklyn Campaign meeting. It was there that I met Cynthia Butts, who took me under her wing, invited me to join the Convention Planning Committee, and tirelessly reminded me to pay my dues!



I have been around for a little over a month now and I am excited about the upcoming Convention. All of the FUREE members have been so welcoming and full of good ideas, that I don’t even mind going to the meetings. I am looking forward to going to a FIRE training this summer so I can work on my organizing skills, as well as pulling in more of my friends for campaigns.

FRESH, AFFORDABLE FOOD COMING TO FORT GREENE THIS SUMMER!

By Jen Datka, Fort Greene CSA Coordinator



In just a few weeks the Fort Greene CSA, a great new program being organized with FUREE’s help, will begin bringing fresh, affordable, pesticide-free fruits and vegetables to our community. The CSA (that stands for Community Supported Agriculture) works like a buyer’s club, allowing Fort Greene resi-

dents to purchase food directly from a local farmer. This direct relationship saves you money and also makes it more convenient to purchase food, as our farmer will make weekly deliveries of his harvest directly to the neighborhood – to the northeast corner of Fort Greene Park, to be exact.

In order to enjoy all of these great benefits, you need to become a member of the program. Being a member means that you agree to purchase and pick up a family- or individual-sized share of our farmer’s harvest once a week from June through November.

Full shares, the family-sized option, will consist of 6-7 types of vegetables each week, and are sized to provide enough vegetables for a family of 2-3 people. Full shares are available for as low as \$13.63 per week – much less than what the same amount of food would cost at your local supermarket. The smaller share option, intended for single members or families who don’t eat many vegetables, is the same size as the full share but is only picked up every other week. These half shares cost as little as \$8 per *please see FRESH, AFFORDABLE FOOD, page 7*

TAKING OUR ACTION TO MIAMI

MARCH ON THE MAYORS!

85% of people in the United States live in cities or metro areas

Metro Economies account for 85% of the nation's jobs

WE HAVE BUILT our CITY AND WE MUST PROTECT IT!

This is a call out from the National Right to the City Alliance. FUREE is a core organization in RTTC and we are building power with organizations all over New York City and the country.

Over the last twenty years, the government is cutting programs and services, placing a greater burden on state and city governments. Unable to handle the pressure, cities are using unfair programs and privatization to sell land, programs, and resources to make ends meet. As a result, instead of working with the community, politicians are cutting deals with luxury developers and huge corporations.

Affordable housing, public space, transportation, schools, are all being sold to the highest bidder. This is costing us our services, programs, access, resources and, in general, our right to the city.

Right to the City is a national alliance of organizations taking back our cities from the throws of gentrification. Led by community-based grassroots organizations, the alliance spans 7 cities and includes legal,

media, and academic advocates from across the nation.

The movement against gentrification is growing across the United States. Join us as we TAKE BACK THE CITY!

Our next big event will be joining our allies from around the country as we march on the US Conference of Mayors in Miami:

The People's State of the City Conference
Discuss a people's platform for the US urban agenda in 2008.

June 19, Miami

March on the Mayors: Day of Action
Assert your right to the city. Join us in taking the people's urban agenda to the U.S. mayors meeting with US presidential candidates.

June 20th, Miami



For more information about FUREE's work with Right to the City, contact Theo at (718) 852-2960 x307

MEMBERS' REACTIONS TO THE SHUTTLE BUS SERVICE



Since the development of Myrtle Avenue, we've lost a supermarket, pharmacy, discount store and Laundromat, to name a few. Our members, especially our senior citizens, have had great difficulty having access to quality food. Recently, FUREE was provided

with shuttle buses by the UFCW Local 1500 to help community residents access a supermarket and a pharmacy.

The following are members' reactions and a call for more services that some of us take for granted...

"The bus trips were a delightful experience. The bus that were provided for us was an excellent coach charter bus with a restroom, comfortable seating with extra leg space, a VCR and air conditioner.

The drivers were very courteous, polite, helpful, responsible and most of all CAREFUL. During the trip we were able to communicate by having enlightening conversations with other passengers. We also gathered information that was passed around, which were beneficial to everyone."

