



CONTACT: Beverly Cheuvront , Habitat-NYC
917-224-0969
212-991-400, x 344 bcheuvront@habitat.org

Sheila Stainback, NYCHA
212.306-3322 sheila.stainback@nycha.nyc.gov

ARMED FORCES VOLUNTEERS SALUTE FLEET WEEK BY PAINTING MARINERS HARBOR COMMUNITY CENTER IN STATEN ISLAND

Staten Island, NY, May 26 – Sailors from the USS New York, Marines and Coast Guard personnel participating in Fleet Week gave up some of their shore leave to volunteer with [Habitat for Humanity – New York City](#), brushing a fresh coat of paint on a community center at the [New York City Housing Authority's](#) (NYCHA) Mariners Harbor Houses in Staten Island.

The Fleet Week paint-a-thon is part of Habitat-NYC's Brush with Kindness neighborhood revitalization initiative, which includes a partnership with NYCHA to refurbish community and youth centers in public housing developments throughout the city. In Staten Island, Brush with Kindness is funded in part by a generous grant from [The Staten Island Foundation](#).

Fleet Week volunteers repainted a cafeteria and recreation room at the center, leaving it shipshape and ready for the children, teens, adults and seniors who use the facility. The center provides programs for both residents from Mariners Harbor Houses and residents of the neighboring community. The center hosts a wide range of services, including after school and summer programs for youth, arts and crafts, dance, cultural programming, games, gardening and a food program.

May 26 included a brief program, followed with a festive New Orleans-style jazz performance by the Navy NE Street Band.

Josh Lockwood, Executive Director of Habitat-NYC, said: "We are honored to partner with the dedicated members of our Armed Forces, NYCHA and and the Staten Island Foundation. We share the mission to ensure that all Americans live in safety and that our neighborhoods thrive. By working together, we will be able to transform more lives and communities."

"NYCHA is grateful to our partners at Habitat for Humanity and the Staten Island Foundation, as well as our Fleet Week volunteers, for helping improve the quality of life of our residents and the community," said NYCHA Commissioner **Margarita López**. "Brush with Kindness is a unique opportunity for our residents to be directly engaged in the beautification and preservation of their communities."

(More)

Betsy Dubovsky, Executive Director of The Staten Island Foundation, said: “The Staten Island Foundation is proud to support the Brush with Kindness work of Habitat-NYC in our community’s neighborhoods in need. Often funds are not available to make needed repairs or brighten the spaces where residents gather. Habitat brings in motivated, inspired volunteers to improve the lives of low-income residents by improving the spaces they need and use. A project such as Brush with Kindness meets our foundation’s interest in helping the least advantaged and increasing the number of volunteers here.”

Lt. Sarah Higgins, a U.S. Navy spokesperson, said: “Fleet Week New York is not only an opportunity for citizens to show their appreciation for the military, but also an opportunity for us to show our appreciation to the New York City community. Working with community service organizations is a great opportunity for us to give back.”

The [USS New York](#) was berthed in the Staten Island Homeport during Fleet Week. Built with 7.5 tons of steel recovered from the attack on the World Trade Center, the USS New York was commissioned in 2009 and is stationed in Norfolk, VA.

About the New York City Housing Authority

The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) is the largest public housing authority in North America and provides decent and affordable housing in a safe and secure living environment for low and moderate-income residents throughout the five boroughs. NYCHA has 336 housing developments with 400,000 residents. The Authority also administers a citywide Section 8 Leased Housing Program in rental apartments. NYCHA serves approximately 1 in 13 New Yorkers through its public housing and Section 8 programs.

About Habitat for Humanity – New York City

Habitat for Humanity - New York City transforms lives and our city by building quality homes for families in need and by uniting all New Yorkers around the cause of affordable housing. With the help of thousands of volunteers every year, Habitat-NYC has built more than 220 affordable homes in the five boroughs of New York City. Learn more at www.habitatnyc.org.

About The Staten Island Foundation

The Staten Island Foundation funds results for the local community, especially its least advantaged, in the areas of education, health and human services and the arts. Since its founding in 1997, The Staten Island Foundation has granted over \$43 million to local, service-providing organizations for the benefit of Staten Island residents. For information call 718-697-2831 or visit the Foundation’s website at www.thestatenislandfoundation.org.

About Fleet Week

Thousands of Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen from U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard ships will be in Manhattan for Fleet Week New York, May 25 - June 1. Hosted nearly every year since 1984, Fleet Week New York is the City's celebration of the sea services. This annual event also provides an opportunity for the citizens of New York City and the surrounding Tri-State area to meet Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen, as well as witness first hand the latest capabilities of today's Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard Team. Fleet Week includes dozens of military demonstrations and displays throughout the week, as well as public visitation of many of the participating ships.

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