BloomAgainBklyn

NewsInBloom

Winter 2021

In this Winter 2021 edition of News in Bloom we are pleased to share new initiatives and program updates:

- recognizing the commitment of essential workers including teachers, nurses and front-liners
- planning a new initiative with an affordable housing developer
- adding wonderful new floral partners
- finding new life for silk flowers
- how to connect with us on BloomZoom

Enjoy!

BloomAgainBklyn Salutes PS 29 Teachers and Staff with Donated Flowers from Bombas Photo Shoot and Winston Flowers

BloomAgainBklyn volunteers said “thank you” to the teachers at PS 29 in February with brilliantly-colored arrangements from flowers donated by Bombas–the give-back sock company that donates one pair of socks to the homeless for every one pair bought by their customers, and by Winston Flowers, one of our newest and generous floral partners. Arrangements were presented to over 75 teachers and staff at PS 29 elementary school in Cobble Hill in keeping with Bombas, Winston Flowers and BloomAgainBklyn’s shared mission to give back to the community. Winston’s upcycled flowers were also distributed to over 200 food pantry recipients in East New York.

BloomAgainBklyn Partners with CAMBA Housing Ventures in Affordable Housing and Community Center Development

CAMBA

BloomAgainBklyn will be participating in CAMBA Housing Ventures 300-unit affordable housing complex to be built in Flatbush and expected to be completed in 2024. **CAMBA Housing Ventures** is an award-winning, sustainable, and affordable housing developer throughout Brooklyn and New York City, and is part of **CAMBA**, a leading provider of community-based services. BloomAgainBklyn has been asked to develop a program that utilizes youth volunteers living in the housing complex to deliver flower arrangements to in-need populations including those at the nearby hospitals–Kings County and SUNY Downstate. The project also envisions creating an urban garden from which the flowers will be grown, cut, and arranged for the development's residents by the young gardeners.

Successful Year-End Fundraising Campaign

Thanks to our loyal supporters and committed board members, BloomAgainBklyn's 2020 year-end fundraising campaign exceeded expectations raising more than $52,000 in individual donations. We are grateful to our repeat donors and the new contributors who joined us this year.

Foundation Support Grows in 2021

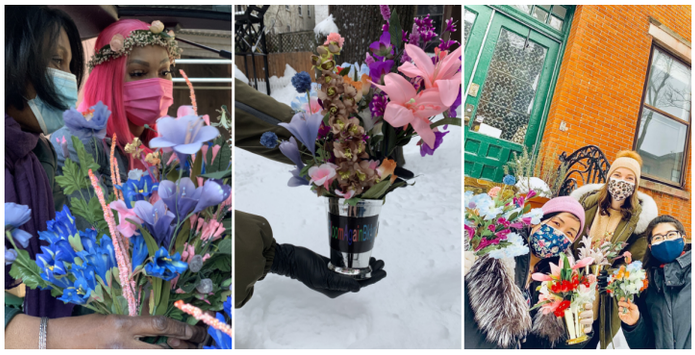
The **Herman Goldman Foundation** awarded BloomAgainBklyn a grant in January 2021. The Goldman foundation has provided BloomAgainBklyn with financial support for four years running with this year's grant being the largest to date.

The **Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation** awarded BloomAgainBklyn a grant to implement a 2021 program for "Addressing Isolation and Loneliness Through Flowers in a Restricted COVID Environment." This is the third year that BloomAgainBklyn has received a Samuels Foundation grant to support our upcycled flower visits and community workshops for the older adult population.

New Floral Partners

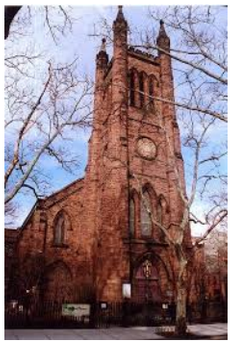
This fall, BloomAgainBklyn acquired new floral partners including four prime florists and design/event firms: **Winston Flowers**, with locations in the Boston area, Greenwich, CT, and Long Island City; **Morgan and Grand Flowers** based in Williamsburg, Brooklyn; **Ron Hansford Design** in Manhattan; and **Villaneuva Designs**, based in the city's Flower District. Having these talented floral designers on board has greatly enhanced BloomAgainBklyn's weekly donations with extraordinary long-stem roses, other spectacular blooms, and floral materials.