- Willie Mae Martin, Member

"On September of 2004, our neighborhood began to go under construction from Myrtle and Ashland to Myrtle and Flatbush Avenues. We lost all access to our stores. They were all torn down to be replaced with condos, which we cannot afford.

Tenants from the Ingersoll side had to walk over to Myrtle & Carlton Avenue or Myrtle Avenue & Hall Street, just to go shopping. We suffered **DEARLY**.

Then FUREE stepped-in and provided a bus service for us. Because of funding, the buses cannot be continued. Tenants are in great need of this service. What services are people going to lose NEXT?

PLEASE! Try to see things our way. Help us! Don't overlook us anymore."

- Ruby Davis, Member

please see REACTIONS, page ?

CHILD CARE CAMPAIGN UPDATE

by Wanda Imasuen, Lead Organizer, Child Care Campaign

FUREE Members have been working on issues within the child care arena since 2005. We won \$4.5 Million in pay for family day care providers with city contracts and forced OCFS to make some concessions on their egress policies. We were able to bring all providers up to the current market rates and save hundreds of group and family day care centers thought-out the city.

The highlights of the campaign were seeing providers that never spoke out against the unfair OCFS (Office of Children and Family Services) policies that are targeting communities of color. The members spoke at press conferences, interviewed with media, met with city and state elected officials. They met with OCFS Commissioner Gladys Carrion thirty days into her appointment. We also met with then Lieutenant Governor David Patterson

and Carl Andrews, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs.

Our goal is to prevent centers in low income communities from closing, change the egress policy and to create a relocation and renovation fund. The fund will enable providers that cannot comply with egress policies to do necessary repairs or relocate their centers so that our children and families won't lose necessary child care services in our communities.

We are continuing to work on strategic ways of bringing this about and also reaching out to unions that can help in our organizing efforts.

To help us fight to keep family day care centers open or for more information, call Wanda Imasuen or Teresita Gaton at (718) 852-2960.

REACTIONS

from page 6



"The Atlantic Center Mall consists of a supermarket, electronic store, clothing stores, shoe stores, eateries and other choices that were available, too.

We went there on the shuttle bus and were able to choose our time period. It was agreeable with everyone. Our purchases were handled with care and then stored on the lower lever. We must give FUREE credit for assisting us in getting our purchases

into the luggage area and also for taking them out at our destinations.

We were looking forward to the trip to be scheduled at the end of this month (May), but to our surprise, we no longer have this opportunity. We really would like for you to continue this service because we were in the process of getting more people to go and these shopping trips."

-Debra Bailey, Member

FRESH, AFFORDABLE FOOD

from page 5

week. EBT will be accepted as a payment option as well.

CSA members commit to paying for their share and picking up their veggies each week. They also promise to complete five hours of volunteer time with the CSA. The fact that our program is entirely volunteer-run helps keep prices low, and we expect all of our members to pitch in.

But there is more to the Fort Greene CSA than picking up vegetables! It is our hope



that our CSA will help members learn new skills, connect with their neighbors, and make new friends. To this end, we are planning a number of fun events for our members this summer, including cooking classes, barbecues, film screenings, and trips to visit the farm our vegetables come from.

We are also seeking individuals who will volunteer more of their time to help manage the CSA and plan our special events – a great opportunity to get more involved in your community and shape the future of the program.

If you are interested in learning more about the CSA, or want to become a member, you can contact Jen Datka at 718-852-2960 x312 or jendatka@fortgreencsa.org.

UNITING COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS, UNIONS AND WORKER CENTERS TO BUILD WORKERS' POWER

REPORT FROM THE LABOR NOTES CONFERENCE

By Beverly Forbes, Board Member, Child Care Campaign

Labor Notes was a very exciting conference which created a safe environment for community base organizations, unions and worker centers to have many conversations of how to help build relationships and alignment with the work that we do. This event was held in Detroit Michigan and had over 1,000 attendees.

There were workshops with panel members from around the country and the world that addressed issues that affect their members and their communities. The audience was able to interact and ask hard and difficult question of the panel participants.

Labor Notes holds this event every two years to focus on strengthening the union of rank and file members while incorporating worker centers and community-based organizations to build a movement



so that all workers will have the right to have their voices and concerns heard and not be sold out by the unions that are supposed to represent their interests.

