

Brooklyn Daily Eagle

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT ♡ PROSPECT HEIGHTS

★PREMIUM

BloomAgainBklyn gives flowers second life at Brooklyn Botanic Garden exclusive 'Rose Night'

In their first-ever BBG collaboration, the nonprofit teaches sustainability and fosters community

July 1, 2025 Joanna Insko



Vase arrangements made for vulnerable populations by Brooklyn Botanic Garden members in collaboration with BloomAgainBklyn. Brooklyn Eagle photo by Joanna Insko

PROSPECT HEIGHTS — BloomAgainBklyn, a Brooklyn-based nonprofit, brought even more flowers to Brooklyn Botanic Garden's (BBG) exclusive Rose Night on June 11. During the members-only event, 17 BloomAgainBklyn volunteers staffed 80 buckets, each filled with more than 30 flowers, for bouquet and card-making workshops at the group's first-ever collaboration with BBG.

"BBG is a wonderful and natural collaboration for us," shared BloomAgainBklyn founder Caroline Gates-Anderson. "It's very aligned with our mission in terms of giving back, composting and being part of the greater community."



Cards made for residents of Cobble Hill Health Center by Brooklyn Botanic Garden members in collaboration with BloomAgainBklyn. Brooklyn Eagle photo by Joanna Insko

BloomAgainBklyn was founded in 2014 by Gates-Anderson and board member Donna Whiteford with a core mission: to repurpose flowers rescued from events or retailer oversupply to help combat loneliness and isolation. The mission comes to life through collaborations with partners

such as Trader Joe's who provide gently used flowers for workshops where bouquets are created by or for underserved communities.

Gates-Anderson was named one of three Brooklyn-based honorees on Crain's [New York Business' 2025 Notable Leaders in Philanthropy list](#). The recognition noted that "Gates-Anderson has created programs in which hundreds of Title I schoolchildren and corporate employees have participated in floral workshops, learning about sustainability, team-building and giving back."



P.S. 307 visual arts teacher Jordanna Gatoff makes a vase arrangement at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. Photo courtesy of BloomAgainBklyn

From May through September, BBG members receive extended garden access every Wednesday evening. BloomAgainBklyn's workshop was set up on the Atrium Terrace, where members could create small hand-tied

bouquets and a vase arrangement of 12 to 14 flowers, along with a card, for socially isolated neighbors.

“I was amazed when they sent out the email to say what they were doing at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden,” shared longtime BloomAgainBklyn volunteer and Grants Manager at New York City Department of Education Dr Delia Loney. “I thought this was a wonderful way to give us a lot of exposure to the community and partner with people who we know need this type of joy in their life.”



Brooklyn Botanic Garden member poses with vase arrangement. Photo courtesy of BloomAgainBklyn

Roughly 300 BBG members participated in the bouquet and card-making workshops BloomAgainBklyn offered Wednesday evening. Each hand-tied and vase arrangement was prepared for delivery to one of three BloomAgainBklyn partners: Cobble Hill Health Center for residents and staff; Graham-Windham Services for Families and Children, a foster care advocacy group; and P.S./I.S. 157 for its eighth grade dance.

“I’m very happy at the turnout,” said BloomAgainBklyn volunteer Kumudha Ramanathan. “It’s a great fit in a perfect setting.”

BBG Membership Director Cathryn Popowytch added, “We are excited to have BloomAgainBklyn at member’s Rose Night to work with our members and share their inspiring work.”

Although the arrangements made were not for members to bring home, BloomAgainBklyn volunteers spoke to the benefits felt from the simple activity of working with flowers.



Brooklyn Botanic Garden members handle unsold and once-used flowers. Photo courtesy of BloomAgainBklyn

“As a person doing the service, it’s very meaningful because we work so often and we move so often, especially in New York.” said BloomAgainBklyn volunteer Najee Hunt. “I think this gives us a moment to be conscious of the world, allow for us to take a pause, but also just do

something for someone that goes beyond what we do out of our workspaces. To be selfless instead of selfish.”

BloomAgainBklyn’s [more than 3,500 volunteers](#) assist not only with workshops but also with biweekly flower deliveries and vase swaps for partners such as Cobble Hill Health Center.

“Everybody enjoys the flowers but people in a nursing home, this is a special population who deserve to have this opportunity,” said BloomAgainBklyn volunteer Veronica Kaninska.

Hunt added, “For the people who are receiving it’s very meaningful. A lot of people don’t receive moments where they can be celebrated. I think this kind of experience provides them that opportunity to feel seen.”



BloomAgainBklyn volunteers teach Brooklyn Botanic Garden members to make hand ties and vase arrangements with unsold and once-used flowers. Brooklyn Eagle photo by Joanna Insko

Bringing BloomAgainBklyn's mission to BBG was a partnership many volunteers described as "intuitive." The missions of both organizations align in their goal of fostering connection through the enjoyment of plants.

"Being at the Garden, there's a whole team here, curating the space for New Yorkers to come and relax and have a place where they can quiet their mind," said BloomAgainBklyn volunteer MK Rankey. "With BloomAgainBklyn, volunteers are there to offer that same opportunity to people who can't come to the Garden."



BloomAgainBklyn volunteer MK Rankey. Photo courtesy of BloomAgainBklyn

According to Gates-Anderson, conversations about future BBG collaborations are underway, but for now BloomAgainBklyn will continue its work of rescuing flowers that would otherwise be discarded and delivering them to vulnerable communities.

"Flowers are flowers, no matter where you do it and what you do with it," said Ramanathan.