

# SELF ADVOCATES NEWSLETTER

DON'T TALK ABOUT IT, BE ABOUT IT

## THE DREW BARRYMORE SHOW

BY JANICE MCPHILLIPS

My sister and I went to the Spring Gala for the Yonkers Public Library. There was a silent auction. I bid on VIP Tickets to the Drew Barrymore Show. I won two tickets!

Because of the writers' strike they weren't filming until recently. Me and my sister went on October 24th. They treated us very nice. Because we had VIP tickets our seats were really comfortable and even swiveled. They were close to the stage. They filmed two shows while we were there. It was fun to see them move things around and dance to the music when we were told to.

The big guest was John Stamos from Full House. He wrote a book about his life. When he came out to go to the stage, he shook people's hands. When he got to me I hugged him and he asked me my name and asked if he could go talk to Drew Barrymore because it was her show. I said yes but he should come back to me.

He talked to Drew about his new book and his 5-year-old son. After the interview I was surprised and shocked that John Stamos and Drew Barrymore came to my seat and hugged me. John even took a bracelet off his wrist and put it on me. They even took a picture with me. It was a wonderful and special day!

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Left to right: John Stamos, Janice McPhillips & Drew Barrymore

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## FRIENDSGIVING CELEBRATION

BY KENNETH YOUNGBLOOD



Kenneth (back row in green shirt) stands with friends celebrating Friendsgiving

On Friday, November 10th, my supervisor had a Friendsgiving Celebration at my job from YAI Group Home at 4pm to 8pm. We had Stuffed Turkey, Collard Greens, Macaroni and Cheese, Rice, Baked Ziti, String Beans, Barbecue Wings, Pecan Pie, Cheesecake and Pound Cake at the Friendsgiving Celebration. I asked my supervisor to call my friends and family to come my Friendsgiving Dinner at my job. My supervisor says yes! I met disabled people for Friendsgiving Dinner from YAI. I have a disability too, but my supervisor and coworker helped me to set the table and take care of our business. I was thankful to learn about cruise line vacation, overnight trip in Albany, family and friends, newsletter, training program, arts studio and self advocacy. My friends and family didn't come over for Friendsgiving at my job. Because they had a busy day. I posted my pictures on my Facebook for Friendsgiving Celebration from YAI. I was happy for Friendsgiving Celebration from YAI. We wish you all a Happy Friendsgiving Day.



## **19-YEAR ANNIVERSARY LIVING IN MY APARTMENT IN BROOKLYN!**

**BY ROBERT CARDONA**

On Sunday, Oct. 31st, 2004-at 2pm in the afternoon- I moved to my apartment in Flatbush, Brooklyn - under an agency called Job Path- an agency for individuals with disabilities that helps them find supported apt living housing, employment and recreation services. I have been living in my current apt. in Flatbush, Brooklyn for 19 years. 8 years ago, however, I almost came this close to losing my apt. The building management that was running my building at the time- along with the landlord- were going to kick me out of the building on account of the fact that the building management didn't want to rent out any more apartments to people with disabilities. But Job Path and myself, along with my former super in my building (who now only is my neighbor) went out on a limb to have me remain in the building. We mentioned about how I have been getting along with the neighbors and the tenants in the building and the good repertoire I had been having with them. I took the building management to court and the court trial was televised on My9 TV, ABC 7- even reported in the New York Times. My 19-year history in Brooklyn has been the best there is- I wouldn't trade it for any other experience I ever had!

## **DISNEY 100TH ANNIVERSARY**

**BY ORLANDO JUAREZ**

This year is the 100th anniversary of Disney. This company gives their support and thanks to the people who cherish and enjoy the moments that Disney has been giving them throughout the years, and it is also a way to honor the man who started it all, Walt Disney. It began in 1923 when Walt Disney began his company with his brother Roy. In 1928 he developed his first character that we all know and love -- Mickey Mouse. That same year he made his first sound cartoon "Steamboat Willie". In 1937 he produced his first color feature film Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.

In 1955 Walt created the Disneyland Park in Anaheim California for fun and smiles. In 1966 Disney himself passed away. But even though he's gone, his company continues to bring dreams and happiness to the world. In 1971 they opened the Walt Disney World Resort at Orlando Florida. The company also made other movies for the audiences. And now, 100 years later, the Disney company continues to bring smiles and dreams to this current generation.