A Trouble Makers Award is also given to those that fought against injustice and won against unfair employment practices. Trouble Maker Awards were given to John Sferazo, an Ironworker and 9/11 responder who fought for compensation

YOUTH ORGANIZING UPDATE

By Darinka Maldonado, Staff Organizer, Youth Organizing Initiative

Our FUREEous youth are getting ready to launch a new campaign! Over the past few weeks, they've been busy getting youth in their schools, other community organizations and youth hanging out Downtown to complete surveys on issues they feel matter to them most. The results from the survey will help FUREE youth decide which campaign issues they will work on this and next year.



To prepare for the launching of the new campaign, our youth are starting a new four week program that teaches the new

incoming youth members everything about community organizing, advocacy and coalition building. Youth who complete the four week program and participate in the campaign, will earn a chance to participate in an internship over the summer.

The internship program will include graduating members mentoring new youth leaders that will lead campaign. Current youth leaders will teach the youth leaders everything they know about the youth campaign history, social justice, and forms of outreaching. The four week program will be a good way for the youth to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to demand better opportunities for themselves. Also this will be a great experience that you can't get from some plain SYEP Summer Job!

To join the Youth Organizing Initiative or to learn more about the program, contact Darinka Maldonado at Darinka@furee.org or call (718) 85552-2960 today!

for workers disabled by their work at Ground Zero; the United Workers, a group of low-income workers who won a living wage for the day laborers who clean the Camden Yards Baseball Stadium in Baltimore; the Taxi Workers Alliance, which organizes New York City's immigrant cabbie workforce; and the American Axle strikers.

The Labor Notes Conference was such an inspiration that Eileen Vanderpuye, Wanda Imasuen and myself did not realize that we had not been out of the hotel the whole three days.

SMALL BUSINESS

from page 5

lot of my costumers. I am now in major debt and can barely keep my head above water.

I got involved with FUREE because they approached some of the business owners of the mall right before the sale. They really impressed me because of all the great work they have done in the past and the fact that they actually cared. With the help of FUREE and organizing with other small businesses owners from Albee Square Mall, Lawrence Street, Bridge Street, and Willoughby Street, I am sure our demands for relocation money, affordable space and inclusion in decision making for the future of Downtown Brooklyn will be met.

If you, or someone you know, is a small business owner negatively affected by development in Downtown Brooklyn, contact Theo Moore at theo@furee.org or (718) 852-2960, ext. 307 for more information on small business organizing.

UPDATE: On Monday, May 12 at the city Council Small Business Committee hearing, Council Members Letitia James, David Yasskey and Lew Fidler all said that the City should take the \$1.8 million they have allocated to the Downtown Brooklyn Partnership, and put it in a fund for displaced small businesses in Downtown Brooklyn. This is what we've been fighting for! We have a lot of work to do to win this fund, but we're making progress.

YOUTH SPEAK UP!!!

SURVEY REVEAL THE TOP THREE ISSUES THAT MATTER TO BROOKLYN TEENS

By Sandra Battle, Youth Member

For a couple of months now Youth across Brooklyn have been expressing their voices via the FUREE Youth Survey.

Over 200 Youth under the age of 21 spanning over 20 schools have participated in the survey. The survey asks youth to rate the issues of most important to them. Issues include: Lack of jobs/Finding jobs; Police harassment in the neighborhood/outside of schools; School safety agenda/Police in schools; Lack of college counseling/college prep in schools, etc.

Of the students who completed the survey, the top three issues ranked in order of

importance to them include:

1. Safety in Schools
2. Lack of jobs/finding jobs
3. Lack of college counseling/college prep in schools

The Youth have spoken and they are demanding safety in their schools, more job opportunities and better college preparation. This spring and summer youth will be working hard to put in place a campaign that will address these issues.

Youth are currently still conducting surveys, if you are or know of any youth between the ages of 14-21 that is interested in taking the survey or being a part of the Youth Organizing Initiative, have them contact Darinka, Staff Youth Organizer at 718-852-2960 or send an e-mail to Darinka@furee.org.

These are our issues and it's up to us to make our voices heard!

