



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Mural Unveiling in Bushwick**

**Female Teen Artists Support Reproductive Justice**

**Through Public Art**

**Mural Dedication Ceremony:** Thursday, August 28 at 4pm

**Location:** Food Bazaar Supermarket, 17-59 Ridgewood Place, Bushwick, Brooklyn, NY 11237

**NEW YORK, NY** – Groundswell, in partnership with Food Bazaar Supermarket, is pleased to announce the dedication of “Guided Gateways,” a 22’ by 109’ mural designed to spark dialogue about reproductive health in Bushwick.

The monumental public artwork presents a new perspective on supporting young women’s growth and development through self-love and affirmative decisions. Teen artists, participants in Groundswell’s Voices Her’d Visionaries leadership development program, would like to extend the conversation about positive reproductive health to the care networks of local young women.

The mural was created through an intensive research, design, and fabrication process, which began in spring 2014 during an afterschool research session and continued through Groundswell’s flagship Summer Leadership Institute. Throughout their ongoing participation in Groundswell’s youth artmaking programs, young women participants have demonstrated exceptional leadership potential and developed through peer-to-peer mentorship, exemplifying the mural’s transformative message of women’s empowerment.

The mural is rich in allegorical symbolism related to fertility and reproduction. The dominant central image is a pair of goddess-like figures. Connected to one another in Warrior Pose, the elder figure guides the younger safely through the gateway of womanhood. Inspired by the collaborative dynamism of the project team, the figures remind viewers of our shared responsibility to mentor and support young women within our own communities.

“We want to portray a positive image that encourages young women to make affirmative decisions about their bodies and futures via choices around reproduction,” said youth participant Sammi Chan. “The mural is about providing support for women through their social networks, to balance the prevalent discourse of shaming females in identical situation.”

The reality of judgment and shaming teen mothers is portrayed on the left of the mural. A set of locked books references the lack of access to comprehensive sex education and women’s stories

which remain untold. This imagery is balanced by an open book of consent on the right, encouraging young women to make healthy and responsible choices through transparent and honest discussion.

“By instilling confidence, encouraging collaboration, and supporting progressive action, this summer's Voices Her'd project has empowered young women to be successful in their futures as individuals and as part of their community,” said Groundswell Founder and Executive Director Amy Sananman. “With support from our committed community partner Food Bazaar Supermarket, these talented young women have shined a spotlight on positive reproductive health through the highly visible platform of public art.

“Food Bazaar identifies with the affirming message of this beautiful mural and is proud to support the young women's voices as they engage their peers, neighbors, and passersby” said Spencer An President of Bogopa Service Corp. “Through our partnership with Groundswell, we hope to provide an effective platform to get this meaningful message across to the support networks of young women living near our Bushwick store and beyond.”

“Guided Gateways” is made possible with funds from EILEEN FISHER, Charles Lawrence Keith and Clara Miller Foundation, and the Irene B. Wolt Lifetime Trust.

Major financial support for Groundswell's 2014 Summer Leadership Institute (SLI) is contributed by Altman Foundation, Brooklyn Nets, Catskill Watershed Corporation, Charles Lawrence Keith and Clara Miller Foundation, David Rockefeller Fund, Dedalus Foundation, EILEEN FISHER, Ethel and W. George Kennedy Family Foundation, Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund, Irene B. Wolt Lifetime Trust, Lambent Foundation, M&T Bank, Pinkerton Foundation, Variety The Children's Charity, and William Randolph Hearst Foundations, 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 State Office of Public Safety, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, New York City Department of Youth and Community Development Summer Youth Employment Program, New York City Department of Education, and New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

Groundswell is grateful to the Office of the New York State Attorney General; the Office of the Mayor of New York City; the Office of the Brooklyn Borough President; New York State Assembly Member Joseph Lentol; and New York City Council Members Brad Lander, Stephen Levin, Carlos Menchaca, and Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito.

### **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. This mural was completed as part of Groundswell's flagship program, the Summer Leadership Institute (SLI), which employs over 140 youth each summer as paid apprentices on mural projects that beautify neighborhoods and give voice to ideas and perspectives

that are underrepresented the public dialog. To follow a youth-driven social media campaign highlighting SLI, use #GroundswellNYC. [www.groundswellmural.org](http://www.groundswellmural.org)

**About Food Bazaar Supermarket**

Bogopa Service Corp. is a privately owned company that operates 18 full-service supermarkets in the Tri-State metropolitan area (NY, NJ, CT) under the name “Food Bazaar.” For more than 25 years we have been providing our communities with the flavors they love and recall from ‘back home,’ exotic and unique foods as well as basic essentials. We devote aisles of space to international grocery and dairy/frozen items as well as a full-service fish market, a huge selection of local and international produce, a full service deli, bakery and custom butcher. With thousands of products waiting to be explored, Food Bazaar always provides a true culinary adventure. For more information visit the Food Bazaar website at <http://www.MyFoodBazaar.com>.

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