



# NORWOOD NEWS

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## BRONX STANDS WITH DR

Photo courtesy of the Office of the Bronx Borough President

**BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT** Vanessa Gibson, Dominican Bronx residents, community leaders, clergy members, and a host of Dominican elected officials representing The Bronx and Northern Manhattan were joined by Gov. Kathy Hochul (not pictured) at a vigil on April 14, 2025 on Lou Gehrig Plaza in Concourse, The Bronx, to honor the lives lost in the Jet Set nightclub roof collapse on April 8, 2025 in Santa Domingo, Dominican Republic.

By **DAVID GREENE & SÍLE MOLONEY**

Bronxites are standing in solidarity with a grieving Dominican community ever since hearing news of the tragic roof collapse at the Jet Set nightclub in the country's capital, Santo

Domingo, on Tuesday, April 8.

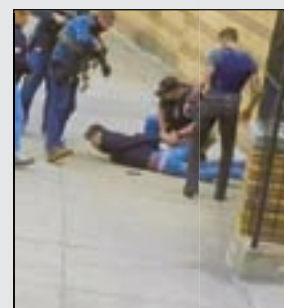
The death toll has risen to at least 231 people according to several media reports, and more than 180 have been injured. At least two victims of the collapse were from The Bronx, retired NYPD Det. Enmanuel Gomez of

Home Street in the South Bronx and Manny Diaz of University Heights.

Based on the 2020 Census, there are 702,330 residents of Dominican origin living in New York City, representing 7.9% of the city's total popula-

tion. The Bronx has the largest concentration with 334,347 Dominican residents, and they make up around 23.8% of the borough's population. According to census records, Dominicans recently surpassed Puerto

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**ICE Agents Descend on Bedford Park**  
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**DOJ Drops Bribery Charges against Mayor Definitively**  
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**Janet Peguero Resigns as Deputy BP**  
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# Fordham Manor: Two Young Men Shot inside Wendy's on Fordham Road

**By SÍLE MOLONEY**

Two young men were hospitalized after they were shot inside Wendy's restaurant in Fordham Manor on Saturday evening, April 5, police said.

A police spokeswoman said the shooting took place around 7.24 p.m. inside 342 East Fordham Road, which is the address for Wendy's. They said the first young man who was shot was 26 years of age and he was shot in the chest and back. "He's transported to St. Barnabas, and stable," the police spokeswoman said.

She said the second victim, a 27-year-old man, was shot in the arm and the thigh. "He was also taken to St. Barnabas and is in stable condition," she said. We asked about unconfirmed reports of a potential third gunshot victim who may have fled the scene on a motorcycle. The spokesperson said, "No, I don't see anything for a third individual anywhere."

Asked if there were any suspects, the spokesperson said, "I don't have any information on the suspect, just that they fled the scene. I'm not even sure how they fled, but I guess on foot, but I can't confirm."

Asked if the two victims were customers or employees, the spokeswoman said, "I'm not sure if they had purchased anything at the time but they were in a Wendy's." Asked if she could confirm if they were employees, she said in part, "Oh no,



Image courtesy of the Citizens App

**CONE MARKERS ARE** placed by NYPD ballistics investigators inside a Wendy's located at 342 East Fordham Road in Fordham Manor on Saturday night, April 5, 2025, after two young men were shot on the premises earlier that evening. One chair is seen overturned and a liquid (possibly blood) is seen on the floor as police cordon off the crime scene.

no, I can't tell. I'm not sure if they were there as customers or if they were working."

Norwood News later spoke to one man who was passing Wendy's in the early hours of Sunday morning when the res-

taurant was seen shuttered and asked if he knew anything about the shooting. He said he had not heard about it and told us he was just out of hospital. He had a bandaged hand and was carrying some plastic bags.

A police car was also seen seemingly on patrol in the area and at one point was parked on East Fordham Road in the early hours of Sunday morning, not far from Wendy's.

On Sunday, April 6, the NYPD confirmed there were no arrests, and the investigation remains ongoing. Wendy's was seen back open on Sunday, but a sign on the door advised customers that it was taking orders to go only through a front window. No indoor dining was available. [The restaurant may be back to normal now.]

We spoke to one staff member who didn't have any comment on the incident other than saying that everyone (staff members) was ok.

Anyone with information regarding this incident is asked to call the NYPD's Crime Stoppers Hotline at 1-800-577-TIPS (8477) or for Spanish, 1-888-57-PISTA (74782). The public can also submit their tips by logging onto the Crime Stoppers website at <https://crimestoppers.nypdonline.org/> or on X @NYPDTips.

All calls are strictly confidential.



Image courtesy of the Citizens App

**NYPD INVESTIGATORS AND** police officers cordon off the Wendy's restaurant located at 342 East Fordham Road in Fordham Manor on Saturday night, April 5, 2025, after two young men were shot on the premises earlier that evening.



# Kingsbridge: Person Found Deceased on Subway Station Tracks

By SÍLE MOLONEY

A man in his thirties was found deceased on the tracks of the 238th Street subway station in Kingsbridge in the early hours of Tuesday morning, April 15, police said.

"Today, at approximately 3.18 a.m., police responded to a 911 call of an aided at 238th Street aboard a northbound 1 train within the confines of the 50 Precinct," a police spokeswoman told *Norwood News*. "Upon arrival, officers observed an unconscious, unresponsive and unidentified male in his thirties on the tracks."

She said EMS responded and pronounced the male deceased at the scene and added that the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner will determine the cause of death. The investigation is ongoing.

The NY Daily News had described the victim in a headline as a subway surfer. Meanwhile, the New York Post has reported on some dangerous subway surfing incidents in recent months. *Norwood News* has also witnessed passengers riding outside in between subway cars, especially in summer on the elevated train tracks, though we don't know if it was the case here.

We asked the NYPD if the victim in this case had been train-surfing, and the spokesperson said she could not confirm.

On Jan 21, the FDNY said they received a call at around 5.59 p.m. for a report of an injured person on the tracks at East Gun Hill Road subway station serving the 5 train at Dyre Avenue in the Pelham Gardens section of The Bronx. They said one civilian with life-threatening injuries had been transported to Jacobi Hospital in Morris Park and the person's condition and description were unknown. The NY Post reported that incident as being a subway surfing case.

Regarding the latest incident in Kingsbridge, we also reached out to the MTA for comment and a media spokesperson, Lucas Bejarano, responded, saying, "Northbound (1) train service was temporarily suspended between Dyckman St and 242 St – Van Cortlandt Park. Shuttle bus service was called for to take customers from Dyckman St to 242 St – Van Cortlandt Park station. Normal service resumed at 6:02 a.m." We were referred by the MTA to the NYPD for further information on the incident.

We also asked the MTA what the agency is doing generally to combat subway surfing. Bejarano referred us to a 22-page letter addressed to U.S. Secre-



Photo by Síle Moloney

**A MAN WAS** found deceased on Tuesday, April 15, 2025, on the tracks of the 238th Street subway station, pictured here on April 14, 2023, in Kingsbridge police said.



Photo by Síle Moloney

**A SUBWAY SAFETY** notice regarding subway surfing is seen inside Grand Central subway station on March 2, 2025.

tary for the Department of Transportation Sean Duffy. In it, the MTA outlines various safety challenges the agency faces, including the handling of persons who may be living with a mental illness and the dangerous subway surfing trend. Page 14 and 15 share information on the efforts underway by the MTA to combat subway surfing in particular.

These included in 2021 convening a Track Trespass Task Force to combat

unauthorized access to its subway tracks and cars through NYPD enforcement, sensors, and innovative technologies to detect trespassing, infrastructure enhancements, and customer campaigns.

Bejarano said the agency's outreach work includes the campaign against subway surfing, "Ride Inside Stay Alive." He said as part of a more recent partnership with comedian Kenan Thompson of Saturday Night Live fame,

Thompson's voice can be heard in a recorded announcement asking passengers not to ride outside train cars.

Reacting on the Citizens' App to news of the Kingsbridge incident, BronxUser1566585015, said, "You're 30, why would you do this sh\*t?" Meanwhile, destiny513 said, "30 years old doing this is sad; should have definitely known better."

NewYorkUser780494014 said, "Definitely wasn't subway surfing... I take that train every day from (West) 242 Street. It had to be one of the homeless people who pee between cars and probably lost balance and fell... ya lack real intelligence and emotion."

Another user, saucyyyyyyyyy, said, "Where the f-k you get energy to wanna climb on top of a train in your 30's. Lol I barely wanna get out of bed."

Meanwhile, later on Tuesday, at Crescent Street subway station in Brooklyn, emergency services reportedly removed a person from the northbound train tracks and onto the platform, avoiding contact with a train, according to a Citizens' App post.

The station serves the J and Z trains. When contacted, FDNY officials said they received a call at 6.37 p.m. for a report of a person on the roadbed at 233 Crescent Street. They said the patient left prior to the arrival of EMS.

Back in The Bronx, it's not the first time that a dangerous incident has taken place at the 238th street subway station. A man was hospitalized following a police-involved shooting on April 13, 2023, at 231st Street subway station, following an apparent stand off on the elevated train track between police and the man who officers said was armed with a gun.

Witnesses had earlier reported seeing a man on the elevated train track at the 238th Street subway station armed with a gun who had been acting erratically. In November 2023, a police lieutenant from the 50th Precinct was hospitalized after he was assaulted by a subway rider at the same subway station.