FUREE'S OPEN HOUSE

By Valery Jean, Development Director



On February 20th, FUREE held an open house to invite donors and supporters to visit our offices, meet our staff and hear more about our organizing work.

The Open House was well attended and included special guests including Senator Velmanette Montgomery, Council Member Rosie Mendez, Assemblyman Hakeem Jeffries, Assemblyman Joseph Lentol and Kevin Powell.

As you know, last summer, FUREE's growth called for larger space and so we renovated a new office to include a computer lab for members, larger meeting spaces and more workspace for staff and members. Visitors got a chance to tour our new office and viewed multimedia pre-



sentations of our campaigns that were played on desktops.

Staff and Board Members also made presentations on our Child Care Campaign, Downtown Brooklyn Campaign, Youth Organizing Initiative and Voter Engagement for Empowerment campaigns. We also showed a trailer on our upcoming documentary on the effects of development in Downtown Brooklyn.

The Open House was also an opportunity to get let our supporters know we appreciate their help and working hard to meet our communities' needs.

For more information on how you can support FUREE's work, contact Valery Jean at valery@furee.org or call (718) 852-2960, ext. 301.



NEW STAFF

NICOLE BROWN is a Social Justice Leadership Activate! Fellow, joining FUREE as a Community Organizer on the Downtown Brooklyn Campaign. Nicole is a Brooklynite, born, raised and hailing from East Flatbush. She brings to FUREE her passion for working with community members through grassroots organizing and had the experience of working with other nonprofits in New York and Massachusetts that include Working Families Party, Class Action (MA) and Seedco. Nicole is committed to anti-classism work and feminism for women of color, and is excited to focus her passion for economic and racial equality at FUREE.



CYNTHIA BUTTS was a FUREE member who participated in FUREE's first Organizing Internship Program working starting on outreach for the 2007



Convention. As a Staff Organizer on the Downtown Brooklyn Campaign, Cynthia works to organize for the restoration of loss services due to major development in the area as well as providing support on

strengthening the campaign. A former security guard and corrections officer, Cynthia is a resident in Walt Whitman houses for over 50 years where she remained active in the Tenants Association for more than 20 years, supporting organizing work on the March on Washington to protest the closing of Fort Greene housing. She is married with 2 children, 2 step children and 7 grand children.

JEN DATKA is an Americorps VISTA Volunteer with the Downtown Campaign. As the Food Justice Organizer, her main responsibility is organizing the Fort Greene CSA, a new food justice program that FUREE is spearheading this year along with the Myrtle Avenue Revitalization Project and Just Food. (See the article on page X for more information about that.) Improving the availability of healthy, high-quality food across economic and cultural lines is an issue Jen cares about a lot and is an issue of basic human rights. Good food is an important factor in our basic health and well-being, and should be available to everyone.



DARINKA MALDONADO recently joined the FUREE family as the Staff Youth Organizer in the Youth Organizing Initiative. Darinka began her career as an organizer at the New York Civil Liberties Union working on Police Accountability and LGBT issues. As an undergraduate student at the University of Pittsburgh Darinka was active as a member of Sigma



Darinka is currently very active as a member of the Eta Nu Sigma Brooklyn/Queens alumnae chapter of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Incorporated and is pursuing her Masters in Urban Policy Analysis and Management at Milano New School. A young proud woman of Dominican heritage, Darinka enjoys Salsa music, cooking, eating, Law and Order, The Wire, the SIMS and watching Keith Olberman on TV.

TALIA REYES is joins the Downtown Brooklyn Campaign, as a Staff Organizer. Talia comes to FUREE with a wide variety of experience working for social justice organizations and local labor unions in both New York City and California. Having been raised as part of a Mexican family in Los Angeles, California, Talia is dedicated to empowering low-income families, and people of color to take action to fight injustice within their communities. While attending the University of California, Santa Cruz, Talia majored in both Cultural Anthropology and Community Studies with an emphasis on Immigration and Social Justice.

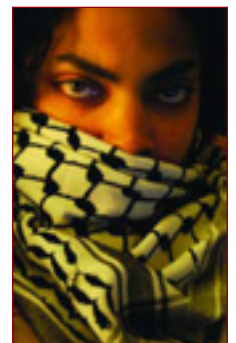


On campus, Talia was involved in the Fair Trade movement and participated in a delegation to Chiapas, Mexico to study the principles and practices of the Zapatistas.

