



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Sharon Polli (718) 254-9782
Sharon@groundswellmural.org
Vanessa Hadox (718) 254-9782
Vanessa@groundswellmural.org

Mural Unveiling on Atlantic Avenue

**Youth Artists Create Safe and Inviting Gateway
Between Atlantic Avenue and Brooklyn Bridge Park**

Mural Dedication Ceremony: Wednesday, September 4 at 10am

Location: Atlantic Avenue underpass between Hicks and Columbia streets, Brooklyn NY 11201

Groundswell, in partnership with NYC DOT, the Atlantic Avenue BID, and the NYC Department of Small Business Services is pleased to announce a dedication ceremony to mark the unveiling of “Moving Along,” a new public mural that transforms an uninspiring underpass into an inviting gateway between the vibrant shopping district on Atlantic Avenue and the beautifully restored Brooklyn Bridge Park, to be safely shared by pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles alike.

This summer, 17 teens participating in Groundswell’s Summer Leadership Institute (SLI) collaborated with artists Esteban Del Valle and Marc Evan to research, design, and fabricate this 120 ft wide by 19 ft high mural.

“Moving Along” activates the threshold between Atlantic Avenue and Brooklyn Bridge Park and promotes safe pedestrian movement between the two. The design incorporates historical elements which evoke the rich history of the site, including a horse-drawn carriage and cobblestone streets. At the same time, the mural creates movement and motion through a bright color palette and wave-like composition, reminding viewers that there is always more to see along this corridor.

“With a little paint and a lot of imagination, students are transforming their neighborhood streets into more inviting places,” said NYC DOT Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan. “This colorful narrative educates New Yorkers about working together to make our streets even safer.”

“We are thrilled to see what a positive difference the mural makes in creating a bright, beautiful connection between Atlantic Avenue’s businesses and Brooklyn Bridge Park,” said Josef Szende, Executive Director of the Atlantic Avenue Business Improvement District. “We are appreciative of the BID Challenge Grant from the Department of Small Business Services that allowed us to do this project, and the Groundswell mural team that has done such a fine job reflecting all that makes this area great. We look forward to welcoming families, friends, children from near and far to come and enjoy this work of art, as well as the recreation and retail on both sides of the underpass.”

“This summer, Groundswell teens had a one-of-a-kind summer job, working in partnership with NYC DOT and the Atlantic Avenue BID to transform this once uninspiring underpass into a bright and welcoming space, to be safely shared by shoppers, cyclists, local residents, and vehicles,” said Groundswell Executive Director Amy Sananman. “Our youth muralists look forward to unveiling the mural to the broader community and sharing all that they have learned, from mixing paints to encouraging safe streets.”

“I feel like we are a community,” said youth participant Helen Zhen. “Even though we are diverse and come from different neighborhoods, we are still able to interact with each other, laugh, and create this amazing mural.”

“Moving Along” is made possible through the generous support of NYC DOT and the Atlantic Avenue BID. Additional support is provided by New York City Council Member Stephen Levin. Lead scholarship sponsorship support is provided by the Brooklyn Nets.

The mural was developed as part of a larger effort to redesign and program the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway underpass to draw pedestrian traffic from the newly completed and popular Brooklyn Bridge Park – Pier 6. Led by the Atlantic Avenue BID together with Interboro Partners, the project is funded by Deputy Mayor Steel and the NYC Department of Small Business Services through the BID Challenge, a competitive grant program launched last summer for the most innovative neighborhood improvement proposals.

“The BID Challenge grant was designed to encourage BIDs across the City to come up with creative ways to help transform neighborhoods, and the Atlantic Avenue BID put their best foot forward with the underpass redesign and programming project,” said Rob Walsh, Commissioner of the NYC Department of Small Business Services. “I encourage New Yorkers to come see the mural for yourself and support the neighborhood’s small businesses while you are here.”

About Groundswell

Groundswell brings together artists, youth, and community organizations to use art as a tool for social change. “Moving Along” was completed as part of Groundswell’s flagship program, the Summer Leadership Institute (SLI), which employs over 100 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. www.groundswellmural.org

Major financial support for Groundswell's 2013 Summer Leadership Institute (SLI) is contributed by Altman Foundation, Charles Lawrence Keith and Clara Miller Foundation, Con Edison, David Rockefeller Fund, Dedalus Foundation, Ethel and W. George Kennedy Family Foundation, Irene B. Wolt Lifetime Trust, Lambent Foundation, M&T Bank, Variety The Children’s Charity, and Winifred Johnson Clive 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 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 Mayor of New York City, the Office of the Brooklyn Borough President; and New York City Council Member Brad Lander.

About the New York City Department of Transportation

NYC DOT's mission is to provide for the safe, efficient, and environmentally responsible movement of people and goods in New York City. NYC DOT's Office of Safety Education and Outreach runs programs and provides services that promote traffic safety for children, parents, educators, and senior citizens. www.nyc.gov/dot

About the AABID

The Atlantic Avenue Business Improvement District, was signed into law in September 2011 after garnering overwhelming support from stakeholders, Community Boards 2 & 6, and various City Council committees and City agencies. Operations launched in April 2012. Representing over 300 businesses in Brooklyn's vibrant Brooklyn Heights, Boerum Hill and Cobble Hill neighborhoods, the Atlantic Avenue Business Improvement District (AABID) is dedicated to promoting the Avenue's long-term economic development thereby creating a thriving boulevard that attracts both residents and visitors to its vast array of services, shops and dining, while preserving the Avenue's rich history and diverse character. www.atlanticavebid.org

To accomplish our mission, the AABID provides the following services to local businesses:

- Marketing and promotion of the business boulevard;
- Capital improvements, streetscape and beautification projects aimed at creating a clean and attractive environment for living, shopping, dining and sightseeing; and
- Advocacy programs and business services that improve economic conditions and support a high quality of life for local businesses and residents.

To view an image highlighting the Livable Streets: Atlantic Avenue Underpass mural team, please click [here](#).

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