Anyone with information regarding this incident is asked to call the NYPD's Crime Stoppers Hotline at 1-800-577-TIPS (8477) or for Spanish, 1-888-57-PISTA (74782). The public can also submit their tips by logging onto the Crime Stoppers website at <https://crimestoppers.nypdonline.org/>, or on X @NYPDTips.

All calls are strictly confidential.

*\*David Greene contributed to this story.*



# INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By DAVID GREENE & SÍLE MOLONEY



This week, we asked Bronx residents if they were aware that only particular areas of certain City parks are available for the public to host outdoor barbecues, (areas situated away from trees).



"I was aware of that, and I do barbecue but not in the parks. We go in the backyard or a family member's or a friend's private house. I see people barbecuing on the street all the time. On the sidewalk, they're partying out here. It's not like back in the day when they had barbecue pits in the parks, some parks do, and some don't. I think they should enforce the illegal cookouts more."

**Chevon Young,**  
Former University Heights resident now  
living in Yonkers  
Photo by David Greene



"Yes, in certain parks they allow barbecuing. Yes, I knew that. I don't barbecue, but I used to cook out back in the day. I don't know how things are these days; I haven't been to the parks lately."

**Raven Chestnut,**  
Norwood  
Photo courtesy of Raven Chestnut



"I am against BBQs in public parks; it belongs in private yards. All that smoke is a nuisance. It seems the city could announce that better. I am only vaguely aware of certain places where I've seen it posted that there is a designated barbecue area. In a larger park, they could post that barbecues are only permitted in designated areas, but it gets really tricky with the smaller parks, where there are no barbecuing areas. It is annoying when people do it anyway."

**Roger Fentener,**  
Van Vliessingen, Parkchester  
Photo courtesy of Roger Fentener Van  
Vliessingen



"I'm all for public barbecues as long as folks are provided the tools to clean up properly with compost and recycling bins and actually use them. Nothing is worse than seeing trash scattered across the park or blowing into the street the next day. If someone is hosting a birthday barbecue, either they have to get there early to hold the space, or they're out of luck. Often, they end up barbecuing wherever they find a space. I think it's more about education and why parks have designated barbecue areas. I also think NYC Parks needs to provide more trash and recycling receptacles."

**Anthony Ramirez II,**  
Parkchester  
Photo provided by Anthony Ramirez II



"Barbecuing in public parks should be better designated and enforced. That was a recent highlighted discussion at the Community Board 7 Parks meeting that your own paper's editor-in-chief attended. It should be allowed, designated, and enforced. It's the latter that is lacking. I do think more public outreach is needed, but the powers at the front don't want to spend money on it."

**Anthony Riviuccio,**  
Bedford Park  
Photo courtesy of Anthony Riviuccio

*Editor's Note: Check out our latest Out & About listing in this edition for details of where to find designated BBQ sites inside Bronx parks.*

## Two Injured in Norwood Fire

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Two people were injured following a fire in the Norwood section of the Bronx, FDNY officials said. A fire department spokesperson said 12 emergency units, comprising 60 fire and EMS personnel responded to the blaze after they received a call at 8.17 a.m. on March 28.

They said the residential fire was on the first floor of 3576 Dekalb Avenue, located between East 212<sup>th</sup> Street and East 213 Street, a multiple, 6-story, Class 3 dwelling (125 ft. x 60 ft.). They said the fire was brought under control at 8.57 a.m. and two civilians were treated for injuries and transported by EMS to local area hospitals.

We spoke to Mongo Sley at the scene who said he was still half asleep earlier that morning as the fire was burning but he recalled witnessing firefighters save some victims. "One was burnt though," he said. We asked if it was an older or a younger person and he said, "An older man, like, an older lady, and some other person."

Asked if the fire was big, he said, "Oh, a whole bunch of flames!" He added that his mother lives in the building close to where it's understood the fire started. "She's lucky it didn't hit her apartment," Sley said. Asked if she was ok, he said she was good and added that everyone [on that side of the building] had evacuated.

Speaking in Spanish, another resi-

dent said he didn't know very well what had happened. He just saw the firefighters arrive and tackle the blaze. Another female resident who lives on another side of the building explained that it was her homecare assistant who was arriving at the woman's building by car who saw the flames and warned her.

"My homecare called me to tell me to come downstairs," she said, adding that she suffers from asthma. "I don't need to get sick," she said, and added that not everyone in the building evacuated, but she and one or two others on her side of the building did.

Referring to the residents of the impacted apartment, another male resident, Joseph Pagan, said, "I know those people for many years. They're a good family. I just want to make sure they're ok. I don't know what the hell happened. I was a little bit depressed when I heard." He asked if we knew if a female resident who had been injured was going to be ok. We said we would share whatever information we received from the FDNY. Bound by HIPAA laws, hospitals don't disclose any personal medical statuses of patients in their care.

Later, we spoke to another young man who said he was a handyman for the building. We asked if he could explain what he knew about the cause of the fire. Speaking in Spanish, he told us a tenant who he estimates is in his forties was inside a first-floor apartment where it



Photo courtesy of Raspy North  
**FIREFIGHTERS ARE SEEN** at 3576 Dekalb Avenue in Norwood on March 28, 2025, after extinguishing a residential fire at the location.

seems the fire started. "It appears he has some mental problems," he said.

He said it appeared that the man set his body on fire in his room with a lighter. When we asked FDNY officials if they could confirm this, they said the cause of the fire was under investigation. The handyman later added that the firefighters arrived promptly at the scene and that three people, the man in his forties and two other younger people, were assisted. He said he believed only one person was injured.

Meanwhile, FDNY officials said there were no injuries reported after a fire

broke out in a residential building at 3154 Grand Concourse in Bedford Park on Saturday morning, April 12. They said the cause is also under investigation.

A popular animal hospital on Kingsbridge Road in Fordham Manor, which has served the community for 90 years, was seriously damaged when an after-hours fire broke on March 27. Again, FDNY reported no injuries to human or animal, though a resident told us a bird located on a higher floor had died in the fire.

Visit <https://www.fdnysmart.org/> to read FDNY's fire safety tips.

(continued on page 14)



Photo by M. Quiñones

**ICE OFFICIALS AND** police are seen surrounding a man with firearms at 2914 Jerome Avenue between Minerva Place and East 199th Street in the Bedford Park section of The Bronx at around 3 p.m. on Tuesday, April 15, 2025.

## Bedford Park: Man Seemingly Restrained by ICE Agents as Council Seeks to Block Rikers Island ICE Office

By **SÍLE MOLONEY & M. QUIÑONES**

As Bronxites remain on edge amid regular news of deportations, including of some on working visas, a man was seemingly restrained at gunpoint by ICE officials in the Bedford Park section of The Bronx on Tuesday afternoon, April 15. When asked, an NYPD spokesperson later said the department had no arrest on file for the location in question.

The attached photos show armed law enforcement authorities at 2914 Jerome Avenue between Minerva Place and East 199th Street at around 3 p.m. on Tuesday. Dressed in plain clothes but wearing bulletproof vests displaying the words “Police” and “ERO,” some were also wearing black face bandanas.

In the context of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency (ICE), ERO stands for Enforcement and Removal Operations. What looked like machine guns were seen pointed at the head of the man, seen lying face down on the street with his hands behind his back at one point, while agents surrounded him. He appeared to plead with them raising his arms at one point as if to protect himself / his head.

An eyewitness told *Norwood News* that as the man exited the building located at 2914 Jerome Avenue, the agents approached him and seemingly instructed him to raise his arms and to get on the ground, which he did. He was then seen getting handcuffed, was put on his feet, and was seen walking away with the agents.

The witness did not see what happened after that and did not see if he was placed in a vehicle or not. The witness also said that the agents arrived at the scene in unmarked vehicles, double-parked, and were later seen without their bulletproof vests and without any

firearms entering the building and going upstairs.

When *Norwood News* contacted the NYPD late on Tuesday for more information, we were informed the department had no arrest on file for the address provided. We shared the attached photos and asked if the man seen in the photos had therefore been released. We did not receive an immediate response.

We also reached out to ICE and asked if the man seen on the ground had been taken into custody, if he could be identified, if he had a criminal record and if so, what the charges were, if he’s in custody and if so, where; and finally, what the next actions are in relation to his status. We will share any updates we receive.

We also reached out to the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of New York to ask if it had any information about the incident and will share any updates we receive. We also tried to reach the property owner for comment but were unsuccessful.

On the same day, the NYC Council sued the Adams administration in efforts to block Executive Order 50 signed by First Deputy Mayor Randy Mastro on April 8. The order invites ICE and other federal officials to operate an office on Rikers Island to investigate criminal activity.

City council members said the order pertains to the City’s Sanctuary City laws which prevent ICE officials from maintaining an office on Rikers Island. They said the council recently authorized Speaker Adrienne Adams to take legal action to defend against the violation of said Sanctuary Laws.

The lawsuit contends that Mastro’s order is “unlawful” and tainted by an alleged conflict of interest. The council

(continued on page 6)



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# Bedford Park: Man Seemingly Restrained by ICE Agents as Council Seeks to Block Rikers Island ICE Office

(continued from page 5)

cil members referred to “the corrupt bargain the mayor entered into [with the Trump administration],” citing the mayor’s personal freedom in exchange for a Rikers Island ICE office. In February, federal prosecutors hit several New York politicians with a lawsuit over alleged ICE raid tip offs, but spared New York City Mayor Eric Adams.