EMAN RIMAWI transitions from the Staff Organizer on the Youth Organizing

Initiative to FUREE's Communications Coordinator and is responsible for FUREE's media and marketing. Eman is a Black, Native American and Palestinian Queer woman of color from NYC.

She is a writer, performance artist, singer, teacher, student, community organizer and freethinker. She has been and continues to organize with organizations like Youth Venture, The Audre Lorde Project, FIERCE, Sista 2 Sista, QEJ, Casa Atabex Ache, as well as many others.



FUREEous FASHION AVAILABLE

You know about our infamous FUREEous shirts! Every once in a while they pop up in your local paper or TV screen.

We know you like them so, we upgraded our fashion line so you can go to an action, demonstration or hang out in a conference in style all while supporting a good cause!

Here's a list of FUREEous Merchandise you can buy and support our work:

At the 701 Store
(OUR OFFICE, IN CASE YOU WERE WONDERING)

Red or Black FUREE T-Shirts with Logo on Front and "Unity is Power" quote on the back
(S,M,L, XL - \$10)

FUREEous Tote Bag (\$15)

Red FUREEous Cinch Bag (\$15)

Anti-Gentrification Poster (\$15)

(POSTAGE MAY BE EXTRA,
PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE FOR EXACT AMOUNT)



Online Merchandise:
(www.zazzle.com/fureeous)

Visit the site for your custom FUREE t-shirt, baby tees, tote bags, key chains, mousepads, posters and more. Shirts have cool quotes like: "We're here and we're not leaving!" or "We all deserve to be valued!" as well as Angela Davis and Martin Luther King, Jr. quotes. And, guess what? We even have shirts for your little ones so they can stroll down the avenue in solidarity with our work. Really cute!

You can customize the shirts to any color, any size and any style you like.

A portion of your purchase goes directly to support FUREE. Visit this site today!

For more information,
contact Valery at valery@furee.org
or call (718) 852-2960, ext. 301.

Happy shopping!

SUPPORT OUR WORK!

YOU'VE READ ABOUT OUR YOUTH LAUNCHING A NEW CAMPAIGN, THE FIGHT TO PROTECT WORKERS' RIGHTS, HOW NEW ORLEANS AND NEW YORK SUFFER FROM DISPLACEMENT OF POOR AND WORKING FAMILIES AND HOW WE'RE BEGINNING TO ADDRESS ENVIRONMENTAL INJUSTICE BY LINKING FAMILIES WITH QUALITY FOOD. IN THIS CHANGING ECONOMY, POOR AND WORKING FAMILIES OF COLOR SUFFER THE MOST THROUGH POLICIES AND PRACTICES THAT PREVENT THEM FROM BREAKING THE CYCLE OF POVERTY AND LIVING OUT THEIR FULL DESTINIES.

NOW, MORE THAN EVER, WE REALLY NEED YOUR HELP WHETHER IT'S A CASH CONTRIBUTION, YOUR TIME OR SIMPLY DONATING GOODS. THEY ALL HELP TO SUSTAIN OUR WORK IN BIG WAYS. AND, ANY AMOUNT OF TIME OR MONEY YOU CAN DONATE WILL KEEP OUR SLEEVES ROLLED UP AND IN THE FIGHT FOR THE LONG HAUL.

VOLUNTEERS fuel our work since the more people power we have, the more we can move things forward!

- Make signs, banners or posters for our campaigns
- Help with graphic design by helping lay out our publications and website
- Help us phone bank to encourage unengaged voters or recruit new members to our organization
- Spend a day in our office to help us with administrative stuff like mailings or putting our media stuff together
- Help us plan special events like fundraisers, open houses or film showings of our new documentary

IN-KIND DONATIONS help us greatly because the money we would spend on the gifts we receive are allocated to things like meeting expenses and travel for our members, for example. Here are some examples of things that would help us out:

- Office supplies like regular and colored paper, pens, tape, card stock, butcher paper and markers
- Picture and poster frames
- Ink and toner for our copiers
- Food for our campaign meetings and special events

