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Communities collaborate for youth programs

By Alley Olivier

The call for action to save our communities from senseless gun violence has been answered by Monique Waterman, celebrating the official opening of East Flatbush Village center on Nov. 5 on Clarkson Avenue between Nostrand and New York avenues.

The space, donated by local Jewish businessman Yeshaya Wasserman — owner of SGW Properties — represents the commitment across communities to provide safe spaces for the youth to learn, grow and evolve.

Surrounded by her four children, mother, mother-in-law, and local officials, Waterman proclaimed her gratitude to all who helped bring her vision to life. “Today is a great dream come true; thank you to all of our supporters and to Yeshaya Wasserman for donating the space, having the vision, and sharing the vision with what we’re doing in East Flatbush and other communities,” Waterman said.

The center will operate a meeting room for youth to have access to workshops and technology, as well as resources for parents through a partnership with Affinity Health.

Councilmen Mathieu Eugene and Jumaane Williams expressed their excitement for the opening of East Flatbush Village.

According to Councilman Eugene, “This organization is so important. When we see the violence in the community we know the reason why. We need more organizations and more people to work together to invest in the resources for the young people.”

“I’m very proud of Monique and East Flatbush Village. I think a lot of organizations can learn a lot from them. This just goes to show what can be done if everyone works together,” Councilman Williams added.

“I want to thank Mr. Wasserman, who stepped up when a lot of people wouldn’t, for being responsible in saying that he has a business but part of that business is ensuring that there is a social impact in the community,” Williams said.

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During the congratulatory remarks underneath the blue awning of East Flatbush Village, Wasserman and his colleague Neil Stern expressed their thanks in being able to connect with Waterman and contribute to the project.

“I’m just proud to be apart of all the good work that Monique, Eric and Jumaane Williams are doing,” Wasserman said.

“I just want to register here today how inspired I am and how wonderful it is to be a part of such an amazing organization contributing to all the good things the organization is doing,” Stern added.

East Flatbush Village is open to serve the community, connecting youth with free or affordable programming to keep them off the streets.

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