On April 2, the mayor addressed New Yorkers following news that Judge Dale E. Ho of the Federal District Court in Manhattan, on behalf of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), had dismissed “with prejudice” [definitively] the bribery and corruption charges brought against him in September 2024, following a November 2023 federal probe into the campaign finances relating to his 2021 mayoral election campaign.

The mayor had consistently maintained his innocence. His critics allege the charges were dropped in exchange for his cooperation with the implementation of the Trump administration’s immigration policy agenda and maintain he is unable to avoid the alleged conflict by delegating his authority regarding the ICE office to Mastro.

The council members allege the ICE office would “undermine public safety in New York City by eroding trust between local government, including local law enforcement, and New Yorkers.” They also argue that the mayor allegedly never delegated the specified duty relating to the invitation to open the ICE office to Mastro, as required by the City Charter.

“Once again, this City Council is standing firm to protect the rights and safety of all New Yorkers against attacks by the Trump administration, because the city’s mayor won’t stop placing his own personal interests ahead of the people of our city,” said the council speaker, who is also running for mayor.

“Mayor Eric Adams clearly indicated his intention for this executive order when the Trump administration

attempted to dismiss his corruption case in what prosecutors and Judge Ho saw as a quid pro quo,” she said in part. “The mayor has compromised our city’s sovereignty and is now threatening the safety of all New Yorkers.”

The speaker alleged that [under the Trump administration], New Yorkers are afraid of cooperating with the city’s police, are discouraged from reporting crime and seeking help, and that this makes everyone in the city less safe. “This is a naked attempt by Eric Adams to fulfill his end of the bargain for special treatment he received from the Trump administration,” she said.

The speaker continued, “New York cannot afford its mayor colluding with the Trump administration to violate the law, and this lawsuit looks to the court to uphold the basic standard of democracy, even if our mayor won’t.”

The council alleges that on the same day the DOJ dismissed definitively the charges against the mayor, he met with Tom Homan, the Trump administration’s “border czar,” and expressed his intention to invite ICE onto Rikers via executive order.

Several top federal prosecutors resigned amid the push to drop the charges against the mayor. The council said that Ho, who reportedly declined to immediately dismiss the case, sought independent arguments and indicated that “everything here smacks of a bargain: dismissal of the indictment in exchange for immigration policy concessions.”

The Council also alleges that neither the mayor nor Mastro have claimed the mayor was walled off from the decision-making process about Rikers office and that “to the contrary, when asked, the mayor explicitly denied that he was ‘re-cused’ from the decision.”

An excerpt from the petition reads in part, “To assume, then, that federal agents from these [federal] agencies would limit themselves to criminal investigatory work if permitted on Rikers is willfully blind. Even if the Mayor and Mastro intend for ICE to limit its activities on Rikers to criminal enforcement, as permitted under the City’s sanctuary laws, once ICE re-establishes a presence on the island, there is no reason to believe it will not use the opportunity to supercharge President Trump’s mass deportation agenda.”

It continues, “Numerous experts have noted that the Mastro Executive Order gives ICE all of the tools it needs to carry out its civil deportation agenda. For example, Executive Order 50 contemplates the [Department of Correction] DOC intelligence bureau partnering with the federal government to coordinate investigations and share information, but once information is shared, it cannot be un-learned, the bell cannot be un-rung, and federal agents will be able to use that information beyond its

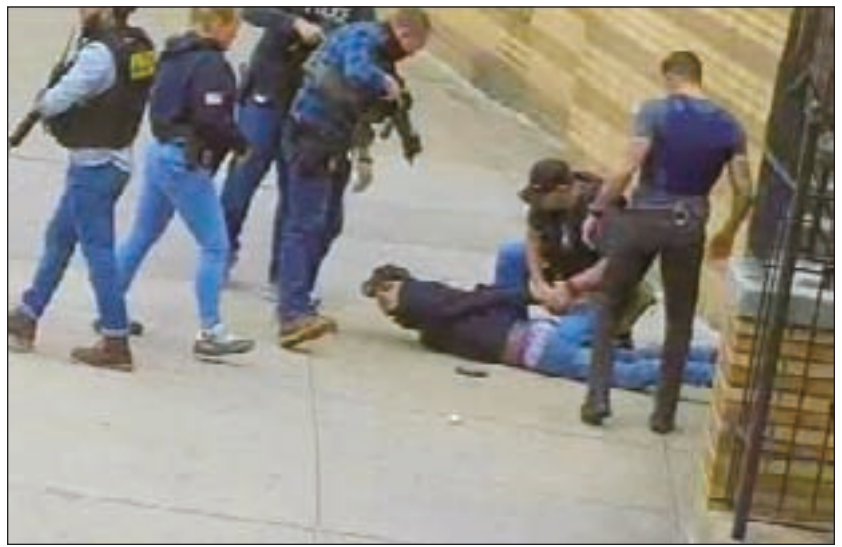


Photo by M. Quiñones

**ICE OFFICIALS AND** police are seen surrounding a man with firearms at 2914 Jerome Avenue between Minerva Place and East 199th Street in the Bedford Park section of The Bronx at around 3 p.m. on Tuesday, April 15, 2025.

intended purpose, including for civil immigration enforcement.”

Meanwhile, an excerpt from the filed petition reads in part, “Furthermore, ICE has long been notorious for sweeping unintended targets into its enforcement activities, meaning that allowing ICE back onto Rikers for the purpose of criminal investigation [...] is only a short and slippery slope to civil immigration enforcement.”

It continues, “In fact, ICE routinely arrests immigrants who simply happen to be in the vicinity of its intended target, despite lacking a warrant or even probable cause with respect to those ‘collateral’ arrestees. And it continues to do so in violation of a federal court order that limited this practice in 2022, but which it has flagrantly disregarded.”

The petition excerpt continues, “Indiscriminate removals harm more than just those who are deported, as immigrant New Yorkers account for roughly 38% of our city’s total population and often have a U.S. citizen spouse or children. And once ICE gets started, courts and City officials will be largely powerless to stop these harms from cascading. The impacts will not be confined to Rikers: enabling ICE to pursue its aggressive immigration on Rikers, [they] will irreparably erode the trust between local government and the New York residents that it serves.”

We reached out to City Hall for comment on the lawsuit. Press Secretary Kayla Mamelak Altus alleged the Council appeared to be spreading misinformation and said in part that the mayor “delegated all powers, responsibilities, and decision-making related to any action authorizing federal officials to investigate crimes at Rikers Island to First Deputy Mayor Randy Mastro.”

She said Mastro conducted a thorough and independent assessment, which included multiple visits to Rikers Island, conversations with federal law enforcement, the City’s own Department of Correction officers, and more. She said he independently concluded that a federal presence at Rikers is in the City’s best interest and protects public safety,

particularly in ongoing efforts to target violent transnational gangs now present in the city, including those designated as terrorist organizations.

“Cooperation with federal law enforcement, including the FBI, DEA, ATF, Homeland Security, and U.S. Postal Inspectors, will be expressly limited to criminal law enforcement investigations, not civil matters,” she said. “Executive Order 50 is expressly authorized by New York City’s local laws, the very laws enacted by the City Council.”

She added, “While we will review the lawsuit, this one seems baseless and contrary to the public interest in protecting New Yorkers from violent criminals. We remain committed to our administration’s efforts to reduce crime and keep New Yorkers safe — we hope the City Council will join us in doing so.”

We were further informed by City Hall that the City Council realizes the executive order, on its face, is consistent with local law and therefore, is, in City Hall’s view, engaging in speculation and surmise, which, according to City Hall, is not a proper basis for any lawsuit.

Several Bronx Democratic elected officials, as well as Bronx Community Board 7 (CB7) representatives, are encouraging residents who may be fearful of being confronted by ICE officials to learn and know their rights. Many local elected officials have palm cards and other documents available in different languages at their offices to assist immigrants in this regard.

On Thursday, April 3, the mayor [announced](#) he had dropped out of the upcoming Democratic mayoral primary and is now running as an independent, as [reported](#) by Politico.

On Wednesday, April 16, federal prosecutors announced that Ghislaine Barrientos, 37, of Mount Vernon, NY, a former corrections officer, was sentenced to six months in prison, to be followed by six months of home detention, for her participation in a scheme to accept bribes in exchange for smuggling narcotics and other contraband into Rikers Island jail. She had previously pleaded guilty to the charge.

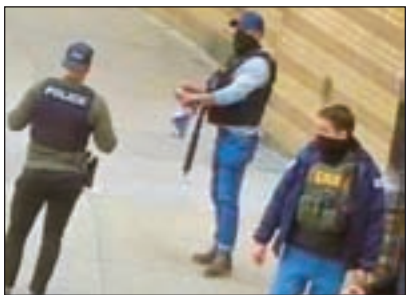


Photo by M. Quiñones

**ICE OFFICIALS AND** police are seen surrounding a man with firearms at 2914 Jerome Avenue between Minerva Place and East 199th Street in the Bedford Park section of The Bronx at around 3 p.m. on Tuesday, April 15, 2025.



