

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 24, 2023
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MAYOR ADAMS LAUNCHES ‘BREAKING BREAD, BUILDING BONDS’ CITYWIDE TO COMBAT RISING HATE AND FOSTER MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

Building on Program Initially Launched at Brooklyn Borough Hall, B4 Aims to Organize 1,000 Meals with Diverse Group of New Yorkers Across NYC

NEW YORK – New York City Mayor Eric Adams today announced the launch of ‘Breaking Bread, Building Bonds’ (B4), a citywide initiative to combat the rise in hate crimes in many communities across the city, and foster mutual understanding between New York’s diverse neighborhoods. The program, which builds on an initiative that was launched when Mayor Adams served as Brooklyn borough president, aims to organize 1,000 meals citywide with a group of 10-12 diverse New Yorkers at each meal.

“Hate is a virus, fueled by the failure to see our common bonds, but we are going to do something revolutionary to eradicate this hate: Break bread and talk to each other,” said **Mayor Adams**. “This year, we are going to organize 1,000 meals and conversations across the city, bringing everyday New Yorkers from different backgrounds together to listen and learn from each other. No matter where we are from, who we love, what religion we worship, or what language we speak, we are all bound together by one thing: We are all New Yorkers, and together, we are going to defeat the pipeline of hate.”

“We fight racism and prejudice through opportunities like this to listen and learn from one another, and there is no better way to do that than by sharing a meal,” said **Deputy Mayor for Public Safety Philip Banks III**. “This program invites New Yorkers to challenge their biases by stepping out of their comfort zones and echo chambers and stepping into someone else’s shoes.”

Organized in partnership with The People’s Supper (TPS), UJA-Federation of New York, and several community-based organizations, ‘Breaking Bread, Building Bonds’ will empower everyday New Yorkers to host dinners and break down silos between communities. Working with the Mayor’s Office to Prevent Hate Crimes (OPHC), alongside the Mayor’s Community Affairs Unit (CAU), and Office of Faith-Based and Community Partnership (OFCP), TPS will coordinate large-scale trainings, provide support and coaching to dinner hosts, and develop a toolkit and resource guide, and assist with matching participants to hosts. UJA-Federation of

New York will provide reimbursements of up to \$150 for those who host dinners of 10-12 people.

In January 2020, then-Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams and U.S. Representative Hakeem Jeffries announced the creation of the ‘Breaking Bread, Building Bonds’ initiative, following a significant rise in anti-Semitic hate crimes. The inaugural dinner of the initiative was held later that month in Jackson Heights, and took place during Peace Week, which features a series of events throughout the city dedicated to promoting peace and unity across cultures. The initiative was put on hold due to the disruption of in-person gatherings during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“This administration continues to commit itself to pursue holistic and effective ways to combat hate crime, bias, and discrimination,” said **Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice Director Deanna Logan**. “New York is one of the world’s most diverse cities. This initiative will continue to bring together the mosaic of New Yorkers to harness the talents, expertise, and diversity that cultivates communities and builds solidarity.”

“Community empowerment is one of the core tenets of our office’s mission and we are excited to lead the ‘Breaking Bread, Building Bonds’ initiative citywide,” said **OPHC Executive Director Hassan Naveed**. “These meals and shared conversations breakdown silos and give New Yorkers an opportunity to get to know each other and foster unity among communities vulnerable to hate, bias, and discrimination.”

“The Mayor’s Community Affairs Unit is eager to work with communities across the five boroughs to bring different voices together for ‘Breaking Bread, Building Bonds’ meals. In these conversations, we will find that our diversity is our strength and that we have more in common than we realize,” said **CAU Commissioner Fred Kreizman**. “New York City is a family of unique communities, and we will work together in a meaningful way to combat hate one meal at a time.”

“‘Breaking Bread, Building Bonds’ is an opportunity for New Yorkers of diverse faiths and ethnic groups to gather, engage in conversations, and better understand each other — bringing us all closer in our city,” said **Office of Faith Based and Community Partnerships Executive Director Pastor Gil Monroe**. “Meals have traditionally been a gathering place for people of different cultures and world views to understand each other further and create a healthy community. The Office of Faith Based and Community Partnerships will continue encouraging communities to build meaningful, healthy relationships across the boroughs through ‘Breaking Bread, Building Bonds.’”

“What better way to bring New Yorkers together than over food and conversation? The ‘Breaking Bread, Building Bonds’ initiative gives us all a chance to get to know our neighbors, talk through some of the most pressing issues of our time, and learn from each other,” said **New York City Chief Engagement Officer Betsy MacLean**. “In a time of growing division across the country, New Yorkers know that the more we connect to each other, the more we can rely on Dr. King’s ‘inescapable network of mutuality’ and strengthen our ‘single garment of destiny.’ Hats off to our agency and community partners for leading the charge in this important effort.”

