



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
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**NYC SERVICE AND CITIZENS COMMITTEE FOR NEW YORK CITY JOIN POPPA
AND MOMMA JONES' HISTORIC COMMUNITY GARDEN TO CELEBRATE THE
2015 LOVE YOUR BLOCK SEASON**

Love Your Block, one of 32 strategic programs and initiatives of NYC Service, the Mayor's comprehensive initiative to increase volunteer service and utilize the power of volunteers in NYC, awards 25 grants to resident-led community groups and links them to City Services

NEW YORK—NYC Service, Citizens Committee for New York City, Department of Parks and Recreation, Department of Sanitation of New York, and Department of Transportation join together tomorrow to celebrate the 2015 *Love Your Block* season by highlighting the work of Poppa and Momma Jones' Historic Community Garden in East New York, one of 25 resident-led community groups awarded a \$1,000 grant to transform and beautify their neighborhood block.

The Poppa and Momma Jones' Historic Community Garden community group will mobilize more than 40 community volunteers to revitalize a community garden and the adjacent street. Today, volunteers will add sidewalk planters, a bulletin board for community events, and solar-powered lighting along the garden perimeter to improve pedestrian visibility of the block.

“Poppa & Momma Jones were icons in the community for decades...They set the finest example of how as a community, when we come together, we all benefit,” said **Stephanie Reeder, Lead Organizer of the Poppa & Momma Jones' Historic Community Garden**. “That is the vision for our project – extending ourselves, reaching outside the perimeter of the garden and showing that Brooklyn Love, East New York style. It is our hope that residents, students, homeowners, and merchants begin to galvanize in efforts to strengthen neighborhood bonds with simple yet significant acts of kindness.”

“The *Love Your Block* partnership provides a clear picture of what we can achieve when our government, nonprofit sector, private sector, and local residents rally around a shared vision to strengthen our neighborhoods,” said **NYC Chief Service Officer Paula Gavin**. “NYC Service congratulates the 25 neighborhood organizations selected to participate in this year’s program and thanks them for their incredible leadership and dedication to their communities.”

Love Your Block, now in its seventh season, is a citywide campaign to connect New Yorkers to resources for block beautification. *Love Your Block* encourages community volunteer groups to engage their members in an organized, one-day block beautification event by providing

resources in the form of a cash grant and facilitating access to relevant City services from the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, Department of Transportation, and Department of Sanitation that support their projects. Since its inception in 2009, over 250 *Love Your Block* awards have been granted, 850 City services provided and more than 8,500 community volunteers have been engaged in beautification projects.

Twenty-five neighborhood volunteer groups were selected to receive the 2015 *Love Your Block* award – each receiving a \$1,000 grant, made possible by Citi, to cover materials needed for their block beautification projects. In addition, upon the groups' requests, City agencies provided services including, but not limited to: free mulch delivery for gardening projects, speed hump surveys, and litter basket replacement. For a full list of our 2015 grantees, please visit nyc.gov/service.

“The *Love Your Block* initiative provides a wonderful opportunity for New Yorkers across the five boroughs to make a difference in their neighborhoods,” said **Ed Skyler, Citi’s Head of Global Public Affairs**. “We are pleased to partner with the City of New York and the Citizens Committee to support our neighbors in their efforts to beautify their streets and communities.”

“This is the seventh year that Citizens Committee for New York City has joined with the city and three of its agencies – Parks, Transportation and Sanitation – to bring improvements to neighborhoods throughout all five boroughs through our *Love Your Block* Program,” said **Citizens Committee CEO Peter H. Kostmayer**. “*Love Your Block* is just that, bringing together neighbors, the city, and a nonprofit to focus on 25 blocks in 23 neighborhoods where New Yorkers show their commitment to their neighborhoods, their city and most of all their neighbors by pitching in to do the work that needs to be done.”

“NYC Parks is pleased to partner again with NYC Service and the Citizens Committee for New York City on the *Love Your Block* program,” said **Parks Commissioner Mitchell J. Silver**. “Community gardens make our park system and our open spaces more accessible and equitable and Poppa and Momma Jones’ Historic Community Garden is a shining example of what can be accomplished when neighborhood residents join together to beautify their communities.”

“We are happy to be able to provide our full support to the *Love Your Block* organization,” said **Sanitation Commissioner Kathryn Garcia**. “The community volunteers do great work all throughout all five boroughs, and help to make New York City cleaner and greener.”

Event Details

WHAT: Community recognition event to celebrate the 2015 *Love Your Block Season*

WHO: **Poppa & Momma Jones’ Historic Community Garden:** Stephanie Reeder, Lead Organizer

NYC Service, Office of the Mayor: Paula Gavin, Chief Service Officer

Citizens Committee for New York City: Peter Kostmayer, CEO

Department of Parks and Recreation: Erica Goldstein, Community Outreach

Department of Sanitation: Bruno Iciano, Citywide Community Affairs

Department of Transportation: Henry Greenidge, Director of Special Projects

WHEN: Saturday, May 2, 2015 at 11:00 AM (Speaking Program at 12:15 PM)

WHERE: Poppa and Momma Jones' Historic Community Garden
337 Van Siclen Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11207

WHY: Celebrate the seventh year of *Love Your Block* and highlight the work of Poppa and Momma Jones' Historic Community Garden in East New York, one of 25 resident-led community groups awarded a \$1,000 grant to transform and beautify their neighborhood block.

NYC Service

NYC Service promotes volunteerism, engages New Yorkers in service, builds volunteer capacity and mobilizes the power of volunteers to impact New York City's greatest needs. NYC Service drives volunteer resources to seven impact areas where New York City's needs are greatest: Strengthening Communities and Serving Neighbors In Need, Improving Health and Well-Being, Supporting Educational Excellence for All Students, Protecting Our Environment, Enhancing Economic and Workforce Development, Preparing and Responding to Emergencies, and Elevating Youth Volunteer Service. In addition to this, NYC Service aims to strengthen strategic volunteer management in community organizations and public agencies, and measure volunteer outcomes and impact, creating accountability standards for volunteerism and service. For more information and to find an opportunity to serve in NYC, visit our website www.nyc.gov/service.

Citizens Committee for New York City

Our mission is simple: to help New Yorkers – especially those in low-income areas – come together and improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods. Residents are uniquely situated to define and act on the issues affecting their communities. When provided with modest support, neighborhood and school groups can effectively mobilize community resources to improve quality of life. Citizens Committee for New York City supports these grassroots efforts by offering grants, skills-building workshops and further technical support in the form of project planning assistance and an equipment share library. In 2014, we provided 366 projects with \$1.6 million in grants and services, and our staff facilitated 30 workshops to over 500 social entrepreneurs. Since 1975, we have promoted the spirit of volunteerism and local engagement that drives our work. For more information, visit our website www.citizensnyc.org.

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