# NEWS BRIEFS

By SÍLE MOLONEY



Image courtesy of NYC Mayor's Office via YouTube

**NEW YORK CITY** Mayor Eric Adams addresses New Yorkers outside his residence at Gracie Mansion on April 2, 2025.

## Mayor Cleared Definitively of Corruption Charges

New York City Mayor Eric Adams addressed New Yorkers on Wednesday, April 2, reacting to news that Judge Dale E. Ho of the Federal District Court in Manhattan, on behalf of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), had dismissed definitively the bribery and corruption charges brought against the mayor in September 2024. The charges followed a November 2023 federal probe into Adams' campaign finances relating to his 2021 mayoral election campaign.

A slew of top-level resignations from the Adams administration were reported around the time of the formal indictment. In February, the DOJ dismissed the charges "without prejudice," meaning they could have been brought against the mayor in the future. However, following the latest DOJ ruling, this is no longer the case. Also in February, former U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York Danielle Sassoon resigned seemingly amid pressure from U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi to drop the charges against the mayor. Adams has consistently maintained his innocence.

On April 3, the mayor announced he had dropped out of the upcoming Democratic mayoral primary and is now running as an independent. The news follows long-term allegations by the mayor's critics that he is beholden to U.S. President Donald Trump after allegedly striking a deal with the president for his exoneration in return for

the mayor's cooperation with Trump's immigration policy implementation.

## Immigrant Heritage Week Kicks Off

Manuel Castro, Commissioner of the NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA), kicked off the 21st annual Immigrant Heritage Week (IHW) with the theme "NYC: Built by Generations of Immigrants" on April 14. "Immigrant New Yorkers have transformed the city into a global capital of innovation, creativity, and progress," MOIA officials said.

IHW 2025 also kicks off MOIA's three-month celebration of immigrants, history, and contributions, with a focus on events showcasing the diversity of immigrant New Yorkers. As part of IHW, MOIA will launch a Language Access Campaign, encouraging all New Yorkers to seek services in their preferred language.

Castro spoke of New York City being a city of hope and a place of opportunity to reach one's own pursuit of happiness. "Each year during IHW, MOIA highlights and promotes city and community events celebrating the city's immigrant community that will run through IHW and the national celebration of Immigrant Heritage Month in June," he said. "We invite all New Yorkers to join us in honoring the legacy of NYC being a city of immigrants."

MOIA officials said that for over 400 years, New York City has been a beacon of opportunity, resilience, and multiculturalism shaped by the dreams and determination of immigrants from around the world. As the gateway to America, they said NYC has welcomed millions through Ellis Island and beyond, with each new wave of arrivals leaving an enduring mark on New York City's neighborhoods, industries, and culture.

On April 17, 1907, they said Ellis Island welcomed 11,000 immigrants, the most in a single day, and since 2004, MOIA has commemorated that date and the contributions of NYC's immigrant population by creating Immigrant Heritage Week. A full list of events can be found here: <https://www.nyc.gov/site/immigrants/about/immigrant-heritage-celebration.page>.

## FIFA Seek Volunteers for 2025 Club World Cup

FIFA, the international governing body for association soccer, issued a call on April 16 for volunteers in New York and New Jersey ahead of

the FIFA 2025 Club World Cup, hosted by the U.S. Those interested in participating are encouraged to submit an application on the Volunteers page at [FIFA.com](https://www.fifa.com) to be considered for volunteer roles.

The FIFA Club World Cup 2025 will bring together 32 elite teams from all six confederations, with the action set to kick off in New York on Sunday, June 15. A total of 63 matches will take place across 12 host venues all over the United States, culminating in a spectacular final at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey on Sunday, July 13, when FIFA will crown the Club World Champions.

## City Opens Third Composting Site in Queens

Responding to overwhelming demand and to record amounts of compostable material collected, NYC Department of Sanitation (DSNY) announced on April 16 the opening of a new compost distribution site in Queens. Beginning next week, residents can pick up a free 40-pound bag of compost from 77-28 19th Avenue in Astoria, in addition to existing sites in Brooklyn and Staten Island.

The Queens Compost Giveback Site will operate Wednesdays from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. beginning April 23 and running through Sept. 27. Residents must pre-register online at [nyc.gov/getcompost](https://nyc.gov/getcompost). Registration opens two weeks before each event.

## Foreclosure Rates Hit Highs in The Bronx

The latest PropertyShark foreclosure report of the broader New York metro area, including 12 New York and 12 New Jersey counties, found

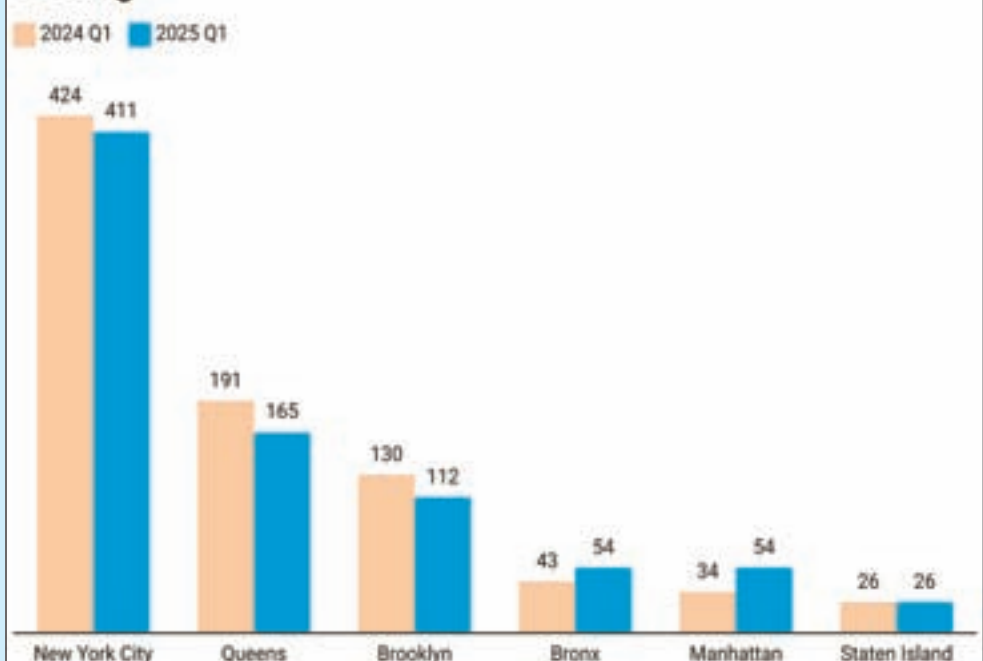
that even as Queens and Brooklyn first-time foreclosure filings declined 14% year-on-year, The Bronx and Manhattan defied citywide trends with foreclosures hitting highs not seen in years.

Foreclosure is the legal process whereby a lender can take ownership of a property and sell it to recover their outstanding debt, if a borrower defaults on a mortgage. The report found that The Bronx closed the first quarter of 2025 with 54 new cases, a figure not seen since the first quarter of 2020, while Manhattan's 54 cases represented an 8-year peak from the final quarter of 2016.

The report found that overall, the start of 2025 brought the slowest first quarter in five years as first-time foreclosures dropped 7% year-on-year to just 1,503 cases. It found that this was fueled by the decrease in filings in nearly half of metro counties, including in its four most active markets: Queens, Suffolk County, Nassau County and Brooklyn, which claimed 37% of the metro's caseload.

The report found that the Parkchester, Bronxdale, and Van Nest areas, zip 10462, was The Bronx's foreclosure hotspot with nine cases. Meanwhile, Staten Island remained flat, retaining its role as the least active foreclosure market in the City. Foreclosures of two-family homes in New York City surged to represent 37% of new cases, while the number of single-family, condo, and co-op foreclosures declined. Meanwhile, New York City commercial foreclosures dropped by a third, fueled by a significant slowdown in Brooklyn cases (-59% year-on-year).

## Manhattan & Bronx Foreclosure Surges Go Against Citywide Cooling



Source: PropertyShark • Created with Datawrapper

Image courtesy of PropertyShark

MANHATTAN AND BRONX foreclosure surges go against citywide cooling



## CRIME FILE

BY SÍLE MOLONEY



### Kingsbridge Heights: Male Suspect Sought after Slashing

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying the person seen in the accompanying photo above who they said is sought in connection to an assault that occurred in Kingsbridge Heights. Police said that on Sunday, April 13, at around 3.27 p.m. at the intersection of Jerome Avenue and West Kingsbridge Road, an unidentified person approached a 29-year-old male victim and slashed him in the face with a cutting instrument.

"The unidentified individual fled on foot, traveling northbound on Jerome Avenue," police said. "The victim sustained a laceration to the face and was transported by EMS to St. Barnabas Hospital in stable condition." The NYPD is also asking for the public's help identifying three people sought in connection to a separate assault (slashing), also to the face, that occurred on Sunday, April 13, at around 2 a.m., in front of 3391 Boston Road in Williamsbridge.

### Norwood: Two Sought for Robbery & Assault

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying the people seen in the accompanying photos at right who they say are wanted in connection with a robbery and assault that occurred in Norwood. Police said that on Tuesday, March 18, at around 2.15 p.m., inside 3459 Dekalb Avenue, a residential property, two people approached a 39-year-old male victim and demanded money.

"The individuals then began to punch the victim about the body and forcibly removed approximately \$70 dollars from his pocket," police said. "The individuals then fled on foot northbound on Dekalb Avenue towards East Gun Hill Road. The victim was treated on scene for minor injuries."

