



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mural Unveiling in Park Slope

Youth Advocate for Traffic Justice in Vision Zero Mural

Mural Dedication: Friday, August 28 at 10 am

Location: 138 5th Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11217

PARK SLOPE, NY – In New York City, approximately 4,000 New Yorkers are seriously injured and more than 250 are killed each year in traffic crashes. Because every New Yorker deserves to feel safe as a pedestrian, the citywide Vision Zero Action Plan aims for zero traffic deaths. As part of the Vision Zero initiative, Groundswell youth artists collaborated with the NYC DOT and wall-owner Michael Chuisano to create a 1,100-square foot educational mural in Park Slope about traffic justice. This mural, “Justice at the Crossroads,” will be unveiled Friday, August 28 at 10 am.

As part of Groundswell’s flagship Summer Leadership Institute, a team of youth researched and developed a design highlighting Vision Zero in a curriculum led by Lead Artist Marc Evan and Assistant Artist Adan Palermo. NYC DOT representatives educated the youth artists in the goals and elements of Vision Zero. The young people also met with street safety activists and families of community members killed by collisions.

“It meant a lot to have a speaker that had actually been through something so tragic. It really hit home for all of us in the team and we’re all greater advocates,” said youth artist Daniela Umana.

The centerpiece of the mural is a grand image of Lady Justice, holding up her scales. There is a vehicle on one side of Justice’s scales, outweighing our lost human lives represented on the opposing scale. Her blindfold has been removed to show that Lady Justice will not overlook injustice in car crashes. She stands at a crossroad, surrounded by protests, traffic signs, and several examples of recent Vision Zero initiatives such as new bike and bus lanes.

“This is the first year that we are doing specifically a Vision Zero mural,” said NYC DOT Assistant Commissioner for Education and Outreach Kim Wiley-Schwartz. “We’re trying to use any tool in our arsenal for culture change.”

“It takes a community to make our streets safer,” said Groundswell Executive Director Rob Krulak. “Park Slope has been at the forefront of the conversation about safe streets, and we hope ‘Justice at the Crossroads’ will help deepen support and engagement with Vision Zero and the campaign to end traffic fatalities.”

“Justice at the Crossroads” stands as a call to action against the injustices created in traffic fatalities and addresses the four key principles of Vision Zero: education, enforcement, legislation, and street modification. With this mural, Groundswell youth advocates urge all New Yorkers to consider their part in keeping streets safe by centering justice in the Vision Zero dialogue.

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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 Council 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.

Groundswell is grateful to the Office of the Mayor of New York City and the Office of the Brooklyn Borough President.

Lead scholarship support is provided by Flavorpill, and David Mendels and Leila Yassa.

Special thanks to Farid Ali Lancheros, NY Kids Club, and 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 NYC DOT

NYC DOT's mission is to provide for the safe, efficient, and environmentally responsible movement of people and goods in the City of New York and to maintain and enhance the transportation infrastructure crucial to the economic vitality and quality of life of our primary customers, City residents. NYC DOT's work is guided by Sustainable Streets, the Strategic Plan for the New York City Department of Transportation. NYC DOT seeks opportunities to create partnerships in the provision of transportation services through appropriate relationships and alliances. www.nyc.gov/dot