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East Brooklyn Community High School

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Mural Unveiling in Brownsville

**“Beacon of Hope” Community School
Transformed Through Mural**

Mural Dedication: Friday, August 28 at 1 pm
Location: 9517 Kings Highway Brooklyn, NY 11212

BROWNSVILLE, NY – Learning has been proven fun this summer through a “Carnival” of color, vibrancy, and community engagement with youth artists. With three monumental murals already installed on the exterior of the school, Groundswell returned to East Brooklyn Community High School (EBCHS) to engage students in the completion of a fourth mural to bring a positive vision of education to EBCHS students.

The mural, “Carnival of Aspirations,” will be unveiled Friday, August 28 at 1 pm.

EBCHS, a partnership between SCO Family of Services and the New York City Department of Education, is a transfer school committed to helping students earn their high school diploma and explore their leadership potential. EBCHS has deepened its mission to serve as a neighborhood hub for students, families, and local residents through its recent designation as a Community School.

During a time when only 75% of high school students state-wide graduate, Community Schools offer New York students experiential learning opportunities to engage them more deeply in their education. As signaled by its title, the community school model also cultivates a new generation of community-based engaged leaders. As outlined within Mayor Bill de Blasio’s New York City Community Schools Strategic Plan, “a \$1 investment in a Community School in NYC can deliver between \$10.30 and \$14.80 in return on investment.”

Through Groundswell’s flagship Summer Leadership Institute, Groundswell youth artists brought the transformative work happening inside EBCHS outside to share with the community. With lessons facilitated by Lead Artist Misha Tyutyunik and Assistant Artist Victor Saint-Hilaire, the youth researched, designed, and fabricated the monumental mural in two months. Tyutyunik led all four murals developed in this partnership.

This mural depicts East Brooklyn Community High School as a beacon of hope for students in Brownsville, providing young people with opportunities and support they might not find elsewhere. Through an overarching theme of a vintage amusement park or carnival, the design illustrates how the school stands apart from traditional avenues of education. The design invites students in and illustrates how they might discover the support they need through thoughtful activities and programming, making school exciting and fun. Each symbol in the mural represents an aspect of the school's functions and core values.

“EBCHS is committed to helping students earn their diploma as they explore their leadership and personal potential. ‘Carnival of Aspirations’ brings the learning happening within the school to the outside, to share with all of Brownsville,” said Patrick McGillicuddy, Principal of ECBHS. “We hope to create a positive impact on our community with this mural as we teach the next generation of leaders for New York City.”

“SCO Family of Services envisions communities where everyone has the opportunity to succeed. EBCHS strives for this vision every day, and this mural proves that commitment to student growth. This project acts as the capstone to a tremendous school-wide transformation that has given EBCHS’s students opportunities to unlock their fullest potential,” said Douglas O’Dell, Executive Director of SCO Family of Services.

“Through our multi-project mural collaboration, Groundswell and EBCHS have transformed the exterior of the school to mirror the positive transformations taking place within,” said Groundswell Executive Director Rob Krulak. “The murals articulate a vision of joyful exploration, discovery, and change that every student deserves to experience in school and carry with them throughout their lives.”

By energizing education through art, “Carnival of Aspirations” creators want other youth to become as inspired as they were through the mural making process. “The mural makes me want to look at things in a new perspective, and find bigger meaning in everything,” said youth artist Stefan Leeke. By creating a mural that shows the transformative potential of learning, EBCHS and Groundswell youth have made manifest the school’s underpinning as a beacon of hope.

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This project is a product of the Community School partnership between East Brooklyn Community High School and SCO Family of Services in collaboration with the DOE Office of Community Schools and the United Way of NYC.

Major financial support for Groundswell's 2015 Summer Leadership Institute (SLI) is contributed by Altman Foundation, Brooklyn Community Foundation, Charles Lawrence Keith and Clara Miller Foundation, David Rockefeller Fund, Ethel & W. George Kennedy Family Foundation, Lambent Foundation, M & T Bank, Nathan & Fannye Shafran Fund, Pinkerton Foundation, and Tikkun Olam Foundation, in addition to numerous individuals.

SLI is made possible in part by public funds administered by the National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, New York City

Department of Youth and Community Development Summer Youth Employment Program, the Brooklyn Delegation of the New York City Council, New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, New York City Council Member Brad Lander, and New York City Council Member Stephen Levin.

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Special thanks to all those who helped on the community painting day.

About Groundswell

Groundswell, New York City's leading organization dedicated to community public art, brings together youth, artists, and community partners, to make public art that advances social change, for a more just and equitable world. Our projects beautify neighborhoods, engage youth in societal and personal transformation, and give expression to ideas and perspectives that are underrepresented in the public dialogue. www.groundswell.nyc

About SCO Family of Services

SCO Family of Services helps vulnerable New Yorkers build a strong foundation for the future. We get young children off to a good start, launch youth into adulthood, stabilize and strengthen families and unlock potential for children and adults with special needs. SCO has provided vital human services throughout New York City and Long Island for more than 100 years.

About East Brooklyn Community High School

East Brooklyn Community High School is a small, academically rigorous high school that prepares students for college, meaningful employment, healthy personal and family relationships, and participation in the life of their communities. East Brooklyn Community High School is a transfer school that is designed to help students who have fallen behind in credit accumulation get back on track and earn a high school diploma.