



Bronx community leaders team up to immediately increase food distribution and protect local jobs throughout the Bronx

The Bronx Community Relief Effort, Relief Access Program for the Bronx, and World Central Kitchen Bring Large-Scale Food Distribution Program to the Bronx

Contact: press@thebronx.org

April 27, 2020 – Bronx, NY – A broad and united group of Bronx community leaders is collaborating to immediately increase food distribution throughout The Bronx and protect Bronx jobs, through an initiative led by [The Bronx Community Relief Effort](#) (BxCRE), [World Central Kitchen](#), [The Bronx Private Industry Council \(The Bronx PIC\)](#) powered by [HERE to HERE](#), Bronx Community Board 9, and the [Relief Access Program](#) for the Bronx (RAP4Bronx). This initiative is currently distributing 16,000 meals and hundreds of grocery bags per day throughout The Bronx to more than 61 locations and groups, including emergency shelters, community-based organizations, workers performing essential frontline roles in healthcare and transportation, and residents living in public and subsidized housing. The team aims to continue increasing the volume of food distributed throughout The Bronx to ultimately distribute up to 50,000 meals daily, with additional funding.

The group's food relief work has four core components, leveraging the strong Bronx food ecosystem:

- 1) **Meal distribution:** World Central Kitchen, local restaurants, Bronx-based catering company Great Performances, and RAP4Bronx are distributing fresh meals to high-need locations across the borough, immediately increasing the number of daily meals delivered to 20,000 per day.
- 2) **Grocery delivery:** RAP4Bronx, led by York Studios and in partnership with Bronx Community Board 9, is delivering approximately 3,800 bags of groceries per week to people and sites in need, with the goal of increasing this volume, from a distribution base at Bruckner Commons donated by Urban Edge Properties.
- 3) **Employing Bronx businesses and workers:** A network of Bronx restaurants and distributors are preparing and distributing these meals and groceries, keeping many local workers safely employed. York Studios is organizing meal distributions, Great Performances and Baldor Specialty Food are providing food and supplies, and meals are prepared by Great Performances and seven Bronx restaurants including

Mott Haven Bar & Grill, Bronx Drafthouse, Bricks & Hops, Beatstro, Hudson Smokehouse, Glenroy's Tavern, Bronx Tavern, and Seis Vicinos. World Central Kitchen is supporting and organizing this effort.

4) Strong **partnerships with community-trusted institutions**, including local hospitals, housing organizations, college campuses, and religious organizations.

This initiative builds on the work of World Central Kitchen, which has distributed thousands of fresh, individually packaged grab-and-go meals to local families and community members at sites in The Bronx and other locations since the pandemic began.

The Bronx Community Relief Effort and HERE to HERE have raised \$300,000 to support this food distribution effort in The Bronx.

In addition to financially supporting the RAP4Bronx initiative, [Urban Edge Properties](#) has donated space at Bruckner Commons, one of its properties in the South Bronx, to store donations and act as a distribution hub for a wide variety of area recipient organizations.

The Bronx Private Industry Council (staffed by HERE to HERE), a collaboration of more than 30 local businesses working to improve talent pipelines, is coordinating with World Central Kitchen, and local restaurant and food distributor partners to immediately increase preparation and distribution of daily fresh meals to 20,000 immediately, with the goal of expanding up to 50,000 meals daily and preserving more local jobs.

"No one should be hungry, and it's a priority to make sure Bronxites have a meal during this pandemic," said Assembly Member Michael Blake (79th District, The Bronx). *"It's been a blessing that our staff, along with the teams at Beatstro, Bronx Drafthouse and Bricks & Hops continues collaborating with World Central Kitchen to provide daily meals to Bronxites. We are very grateful for this expanded collaboration with The Bronx Community Relief Effort, HERE to HERE, RAP and many great partners to now reach 20,000 daily meals in The Bronx so that more Bronxites have not just food but a little more hope."*

"The support from The Bronx business community for the people of the borough in this time of unprecedented hardship has been huge," says **Eddie Summers**, Executive Director of The Bronx Private Industry Council (Bronx PIC). *"This program is serving thousands of meals to Bronx community members, allowing Bronx business employees to get back to work safely, and bringing food and other emergency supplies to people who need them. We look forward to continuing building on this work to bring more meals and supplies to the people of The Bronx."*

