



**Brownsville
Hub
Cooperative**

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Brownsville Hub Cooperative Receives \$1.6 Million Dollar major investment from the Robin Hood Foundation to address economic mobility in Brownsville

Brooklyn, NY – The Steering Committee of the Brownsville Hub Cooperative is proud to announce the launch of its partnership after a 2-year community-facilitated process which included over 400 individuals, local businesses, and institutions (including economic developers, educational institutions, nonprofit organizations, and public agencies) through community convenings, surveys, and other community-led outreach strategies. Together, the cooperative will use a people-centered, equity-based approach to create a self-sufficient community that builds individual and community wealth through education, ownership, business, and workforce development.

With the support of the Robin Hood Foundation and JobsFirstNYC, the Brownsville Hub Cooperative is committed to providing training and entrepreneurship/employment opportunities to Brownsville residents for the purpose of helping them become financially and economically stable. Its five Steering Committee members, led by the Central Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation, along with Brooklyn Community Board 16, Brownsville Community Justice Center, Eleven3Seven5, and Youth Design Center are committed to building on the momentum of existing community economic strategies.

[\(Quote from Steering Committee members\)](#)

“The Brownsville Hub Cooperative is a collective movement that is long overdue. Brownsville residents deserve direct investments that support their economic mobility, and more. It’s time!” - **La’Shawn Allen-Muhammad, Executive Director, Central Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation**

“The Brownsville Hub is an imperative next step towards the economic growth of the Ocean Hill Brownsville community stakeholders. It’s a community-centered model where everyone is a member of the B’Ville Hub. I am excited about this journey as we are focused on providing tools that assist in elevating the community residents to their next level”. - **Anita Pierce, Principal Owner of Eleven3seven5, Host and Producer of the Brownsville Minute**

“Since 2008 members of the Economic Development Committee of Community Board 16 have been on a journey to achieve economic mobility for residents of Community District 16 (Brownsville and Ocean

Hill). We are proud and excited to take another step forward with the establishment of the Brownsville Hub Cooperative and grateful that Robin Hood understands our community vision for economic opportunity and is supporting this community partnership with a generous grant. This initiative is proof that advocacy, collaboration and a bit of hard work can bring our challenges to pass and make our dreams a reality.” - **Genese Morgan, Community Board 16 Chairperson**

“I am very excited to see the B’Ville Hub Cooperative take shape from the ideas and desires of the Brownsville community.” - **Ionna Jimenez, Associate Director, Brownsville Community Justice Center**

Youth Design Center is committed to providing best-in-class mentorship, education and career exposure to a growing number of members in our community, particularly youth. This investment by Robin Hood and the cross-institutional grassroots collaboration that it supports helps us to continue to build upon the valuable and necessary creative and tech workforce apprenticeships and creative services that we've offered in our community over the past eight years.” - **Quardean Lewis-Allen, Founder & CEO, Youth Design Center**

Brownsville, Brooklyn, was selected by the Mobility Learning and Action Bets (Mobility LABs), an initiative supported by the Robin Hood Foundation and other large national funders, as a community that could benefit from investment to create and implement an economic mobility plan to transform individual and community well-being. **Nonprofit intermediary JobsFirstNYC, was engaged to help define economic mobility, determine the existing barriers and help the cooperative to identify community centred solutions.** Brownsville, which is New York’s Community District 16, has a population of approximately 125,000. The neighborhood is one of the most economically disadvantaged in New York City, with persistently high unemployment rates, low local labor force participation and business ownership, and the second-highest incarceration rate in the city. These and other factors contribute to a median household income of just \$28,000, with over 40% of households participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, a shocking 20% living below 50% of the poverty level, and roughly 11% of residents lacking health insurance. In order to achieve neighborhood equity while faced with these challenges, the Brownsville community needs both public and private investments like Robin Hood’s to expand opportunities for businesses and residents. The Brownsville Hub Cooperative hopes to use this opportunity as the engine of a holistic plan to address many challenges faced by Brownsville residents.