Police said the first suspect is described as male, has a dark complexion, a medium build, and was last seen wearing a black jacket, black pants, and grey sneakers. They said the second suspect is also described as male, has a dark complexion, a slim build, and was last seen wearing a black ski hat, a black jacket, white pants, and burgundy sneakers.



### Fordham Manor: Three Sought for Armed Robbery

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying the three people seen in the accompanying photos at right who they say are wanted in connection with an armed robbery that occurred in the early hours of Saturday morning, April 12, in Fordham Manor. Police said that on April 12 at around 2.40 a.m. inside the Fordham Road-Grand Concourse subway station, serving the B and D trains, a 21-year-old male victim was standing on the southbound platform when three unidentified people approached him.



They said one member of the group displayed a knife and another displayed a razor and demanded the victim's property. "The victim surrendered his wallet containing \$10 dollars, credit cards, and a debit card," police said, adding that the group then fled the station on foot to parts unknown. They said there were no injuries reported. Police said the first suspect is described as male, has a light complexion, and was last seen wearing a blue coat, a gray sweatshirt, gray pants, and gray and white sneakers.

They said the second suspect is also described as male, has a light complexion, and was last seen wearing a black

jacket, a black sweatshirt, black pants, and white and black sneakers. They said the third suspect is also described as male, has a light complexion, and was last seen wearing a black jacket, a black sweatshirt, black pants, and white and black sneakers.

### University Heights: Two Sought after Robbery and Assault

The NYPD is asking for the public's help identifying the people seen in the accompanying image on next page who they say are sought in connection with

(continued on page 9)



# CRIME FILE - MAJOR CRIME STSTISTICS

BY SÍLE MOLONEY



Patrol Borough: Bronx		Precinct: 046					
ComptStat Book		Week of 03/31/25 - 04/06/25					
		28 Day			Year to Date		
	% Chg	2025	2024	% Chg	2025	2024	% Chg
Murder	0.0 %	0	4	-100.0 %	0	7	-100.0 %
Rape	0.0 %	5	1	400.0 %	10	4	150.0 %
Robbery	0.0 %	20	28	-28.6 %	66	79	8.9 %
Felony Assault	0.0 %	70	64	29.6 %	211	180	11.1 %
Burglary	100.0 %	10	17	-41.2 %	33	61	-45.9 %
Grand Larceny	-30.4 %	52	59	-11.9 %	166	185	-10.3 %
Grand Larceny Auto	0.0 %	27	16	68.6 %	62	53	17.0 %
Total	-7.0 %	154	179	2.8 %	568	579	-1.9 %
Patrol	-2.4 %	179	172	4.1 %	556	562	-1.1 %
Transit	-100.0 %	1	3	-66.7 %	3	9	-66.7 %
Housing	0.0 %	4	4	0.0 %	9	8	12.5 %
Shooting Victims	- %	4	4	0.0 %	5	9	-44.4 %
Shooting Incidents	- %	3	3	0.0 %	4	8	-50.0 %
UCR Rape*	0.0 %	7	2	250.0 %	13	10	30.0 %
Other Sex Crimes	0.0 %	10	9	11.1 %	20	24	-16.7 %
Petit Larceny	4.6 %	97	97	0.0 %	256	266	-10.5 %
Misd. Assault	-16.7 %	67	60	-16.3 %	214	298	-28.2 %
Hate Crimes	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %
Traffic Fatalities	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %
All figures are preliminary and subject to further analysis and revision. Data Summary as of 6/13/17. Unless otherwise noted, crime statistics reflect New York State Penal Law (NYSP/L) definitions. * Uniformed Crime Reporting (UCR) Rape consists of all crimes defined in the FBI UCR definition of rape.							

Source: NYPD

**MAJOR CRIME STATISTICS** for the 46th Precinct for the 28-day period ending April 6, 2025, compared to last year (left), and year-to-date major crime statistics for the 46th Precinct as of April 6, 2025, compared to last year (right). This precinct covers some or all of Fordham, University Heights, Morris Heights and Mt. Hope.

Patrol Borough: Bronx		Precinct: 050					
CompStat Book		Week of 03/31/25 - 04/06/25					
		28 Day			Year to Date		
	% Chg	2025	2024	% Chg	2025	2024	% Chg
Murder	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	0	1	-100.0 %
Rape	0.0 %	3	0	- %	7	1	600.0 %
Robbery	-60.0 %	7	10	-30.0 %	29	46	-37.0 %
Felony Assault	-75.0 %	15	18	-16.7 %	55	44	25.0 %
Burglary	125.0 %	17	11	54.5 %	42	33	27.3 %
Grand Larceny	-54.5 %	35	60	-41.7 %	117	206	-43.2 %
Grand Larceny Auto	33.3 %	22	22	0.0 %	60	101	-40.6 %
Total	-22.2 %	99	121	-18.2 %	310	432	-28.2 %
Patrol	-19.2 %	97	116	-16.4 %	294	412	-28.6 %
Transit	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	2	0	- %
Housing	-100.0 %	2	5	-60.0 %	14	20	-30.0 %
Shooting Victims	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	0	1	-100.0 %
Shooting Incidents	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	0	1	-100.0 %
UCR Rape*	-100.0 %	3	1	200.0 %	8	5	60.0 %
Other Sex Crimes	-100.0 %	4	9	-55.6 %	9	16	-43.8 %
Petit Larceny	-36.7 %	72	93	-22.6 %	232	292	-20.5 %
Misd. Assault	12.5 %	24	29	-17.2 %	84	85	-1.2 %
Hate Crimes	0.0 %	0	1	-100.0 %	0	1	-100.0 %
Traffic Fatalities	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %
- All figures are preliminary and subject to further analysis and revision. Data Summary as of 6/13/17. - Unless otherwise noted, crime statistics reflect New York State Penal Law (NYSP/L) definitions. * Uniformed Crime Reporting (UCR) Rape consists of all crimes defined in the FBI UCR definition of rape							

Source: NYPD

**MAJOR CRIME STATISTICS** for the 50th Precinct for the 28-day period ending April 6, 2025, compared to last year (left), and year-to-date major crime statistics for the 50th Precinct as of April 6, 2025, compared to last year (right). This precinct covers some or all of Kingsbridge, Fieldston, Riverdale, Marble Hill, and Spuyten Duyvil.

# CRIME FILE - CONTINUED



(continued from page 8)

a robbery that occurred in University Heights. Police said that on Saturday, April 12, at around 5.15 p.m. a 68-year-old male victim was walking in the vicinity of West 183rd Street and Aqueduct Avenue when an unidentified man approached him and demanded his belongings. They said the suspect then stole the victim's bracelet, and as he tried to retrieve it, the suspect punched him to the left side of his head. They said the suspect then fled the location on foot and entered a



black Ford pick-up truck with a second unidentified male before driving westbound on West 183rd Street. They said the victim was treated on scene for minor injuries. *Anyone with information regarding these incidents is asked to call the NYPD's Crime Stoppers Hotline at 1-800-577-TIPS (8477) or for Spanish, 1-888-57-PISTA (74782). The public can also submit their tips by logging onto the Crime Stoppers website at <https://crimestoppers.nypdonline.org/>, or on Twitter @NYPDTips. All calls are strictly confidential.*

Patrol Borough: Bronx		Precinct: 052					
ComptStat Book:		Week of 03/31/25 - 04/06/25					
		28 Day		Year to Date			
	% Chg	2025	2024	% Chg	2025	2024	% Chg
Murder	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	0	1	-100.0 %
Rape	-100.0 %	3	5	-40.0 %	17	17	0.0 %
Robbery	-11.1 %	34	26	30.8 %	83	133	-30.1 %
Felony Assault	0.0 %	67	35	91.4 %	205	165	24.2 %
Burglary	400.0 %	19	6	216.7 %	61	48	27.1 %
Grand Larceny	-32.0 %	58	72	-18.4 %	211	201	5.0 %
Grand Larceny Auto	0.0 %	16	16	0.0 %	64	90	-28.9 %
Total	-11.8 %	197	160	23.1 %	651	655	-0.6 %
Patrol	-11.8 %	197	152	29.8 %	643	639	0.6 %
Transit	0.0 %	0	8	-100.0 %	8	15	-46.7 %
Housing	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	0	1	-100.0 %
Shooting Victims	0.0 %	1	1	0.0 %	2	11	-81.8 %
Shooting Incidents	0.0 %	1	1	0.0 %	2	7	-71.4 %
UCR Rape*	-100.0 %	3	6	-50.0 %	18	24	-25.0 %
Other Sex Crimes	300.0 %	10	10	0.0 %	25	28	-10.7 %
Petit Larceny	-4.9 %	140	132	6.1 %	435	530	-17.9 %
Misd. Assault	90.0 %	79	63	25.4 %	206	222	-7.2 %
Hate Crimes	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %
Traffic Fatalities	0.0 %	2	0	- %	2	1	100.0 %

- All figures are preliminary and subject to further analysis and revision. Data Summary as of 6/13/17.

- Unless otherwise noted, crime statistics reflect New York State Penal Law (NYSP/L) definitions.

- \* Uniformed Crime Reporting (UCR) Rape consists of all crimes defined in the FBI UCR definition of rape.

Source: NYPD

**MAJOR CRIME STATISTICS** for the 52nd Precinct for the 28-day period ending April 6, 2025, compared to the same timeframe last year (left), and year-to-date major crime statistics for the 52nd Precinct as of April 6, 2025, compared to last year (right). This precinct covers some or all of Bedford Park, Fordham, Kingsbridge, Norwood, Bronx Park, and University Heights.