CASH CONTRIBUTIONS provide us with more resources to get our work done. Here are some ways a donation will help:

- A \$50 contribution will help provide food for a campaign meeting or provide Metrocards for 25 members to come to a meeting.
- A \$75 contribution will help pay for our 2 of our youth organizers to attend workshops and conferences in our area.
- \$150 will cover the cost to send one mailing to members on upcoming meetings, actions, campaign meetings and recruitment drives
- A contribution of \$250 will sponsor a member to attend leadership development activities for one year.
- \$500 will provide translation for two meetings for our Spanish-speaking members
- \$1,000 will cover the internship of one adult or youth member to learn hands-on campaign management skills in our office

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS OR MONEY ORDERS PAYABLE TO FAMILIES UNITED FOR RACIAL & ECONOMIC EQUALITY, 81 WILLOUGHBY STREET, SUITE 701, BROOKLYN, NY 11201.

CREDIT CARD CONTRIBUTIONS CAN BE MADE ONLINE BY VISITING WWW.FUREE.ORG/DONATE.HTML

YOUR HELP IS ALWAYS NEEDED AND IS APPRECIATED BY THE MORE THAN 500 FAMILIES WE ORGANIZE. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON VOLUNTEERING OR MAKING A TAX-DEDUCTIBLE IN-KIND OR CASH CONTRIBUTION TO FUREE, PLEASE CONTACT VALERY AT (718) 852-2960, EXT. 301 OR VALERY@FUREE.ORG

WE CAN'T DO THIS WORK ALONE. CONSIDER GETTING INVOLVED TODAY!

FAMILIES UNITED FOR RACIAL & ECONOMIC EQUALITY

81 Willoughby St, #701

Brooklyn NY 11201

718.852.2960

VISIT US ON THE WEB AT
www.furee.org



UNITY IS POWER!

FIESTA DE FUREE



@ MAD RIVER BAR & GRILLE

1442 THIRD AVE (@82ND ST), NYC

JUEVES, 29 DE MAYO

DESPUES DEL TRABAJO, 7-9PM

DONACION DE \$20 A LA PUERTA

21 Y MAYOR

1 CERVEZA GRATIS, TRAGOS A \$3

(MENCIONA "FUREE" A LA PUERTA)

4,5,6 TREN A 86th Y LEXINGTON, CAMINA AL ESTE A LA AVENIDA 3

* Todos los beneficios se apoyan

FAMILIAS UNIDAS PARA IGUALDAD RACIAL Y ECONOMICA (FUREE), una organizacion multi-racial, basada en Brooklyn que organiza familias debajos de ingreso, para promover igualdad y mejorar la condicion economica y desarrollar el poder colectivo para ganar cambios sistematicos en un nivel local, estatal y nacional por medio de accion directa, desarrollar de lideres, organizar la comunidad y education politica.

Para RSVP o para mas informacion:
valery@furee.org o (718) 852-2960 x.301

FUREE.ORG
MYSFACE.COM/FUREE_ORG
YOUTUBE.COM/FUREE0US



Families United for Racial and Economic Equality
Familias Unidas Para Igualdad Racial y Economica

FUREE'S AFTER WORK PARTY



@ MAD RIVER BAR & GRILLE

1442 THIRD AVE (@82ND ST), NYC

THURSDAY, MAY 29TH

AFTER WORK. 7-9 PM

\$20 DONATION AT THE DOOR*

21 & Over

1 FREE BEER. \$3 WELL BAR DRINKS

(MENTION "FUREE" AT THE DOOR)

4,5,6 TRAIN TO 86TH & LEX, WALK EAST TO 3RD AVE

*All proceeds to support

FAMILIES UNITED FOR RACIAL & ECONOMIC EQUALITY (FUREE), a Brooklyn-based, multi-racial nonprofit organization that organizes low-income and working families to promote equality, improve economic conditions and build collective power to win systemic changes at the local, state, and national level through direct action, leadership development, community organizing and political education.

RSVP or more info: valery@furee.org
or (718) 852-2960, ext. 301

FUREE.ORG
MYSFACE.COM/FUREE_ORG
YOUTUBE.COM/FUREE0US



Families United for Racial and Economic Equality
Familias Unidas Para Igualdad Racial y Economica