“As someone who grew up in the Langston Hughes houses in Brownsville, I am excited to see the impact of Robin Hood and Mobility LABs investment in my home community. The Mobility LABs team has built a trusting relationship with the community and the progress we have seen to date is inspiring. I hope the work of Mobility LABs, as well as the work of other funders and partners in the community, continues to drive investment in the economic and social well-being of Brownsville.” - **Lori Boozer, Director, Mobility LABs at Robin Hood Foundation**

Over the next three years, the model for economic mobility in Brownsville will be implemented through the creation of the Brownsville Hub Cooperative (BHC). The BHC is a space where growth, innovation,

and healing are centered through interactions with and amongst community residents. It will increase and improve access to support services, increase economic and ownership opportunities for Brownsville residents, generate revenue as a community, and work to disrupt systems that contribute to a lack of economic progress. The model will also build individual and collective community economic mobility through five focus areas: (1) access; (2) ownership; (3) self-sufficiency; (4) youth development; and (5) civic engagement.

BHC currently engages community stakeholders via online digital platforms including The Brownsville Minute, which features local talent and leaders discussing a range of topics and concerns from the community. The goal of the program is to provide additional ways to engage, inform and connect community stakeholders. The program can be accessed via the YouTube and Facebook pages of Eleven3Seven5 and the Community Board 16, Central Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation, and Made In Brownsville. In addition, the Brownsvillebk.org website is designed to provide a centralized place for residents to find resources they need and for businesses to recruit and promote directly from the community.

The Brownsville Hub Cooperative is also happy to announce that it is currently hiring for two staff positions to support the partnership and is looking forward to announcing other opportunities at a community event this summer. Please see below for job descriptions.

The Brownsville Hub Cooperative was designed for the community and we invite you to become a member. Please go to our website Jobs Listing – OWN Brownsville (brownsvillebk.org) to sign up and receive more information about the services that we will be providing to the community. #jointhevillehub

Quotes from Steering Committee Members:

Quotes from BHC Advocates

Marjorie Parker, President & CEO, JobsFirstNYC

The Brownsville Hub Cooperative is poised to be an exemplary partnership that demonstrates how a diligent focus on identifying and systematically removing the barriers to economic mobility, can be a game changer. Programs like Brownsville, that are structured around community engagement have a far greater chance of providing self-sustaining solutions.

Alicka Ampry-Samuel, NYC City Council Member District 41

“The Brownsville Hub Cooperative’s partnership with Robin Hood is a well-deserved recognition of The Hub’s progress and potential. This transformative programming will support individuals and the broader community. I am looking forward to working with the Hub in this life-changing work.”

Latrice Walker, NYS Assemblywoman District 55

“The Brownsville Hub Cooperative is a welcome partnership in our community. Stabilization through economics in our community will yield ownership opportunities for Brownsville residents, generate varied avenues of revenue, and work to dismantle systems that contribute to a lack of economic progress that has stifled our community for years.”

Darma V. Diaz, New York City Council District 37

Yvette Clarke, US Congressional District 9

Zellnor Myrie, NYS Senate District 20

“The Brownsville Hub Cooperative represents an exciting vehicle for collective action and community wealth-building in a neighborhood in need of both. I am eager to hear of the BHC’s successes and lessons learned along the way.”

Lisa Kenner, NYCHA Resident Association President, Van Dyke Houses

“The Brownsville Hub Cooperative, will encourage, and empower the people in the community, to become financially and economically stable. This is the Rise and Shine, of the Family and the Community.”

Eric Adams, Brooklyn Borough President

“I have long advocated for enhancing access to technology as a means to achieve equity for those who are in need, in communities such as Brownsville, where so many live below the poverty line due to unemployment or underemployment,” said Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams. “The Mobility Learning and Action Bets (Mobility LABs) grant funding provides that access by supporting the vision of the Brownsville Hub Cooperative (BHC), a community initiative that would advance online digital platforms that support job training and business ownership opportunities to lift families out of financially-challenging circumstances, benefiting the community as a whole.”

Bill Chong, Commissioner, NYC Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD)

“As a proud native of Brownsville, I am excited that the Economic LABs project is positioned to deliver needed training and entrepreneurship/employment opportunities to the community. DYCD’s mission is to invest in a network of community-based organizations and programs to alleviate the effects of poverty and to provide opportunities for New Yorkers and communities to flourish. It’s in the spirit of these shared goals that we welcome the Brownsville Hub Cooperative as an effort to increase job training and business ownership in Brownsville and throughout the City. DYCD looks forward to seeing what emerges under the stewardship of the Central Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation in partnership with its collaborative partners.”