**I'm proud of Walt Disney for his dedication and his dreams for bringing joy to people.**

To celebrate all this Disney made a short film with all Disney characters from then and now called "Once upon a Studio," and it took place at the Disney animation studios. I'm proud of Walt Disney for his dedication and his dreams for bringing joy to people. I hope that it will continue 100 years later to the next generation and hopefully The Walt Disney Company will find new ideas for those people.

## LYFT COURT WATCHING

BY MICHAEL HOWARD

Back in August I went to White Plains court watching for the Lyft Discrimination case against us people with disabilities. Court watching is to see what's going on and see how the case is going. The law firm is called Finkelstein, Blankinship, Frei-Pearson, and Garber LLP law firm. They're the ones who are doing a good job representing us people with disabilities to make sure we don't get discriminated against by the private cab company called Lyft. I'm not blaming the drivers, I'm blaming the head of the company. I found out about this through BCID—Brooklyn Center for the Disabled.



A group of people stand outside White Plains Court with protest signs about Lyft

## MY FRIENDS FROM MY PROGRAM

JENNIFER NAFTLOWITZ

We went to walk around the city yesterday looking at different types of stores. So we went to look around in the Hershey's store and everybody made like little goody bags for Halloween and then we went to the M&Ms store and we each brought some more candy. I brought some candy to give out to my friends. After that we went to Bryant Park to look around the Winter Village store for a little while because the staff was talking about where we should go for lunch.

Then we all went for Wendy's for lunch. So I had a small cheeseburger with french fries and a small drink. Plus the staff brought us some chicken nuggets. After that then we went back to the program and watch a Halloween movie called Hocus Pocus. Then at 3:00 after the program was over Rene and I met up with Quentin and we went over to our friend Robert Cardona's house for his Halloween Bash and we all had such a wonderful time meeting new people and getting together and listening to his records and eating and drinking. So our friend Allen went out and brought us pizza and cake while I brought cookies, chips. Rene brought over soda from the store. We all had dessert like more cookies and Allen had such delicious cakes with sprinkles on top. Then we all went home around 7:30 and we said goodbye and said thank you.



## TERRY'S BIRTHDAY PARTY

BY KENNETH YOUNGBLOOD

I went to Terry's Birthday Party at Robert's house on Bedford Avenue in Brooklyn at two to seven in the afternoon on Saturday, September 29th. Robert Cardona invited me for Terry's Birthday Party using my email address from YAI. Terry Bryant's Birthday is September 30th, he is 51 years old. Robert is the DJ Rapper. I asked my mother could I go to Terry's birthday party at Robert's house from YAI. Robert told me to bring snack, spoon, fork, knife, napkin or drink for his birthday party – I brought potato chips. I have a disability, but I did the karaoke dance at the party. I met my friends at Terry's birthday party. I was excited to go to Terry's birthday party and I had a good time at Terry's birthday.



Terry at his birthday party

## VANCE WALKER WINS AMERICAN NINJA WARRIOR

BY JANICE MCPHILLIPS



American Ninja Warrior Logo

Vance Walker, the 18-year-old winner of American Ninja Warrior, was diagnosed with cerebral palsy when he was a toddler. The doctors told his parents that he would need to wear braces on his legs for the rest of his life. Vance was bullied by his school mates. He worked hard not to wear braces anymore, but he stretches his legs for at least 1/2 hour every morning before he can walk. He is in pain a lot.

When Vance Walker saw American Ninja Warriors for the first time he said he needed to try it out. Vance did local American Ninja Warriors competitions and then made it to the finals of the national competition. He won season 15 and won 1 million dollars.

## BEST WEEKEND OF DOMINICAN BASEBALL YET!

BY ISMAEL NUNEZ

This past November 10-12, 2023 Citi Field, the home field of the New York Mets, in Queens NY hosted the first-ever Dominican Winter League (LIDOM) Series. The rival teams were Los Tigres del Licey and Las Águilas Cibaeñas. The event was billed as "Titans of the Caribbean." The series included the two winningest teams in the history of the Dominican Winter League. Parking Lots: 3:30 p.m.

