

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



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**EAST HARLEM ELECTED OFFICIALS, DEVELOPERS, RESTAURANTS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS TEAM UP TO PROVIDE MEALS TO NYC HEALTH + HOSPITALS/METROPOLITAN EMPLOYEES RESPONDING TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

*L+M Development Partners, Jonathan Rose Companies and Acacia Network donate \$115,000 to cover costs; Manhattan Borough President Brewer and City Council Member Ayala initiate effort; Union Settlement coordinating participation of 20 local restaurants*



*Metropolitan Hospital - Photo by Ajay Suresh*

(April 15, 2020) -- Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, City Council Member Diana Ayala, NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan, L+M Development Partners, Jonathan Rose Companies, Union Settlement and Acacia Network today jointly announced a new initiative through which over a dozen East Harlem restaurants – all of which are struggling to survive in the current COVID-19 outbreak – are providing at least 360 meals per day to workers at Metropolitan Hospital in East Harlem.

A total of 20 local restaurants and delis (listed below) will be participating, providing 180 lunches and 180 dinners to the front-line health care workers at Metropolitan Hospital on a rotating basis. The meal will be provided seven days per week until the crisis subsides.

This initiative was started when Ron Moelis (L+M Development Partners) and Jonathan Rose (Rose Companies) reached out to Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer and City Council Member Diana Ayala, offering \$100,000 in funding to cover urgent needs in East Harlem. After discussions with NYC Health + Hospitals, the elected officials learned that Metropolitan Hospital in East Harlem needed food for its hundreds of employees working round-the-clock to care for the waves of COVID-19 patients.

Borough President Brewer then turned to Union Settlement, the oldest and largest social service provider in East Harlem, whose staff members were already working with the many East Harlem businesses suffering from the impact of the COVID-19 shutdowns. Many East Harlem restaurants have been forced to shut their doors, and others are barely surviving through minimal take-out and delivery sales. Union Settlement agreed to serve as a conduit for the funding, and immediately started reaching out to the restaurants to find those able to fill the orders, while simultaneously working with Metropolitan

Hospital's staff to coordinate a schedule of deliveries. Acacia Network then agreed to contribute an additional \$15,000 in funding, increasing the total donations to \$115,000.

The initiative launched on Monday, April 13, and will result in the delivery of hundreds of much-needed meals to Metropolitan Hospital's front-line health care workers every day, seven days per week, until the crisis subsides.

"When I learned that there was a need for meals for the health care workers at Metropolitan Hospital during this crisis, I knew that I had to do something about it," said **Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer**. "Thanks to funding from L+M Development and Jonathan Rose Companies, and the local expertise of Union Settlement, we are now able to provide hundreds of meals to these workers every day."

"In these difficult times, it is clear that we all have to work together, and this is a perfect example of that happening here in East Harlem," said **City Council Member Diana Ayala**. "Our corporate partners, an anchor nonprofit organization, a premier hospital and multiple restaurants are all working together to bring much-needed relief to our dedicated health care heroes. With so much suffering happening, it is great to be part of such a positive effort."

"L+M Development Partners is committed to supporting the communities where we work and proud to provide funding for this initiative," said **Ron Moelis, L+M's CEO and founding partner**. "We care deeply about East Harlem, and saw this as a critical opportunity to assist the dedicated hospital workers who are working so hard to keep everyone safe, while at the same time helping local East Harlem businesses that are struggling to survive."

"We will never be able to fully thank our health care workers for their heroic efforts in this crisis, but we can and should try to do everything we can to make it easier for them to do their jobs," said **Jonathan F.P. Rose, founder and CEO of Jonathan Rose Companies**. "The fact that we can do so, while also helping over a dozen struggling East Harlem restaurants, makes this entire effort particularly satisfying, and I am grateful to be part of it."

"The COVID-19 outbreak has had a devastating impact here in East Harlem," said **David Nocenti, Executive Director of Union Settlement**. "Not only does the disease have a disproportionate impact on the largely Latino and African American residents in this community, but thousands of community members have lost their jobs, and hundreds of local businesses have been forced to close temporarily, and perhaps permanently. Union Settlement is proud to be part of this initiative, which helps local businesses stay open, while at the same time providing much-needed meals to our health care heroes at Metropolitan Hospital."