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All coal and matches must be disposed of in designated red barrels. Flammables should never be placed in a regular litter barrel. Use water to extinguish hot coals. Improperly dumped coal or matches can do major damage to parks.



# Bronx Stands with DR

(continued from page 1)

Ricans as the largest Latino national subgroup.

Norwood News reached out to the responsible DR government agency and to the U.S. Consulate in the Dominican Republic (DR) for precise details of the accident, including the cause, if known, the number of people in the nightclub at the time of the collapse, the number permitted by law, along with other questions, but did not receive a response.

According to various media reports, those killed include merengue singer Rubby Perez, who was performing in the club when the collapse occurred, and former Major League Baseball players, Octavio Dotel, Tony Enrique Blanco Cabrera, and Nelson Cruz.

According to the NYPD, Gomez joined the department in 2004 and was promoted to detective in 2017. He had spent the last several years as a detective at the 49<sup>th</sup> Precinct located on Eastchester Road. The Precinct covers the Bronx neighborhoods of Allerton, Morris Park, Van Nest, Pelham Parkway, Eastchester Gardens, and Pelham Gardens.

During his career, Gomez had made 150 felony arrests and 319 misdemeanor arrests. He retired in October as a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade detective. Asked about his memories of Gomez, Pastor Jay Gooding Sr. of the 49<sup>th</sup> Precinct Clergy Council said, "As a matter of fact, one of my members, his store was robbed. He had a 99-cent store on (East) Gun Hill Road and Det. Gomez was the one who came in and investigated."

As part of the clergy council, Gooding Sr. often hosts "roll call" events at the 49<sup>th</sup> Precinct in remembrance of officers who die or are killed in the line of duty. "Down through the years, many times we did the roll calls, and he was there at many of the events we had," Gooding Sr. said.

He added that a public memorial for Gomez would be announced shortly.

Meanwhile, the Dominican American Republican Club invited the community to its monthly meeting and vigil prayer for the victims on Wednesday, April 16, in Allerton.

On April 9, Irene Estrada, a minister and spiritual advisor for the NYPD Policewoman's Endowment Association, visited the precinct and prayed with several officers who had worked with Gomez on the nightshift.

"All of the officers said that this detective had been at the 49 for so many years, that he had always been dedicated and very committed to his work and to his partners," Estrada said. "Everybody loved the way he worked and the way he carried himself; a man of integrity."

Asked how the Gomez family were doing, Estrada said, "They all went to DR to help find the bodies because at the time, they had still not found his body. They found his brother's body first. Yeah, his brother died too."

Estrada said of the officers who served with Gomez, "They were all taking it very hard and I was, like, wow! These guys are overwhelmed with the death of their friend, and they still show up to work and they've got to carry themselves like nothing's happened."

She concluded, "So I was there to comfort them and pray for them, and they were just sharing stories about him, that he was a man of integrity. They respected him, and [said he was] a good partner when he went out there in the streets."

Norwood News learned less about Manny Diaz, the second Bronx victim of the tragedy. Residents had set up a make-shift memorial in his memory, comprising candles and flowers outside 2310 University Avenue in University Heights on April 12.

One resident of the building told us older residents of the building erected the memorial after learning of Diaz's death. The resident said Diaz had moved out "many years ago."



Photo by David Greene

**A PHOTO OF** former University Heights resident Manny Diaz, killed in the roof collapse at the Jet Set nightclub in Santo Domingo, DR on April 8, 2025, is seen as part of a memorial outside his former home at 2310 University Avenue on April 12, 2025. It had been erected by some elderly neighbors and friends.



Photo courtesy of the 49<sup>th</sup> Precinct Clergy Council

**AN UNDATED PHOTO** of retired 49<sup>th</sup> Precinct Det. Enmanuel Gomez, who was among the 231 people killed in a nightclub roof collapse in the Dominican Republic on April 8, 2025, is seen on April 9, 2025.

the citizens are handling this very delicate situation. Today, more than ever, we are a family. Thank you, Jet Set"

Back in The Bronx, Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson issued a statement in remembrance of the victims shortly after news of the collapse broke and when the death toll was at twenty.

It read in part, "Our prayers are with the families and loved ones affected by this devastating event. This tragedy hit close to home, and we extend our heartfelt condolences to both the Dominican Republic and the community here in New York City."

After a prayer vigil at Lincoln Hospital on Friday, April 11, Councilmember Rafael Salamanca (C.D. 17), who is currently running for Bronx borough president, posted on X, "We reaffirm our solidarity with all of our Dominican sisters and brothers who are grieving this loss."

As the rescue efforts continued and the death toll gradually rose, several vigils were planned or have already taken place in the borough. New York Gov. Kathy Hochul announced that 13 State landmarks were to be illuminated in blue, white and red to honor the victims of the tragedy on April 14.

The same day New York City Mayor Eric Adams visited DR, along with NYC Department of Transportation Commissioner Ydanis Rodriguez, a former councilman who represented Washington Heights in Manhattan, a heavily populated Hispanic neighborhood. They toured the scene of the collapse, met with relatives of the victims, laid flowers, and offered words of support.

Laying a wreath during his trip, Adams said it was a symbol not only of his love, but of the love that the Dominican Republic and New York had for all those impacted by the tragedy. "I'll say it over and over again," Adams said. "I'm not just the mayor of the city. I'm your brother, and your brother mourns with

In the immediate aftermath of the tragedy, the Jet Set Niteclub management posted a statement on its Instagram page in Spanish. It read, "Antonio Espaillat, a representative of the Jet Set family, encouraged the country to stand with the victims and their families. The businessman found himself out of the country when this desperate, sad tragedy occurred and immediately returned to make himself available to collaborate with the authorities in the investigation and rescue efforts."

It continued, "Today, we would like to turn our attention, above all, to the families affected by the tragedy that occurred last night at Jet Set. There are no adequate words to express the pain that this event has generated. What happened has been devastating for everyone. We want you to know that we are with you, that we share in your anguish."

The statement continued, "From the first moment, we have been collaborating totally and transparently with the authorities. We are in constant contact with the Center of Emergency Operations (COE), while they continue the search and rescue efforts with the emergency teams, volunteers and employees from more than 22 institutions."

Another further section read, "As a family, Jet Set is with you. To you, the mothers, fathers, brothers, sons, and loved ones of those affected: they count on us. Everything we do now, every decision, every step has one purpose: to stand in solidarity with those in pain and to accompany them."

It continued, "We want to thank, sincerely, the president of the Republic, Luis Abinader Corona. His presence at the site of the tragedy was a clear sign of solidarity. We also appreciate the tireless work of the emergency teams, and the respect with which the media and



Photo courtesy of Michael Appleton / Mayoral Photography Office

**NEW YORK CITY** Mayor Eric Adams visits relatives of the victims of the Jet Set nightclub roof collapse in Santa Domingo, Dominican Republic during a trip to DR on April 14, 2025.

(continued on page 15)



# Deputy Bronx BP Resigns & Returns to Private Sector

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Bronx Borough President (BP) Vanesa Gibson announced on Monday, April 7, that Deputy Bronx Borough President (DBP) Janet Peguero resigned to focus on her family. The now-former DBP has since announced she has taken up a new role in government relations and public/ private partnerships with Constantinople & Vallone Consulting.

The announcement follows the filing on March 28 of a lawsuit by Agallas Equities, a Manhattan-based real estate firm, in which Peguero, Gibson, Andrew Kimball, CEO of New York City's Economic Development Corporation (EDC), the EDC, The City of New York, 8<sup>th</sup> Regiment Partners LLC, Maddad Equities, and Joy Construction Corporation are named.

The lawsuit challenges the integrity of the bidding/request for proposal process surrounding the redevelopment of the NYC-owned Kingsbridge Armory, as announced in January. The winning chosen developer was 8th Regiment Partners LLC, a joint venture of Maddad Equities and Joy Construction. Agallas Equities also bid on the RFP.

"It is with an emotional heart that I share the news of Deputy Borough President Janet Peguero stepping down from her position in our administration to focus on her family as a new mom," Gibson said. "Although this transition may seem sudden, it has been influenced by her deep love and commitment to her daughter." The deputy borough president gave birth to a baby within the last year.

The BP continued, "Janet has made an incredible impact on our office and The Bronx over the past three years. As deputy borough president, she redefined the role, overseeing key units such as health and human services, borough operations, policy, and community services. She fostered vital partnerships, supported economic development, and advocated tirelessly for our immigrant communities, ensuring they were heard, represented, and supported."

Gibson added, "Janet's efforts played a pivotal role in securing millions in federal funding for M/WBEs (minority and women-owned business enterprises) and empowerment zones, fostering greater community input and civic engagement from historically underserved populations, and advancing workforce development through the Hunts Point Forward Plan."

She said in addition Peguero championed what the BP described as "critical" public policy, and that her advocacy for improving maternal healthcare and her leadership in implementing parental paid leave policies demonstrated Peguero's "deep" commitment to supporting mothers and families in the borough.

"As the first Dominican American woman to serve as deputy borough president, Janet's leadership was grounded in equity and compassion for all who call the Bronx home," Gibson said.

The BP concluded, "As Janet transitions into motherhood, we express our

deep gratitude for her extraordinary contributions. Her legacy of dedication to equity, compassion, and excellence will continue to inspire our work in The Bronx. We wish her and her family all the best in this exciting new chapter, and I am forever grateful to call her my friend and my sister. Thank you, Madame Deputy, for your commitment and service to our team and to our Borough."