"Since 2010, World Central Kitchen has been providing fresh meals to people affected by disasters both natural and man-made," said **Nate Mook**, CEO, World Central Kitchen. *"We use the power of food to heal and strengthen communities in times of crisis and beyond, and we know that a plate of food is so much more than just a meal. We believe our work in The Bronx, and across New York City, is a reminder to the community that someone cares about them and that tomorrow will be better."*

“The Bronx remains one of New York City’s hungriest boroughs with many Bronx residents experiencing food insecurity,” said **Derrick H. Lewis**, Senior Manager, EY, and Chair and Convener for The Bronx Community Relief Effort. *“Our relief effort is providing the necessary resources to The Bronx while also giving Bronxites the opportunity to get back to work. We are grateful for the partnership with World Central Kitchen, The Bronx PIC, Bronx Community Board 9, and RAP4Bronx.”*

“This partnership with our tenant Bronx Community Board 9 is a terrific example of how we can act quickly and get creative to use available resources to support the communities where we have properties,” said **Chris Weilminster**, EVP and Chief Operating Officer of Urban Edge Properties. *“With so much uncertainty, our heritage in essential retail gives us the opportunity to connect help with the helpers.”*

York Studios said, *“The need for services in the Bronx has multiplied and the private sector has a role to play in meeting that need. We are mobilizing our resources and leveraging our ability to move quickly. In partnership with the Bronx PIC, WCK, CB 9, and Urban Edge, we are identifying the most vulnerable populations in the Bronx and working diligently to provide them with food relief and essential goods.”*

John Kalafatis, CEO of Andromeda Advantage, said, *“This is a time for creative problem-solving. We’re a construction logistics company delegating our professionals to quickly and effectively provide labor, vehicles, supplies and distribution services to this effort. We aim to amplify the impact of RAP4Bronx.”*

Liz Neumark, Chair & Founder of Great Performances, said, *“The Bronx is defined by activist communities that step up. We are deeply gratified to be part of the effort led by York Studios and RAP4Bronx, to help our hungry neighbors. Making a difference has never been more critical; and nothing is more basic than providing a meal.”*

William Rivera, District Manager of Community Board 9, said, *“No one in our district should be going to sleep hungry. We are more than a program, we are a family ready to feed The Bronx.”*

Rosa Garcia, Owner of Mott Haven Bar and Grill, added, *“Mott Haven Bar and Grill is honored and grateful to have the opportunity to collaborate with World Central Kitchen and The Bronx Community Relief Effort to provide a meal to those in need during these times of crisis.”*

Junior Martinez, Owner of Bronx Drafthouse, agreed, *“This has been a hard time for everyone, especially here in New York. We cannot be more thankful than to be able to help feed first responders, rehire our employees and show that South Bronx Small Businesses are here to stay.”*

Thomas McQuillan, Vice President of Strategy, Culture and Sustainability for Baldor Specialty Foods, stated, *“We are honored to be working with the World Central Kitchen to support the*

initiatives that are making sure our first responders and others on the front lines are being fed. We are also happy to know that the program supports those in need in our industry - the food industry -- who have been displaced by, or face hardship due to the coronavirus."

##

About the Bronx Community Relief Effort

The Bronx Community Relief Effort was born in the South Bronx immediately after the Coronavirus hit New York City. The Effort aims to raise \$10 million to support effective, on-the-ground operations that are focused on meeting the most essential needs of The Bronx community. This includes filling gaps in public financing and broader grant programs. Donations collected are distributed in real-time within the community to eight critical areas of need: Food Insecurity, Small Business Relief, Distributing Microgrants, Personal protective equipment (PPE) for frontline responders, Nonprofit Economic Relief, Connectivity and Technology Gaps, Equity & Justice, Housing Stability.

About RAP4Bronx

The [Relief Access Program for the Bronx](#) (RAP4Bronx) collects and donates meals, food, and essential supplies to help frontline workers, families, seniors, and vulnerable residents throughout the borough. RAP4Bronx was founded by York Studios in partnership with Urban Edge Properties, HERE to HERE, Bronx Community Board 9, The Bronx Private Industry Council powered by HERE to HERE, Great Performances, and The Skyline Charitable Foundation.

To learn more or to donate to support the distribution of food and essential supplies in the Bronx, visit: www.rap4bronx.org and www.thebronx.org