"Metropolitan's employees have shown great dedication and teamwork during this pandemic," said **Christopher Roker, CEO of NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan**. "We are grateful for this outpouring of support from our local community and beyond. Having these hundreds of additional meals delivered directly to the hospital every day will allow staff on the front lines to focus on providing vital medical care to our COVID-19 patients."

“The COVID-19 public health and economic crisis has challenged our communities in a way we never could have imagined,” said **Raul Russi, President and CEO of Acacia Network**. “The people of New York City, especially our Latino and African American communities, continue to suffer the greatest blows during this pandemic. As a primarily Latino organization, Acacia stands ready to support initiatives that seek to help those in the front lines – particularly essential workers. We commend the leaders of East

Harlem and our partners, as we believe that food is a right, not a privilege. During these trying times and beyond, we stand in solidarity with our partners and fellow organizations in the nonprofit sector.”

"We have lived in East Harlem for 15 years and have had a restaurant in the neighborhood for the last 5 years, and when COVID-19 hit our community, our business was deeply affected," said **Leo Lauer, owner of East Harlem Bottling Co.** “When we heard about the effort to help feed the frontline heroes at the Metropolitan Hospital, we were so grateful to be a part of it, because it is helping immensely the small businesses in the neighborhood who are really struggling during this time."

Additional donations to this initiative are welcome, and interested donors can reach out to Susan Puder, Union Settlement’s Director of Development and Communications, at [spuder@unionsettlement.org](mailto:spuder@unionsettlement.org).

Below is a list of the East Harlem restaurants that are part of this initiative, and will be preparing and delivering meals to the Metropolitan Hospital workers:

<b>Amor Cubano</b>	<a href="http://amorcubanonyc.com">amorcubanonyc.com</a>
<b>Armonie Italian Bistro</b>	<a href="http://armonienyc.com">armonienyc.com</a>
<b>Bistro Casa Azul</b>	<a href="http://bistrocasaazul.business.site">bistrocasaazul.business.site</a>
<b>Cake Burger</b>	<a href="http://cakeburgers.com">cakeburgers.com</a>
<b>Cassava House</b>	<a href="http://cassavahouseny.com">cassavahouseny.com</a>
<b>Dave's Marketplace</b>	<a href="http://davesmarketplacenyc.com">davesmarketplacenyc.com</a>
<b>Dear Mama Cafe</b>	<a href="http://dearmamacoffee.com">dearmamacoffee.com</a>
<b>East Harlem Bottling Co.</b>	<a href="http://eastharlembottlingco.com">eastharlembottlingco.com</a>
<b>Healthy Choice Deli</b>	1780 Madison Avenue; 646-928-4848
<b>Hot Jalapeño</b>	219 East 116th Street; 646-351-6895
<b>La Avenida Restaurant</b>	2247 First Avenue; 212-828-2247
<b>La Fonda Boricua</b>	<a href="http://fondaboricua.com/">fondaboricua.com/</a>
<b>Mocha Cafe</b>	203 East 121st Street; 212-996-2600
<b>Mojo Desserts</b>	<a href="http://mojodesserts.com">mojodesserts.com</a>
<b>Pabade Bakery</b>	<a href="http://pabadebakery.com">pabadebakery.com</a>
<b>Sabor Borinqueñ</b>	<a href="http://saborborinqueno.net">saborborinqueno.net</a>
<b>Sapoara Grill</b>	<a href="http://sapoara-bar-and-grill.business.site/">sapoara-bar-and-grill.business.site/</a>
<b>Sisters Cuisine</b>	<a href="http://sisterscuisineharlem.com/">sisterscuisineharlem.com/</a>
<b>Super Nice NYC</b>	156 East 117th Street; 917-261-5069
<b>TastingsNYC</b>	<a href="http://tastingsnyc.com">tastingsnyc.com</a>

## **About Union Settlement**

Union Settlement is an on-the-ground resource for East Harlem residents of all ages, and a passionate advocate for the needs of underserved communities. Established in 1895, Union Settlement provides a broad array of education, wellness and community-building programs to over 10,000 East Harlem residents each year, including early childhood education, afterschool and summer youth programs, college preparation, job readiness, English language classes, behavioral health counseling, small business assistance, senior centers, Meals on Wheels and more. For more information about Union Settlement, visit [www.unionsettlement.org](http://www.unionsettlement.org).