“Our country has watched New York City model solidarity and connection in moments of real need in the past,” said **K. Scarry, partnerships director, Dinner Party Labs; and lead,**

People's Supper. “We see this as an opportunity for New York City to model once more what it means to actively respond to isolation and fragmentation in our communities, and to tell a different story. We’re excited to help New Yorkers pull up a chair for their neighbors, go deep with one another, and imagine a future together that works for all.”

“UJA-Federation and our non-profit partners work each day to support tens of thousands of New Yorkers from diverse backgrounds across the city,” said **Eric Goldstein, CEO, UJA Federation of New York.** It is crucial to the fabric of our community to create opportunities to learn more about our neighbors, and the mayor’s new initiative bringing together people who would not otherwise know each other to share a meal is a wonderful endeavor, which we’re delighted to support.”

“The Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan and our board of directors are proud to host the inaugural meal of Mayor Adams’ Breaking Bread, Building Bonds initiative,” said **Rabbi Joanna Samuels, CEO, Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan.** “We are deeply committed to the well-being of our New York City community, and we know that coming together, centering each individual’s humanity, is the best way to unite against hate. Our tradition, like so many others that thrive in this great city, finds holiness in breaking bread with both those whom we know and those who are guests at our tables.”

“With the increase in hate crimes in 2022 and the need for greater sensitivity and understanding, the 67th Precinct Clergy Council, ‘The GodSquad’ welcomes and supports the B4 initiative by our mayor, Eric Adams,” said **Pastor Edward-Richard Hinds, president, 67th Precinct Clergy Council Inc., ‘The GodSquad.’** “This affords various ethnicities, identities, and faiths to gather in communal settings and share history, thoughts and perspectives aimed at a greater appreciation of unity in diversity within our communities. We are hopeful that in breaking bread and building bonds, we can bridge the divide, combat hate, and reconstruct common bonds for the greater good, for out of many, we are one.”

“New York City is one of the most diverse cities on the planet. At the Arab American Association of New York, we seek to celebrate and find strength in our differences — and we are excited for the Breaking Bread, Building Bonds Initiative, and the space it will create for New Yorkers to come together to learn more about each other and build solidarity across the five boroughs,” said **Marwa Janini, executive director, Arab American Association of New York.** “Public safety is a community practice, and AAANY will continue to advocate for programs and initiatives that invest in the health and wellbeing of our most vulnerable communities, including all targeted religious groups, immigrant and AAPI communities, people of color, the unhoused, and the LGBTQ+ community.”

“Breaking bread with our brothers and sisters from all communities is essential to rebuilding safety in a city that has seen more than its fair share of hate violence during the pandemic,” said **Jo-Ann Yoo, executive director, Asian American Federation.** “The Asian American Federation is proud to sit alongside Mayor Adams, the Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes, and the many partner organizations that have stepped up to address the hate violence impacting so many of our vulnerable communities. May this be the first of many important conversations to ensure our communities build the bonds that will lead to a safer, more just city that we all deserve.”

“The mayor’s new initiative Breaking Bread, Building Bonds will allow communities that don’t often have opportunity to share space, the chance to get to know each other over a meal,” said **Sean Ebony Coleman, executive director, Destination Tomorrow**. “It will begin to build a bridge towards a united New York, that will only serve to strengthen its residents. Destination Tomorrow is honored to be a part of this groundbreaking project.”

“Only the sheer demonstration of our actions of love, will allow our communities to rise above the broken pieces of hate; We are indeed better together,” said **Dr. David K. Allen, executive director, Epic Village Community Development Inc.**

“The strength of our city is found in our diversity. New Yorkers must cultivate and respect this feature that makes us the most unique city in the world,” said **Frankie Miranda, president and CEO, Hispanic Federation**. “With ‘Breaking Bread, Building Bonds,’ the Adams administration is doing its part to not only combat hate, but build meaningful relationships in our community that celebrate our great diversity. Together, through this initiative, we are creating stronger and safer communities across the five boroughs.”

“Breaking Bread is an excellent initiative to bring together in dialogue, understanding and spirit the many diverse communities that make up our city. We urge all New Yorkers to participate in these healing and uplifting opportunities,” said **Rabbi Bob Kaplan, executive director, Center for a Shared Society at the JCRC-NY.**

“Muslim Community Network welcomes Mayor Adam’s Breaking Bread, Building Bonds initiative,” said **AjiFanta Marenah, advocacy program manager, Muslim Community Network**. “As an organization working to fight the spread of hate crimes, we understand the significance of bringing communities of different backgrounds together to learn and build relationships with one another. In many of our cultures, sharing meals builds community, trust, and respect. We are excited and honored to participate in this crucial step towards reducing hate crimes in New York City.”

Those interested in hosting a dinner or learning more about the initiative can visit www.nyc.gov/breakingbread.

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