Bed-Stuy continues to gentrify, but significant pockets of need remain within the community. The issue of affordability – from housing to food – is spreading ever more beyond the lowest income residents into moderate income families. NEBHDCo continues to seek new solutions for the changing needs of our neighborhoods. Our anti-hunger and healthy food access programs have grown steadily over the last four years, with the opening of our choice pantry and the launch of our Communities for Healthy Food work. Both of these efforts are expanding, but we need to do still more. Our new Urban Aqua Farms aquaponics initiative described below is the latest example of our entrepreneurial approach to addressing community needs through community development.

Our Park Monroe II renovation project addresses housing quality and affordability needs across seven properties in the NEBHDCo portfolio, including significant renovations needed in these buildings since NEBHDCo acquired them. Our new renovation has included repositioning of some of the units to qualify families within a wider range of incomes. This both addresses the changing needs of the community and provides a stronger income base for proper building operations. As demonstrated in these two examples, NEBHDCo’s approach works in response to market needs, while remaining committed to providing solutions for our neediest families.

Jeffrey Dunston, CEO

On Thursday, September 29th, NEBHDCo held a fun night of food and wine tasting to fundraise for its new Urban Aqua Farms venture. Wine was donated by Wine Ring; all food was aquaponically grown, and provided by Cabbage Hill Farm and Oko Farms.

Urban Aqua Farms (UAF) is an aquaponics facility in development at one of NEBHDCo’s properties in Bed-Stuy. The farm will provide year-round, high quality, affordable fresh-water fish and vegetables to food insecure individuals and families in the community. UAF will supplement the healthy food supply for NEBHDCo’s Client Choice Food Pantry which feeds 19,000 people a year. Our aquaponics farm is a natural bridge between and expansion of our Golden Harvest Client Choice Pantry and Communities for Healthy Food Bed-Stuy initiative. Our goal is to use the Urban Aqua Farms not only to source the pantry, but also to provide a model for producing sustainable, fresh and healthy food in an urban setting. More importantly, through workshops and training we will educate the community, provide living wage farm jobs and also potential entrepreneurial opportunities.

For more information, contact Lisa Boyd at lboyd@nebhdco.org or 718-453-9490.
program and a chef for the DOH-supported early child care cooking demos. She shares why the training was meaningful for her and a little bit about her experience in a demo.

“NEBHDCo’s Community Chef program recognizes how imperative it is to create a space where Black and Brown stories and histories can be seen, heard, and felt. Personally speaking, sharing our ‘food stories’ at our Community Chef training encouraged me to connect to how I’ve helped heal myself using food and the food traditions that traveled with my parents from Ethiopia to the States in the early 1980’s and why social justice needs to include food sovereignty and a commitment to the dismantling of white supremacy at its core. This is why I became a Community Chef.

Our Community Chef training sessions enabled a space where we gained practical skills that we’ve been able to apply both in our kitchens and in our community. Since becoming a chef, I’ve done our early child care demos where we hope to encourage parents and guardians to take part in supporting local farms and benefit from fresh, nutritious produce through a farm-share program. I’d weave together a meal using that same produce on the spot for care-takers and their children. Most importantly though, these demos have been situated in experiences where food has united Black and Brown people, from the Black Panther Free Breakfast for School Children Program to the holiday meals that we look forward to every year. Moreover, this reminds us of the reverence we must have for our ancestors that have embedded an intimate and powerful connection to the very land that sustains us. Working with caretakers and children alike generates a space where it is possible to create the conditions both for us to dictate which food can nourish us and create a tasty, communal meal!

Understanding ‘food justice’ provides folks with the opportunity, as community members committed to taking care of one another, to collectively reimagine what possibilities can look like and to re-situate our current food landscape in a space that is being recreated by us. As folks connected to the well-being of Bed-Stuy and Brooklyn at large, we can exercise our agency, and rearticulate and recreate a food-future, from scratch, that is overflowing with health, happiness and hope!”

Hit us up for more information and to RSVP to any of the programs! Ashleigh Eubanks at 917-417-3082 or aeubanks@nebhdco.org
Visit us online at www.nebhdco.org

RECLAIM Our History and Culture through Cooking

Looking to try new foods that you don’t know how to cook, want to learn more about how good food is curing sickness, or just enjoy eating and spending time with the community? Join us for cooking demos taking place all over Brooklyn. The chefs who are cooking up these tasty and seasonal treats include 19 who just graduated from NEBHDCo’s latest community chef training, a program that gives cooks a paid opportunity to share the food and stories they love with the community.

Since the start of the program 2 years ago and with a total of 28 chefs trained to date, we are very excited at the growing interest from outside organizations to engage our chefs throughout the community, recognizing the importance and value of our cooking demos. The new partnerships include the NYC Department of Health (DOH), who has funded our community chefs for a series of cooking demos at early child care centers.

Meet community chef Ribka Getachew, a recent graduate of the community chef training program and a chef for the DOH-supported early child care cooking demos. She shares why the training was meaningful for her and a little bit about her experience in a demo.

