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Mural Unveiling on Junction Boulevard

Youth Artists Illustrate Vision Zero with DWI-Prevention Mural

On Food Bazaar Supermarket Wall

Mural Dedication Ceremony: Wednesday, September 3 at 11am

Location: 34-20 Junction Boulevard, Jackson Heights, NY 11372

NEW YORK, NY – Groundswell, in partnership with the New York City Department of Transportation (NYC DOT) and Food Bazaar Supermarket on Junction Boulevard, is pleased to announce a dedication ceremony celebrating the unveiling of a family-friendly mural, entitled “Hit The Brakes on DWI and Choose The Right Path” to educate New Yorkers the prevention of Driving While Intoxicated (DWI). The mural promotes the important role all members of the community have in stopping DWI and prepare youth participants with DWI deterrence strategies with the potential to save lives.

This summer, 16 youth participating in Groundswell’s Summer Leadership Institute (SLI) worked with Co-Lead Artists Angel Garcia and Olivia Fu as paid apprentices, to research, design, and fabricate this 20’ by 100’ mural on the wall of Food Bazaar Supermarket on 34-20 Junction Boulevard.

Featuring responsible drinking, “Hit The Brakes on DWI and Choose The Right Path” uses positive reinforcement to encourage every member in the community to play their part in stopping DWI. The slogan “Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over” is presented in both English and Spanish, demonstrating the in-depth research youth participants conducted on the neighborhood’s demographics. The family-friendly imagery with colorful and engaging visual symbols also reflects the youth artists’ efforts to effectively deliver the message across a diverse population and age group.

To grasp the impact of DWI on family and community members, community partner NYC DOT invited a former DWI offender on probation to share his experience with the project team. His stories, involving personal transformation after seeing the suffering caused by unsafe driving, inspired the team to incorporate the process of rebirth in the mural. As a part of the deference strategies, the design also incorporates a subway train safely delivering passengers away from the road accidents on the left of the mural to safe streets on the right.

“The colorful and welcoming public artwork perfectly translates the Vision Zero initiative into an inviting visual story for the general public,” said NYC DOT Commissioner Polly Trottenberg. “As we

continue to build momentum for safe streets, partnerships with organizations like Groundswell and businesses like Food Bazaar Supermarket are critical to our success.”

“The mural brilliantly illustrates the preventability of traffic accidents in a way that speaks to the families and children in the neighborhood. It plants an educational seed in an engaging and approachable way,” said Spencer An, President of Bogopa Service Corp. “Food Bazaar Supermarket recognizes the importance of the message the mural delivers and wants to share our responsibility as a local business by joining this community circle of DWI prevention.”

“Groundswell youth had a memorable summer job experience, participating in the completion of something meaningful for the community and becoming an essential part of this family-friendly mural on road safety awareness,” said Groundswell Founder and Executive Director Amy Sananman. “Our youth muralists are eager to share their learning with the broader community, including real life strategies for DWI deference.”

“It is amazing how children asked their parents to stop at the wall during mural fabrication, pointing at the images and asking us to explain their meanings,” said youth participant Cynthia Espinosa. “It feels great to see our design really capturing the attention of the people in the neighborhood with positive messages of collective responsibility coming across!”

Nationally, three out of ten people will be in an alcohol related crash in their lifetime. In a study published in the Journal of Studies on Alcohol (May 2000), a driver with a .08% Blood Alcohol Concentration can be up to 50 times more likely to die in a crash than if he was completely sober. New York State is recognized nationally as a leader in traffic safety and in particular for continual progress in reducing alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes and fatalities. Fines in New York State for alcohol offenses range from \$300 to \$10,000.

“Hit The Brakes on DWI and Choose The Right Path” is made possible with funds from NY STOP-DWI.

Major financial support for Groundswell's 2014 Summer Leadership Institute (SLI) is contributed by Altman Foundation, Brooklyn Nets, Catskill Watershed Corporation, Charles Lawrence Keith and Clara Miller Foundation, David Rockefeller Fund, Dedalus Foundation, EILEEN FISHER, Ethel and W. George Kennedy Family Foundation, Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund, Irene B. Wolt Lifetime Trust, Lambent Foundation, M&T Bank, Pinkerton Foundation, Variety The Children's Charity, and William Randolph Hearst Foundations, in addition to numerous individuals.

SLI is made possible in part by public funds administered by the National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts, New York State Office of Public Safety, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, New York City Department of Youth and Community Development Summer Youth Employment Program, New York City Department of Education, and New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

Groundswell is grateful to the Office of the New York State Attorney General; the Office of the Mayor of New York City; the Office of the Brooklyn Borough President; New York State Assembly Member Joseph Lentol; and New York City Council Members Brad Lander, Stephen Levin, Carlos Menchaca, and Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito.

About Groundswell

Groundswell, New York City's leading organization dedicated to community public art, brings together youth, artists, and community partners, to make public art that advances social change, for a more just and equitable world. This mural was completed as part of Groundswell's flagship program, the Summer Leadership Institute (SLI), which employs over 140 youth each summer as paid apprentices on mural projects that beautify neighborhoods and give voice to ideas and perspectives that are underrepresented the public dialog. To follow a youth-driven social media campaign highlighting SLI, use #GroundswellNYC. www.groundswellmural.org

About Food Bazaar Supermarket

Bogopa Service Corp. is a privately owned company that operates 18 full-service supermarkets in the Tri-State metropolitan area (NY, NJ, CT) under the name "Food Bazaar." For more than 25 years we have been providing our communities with the flavors they love and recall from 'back home,' exotic and unique foods as well as basic essentials. We devote aisles of space to international grocery and dairy/frozen items as well as a full-service fish market, a huge selection of local and international produce, a full service deli, bakery and custom butcher. With thousands of products waiting to be explored, Food Bazaar always provides a true culinary adventure. For more information visit the Food Bazaar website at <http://www.MyFoodBazaar.com>.

About the New York City Department of Transportation

NYC DOT's mission is to provide for the safe, efficient, and environmentally responsible movement of people and goods in New York City. NYC DOT's Office of Safety Education and Outreach runs programs and provides services that promote traffic safety for children, parents, educators, and senior citizens. www.nyc.gov/dot

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