Extraordinary Silk Flowers Come to Brooklyn



A new medium for BloomAgainBklyn, volunteers are now learning silk skills! Recently, **Charles Lubin Company**, importers of silk flowers dating back to 1900, reached out to BloomAgainBklyn to bring their flowers new life, so to speak. They have donated thousands of elegant silk flowers–the very finest imported from Europe and Asia. Now, silk floral arrangements are regularly going out for distribution, alongside fresh flowers, for recipients to keep and brighten their days for good. Silk flowers open up opportunities for new children's projects including potential floral workshops with public schools in Brooklyn.

Replanted



BloomAgainBklyn was able to "plant" itself once again by moving into a new workspace at Christ Church in Cobble Hill. While we miss our old home base at Plymouth Church and hope to be back one day, the generously donated space at Christ Church enables us to conduct weekly sessions with COVID compliance safety guidelines in place for our volunteers. BloomAgainBklyn has been conducting socially distanced flower arranging since last June in outdoor spaces in local parks, on brownstone steps, in parking lots and on Governors Island at the **GrowNYC Teaching Garden**.

New and Old Community Partners

NYU Langone Emergency Room is a newer community partner which was introduced to BloomAgainBklyn by the local Kitchen Sink Band who regularly cheer, play, and hurrah for both the front-liners at Cobble Hill Health Care and NYU Langone for their evening shift change. BloomAgainBklyn has been distributing arrangements, bouquets, and plants for the frontline workers.

For the Thanksgiving holiday, BloomAgainBklyn joined with longtime community partner **Heights and Hills** to distribute flowers. Heights and Hills provided the meals to their network of homebound residents and BloomAgainBklyn naturally supplied the flowers to accompany those meals and bring a little added holiday cheer. Several recipients reached out to us, just to let us know how much brighter it made their holiday because once the meal was gone, the flowers were still there to bring them cheer. Mission accomplished.

During the worst of the pandemic, BloomAgainBklyn found ways to support the **YWCA Brooklyn** with floral collage prints, latex gloves, and holiday cards to their hundreds of residents. Now we are back distributing fresh upcycled flowers and silk flower arrangements.

BloomAgainBklyn has resumed floral donations to **Congregational Nursing Home** in Crown Heights once again on a monthly basis, with some additional bouquets going specifically to their frontline workers.

Longtime partner **Cobble Hill Health Center**, recipient of floral arrangements for residents and staff, was also provided with a regular donation of hand tied bouquets for their frontline workers in appreciation of the work they do.

Little Brothers–Friends of the Elderly and **Sisters with Purpose** food pantry, both steady community partners, received extra floral arrangements for the holidays in addition to a pastel of mini pumpkins for Thanksgiving, a supply of masks and holiday cards. Now additional fresh flowers and silk flower arrangements and plants are also being distributed.

Bonus Blooms

A little something sweet: BloomAgainBklyn partnered with Amelia Swanigan, founder of sugarmee cookies, to provide festive treats to residents and front-line workers with gorgeously decorated holiday handmade chocolates to our

community partners.

A little something safe: BloomAgainBklyn was fortunate to partner with Benita Sedoc, founder and CEO of DesignStudio7, an independent luxury footwear and small leather goods brand, and most recently a maker of custom masks. DS7 created beautiful floral-print masks out of fine fabric from Liberty London and partnered with BloomAgainBklyn on a limited edition of masks. For each mask purchased, one mask was donated to BloomAgainBklyn for a community partner.

Illustrations ©2020 Becky Lewis

BloomZoom Connect

Since the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020, BloomAgainBklyn has connected with its volunteers, donors and partners through BloomZoom–a weekly virtual platform that brought the BloomAgainBklyn team together to support each other and find creative ways to work with our community partners. Over time, BloomZoom has become an important channel for people to share individual expertise with presentations that have taken us around the world, into our own kitchens and to a designer's studio, in addition to unique floral demonstrations.

Here is a glimpse at what BloomZoom has lined-up for March and past presentations over the last few months. Sign up using this link.

