

# Neighborhood UPDATE



SEPTEMBER 2022

## THE MUNICIPAL HOUSING AUTHORITY FOR THE CITY OF YONKERS

### A Letter from Carlos Laboy

*Why do we Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month?*

As we celebrate Hispanic Heritage month from September 15 to October 15, I thought it would be a good idea to find out the reasons why we do it. To my surprise, the Library of Congress, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and many other national organizations wrote a beautiful synopsis.

“Americans observe National Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 to October 15 by celebrating the histories, cultures, and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central and South America.

The observation started in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week under President Lyndon Johnson. It was expanded by President Ronald Reagan in 1988 to cover 30 days beginning on September 15 and ending on October 15. It was enacted into law on August 17, 1988, with the approval of Public Law 100-402.

The day of September 15 is significant

*(Continued on page 2)*



### Hispanic Heritage Month 2022 – Unidos: Inclusivity for a Stronger Nation

National Hispanic Heritage Month traditionally honors the culture and contributions of both Latino and Hispanic Americans. The history and accomplishments of these groups in the shaping of the country are celebrated. Here are some notable Hispanics you should know about:



**Jovita Idár** (1885 – 1946)

Jovita Idár was a Mexican American journalist, activist, and suffragist. She used her father's newspaper *La Crónica* as a platform to speak out against racism and in support of women's and Mexican American's rights. Although the paper was

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## A Letter from Carlos Laboy

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because it is the anniversary of independence for Latin American countries Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence days on September 16 and September 18, respectively. Also, Columbus Day, or Día de la Raza, on October 12, falls within these 30 days”.

While all this information is essential to us, the transformation of the Hispanic Community in the last decade has been incredible; just in the Housing Authority, 64 percent of our residents are of Hispanic descent, and approximately 40 percent of our workforce is of Hispanic descent as well. Like the country, we have employees from Mexico, Peru, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and many other places.

Our community has grown, and we are active participants in our society.

I moved to the mainland US in 2010 from Puerto Rico, and settled in Yonkers in 2015 and was part of the most significant transformation of any Housing Authority in the nation.

Under the leadership of Mayor Mike Spano and Wilson Kimball, President & CEO of MHACY, we have renovated all our Housing units and will start the construction of a new building this fall. This will be the first affordable housing property built by MHACY in more than 30 years.

It is time to celebrate! Cual es tu historia?  
Celebremos Nuestra Cultura!

**Carlos Laboy**  
COO, MHACY

## Hispanic Heritage Month 2022 – Unidos: Inclusivity for a Stronger Nation

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eventually shut down, she continued advocating for the fair treatment of women and Mexican Americans.



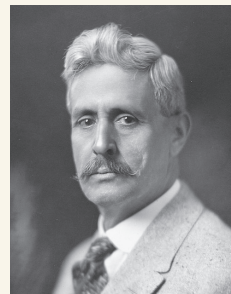
**José Andrés** (1969 – )

José Andrés grew up in Spain and came to the U.S. in 1991. After the earthquake in Haiti in 2010, he formed the World Central Kitchen (WCK) to provide hot meals to those affected by natural disasters. He served 3.5 million meals to residents in Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria, and also fed furloughed workers during the month-long government shutdown in 2019.



**Sylvia Rivera** (1951 – 2002)

Sylvia Rivera was a Venezuelan- and Puerto Rican-American who fought against the exclusion of transgender people, specifically transgender people of color, from the larger gay rights movement. She was actively involved in the Stonewall Inn uprising.



**Octaviano Larrazola** (1859 – 1930)

Octaviano Larrazola was born in Mexico and was eventually elected as the fourth governor of New Mexico in 1918, and 10 years later was elected as the first Hispanic American to serve as a U.S. Senator.

## Hispanic Heritage Month 2022 – Unidos: Inclusivity for a Stronger Nation

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### Sylvia Mendez (1936 – )

Seven years before the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education ruling, Sylvia Mendez was at the center of the Mendez v. Westminster case, in which her parents and neighbors fought against

segregated education for children of Mexican descent in Southern California. The case banned segregation in California public schools and paved the way for the national ban that would come. In 2011, Mendez received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Obama.



### Joan Baez (1941 – )

Joan Baez is a Mexican American singer-songwriter who became the moral center of the anti-war and social-justice movements in the 60s. She sang at the 1963 March on Washington for civil

rights; visited Vietnam during the war; stood alongside Cesar Chavez on strike for fair wages; participated in the birth of the free speech movement at UC Berkeley and rallied behind many human rights and social justice causes.