In the lawsuit, Agallas Equities said in part that key "revelations" in the lawsuit allege that "political favoritism tainted the process" and that Peguero [allegedly] "improperly participated in the process." According to a New York State Ethics Report for the filing period 2021-2022, and as reported by The City media outlet, Peguero was listed as a prior lobbyist for Maddad Equities.

While at least one social media post had been circulating online since March 28 that suggested Peguero had resigned, her LinkedIn profile had remained unchanged until April 11. Meanwhile, a footnote included in the filed lawsuit (complaint), and as reported by The Bronx Times, alleged, "Notably, Ms. Peguero is set to return in April 2025 to work as a lobbyist at her former employer, Constantinople & Vallone Consulting, where she will work exclusively on the Kingsbridge Armory project."

*Norwood News* had previously reached out to the BP's Office for a comment on both Peguero's employment status and on the lawsuit. We had also tried to reach the now-former DPP directly for comment.

On April 1, we received a statement from the BP's Office, saying, "It is not uncommon with large projects like this to have some litigation. There is a great deal of time and money invested in the bidding process, and only one applicant can be successful. Someone is always going to be unhappy. There have been no valid claims made involving The Office of the Bronx Borough President, and it is evident that the Office was named merely in an attempt to generate news and attention."

It continued, "The redevelopment of the Kingsbridge Armory is a long-overdue investment in The Bronx, promising thousands of jobs, hundreds of affordable housing units, and numerous safe community spaces. Attempting to obstruct this development for selfish business and political reasons is nothing short of disgraceful."

We also received the following statement from the EDC on April 1. "After a rigorous evaluation of all proposals, NYCEDC selected El Centro Kingsbridge's proposal, which is consistent with the values of the Kingsbridge Vision Plan and the requirements of the RFP," officials wrote. El Centro Kingsbridge was the name of 8<sup>th</sup> Regiment's winning plan.

We were informed that due to pending litigation, EDC was unable to comment further. The department reiterated that the winning "El Centro Kingsbridge" proposal exemplified the "Together for



Photo by Síle Moloney

**DEPUTY BRONX BOROUGH** President Janet Peguero (right) speaks during a press conference held inside the vacant Kingsbridge Armory in the Kingsbridge Heights section of The Bronx on Tuesday, Aug. 8, 2023, during which New York State Gov. Kathy Hochul and New York City Mayor Eric Adams committed to joint City and State funding to boost the redevelopment of the armory of \$200 million.

Kingsbridge" vision plan for the Armory and demonstrated the greatest ability to deliver on a diverse program. The doomed Kingsbridge National Ice Center was abandoned amid claims by the City of insufficient funding, though the developer in question disagreed.

Following news of Peguero's announced resignation, *Norwood News* asked for clarification from the BP's Office of its effective date. We did not receive an immediate response. However, after reaching out directly to Peguero again on April 7 to ask if it was true that she planned to return to work for Constantinople & Vallone Consulting and work on the Kingsbridge Armory project now or in the future, we received the following statement on April 11.

"In February, upon return from maternity leave, I made the difficult decision to resign from my post as the Deputy Bronx Borough President, so that I could pursue other endeavors that would allow me to spend more time with my family," Peguero said. "This decision was not made lightly, as it has been the honor of my lifetime to serve in this appointed position."

She added, "Respectful of the time it takes to transition from a public post, I committed to ensuring and executing a transition strategy over several weeks to ensure continuity of services. I thank the Borough President for her leadership and for the opportunity to serve the borough I call home, alongside the committed public servants of Bronx Borough Hall."

The former DPP concluded, "I am excited to rejoin Constantinople & Vallone Consulting now as their Chief Operating Officer. In this new role, I will be overseeing the daily operations and assurance of the firm's goals and long-term strategy. I'm looking forward to this next step in my career and the opportunity to be of service to the City in

a new capacity!"

We have since reached out to the BP's Office to ask who the new deputy BP will be and will share any updates we receive. We also reached out to Agallas Equities LLC for comment and Manuel Tavarez, managing partner for the firm, responded, saying, "Dominicans breaking barriers in leadership is worth celebrating, but Janet Peguero's resignation, amid corruption claims, isn't surprising. It's a wake-up call: representation must come with accountability. Our community deserves leaders who uplift, not undermine, the trust placed in them."

Tavarez has since advised that Agallas has filed a complaint with the City's Conflicts of Interest Board (COIB); and has received an acknowledgement confirming the opening of an investigation into the issue.

"We have spoken with several Community Board members who have expressed serious concerns about the Kingsbridge Armory project and its association with ongoing allegations of corruption," Tavarez said. "Given these concerns, they have reservations about supporting a project that remains under such scrutiny."

*Norwood News* reached out to Bronx Community Board 7 for comment. We did not receive an immediate response but will share any feedback we receive.

Joy Construction has an address at Fulton Street in Manhattan, and Maddad Equities has an address on Long Island.

According to the lawsuit documentation, EDC is a domestic public benefit corporation organized under the not-for-profit corporation law of the State of New York, with a principal place of business in Manhattan.

For additional coverage on this issue, visit [www.norwoodnews.org](http://www.norwoodnews.org).





## Letters To The Editor

**Editor's Note:** We reserve the right to edit letters for space, clarity, civility and accuracy.

### Broken Windows Policy Letter April 3

In an editor's note following a letter to the editor entitled "Bronx DA Has it All Wrong," by Richard Marias, published in the *Norwood News* dated April 3-16, 2025, Ms. Moloney references the website of the organization, Common-Justice, as if it is a neutral, fact-based organization. It is anything but. It clearly has an anti-incarceration agenda (with which I don't necessarily disagree).

The passage Ms. Moloney cites excoriates broken windows policing. It doesn't present a shred of evidence (for or against) to back its assertion. In fact, Common Justice mentions the very poster boy for Broken Windows: the unfortunate soul, Jordan Neely.

I believe it is reasonable to infer that Mr. Neely did not pay his subway fare. Had the authorities stopped him from entering the system (notice I'm not saying arrest or ticket him), Mr. Neely might not have been on the subway car and lost his life.

Richard Warren, with whom I've disagreed on these and other letters pages, posted a brilliant letter in multiple publications in support of broken windows. Mr. Warren mentioned the 49-year-old father of four murdered because a bar patron was blocking his driveway. The minor violation led to a much more serious crime.

I have endless respect for Sile Moloney. She is a thorough, fact oriented, neu-

tral, honorable journalist who has never failed to respond to private e mails I have sent her, has requested input when editing my letters, and unlike other newspapers, does not suppress her critics (as long as they are civil). But in this case, I truly must disagree with her choice of a source of information.

**Nat Weiner,  
Parkchester**

*Editor's Note: Firstly, I thank Mr. Weiner for his honest and kind feedback, and for all his letter submissions. [I also take this opportunity to apologize to anyone I haven't been able to respond to as I can't always do so. I wish I could.] To clarify, the purpose of editor's notes is not to negate, justify, or argue the content of any letter, since opinions by nature are subjective. Neither should they be taken as my personal views on any given letter [as my views are irrelevant].*

*The notes are merely intended to add some balance, perspective, context, and sometimes clarity to certain letters. We also have a duty to ensure that the opinions shared in the letters are based on facts.*

*Our disclaimer states that we reserve the right to edit letters for length, clarity, context, civility, and accuracy. It is sometimes cumbersome to do this within the body of a letter without disrupting its flow. However, as we also want to ensure readers are presented with additional context on certain topics, this is when we add the notes.*

*Our resources are very limited but in the case of the referenced letter from Mr. Marias, in addition to the referenced Common Justice viewpoints shared [for context],*

*I also included an NYPD-sourced table which showed citywide major crime stats over two decades so that readers could see for themselves the effect of the broken windows policy on major crime over time. [I didn't have access to the data prior to 1990 unfortunately.] We do not know if Jordan Neely paid or did not pay his fare on the day he was killed.*

### Let's Send Our Rikers Officials to El Salvador Prison for Training

I am very impressed with the number of prisoners in El Salvador prisons who are very well behaved due to the strict conditions put on their imprisonment. By making them sit in tight squatting positions, it takes all the steam out of their criminal personalities and allows rehabilitation to take place. Currently, in American prisons, and certainly in Rikers, these gangs are allowed to roam prison yards and foster a reunion party atmosphere from the streets. That must end with an El Salvador mindset by correction officials at Rikers, and it should start immediately.

**Richard Marias,  
Norwood**

*Editor's Note: Human Rights Watch investigated and reported on the conditions in Salvadoran prisons experienced by Salvadoran nationals deported by the United States. In interviews with deportees and their relatives or friends, HRW collected accounts, among others, of three male deportees from the United States who said they were beaten by police or soldiers during arrest, followed by beatings during their time*

*in custody, which lasted between three days to over a year.*

### Celebrating a Compassionate Easter

This Easter, let's celebrate with compassion by leaving animals out of our traditions. Giving baby chicks as gifts or using real eggs for hunts may seem harmless, but these practices often lead to neglect and suffering. Instead, try reusable eggs and plant-based treats that everyone can enjoy.

A vegan Easter is a powerful way to honor the holiday's message of renewal and kindness, while also supporting your health and protecting the planet. With so many plant-based recipes and ideas online, it's never been easier to plan a festive, cruelty-free celebration. Hop over to your local grocery store or co-op and discover all the plant-based items on the shelves.