Good news that the series took place in New York City where the Dominican population is growing, especially in Washington Heights, which is considered the Dominican Capitol of the United States.



Future Hall of Famer, former designated hitter/outfielder Nelson Cruz, was at Citi Field observing the game and was honored for his accomplishments. He'll be joining two other Dominicans ADRIAN BELTRE AND ALBERT PUJOIS who are destined for the Baseball Hall of Fame. Cruz stated, "The way the fans are reacting is great. We as Dominicans, we love the game of baseball. It's in our DNA. I don't think it's going to stop for now."

Other well-known Dominicans present were: Singer/Bandleader Wilfrido Vargas (composer of "El Africano"); Tony Peña, the five-time All-Star who took over as Tigres' manager in the last week. Peña had his warmup jacket zipped to the neck; David Ortiz Baseball Hall of Famer (2022) caught the ceremonial first pitch.

The Cibaeña Eagles would go on to win "Titans of the Caribbean" series, via a sweep, after defeating the Licey Tigers 9-6 in the third and last game that marked the closing of the exhibition event.

Despite all the excitement I believe that the series has three strikes against it.

**Strike One:** a real lack advertising. No postings anywhere, If one were to go to Latin American Communities here in New York City there were no announcements, the Latin Media Newspapers, Radio, TV. Nothing.

**Strike Two:** High Prices. The only method of payment was either by credit/debit cards and mobile payment (Apple Pay and Google Pay) at the cost of \$40/vehicle and \$80/oversized vehicle. One has to ask how much for the tickets? Pretty sure the price was above \$100 or more who knows

**Strike Three:** The games were not broadcast on TV! This is hard to believe. That past weekend there were over 10 College Football games on TV, Two NYC footballs teams NY Giants/Jets (both teams playing terribly) and they did not even show one game of the Dominican series! Hard to believe! Yet sad!



## ZOOM SUMMIT MEETING

BY ROBERT CARDONA

Last night I did hosting duties for the Zoom summit meeting!

As the new self-advocacy president for the Manhattan group, I met some of the other region groups who also want to begin new campaigns and fundraisers other than the yearly Central Park Challenges. I even came up with new recreation activities for all of the region groups to pursue- such as going to dance clubs, Broadway plays, etc.

I had to reinforce the guideline rules for the group. All in all I wasn't nervous, but this was my 1st time- not only hosting the summit meeting, but my 1st time doing it as the new president of the Manhattan group!

## HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

BY ORLANDO JUAREZ

The Hispanic Heritage Month or in Spanish “el Mes del Herencia Hispana” is an annual celebration that takes place from September 15 to October 15, and is to honor the culture, the contributions, and the achievements of Hispanic and Latino Americans. During the celebration, people enjoy moments like going to parks. I, of course, enjoy that moment by sightseeing in places like sunset park. For 30 years I have been around sunset park on Saturdays because that’s when it gets crowded during the weekend. There are also other areas that have those cultures such Jackson Heights in Queens, I went there when I was kid years ago. And Washington Heights in Manhattan where there are lots of Hispanic and Latino people including Dominicans, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, and Cubans - for the Dominicans it’s call Little Dominican Republic. It was the base of both a Broadway show and film call “In the Heights” which tells about a young man name Usnavi who was living in a Dominican community, and was chasing his suenitos which is Spanish for little dream, I believe that they are chasing their dreams and opportunities as long as they continue to work on their achievements as much as I do on my own.



Pictures around the city taken by Orlando



# INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SERVING LATINOS WITH DISABILITIES

BY ISMAEL NUNEZ

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The growing population of Latin America is growing each day whether here in the USA or in Latin America itself. Latin Americans should be aware and shouldn't be afraid to seek help if needed whether you or a loved one has a disability. This reporter has a list of some organizations around the world that can help.

The Latin American Network of Non-Governmental Organizations of Persons With Disabilities and their Families (RIADIS) is a network formed by organizations of persons with disabilities from 19 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. Formed in 2002, RIADIS represents national DPOs (Data Protection Organizations) as well as several NGOs (Non-government Organizations) acting as technical collaborators.

The Latin American Union of the Blind (ULAC) is a non-governmental and nonprofit international organization that represents Latin American blind and low vision persons. It was founded on November 15 1985, in the city of Mar del Plata, Argentina.

