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Much Afoot: Baryshnikov Center Hosts HY / HK **Alliance Annual Meeting**

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Winners of the Hell's Kitchen Foundation's 2017 cycle (most of whom are seen here, along with Alliance and Foundation reps) were given grants to help them pursue creative endeavors. Photo by Winnie

BY WINNIE McCROY | The new kids on the block took care of business like old hats, when the Hudson Yards / Hell's Kitchen Alliance recapped a successful third year at June 6's Annual Meeting.

Held in the heart of its burgeoning Business Improvement District (BID), about 100 people gathered at the Baryshnikov Arts Center (450 W. 37th St., btw. Ninth & 10th Aves.), where they enjoyed a lavish spread of hors d'oeuvres from Better Being 940 and complimentary wine and soft drinks before heading into the theater.

Among the orders of business were electing new board directors, handing out the Community

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Gregg Bishop, Commissioner of the NYC Department of Small Business Services. "The Hudson Yards / Hell's Kitchen Alliance is a relatively young BID, but you've done a lot," Bishop said. "We look at BIDs as a partnership, because we can't do it alone. It's our job to encourage and help small businesses, but we could not have done this without you.'

Speaking about the new Farmers Market, he added, "[These] are things that bring people to the district to discover new stores, be them large businesses or mom and pop stores, and that is very helpful."

Bishop noted that in our city of 8.5 million people, a third are foreign-born., and half of small businesses are owned by foreign-born people. Having services to connect immigrant and women entrepreneurs to celebrate the urban landscape was important.

He also praised the work the BID had done to maintain and program Hudson Boulevard Park, and to remove graffiti in the area. He mentioned the city's Love Your Local campaign, designed to help residents show their appreciation for independent, non-franchised small businesses that anchor their neighborhoods. Visit loveyourlocal.cityofnewyork.us to add a business (interested, eligible ones will be considered for grants and expert advice).

"You've also taken a lead on streetscape planting, open spaces, and the connectivity of people in

2 of 4 5/30/18, 3:27 PM this emerging neighborhood," Bishop said of the Alliance. "As the neighborhoods change, this is what makes New York City great."

Finally, he took time to thank the 10th Precinct for "reducing crime, because when you look at economic development, if there isn't a lively mix of businesses, New York City doesn't become a destination. It's a collaborative experience and we appreciate what they've done to work with the RID."

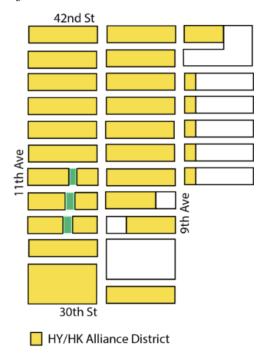
Benfatto then presented 10th Precinct Det. Petrillo with the Alliance's Community MVP Award, saying, "Every neighborhood has that indispensable man, and that's Detective Michael Petrillo. Whenever I have a problem, he makes it go away. We had got him a wonderful etched-glass award from Tiffany, but it got into a wreck in a UPS truck on the way here." As a temporary substitute for the Tiffany version, Petrillo accepted a laminated certificate of appreciation in good spirits, and with a few humble remarks.

Finally, the Alliance called to the front the 10 local artists to whom they were awarding grants, funded wholly by the Hell's Kitchen Flea Market, via their Hell's Kitchen Foundation.

"This is our second year awarding grants to Hell's Kitchen artists, and we couldn't be more thrilled to meet them. I hope this money will help them continue their creativity," said Foundation Chair Inge Ivchenko. "This year's winners are so diverse and talented. We met with young and older artists, and our goal is to support their work in New York City, especially given the high cost of living. We can all make a difference in supporting the arts by going to a gallery opening or becoming a patron of an artist whose work you admire. Talented artists, your work brings joy and sometimes despair into our lives, and helps us understand the complex world we live in. Whatever your medium is, we thank you for your art."

Foundation Treasurer Scott Isebrand then presented checks to the 10 grant recipients, all of whom are residents of Hell's Kitchen: Jordan Baker-Caldwell, Frank Graham, Mahmoud Hamadani, Christian Miles, Guy Pierce, Janet Restino, Jill Slaymaker, Nick Stavrides, Shawn Wickens, and Tristen Wolksi (who was not present).

For more information on the Hudson Yards / Hell's Kitchen Alliance, visit hudsonyardshellskitchenalliance.org, call 212-239-1619, or send an email to info@hyhkalliance.org.



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