



Arab-American Family Support Center  
المركز العربي الأمريكي للخدمات الاجتماعية

**CONTACT:**Ahmed Mohammed  
[Ahmed@aafscny.org](mailto:Ahmed@aafscny.org)  
718-937-8000 Ext: 33  
May 4, 2015

**\*\*\*MEDIA ADVISORY\*\*\***

**Community garden to get update, trees to be planted, thanks to Arab-American Family Support Center**

*Local non-profit to participate in nation-wide Arab-American service day*

BROOKLYN—A group of 30 community volunteers from the Arab-American Family Support Center will provide Spring renovations for an East New York urban garden operated by Brooklyn Community Services and plant trees in the Gowanus neighborhood for the National Arab American Service Day on May 14, 2016.

Service Day, now in its 12<sup>th</sup> year, is a national Arab-American-led initiative that includes dozens of projects across the country from planting trees and beach clean-ups to serving the homeless and organizing a clothing drive. The local project, led by the Arab-American Family Support Center in partnership with Brooklyn Community Services (BCS) and the Gowanus Canal Conservancy, will include cleaning, mulching, weeding, and planting new vegetables at the BCS Transitional Living Community's Urban Garden and a tree stewardship initiative to plant more trees and improve the health of existing trees in Gowanus.

"Our urban garden is a unique green space used by both the women of the local shelter and the community in East New York," said Kristina Reintamm, Director of Community Education & Engagement at BCS. "We are grateful to volunteers who help us keep it thriving!"

"Stewarding trees is a vital component to the Gowanus Canal Conservancy's vision of an open, clean, and alive Gowanus Canal Watershed. We are happy and grateful for the AAFSC to join us in realizing this vision!" said Michael Wasserman, Stewardship Coordinator at Gowanus Canal Conservancy.

"We are happy to help make our community a more beautiful and green space for all," said Lena Alhousseini, AAFSC's Executive Director. "Service Day is an excellent example of the Arab-American community's commitment to building connections with others and giving back."

**FIRST PROJECT—URBAN GARDENING:**

**WHO:** The Arab-American Family Support Center  
Brooklyn Community Services

**WHAT:** Urban Gardening at the BCS Transitional Living Community for Arab-American National Service Day

**WHERE:** 116 Williams Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11207; (*The Garden is located around the corner a short distance from TLC. The actual location of the Garden is Glenmore Street between Williams Avenue and Hinsdale Street in East New York, Brooklyn*). Nearby metro stops are the J, Z train at Alabama Ave, the C train at Liberty Ave, and the L train at Atlantic Ave

**WHEN:** Saturday, May 14, 2016 from 10:30 to 2

**:** SECOND PROJECT—TREE STEWARDSHIP

**WHO:** The Arab-American Family Support Center  
Gowanus Canal Conservancy

**WHERE:** 543 Union St, Brooklyn, NY 11215; Nearby metro stops are the R train at Union St and the F, G trains at Carroll Street

**WHEN:** Saturday, May 14, 2016 from 11 to 2

National Arab American Service Day is about fostering a culture of leadership and community engagement through service and volunteerism. Under its motto of "Serving Communities, Connecting People," Service Day brings together diverse groups and individuals for one shared goal: responding to their community's needs. A project of the National Network for Arab American Communities (NNAAC), Service Day has engaged more than 10,000 volunteers for hundreds of service projects since 2005. For more information, visit [www.nnaac.org/serviceday](http://www.nnaac.org/serviceday).

-###-

**The Arab-American Family Support Center** is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, non-sectarian organization created in 1994 to provide low-immigrant Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, and South Asian immigrants and refugees in New York City culturally and linguistically competent social services. As a settlement house and member of United Neighborhood Houses (UNH), AAFSC's mission is to empower new immigrants with the tools they need to successfully acclimate to the world around them and become active participants in their communities. AAFSC is the first and largest Arabic-speaking trauma-informed social service agency in New York City. AAFSC is headquartered in Brooklyn, the borough with the highest population of Arab immigrants in New York City, and has an additional center in Queens.

#### About Brooklyn Community Services

BCS celebrates the strength of the human spirit, and in 2016, we celebrate our 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Our mission is to empower at-risk children, youth and families, and adults with mental illness or developmental disabilities to overcome the obstacles they face, as we strive to ensure opportunity for all to learn, grow and contribute to ONE Brooklyn Community. To achieve this mission, we offer comprehensive and holistic services: early childhood education; youth development services and educationally rich after-school programs; counseling for at-risk families; treatment, recovery and job training to support the life goals of adults living with mental illness; person-centered rehabilitation and community living support for adults with developmental disabilities and disaster recovery case management and relief services. BCS also seeks to increase public awareness of the impacts of poverty on individuals and the community at-large. With a staff of over 400 and over 20 sites around the borough, BCS serves 12,000 people every year. Today, BCS is one of the oldest not-for-profit, non-sectarian social service providers in New York City.