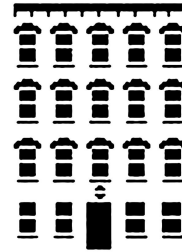


# East Side House Settlement

*Education, Innovation, Results*



## September 2016 News & Updates



### A Shining Star: Belissa Laureano

Meet Belissa. Two years ago, she was a student at a troubled high school whose prospects of ever graduating from high school were looking slimmer and slimmer.

Belissa struggled to meet academic requirements and failed the Regents exams multiple times. When she approached her guidance counselor and other school staff about getting tutoring, she found them to be unhelpful and aloof. Soon, she left the school.

However, Belissa had not given up hope. She searched for a school that could help her. That's when she found Alfred E. Smith Young Adult Borough Center (YABC). When she visited, she found the staff at Smith YABC were warm, listened to her, and genuinely wanted to see her graduate. They were quick to set her up with one on one tutoring and gave her the confidence she needed to pass her exams. She was back in the game!

While studying for her examinations, staff exposed her to new ideas and made her believe that she could graduate. They placed her in internships where she could earn money while gaining skills and experience. They also brought her on field trips to college campuses, encouraging her to begin considering her future.

When thinking back about her experience: ***"I'd really lost hope...I thought I was going to be in high school forever," Belissa recalls. "I knew as soon as I met the East Side House staff, they were going to help me pass these exams to graduate. They gave me faith and made me believe in myself a lot more than I used to,"*** crediting her College Advisor at Smith YABC.

Belissa graduated this past June and is now enrolled as a freshman at Hostos Community College. We wish Belissa, and the hundreds East Side House graduates like her, the best of luck!

Watch her interview on Bronxnet [here](#).

**National  
Family Service  
Learning Week**



This month, Members of Congress took a giant step in officially recognizing the benefits of family civic engagement in our communities by declaring the week of September 12<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>, 2016 "National Family Service Learning Week."

The concept of multi-generational service learning was studied and

developed by the [National Center for Families Learning](#) (NCFL), who also funds East Side House's Family Learning Program. The program, which targets newly arrived immigrant families with young children, focuses on using civic engagement as a means to boost a family's literacy skills while empowering them to be real agents of change in their communities.

Families who've completed the program express that they feel they have a deeper connection to their neighborhoods and have increased social networks. Families learn while garnering valuable skills and resources, making them more employable and better equipped to navigate their new home. A whopping 46% of participants in the countrywide program have gained employment or reported improvements at work.

For more information, [see press release](#) for details.



## Rocking the Vote

Despite making up over 30% of Americans of voter age, fewer than half of registered millennial voters participated in the last presidential election. Staff across East Side House's high school programs are looking to change that!

On November 8<sup>th</sup>, 18 year olds will cast a vote in their very first Presidential Election. With the big day just weeks away, our staff has been hard at work helping their students register to vote. East Side House is serious about getting its young adults civically engaged.

October 8<sup>th</sup> is the voter registration deadline and if you turn 18 before Election Day, you're eligible. Not registered yet? No worries-register [here](#).

## Dads Take Their Kids to School Day

September 20<sup>th</sup> was *Dads Take Your Child to School Day*, a day fathers across New York State brought their children to school.



At East Side Houses' partner school, Public School 179, over fifty Dads walked with their kids to school, joining them for a special breakfast and cheering for the camera for Daddy-Child portraits. Once the children went off to class, an East Side House staff guest-and father of two-delivered a motivational speech about what it means to be an active Dad in his kid's lives.

It was inspirational to see so many fathers invested in their children's education.

[Check out photos](#) from the day's event and don't forget to like our Facebook page!

## They're Ready to Run!



OFFICIAL CHARITY PARTNER  
**TCS**  
**NEW YORK CITY**  
**MARATHON**

In just five short weeks, thousands of runners will be hitting the streets of New York to cross a lifelong goal off their bucket lists: to run in the world-renowned New York City Marathon. To honor our 125th Anniversary, East Side House ends the year on a high note, as the first time as an official 2016 TCS New York City Marathon charity partner.

Six generous individuals with a passion for social justice make up Team East Side House, who've trained hard while tirelessly fundraising on our behalf. The runners- some veteran marathon participants, as well as first timers- will run the 26.2 mile course through the five boroughs, snaking through Mott Haven, mere feet away from East Side House's headquarters.

"A huge part of the reason I was so interested in doing this is because it was a way for me to give back to my community. I'm of Dominican and Haitian descent, and I love that East Side House has given me an opportunity to give back to Black and Latino students by raising funds that will help these young adults," gushed one of the runners, a professional in the field of higher education.

Stay tuned for details on [how you can join](#) cheer them on.

**Connect with us!**

