

MOVING ON UP

Brooklyn teens looking to earn a GED or improve skills on the job need look no further than the Sunset Park Alliance for Youth (SPA), an organization established in February 2009 in **Sunset Park** that offers young people ages 16-24 multiple opportunities to improve their lives.

Paired with an Alliance caseworker from their first day of contact, young Brooklynites can gain access to GED or work skills programs. SPA director Stacie Sanchez said, "Our case managers really get to know their individual clients. In fact, grants from JobsFirst NYC, the Clark Foundation, the Tiger Foundation and funding from the Mayor's Office of Adult Education allowed us to expand services, allowing case managers to actually accompany a client to make sure that the class or workshop is the right fit."

Not only are pre-GED, GED, ESOL programs and job counseling available, but young Brooklynites can also get assistance with housing, healthcare and psychological counseling. Alliance partner agencies include Center for Family Life in Sunset Park, Fifth Avenue Committee-Brooklyn Workforce Innovations, Lutheran Family Health Centers, Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow, Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation and Turning Point.

The Alliance is always looking for job openings for the young folks they counsel, so if you have a business that could use a skilled and energetic young person, contact the Alliance today!

The Alliance welcomes young people ages 16-24 from throughout the borough, but participants must be able to get to Sunset Park where the programs are located. For more information, contact the Sunset Park Alliance for Youth; 783 4th Avenue, Lower Level, Brooklyn, NY 11232; (718)788-2305, visit www.sunsetparkalliance.org or email them at info@sunsetparkalliance.org

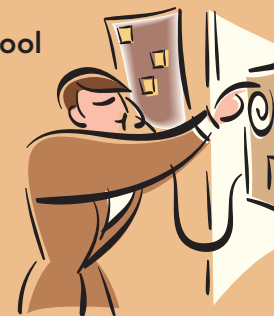


◆ Imee Hernandez, Alliance case manager, with client Martin Williams

PUBLIC SCHOOL PARENTS: ONE CALL DOES IT ALL!

One call to 3-1-1 connects you with public school experts and information about:

- Enrollment
- Transportation
- Admissions
- Any other questions you have about your child's public school education



The DOE's enhanced 311 service makes it easier for parents to get information and answers on New York City public schools, all by making one call. Hundreds of 311 representatives have been trained to handle basic education inquiries and the DOE has enlisted specialists to handle an even wider range of questions. Calls to existing DOE hotlines are now routed to the education experts at 311, who are all Brooklyn-based.

CALLING ALL POETS IN BROOKLYN BOROUGH PRESIDENT MARTY MARKOWITZ SEEKS POET LAUREATE



The Poet Laureate must be a Brooklyn resident with recognition as a poet and a commitment to promoting poetry and literacy in Brooklyn.

Applicants should submit 5-10 pages of their work; a two-page bio or resume and a cover letter that describes their vision of engaging Brooklyn communities in writing and appreciating poetry.

Mail to: Brooklyn, New York 11201
Brooklyn Borough Hall Att: Liz Koch
209 Joralemon Street or ekoch@brooklynbp.nyc.gov

THE LIVING TORAH

"We are the only museum in the world that allows you to touch ancient items," said Rabbi Shaul Shimon Deutsch, owner/proprietor of the Living Torah Museum in **Borough Park**. The museum has been open for eight years and was inspired by the idea that reading the Torah (Judaism's holiest text) is only the first step in understanding its wisdom. Deutsch's museum contains nearly a thousand archaeological artifacts similar to those mentioned in the Torah—everything from ancient coins to everyday household items. "I believe that if you touch history, history touches you," he said.



◆ Torah Animal World

Earlier this year, Rabbi Deutsch took the Living Torah Museum to a new level by opening Torah Animal World right next door, which aims to provide a zoological companion to the Torah. For example, the Torah has five different names for lion. And like many animals represented in the museum, there is a real, taxidermy-preserved lion. "You can't touch a lion in the Museum of Natural History," Deutsch proudly notes.

In addition to running two museums and presiding over rabbinical duties, Deutsch runs City Harvest, which provides \$5.5 million worth of food each year to New York's hungry. For him, museums are about providing intellectual sustenance. "I don't want people to just study words," he says. "I want them to be able to see, feel and understand what the words convey."

The Living Torah Museum, 1601 41st St.; Torah Animal World, 1605 41st St. All are welcome, but admission is by appointment only. (877) PLAN-A-TOUR; <http://www.torahmuseum.com>

DOWNTOWN BROOKLYN GUITAR HERO



◆ William de Pilar, master guitar maker

Roughly 20 years ago, William del Pilar, a guitar builder in downtown Brooklyn, went to sleep and dreamed of a magic sound. "I could hear myself playing, and it just sounded like the perfect guitar," he said. "When I woke up, I was frustrated, because most guitars don't have that sound." His pursuit of the sound of his dreams eventually led him to create a new method using wooden braces to support the guitar's body, which he says gives it a purer tone.

Del Pilar's road to Brooklyn began in Quebradillas, Puerto Rico, where his father, William, Sr., worked as a cabinet maker. During a bar fight in town, one combatant broke his guitar over another man's head. The guitarist asked the elder Del Pilar if he could fix his damaged instrument, and a new craftsman was born. He eventually moved to New York, and opened his own shop in **Downtown Brooklyn**. William, Jr., joined his dad in 1950, when he was six years old, and eventually took over the business.

Today, del Pilar is one of the most sought-after guitar makers in the world, with an exclusive clientele that is willing to pay up to \$4,500 for one of his instruments. Each one is custom-built—sometimes using exotic rosewood that del Pilar's father salvaged from the Columbia St. piers 40 years ago—and requires up to a year to produce.

Although New York City was once a haven for guitar makers, del Pilar is one of the few who still practice this increasingly rare art. "It's like a museum," he says of his shop. "I want to educate people about how instruments should sound." Who woulda guessed that this perfect guitar sound would come out of downtown Brooklyn, USA?

Del Pilar Handcrafted Guitars, 200 Atlantic Ave., (btw Boerum Pl. and Court St.); (718) 858-6564