BloomZoom Lineup for March 2021

March 1

Noted photographer Randy Matusow kicked off our series celebrating women photographers for Women's History Month on March 1. Randy's work, which has been widely exhibited, can be found in the permanent collections of the Brooklyn Museum, The Museum of the City of New York, and the Museum of Contemporary Photography in Chicago. Her photographs have appeared in numerous magazines including *Esquire*, *Forbes*, *Fortune*, and *The New York Times*. She is a professor of photography at City College and Manhattanvile College.

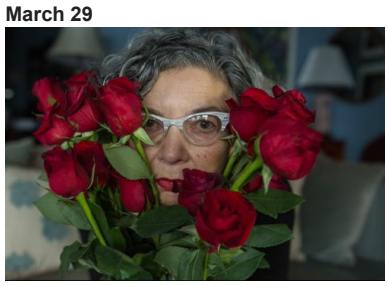
March 8

Artist Ken Rush presenting his current exhibit–Poolside. Ken is a painter, teacher and children's book author and illustrator. His art reflects his lifelong attachments to the Vermont landscape and to NYC which are constants in his work. Ken is also widely revered as a longtime art teacher at Packer Collegiate Institute where he introduced the world of art to many appreciative young students and aspiring artists.

March 15

Cooking with Jennifer Vastola–Soups & Savories. Jennifer is an accomplished, professional chef and caterer in Brooklyn and upstate New York in the Catskills. Her extraordinary talents were on full display at BloomAgainBklyn's “Spring Fling” event in May 2019 where over 250 guests had the opportunity to enjoy her amazing culinary creations.

March 29



Photographer Susan Rosenberg Jones will close out our series for Women’s History Month with a presentation of her work which touches on recognizable human emotions. Susan is an award-winning photographer whose artistic practice explores themes of family, identity, aging, love, and relationships. Her work has been featured in the Boston Globe, Slate.com, Lenscratch, Float Magazine, The American Scholar and TribecaCitizen. She has been recognized in the 2020 and 2019 Critical Mass Top 200.

Recent BloomZoom Presentations

In December 2020, **Jennifer Vastola**, professional chef and caterer, and her daughter Jesse presented a cooking class–“Make Your Vegetables Work for You: Steamed, Roasted, and Stir Fried.” And **Lisa Oberholzer-Gee**, a noted European-style floral designer and lecturer, presented a festive Holiday Floral Designs Demo to finish the year on a high and informative note! In January 2021, **Jackie Schaldjian**, world traveler and talented photographer, took us on a visit to Abu Dhabi in pictures. This month, in February 2021, BloomAgainBlyn was taken by **Benita Sedoc**, founder and CEO of Design Studio 7 on a special tour of her studio and recounted to us her designer journey! **Lisa Oberholzer-Gee** presented a crafty and creative Valentine’s Day Floral Designs Demo to get us in the mood.

Of special note: BloomAgainBklyn Founder **Caroline Anderson** made a virtual presentation to more than 65 members of the North County Garden Club on Long Island and affiliated New York State garden club members accompanied by **Veronica Kaninska**, who is an Instructor of Recreation Therapy at St. Joseph’s College in Brooklyn. They discussed how BloomAgainBlyn upcycles, refurbishes, arranges, and distributes floral arrangements to our community partners that include homebound seniors, residents at health centers and nursing homes, former trauma survivors and homeless victims, and to the front liners who serve them all.

In late February, **Cristian Gilces**, a junior at John Bowne High School in Queens, brought his agricultural experience in the fields of farming, houseplant and animal care to the BloomZoom community. Cristian serves as an officer for school’s Future Farmers of America Chapter.

And stay Bloom Connect-ed for more!

BloomAgainBklyn Combatting Loneliness and Isolation

Many studies and recent articles have addressed the adverse effects of loneliness and isolation on peoples’ health, both mental and physical. It is a scientific fact that flowers combat isolation bringing healing and renewal. Now more than ever through this pandemic, with so many being isolated, BloomAgainBklyn’s mission has become all the impactful. It is all about bringing new life to people and showing that someone cares and that they are not alone.

Thank you for supporting the work BloomAgainBklyn is doing to combat loneliness and isolation in our community.

PLEASE DONATE NOW

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