## **About NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan**

NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan is the community hospital of choice for residents of East Harlem, northern Manhattan and neighboring communities. NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan provides culturally sensitive primary and specialized medical care to patients of all ages regardless of national origin, immigration status, or ability to pay. Since its founding in 1875, the hospital has been affiliated with New York Medical College, representing the oldest partnership between a hospital and a provide medical school in the United States. NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan is part of the NYC Health + Hospitals public health care system. For more information, please visit [www.nychealthandhospitals.org/metropolitan/](http://www.nychealthandhospitals.org/metropolitan/).

## **About Jonathan Rose Companies**

Jonathan Rose Companies is a national development, owner's representative and investment management firm. The company's mission is to strengthen communities of opportunity by developing innovative real estate solutions that build value, enhance resilience, and cultivate wellbeing. The company works with cities and not-for-profits to build green, affordable and mixed-income housing, along with cultural, health and educational infrastructure. Since its founding in 1989, the firm has completed over \$3.2 billion of work. More information is available at [www.rosecompanies.com](http://www.rosecompanies.com).

## **About L+M Development Partners**

Founded in 1984, L+M is a double bottom line company that is an innovator in the affordable, mixed-income and market-rate housing market. L+M is committed to improving the communities where it works, and takes pride in its long-standing dedication to the communities it serves. A full-service firm, L+M is responsible for over \$9 billion in development, construction and investment. L+M has acquired, built or preserved nearly 30,000 high-quality residential units in New York's Tri-state area, the West Coast and Gulf Coast regions. Learn more at <https://lmdevpartners.com/>.

## **About Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer**

Gale A. Brewer is the 27th Borough President of Manhattan. Since she took office in 2014, she has successfully passed legislation to reform the deed restriction process, add 'caregivers' to the city's anti-discrimination law, remove criminal history questions from initial employment applications (the "Fair Chance Act"), and enforce requirements for street numbers on buildings in Manhattan (to aid emergency workers). She has also spearheaded community planning initiatives at the South Street Seaport, in East

Midtown, and in other neighborhoods to address development and zoning issues. Brewer previously served on the City Council for 12 years, serving as the founding chair of the Technology Committee and leading the Government Operations Committee. Please visit [www.manhattanbp.nyc.gov/](http://www.manhattanbp.nyc.gov/) for more information.

### **About City Council Member Diana Ayala**

Diana Ayala has worked for nearly two decades serving the people of the 8th City Council District in social service agencies and government, and is a passionate advocate on issues including housing, gun violence, and senior services. Council Member Ayala was born in Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico, and moved to New York City with her family as a child. Growing up in public housing after a time in the shelter system, she experienced numerous challenges that would help give her a unique voice and perspective in government and politics, and drive her passion for public service. She has been instrumental in crafting legislation that has become law, from expanding tenants' rights to cracking down on the sale of synthetic marijuana (K2). Please visit <https://council.nyc.gov/district-8/> for more information.

### **About Acacia Network**

For over 50 years, Acacia Network and its affiliates have been committed to improving the quality-of-life and wellbeing of underserved Latino communities by providing access to integrated health and housing programs, and by reinvesting in communities through innovative programming, employment opportunities and affordable housing ownership, among other initiatives. Acacia Network's offices are located in New York City, Buffalo, Albany, and Syracuse in New York State, as well as Florida, Maryland, Tennessee, Georgia, Connecticut, and Puerto Rico. Acacia Network's extensive array of community-based services are fully integrated, bilingual and culturally competent, while ensuring easy access and actively incorporating consumer and community level input. More information is available at [www.acacianetwork.org](http://www.acacianetwork.org).

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