ULAC, "committed to inclusion," promotes and upholds the key rights and the independence of persons with visual disabilities. It encourages their participation and their political influence in order to gain access to decision-making levels. It undertakes actions to achieve a true and effective social inclusion.

UNICEF works in the world's toughest places to reach the most disadvantaged children and adolescents – and to protect the rights of every child, everywhere. Across more than 190 countries and territories, they do whatever it takes to help children survive, thrive and fulfill their potential, from early childhood through adolescence.

Latin American Disabled People's Project: Since 1989, LADPP has been providing services to Spanish and Portuguese speaking migrants and refugees living in London, with a particular (but not exclusive) focus on those with disabilities. They are a Latin American, user-led organization proud to serve communities from Latin America, Europe and Africa. Their website is [www.ladpp.org.uk](http://www.ladpp.org.uk)

On their website they proudly state "Disability Rights International is a human rights organization dedicated to promoting the rights and full participation in society of people with disabilities. DRI documents human rights abuses, publishes reports on human rights enforcement, and promotes the international oversight of the rights of people with disabilities."

They go on to add "DRI has found through its investigations that abuse against women and girls with disabilities - such as trafficking, forced sterilization, sexual violence and physical abuse - is rampant, especially when women and girls are locked away and forgotten about in institutions and orphanages." [website.end-violence.org](http://website.end-violence.org)

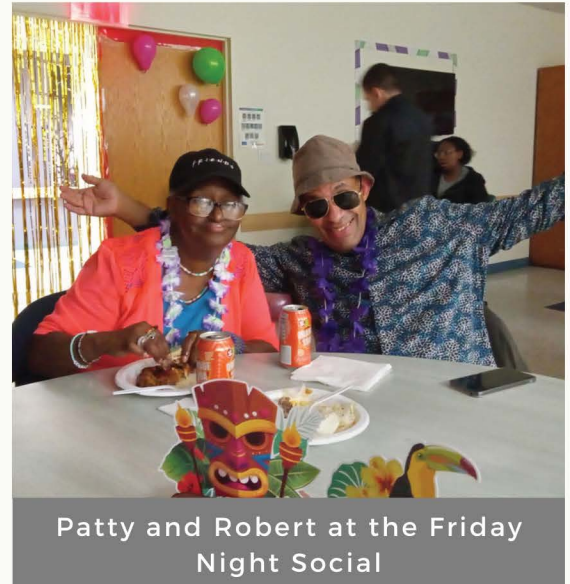


## FRIDAY NIGHT SOCIAL

BY KENNETH YOUNGBLOOD

I went to a Friday Night Social hosted by YAI Zerega Day Hab Program on 1241 Zerega Avenue in the Bronx on Friday October 6th, 2023 from 6pm to 8pm. I asked my mom, can I go to Friday Night Social in the Bronx from YAI? My mom says yes! But I have to be careful.

I donated \$5 to DJ Rapper, her name is Melissa. I called Bridget Butler from YAI Friday Night Social to come to the party at YAI. I have a disability, but I met my friends in Friday Night Social from YAI Zerega. I participated and watched my behavior at the Friday Night Social. I learned to bust a move, breakdance and rap dance. I enjoyed the Friday Night Social from YAI. I had a good time.



Patty and Robert at the Friday Night Social

## WARNER BROS 100TH ANNIVERSARY

BY ORLANDO JUAREZ

This year, Warner Bros is celebrating its 100th year anniversary for making tv shows and movies for friends and families of young and old. The company was created in 1923 by the four brothers, Albert, Harry, Jack, and Sam Warner. To commemorate them the company made a special episode of Teen Titans Go! with some of the characters from Warner Bros cartoons, shows and movies including Daffy Duck, Porky Pig, Scooby Doo, The Flintstones, and of course our main Looney Toon Bugs Bunny.

The Warner Bros company also supports people with disabilities, they even offer special programs and initiatives to any employees that has them, in fact they are promised to provide equal opportunity and equal access for the individuals with disabilities. Also, Teen Titans Go made a special episode with William Walter Thompson from the Make a Wish Foundation who also has a genetic disorder called Barakat Syndrome as a special voice guest. I'm really impressed with what they have done and hope they are still doing it in the future.

