



🎉 Celebrate the Lunar New Year with Abrons Arts Center!

Celebrated in many East Asian countries, the Lunar New Year marks the beginning of the year based on moon cycles. Abrons Arts Center and the W.O.W. Project invite you to attend a celebratory parade on Saturday, January 14. The parade starts at noon at Abrons (466 Grand Street) and will visit various locations throughout Chinatown.

To see all upcoming events, go to:
abronsartscenter.org/events



RESIDENT SPOTLIGHT

Seeking Safety in a New Country

Immigrant family fleeing persecution finds comfort at UFC

Brandon grew up in an extremely homophobic household in his home country of Jamaica. “Homosexual acts” are illegal in Jamaica and punishable by up to 10 years in prison, making it nearly impossible for LGBTQ+ people to live their lives openly. Throughout his childhood, Brandon’s grandmother, the family matriarch and a church leader, fueled the hatred and violence toward him. “I was the prime example in the household of what not to be,” he says. Even at his job at an educational center in his community’s church, he was constantly being bullied for his sexual orientation.

After a harrowing incident this past summer, Brandon, his partner of four years, and his partner’s child made the extremely difficult decision to flee Jamaica. They arrived at the U.S.-Mexico border in

June, seeking asylum. After passing through detention and receiving their appropriate documents, Brandon’s family traveled to New York from California, where an acquaintance on Staten Island allowed them to stay for a couple of months. By early August, however, they were facing homelessness. At the Prevention Assistance and Temporary Housing (PATH) intake center, the family was assigned to the Urban Family Center, one of Henry Street’s apartment-style family shelters. “We are happy that our immigration status didn’t determine whether Henry Street could accept us or not,” Brandon says.

Since arriving, Brandon and his partner have secured employment, and their child, age 7, is enrolled in afterschool programming through the Settlement. “Henry Street has been life-changing for us,” he says. “It’s comforting knowing we have support and that our case worker, Scarlyn, has a lot of belief in us.”

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EVENT CALENDARS

To see all upcoming events at your site, scan the QR code >>

HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Urban Family Center/Abrons Arts Center:** Interactive workshop hosted by The Catcalling Project and Perfect City; Saturday, January 14, 1-3 p.m.; Abrons Arts Center (466 Grand Street)
- **Employment:** NYC Department of Labor Virtual Career Fair; Thursday, January 18, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.; for more information, please contact Tisha Williams, twilliams@henrystreet.org

To learn about upcoming events at Henry Street Settlement, go to henrystreet.org or follow us on social media:



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Employment Services



Urban Family Center



Third Street Supportive Housing



Helen's House



Third Street Women's Shelter



Stanton Street Supportive Housing

SEEKING SAFETY *cont'd from front*

While the U.S. has more protections than Jamaica in place for LGBTQ+ people, Brandon says it's still nerve wracking to walk by police or talk openly in public. "We understand that people will still be homophobic," he acknowledges, "but the law is on our side here if we are discriminated against."

Brandon is receiving legal support from Manhattan Legal Services to pursue permanent asylum in the U.S. based on his well-founded fear of persecution should he return to Jamaica. "We want to stay here in New York City, and I want to go back to school." Brandon is hopeful for the future and is grateful to the UFC team for their support.



Did you know that learning to swim is a gateway to many careers?

Join Friends of + POOL, Henry Street Settlement, and the LES Employment Network for an information session that dives into the field of aquatics to explore several career paths that can take shape for those who learn to swim!

Aquatics Jobs Info Session
Thursday, January 26
6-7:30 p.m.
Firehouse, 269 Henry Street