### MHACY's Own Hispanic Heritage Month Hero



CONGRATULATIONS TO  
MHACY Housing Supervisor  
**Jorge Roman**  
ON BEING NAMED A  
**2022 Rising Star**  
**40 under 40**  
by the Business Council of Westchester

We at the Municipal Housing Authority for the City of Yonkers know that he is truly one of the brightest and the best.

**MHACY**  
Municipal Housing Authority  
for the City of Yonkers  
mhacy.org

## Car Free Day

On September 22 going car free is a badge of honor. 511 Ride Share is urging MHACY residents to sign up and earn green points for taking public transportation, car pooling, biking or walking. Share your car free day photos on social media and tag 511NYRideshare using #CarFreeDay or #MyGreenTrip. Contact [info@NYRideshare.org](mailto:info@NYRideshare.org) for more information or call 866-NY-Commute.



## CAR FREE DAY SEPTEMBER 22, 2022

**Car Free Day** is celebrated on Thursday, September 22, 2022 across New York State—an international event celebrated in more than 50 countries.

To participate, take the pledge, and then go car free or car light on September 22 by riding a bus, subway, ferry, or train, carpooling, biking, walking, combining trips, driving an electric vehicle, or teleworking—it's that easy!

When you take the pledge, you will get recognized for your sustainability efforts and earn "GREEN" bragging rights for your organization!



Contact a 511 NY Rideshare representative with any questions or technical assistance requests at [info@511NYRideshare.org](mailto:info@511NYRideshare.org), live chat at [511nyrideshare.org](https://511nyrideshare.org) Monday thru Friday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. ET, or call 866-NY-Commute, (TTY: 711).

**511NYRideshare**



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**511NY Rideshare**  
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- Follow us on social media
- Stay updated on Car Free Day news
- Upload your Car Free Day photos and tag **511NYRideshare**, on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), or [TikTok](#) using [#CarFreeDay](#) or [#MyGreenTrip](#)



# Groundwork Hudson Valley and Yonkers Featured in National Geographic

Congratulations to our partners Groundwork Hudson Valley and the City of Yonkers for being featured in the recent issue of National Geographic.

The story highlights conservation efforts outside of protected areas and introduces the idea that species can be conserved on working lands and in cities. An entire chapter dedicated to Yonkers and partners highlights the daylighting of the Saw Mill River and the species that call it home. MHACY and Groundwork are currently working on an environmental project to remediate heat islands and flooding at various MHACY properties.

## A CREEK IN YONKERS

City parks are both an amenity for citizens and a valuable habitat for some species.

**EVER MORE THAN PARKS:** cities may seem like the opposite of "nature." They are places for people—lots of people. If you want big protected areas, then encouraging people to live in dense cities makes sense. We can charter like oysters, spending land for other species. And we can live more lightly, using public transit and heating and cooling apartments instead of houses.

But public urban density in the last would spare our parks, gardens, and other green spaces—places that clean the air, shade and cool, and encourage recreation. Research indicates the presence of other species makes us happy.



species in the past five years, from coagles and eagles to various other less previously unknown to science.

Groundwork and urban animals can be conserved through the creation of parks and wildlife sanctuaries that can exist for people. New York City's Central Park is a famous example, but because it's a haven for birds migrating up and down the East Coast, it's also a haven for the city's herons and ospreys. Groundwork is currently working on a project to daylight the Saw Mill River in urban areas around Chicago that is now filled with sewage treatment, and is being replaced by a new, more natural channel. Groundwork is currently working on a project to daylight the Saw Mill River in urban areas around Chicago that is now filled with sewage treatment, and is being replaced by a new, more natural channel. Groundwork is currently working on a project to daylight the Saw Mill River in urban areas around Chicago that is now filled with sewage treatment, and is being replaced by a new, more natural channel.

because they are completely transparent—no chain of command or hierarchy.

This project, initiated by community leaders, is more than 10 years old. It's a joint effort of Groundwork, the City of Yonkers, Groundwork, Yonkers Habitat, and the City of Yonkers. Groundwork is currently working on a project to daylight the Saw Mill River in urban areas around Chicago that is now filled with sewage treatment, and is being replaced by a new, more natural channel. Groundwork is currently working on a project to daylight the Saw Mill River in urban areas around Chicago that is now filled with sewage treatment, and is being replaced by a new, more natural channel.



# NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC



## GROUNDWORK Hudson Valley

# Crossing Guards Needed

The Yonkers Police Department is seeking applicants for the position of School Crossing Guard; the current hourly rate is \$20.

Interested applicants should contact School Crossing Guard supervisor Stephanie Waldie:

(914) 377-7394

[stephanie.waldie@ypd.yonkersny.gov](mailto:stephanie.waldie@ypd.yonkersny.gov)



@mhacyonkers

[mhacy.org](http://mhacy.org)