Easter is about love, hope, and new beginnings. Let's make that message truly inclusive by choosing compassionate traditions this year. A quick online search will lead you to a wealth of vegan Easter recipes, tips, and inspiration.

**Niles Neusbaum,  
Williamsbridge**

*Please send all letters to the editor, along with supporting hyperlinked sources, to [norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org](mailto:norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org), or by mail to Norwood News, 3400 Reservoir Oval East, Bronx, NY 10467, by the Friday before each publication day. Letter writers should aim to write no more than 300 words on local issues or in response to published articles.*

# Opinion

## Executive Order Impact on Puerto Rico

by GENE ROMAN

Since taking office in January, U.S. President Donald Trump has signed more than 90 executive orders, according to the federal register. None has focused explicitly on Puerto Rico (PR), but many of them will affect the territory, perhaps even more than they will impact states like New York.

The nonpartisan Center for a New

Economy located in San Juan, PR, has identified three areas of particular concern.

Reconstruction funding through FEMA has been approved, but less than half of the funds have been spent. The federal government has already clawed back unspent funds in response to the pandemic. It could do the same with the unspent funds for the Island's reconstruction.

Cuts at the U.S. Department of Education are likely to hit Puerto Rico hard, since the territory relies more on this department than states do. Not only does Puerto Rico have higher levels of special needs students, but the Island also has fewer local resources than

states do.

The Medicaid program in Puerto Rico is especially vulnerable because the formula that determines the territory's payments from the federal government currently mandates that 83% of all Medicaid costs will be paid by the U.S. This percentage will decrease to 55% at the end of September 2027 unless Congress passes a new law to keep it at 83%. Roughly half of the residents of Puerto Rico rely entirely on Medicaid for their health care needs.

The report also references the pause in grand funding. While this freeze of funds is currently making its way through the courts, many programs have found that they cannot access the

funds they had been awarded. The thousands of government jobs being eliminated would cast workers who are either federal employees or the beneficiaries of federal spending into unemployment.

Broadly speaking, it's fair to say that Puerto Rico is more vulnerable than the states for two reasons. Puerto Rico does NOT have a voting representation in Washington, and the U.S. supreme court has ruled that Congress can treat the Island's 3.1 million U.S. citizens worse than the residents of states in all federal social safety net programs like Social Security and Medicaid "as long as there is a rational basis for doing so."

*Gene Roman is a freelance reporter based in The Bronx.*

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## Public and Community Meetings

The 52<sup>nd</sup> **PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL** meeting usually takes place on third Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. either in person or on Zoom. Call the 52nd Precinct Community Affairs office at (718) 220-5824 to be added to the email distribution list.

The next **BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 7 (CB7)** general board meeting will be held Tuesday, April 22, at 6.30 p.m. at Monroe University's King Hall, Mintz Auditorium, 2501 Jerome Avenue, Bronx, NY 10468. Contact [KCabrera@cb.nyc.gov](mailto:KCabrera@cb.nyc.gov) to be added to the distribution list. All meetings are in person unless otherwise notified by Bronx CB7.

The next **BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 8 (CB8)** full board (hybrid) meeting will be held in May. Contact [BX08@cb.nyc.gov](mailto:BX08@cb.nyc.gov) to be added to the distribution list.

The **BEDFORD MOSHOLU COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION** meetings are held the first Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. at 400 E. Mosholu Pkwy. South in Apt. B1 (lobby floor). For more details, please contact [bedfordmosholu@verizon.net](mailto:bedfordmosholu@verizon.net).

## Two Injured in Norwood Fire

(continued from page 4)

"During a fire, always close the door behind you!" fire officials say. "It helps contain smoke and flames, giving you precious time to escape." FDNY officials are also reminding drivers not to block fire hydrants to prevent delays connecting fire hoses to hydrants.

Photo by Síle Moloney

**FDNY MARSHALS ARE** seen inside an apartment at 3576 Dekalb Avenue in Norwood on March 28, 2025, investigating the cause of a fire which broke out earlier that day.



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- Interiors - Carpentry
- Sitework-Landscaping

Eligible businesses may need to demonstrate that they are responsible and have the ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of proposed contracts.

If you would like to receive the Bid Package, please identify trade listed above that you would like to bid for and email to Ana Lopez at [alopez@mdgny.com](mailto:alopez@mdgny.com). Please see the Bid Package Documents for more information.



# CB7's Chad Royer Continues Treatment for Multiple Myeloma

By SÍLE MOLONEY

Chad Royer, longtime member of Bronx Community Board 7 (CB7), and chair of the CB7 veterans committee, has been undergoing treatment in recent months for multiple myeloma, an incurable but treatable form of blood cancer that affects plasma cells in the bone marrow.

According to his wife, Kpana Kpoto, after dealing with debilitating back pain over the past two years, and on receiving the shocking diagnosis last year, Chad went from being an active father and community member to becoming bedbound for some time. Consequently, he ended up in the hospital before Thanksgiving and was diagnosed shortly after.

Royer serves on parent associations at local schools and has been a staunch advocate for U.S. veterans and for people with disabilities. Kpoto said he received weekly treatment for his cancer, which included chemotherapy and recently underwent a stem cell transplant, for which he is



Photo courtesy of Chad Royer

**CHAD ROYER, BRONX** Community Board 7 member, is currently undergoing treatment for Multiple Myeloma.

currently hospitalized. Chad and his family are hopeful that his transplant sends his cancer into remission.

Speaking to *Norwood News* in April, Royer said he was immensely grateful to everyone to date for their ongoing

support, is adapting to the latest stage of his medical journey which has involved the loss of his hair, and is feeling hopeful he will be home soon. He is documenting his journey via his YouTube channel, which he hopes people can watch to help raise awareness about multiple myeloma. According to Kpoto, he is also looking forward to going into remission and catching some Mets games this fall.

On Royer's GoFundMe page, Kpoto, who organized the fundraiser, said there are still many costs associated with Royer's illness. These include medical costs from doctor visits, surgery while hospitalized, and rehabilitation and home care, which includes physical and occupational therapy.

They also include hospitalization during his stem cell transplant, medication and transportation costs to

and from appointments, and other expenses, including the cost of food and comfort items to help him manage his intense treatments. "Every dollar you donate will bring us closer to our goal, which is to fight this cancer and improve Chad's quality of life," wrote Kpoto. "Thank you so much, and God bless."

Anyone wishing to donate can do so here: [https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-chad-royer-battle-multiple-myeloma?attribution\\_id=sl:8ce45fba-33ed-404f-bc49-2a4918961a1f&lang=en\\_US&utm\\_campaign=fp\\_sharesheet&utm\\_medium=customer&utm\\_source=copy\\_link](https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-chad-royer-battle-multiple-myeloma?attribution_id=sl:8ce45fba-33ed-404f-bc49-2a4918961a1f&lang=en_US&utm_campaign=fp_sharesheet&utm_medium=customer&utm_source=copy_link) and the link to Royer's YouTube channel is as follows: <https://www.youtube.com/@whatsupwithchadyroyer>.

Donors are advised that Royer will be the beneficiary of all funds donated and will have complete control over and access to those funds. Click here to learn more about Multiple Myeloma: <https://www.myeloma.org/>

## Bronx Stands with DR

(continued from page 1)

you. We pray for the families, and we pray for all those that are impacted. In New York, *mi casa es su casa* [my home is your home]."

Also, on April 14, Hochul joined Gibson, Dominican residents, community leaders, clergy members, and a host of Dominican elected officials representing The Bronx and Northern Manhattan at a vigil on Lou Gehrig Plaza in the Concourse section of the borough to honor the lives lost in the tragedy.

Those expected to attend or who did attend included Rep. Adriano Espaillat (NY-15), who represents parts of Northern Manhattan and the West Bronx, State Sen. Luis Sepulveda (S.D. 32), Assemblyman George Alvarez (A.D. 78), Assemblyman Manny de los Santos (A.D. 72), Assemblywoman Karines Reyes (A.D. 87), Assemblywoman Yudelka Tapia (A.D. 86), City Council Member Carmen de la Rosa (C.D. 10), City Council Member Pierina Sanchez (C.D. 14), and City Council Member Oswald Feliz (C.D. 15).

Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark was also among those in attendance, as was former Lt. Gov. Brian Benjamin.

Together, they delivered messages of faith, condolence and unity in remembrance of those who perished, including those from New York City. Gibson said the gathering was a moment of collective mourning, reflection, and strength in the face of unimaginable loss. Several speakers spoke from the heart, honoring the memory of the victims and offering words of comfort to grieving families. The event concluded with a solemn candlelit vigil, as attendees lit candles in memory of the victims.

"To our Dominican brothers and sisters, especially those here in The Bronx, which is home to the largest Dominican community outside the Dominican Republic, you are not alone," Gibson said. "You are our neighbors, our coworkers, our friends, and our family. We share your sorrow, and we stand with you. Together, we mourn. Together, we heal. Together, we believe that light will one day shine through this sorrow."



Photo courtesy of Irene Estrada

**MINISTER IRENE ESTRADA** (center) joins officers from the 49th Precinct at the precinct stationhouse on Eastchester Road after a prayer service is held on Wednesday, April 9, 2025, for retired Det. Enmanuel Gomez, who was killed in DR on April 8, 2025.



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