“NEBHDCo’s Community Chef program recognizes how imperative it is to create a space where Black and Brown stories and histories can be seen, heard, and felt. Personally speaking, sharing our ‘food stories’ at our Community Chef training encouraged me to connect to how I’ve helped heal myself using food and the food traditions that traveled with my parents from Ethiopia to the States in the early 1980’s and why social justice needs to include food sovereignty and a commitment to the dismantling of white supremacy at its core. This is why I became a Community Chef.

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Clip this coupon for $4 at Marcy Park Farmer's Market on Marcy & Myrtle, Thursdays 8am-4pm, up until November 17th
Limit one coupon per customer
Seniors Cooking Up a Storm

Our most recent Senior Cooking workshop took place in July, for three 2-hour sessions where 12 participants met as strangers and left as friends. They learned about which foods and methods of food preparation fight heart disease, diabetes, blood pressure, and arthritis. Community resident Linda Laverpool participated in the workshop and tells us what was exciting and new for her.

“In August, I attended the Senior Cooking Healthy Workshop taught by Chef Sia Pickett. Before I attended the healthy cooking class, I was cooking foods that had a lot of salt and other unhealthy ingredients in them. After attending the class I learned that with the right herbs and spices, my food could taste delicious and be healthy at the same time. Eating healthy and preparing dishes didn’t have to be boring, but adventurous and very, very, very tasty. We learned the proper way to hold knives and the various techniques in cutting and preparing vegetables and various meats. My awareness about healthy eating and cooking was greatly heightened. It was informative, exciting, and challenging. This class was a very rewarding experience and I look forward to attending more cooking classes. So if you want to learn about healthy eating and cooking, join us at one of the next senior cooking workshops. You will have a great time.”

Look out for the next Senior Cooking Course in July 2017

Turning It Up with FEEST

Our summer Turn Up Youth Garden Internship Program came to an end on September 1st. It was hard to part with all 16 of the kids that we gardened and cooked with, and discussed the lack of good foods in our communities. For 7 weeks the youth participants learned about good food - how to start their own garden, cook food from scratch and improve knife skills. They learned about interview etiquette, how to create a cover letter and resume, understand where our food comes from, and why communities may not have the food we would like or can afford. But that’s not all, they came away with the ability to work together as a team, communicate, and build a community despite our differences.

Now FEEST has picked up where Turn Up ended. The school year food justice program began September 16th. Interns ages 13-18 are FEEST Leaders, deepening their knowledge gained from the summer track program. The lucky six are building on their former experience with NEBHDCo youth programs to be leaders and discuss important topics of greatest concern to them such as poor food access and police accountability, culminating in actual food and community-related projects, and co-leading the monthly FEEST dinners - all while being paid for it.

FEEST dinners are open to all youth. If you are ages 13-18 or know someone who is, then join us for one of the free monthly dinners led by FEEST leaders.

Our first FEEST dinner on September 30th was attended by 8 youth, including Charelle who had heard it about it all the way from Barbados, and 7 other kids from Brotherhood/Sister Sol in Harlem. We started with a game then made a pasta with red sauce covered in mozzarella cheese; a salad with gherkins, a citrusy cucumber; sliced apples; butternut squash soup; and sauteed shitake mushrooms sourced from the pantry, and NEBHDCo gardens. After we placed a tablecloth and dishes on the table, we discussed the topic of race and identity. It catalyzed a conversation on how our appearances can lead to wrongful judgments, and how societal and workplace discrimination can exist, for example, in relation to hair grooming.

FEEST - FREE Monthly Dinners for Youth Ages 13-18. Participants learn how to cook, eat together, talk about issues in their community, and make new friends.

When: One Friday of every month 4pm-8pm October 28, November 11, December 16, January 27, February 24
Where: 376 Throop Avenue
For more info contact: Ashleigh Eubanks, aeubanks@nebhdco.org or (917) 417-3082.

Community Chef Events - Visit a demo and get a free sample!

Marcy Park Farmers Market - Bring the $4 coupon from this issue to get a discount at the farmer’s market.
When: 8am-4pm, Every Thursday until Nov. 17,
Where: At Myrtle and Marcy Avenues

Ebbets Fields Market
When: 10am-12:30pm Nov. 1, Dec. 6,
Where: 1720 Bedford Ave. between Montgomery and Sullivan, behind the building.

Pantry Demos (for NEBHDCo pantry client shoppers only)
When: Every Tuesday at 10am
Where: 376 Throop Avenue
Ms. Jeanene Davis has been a resident of 1933 Union Street in Brownsville for over 15 years. Her apartment was recently renovated through NEBHDCo’s latest and largest tenant-in-place rehab project, Park Monroe II Apartments. The renovation, managed by MDG Design + Construction, improved 214 units across 7 buildings. The project included all new kitchens and baths for each apartment, and upgrades for public areas and building systems.

Ms. Davis is happy with the results: “I have lots more storage than before in the kitchen and all over - roomier! A nice new stove, and a new refrigerator that is also much roomier.” Besides new kitchens and baths, each unit was re-painted and had floors re-finished. For this in-place rehab, hospitality suite apartments were made available for tenants during the workday for cooking and bathing; tenants returned to their apartments at the end of the day. “All the people I know in the building and also across the street at 1920 Union love their apartments, they see a big change.” It made a big change for Ms. Davis as well. “I enjoy bringing my family and my company here now.”