



Van Cortlandt Park Alliance
Springtime Shindig!

Thursday, May 16, 2024



van cortlandt
park alliance



Dear Friends,

We are pleased to welcome you to **Van Cortlandt Park Alliance's Springtime Shindig** — a party to celebrate this year's many accomplishments and honor the extraordinary individuals and organizations that further our mission.

Tonight, we are proud to honor two people, without whom Van Cortlandt Park Alliance would not have gotten off to such a solid start, and five organizations who are working on the Tibbetts Brook Daylighting Project, New York City's largest green infrastructure project to date.

The 2024 Betty Campbell-Adams Park Angel Award goes to two current VCPA Board Members and Founding Co-chairs, Nina Habib Spencer and Carol J. Samol.

The 2024 Cultivating the Bronx Award goes to the team responsible for shepherding the Daylighting of Tibbetts Brook project: NYC Parks Environment and Planning, NYC Department of Environmental Protection, Starr Whitehouse Landscape Architects & Planners, Hazen and Sawyer, and Bronx Council for Environmental Quality.

In addition to our advocacy efforts, Van Cortlandt Park Alliance provides new programs each year, serving our community better and introducing more people to the joys of nature. On behalf of VCPA's board, we also invite you to join us at any one of our amazing **free events** in the park this spring and summer:

The NY Philharmonic will be back in Van Cortlandt on Tuesday, June 11 to kick off their Concerts in the Parks series — last year we hosted nearly 7,000 people on the Parade Ground. Dating back to 1965, the NY Philharmonic transforms our park into a concert hall for the enjoyment of our neighbors, families, children, and friends. This evening of music ends with an amazing fireworks display!

Our annual **Juneteenth Celebration** on Wednesday, June 19, which honors the memory and legacy of people who were enslaved, will include music and spoken word performances. The event culminates with a procession to the Enslaved African Burial Ground where participants can pay their respects. We encourage you to learn more about the **Enslaved People Project**, our free curriculum for young people, and public programming.

Our **Starlight Cinema** series in July and August will feature four movies shown on a giant screen on the Parade Ground. Pre-movie, themed crafts will be available for kids and grown-ups. **Music in the Park**, which we produce with Bronx Arts Ensemble, will feature live concerts in the park.

We are able to offer these, and many other programs ALL SUMMER LONG thanks to our community and YOUR generosity.

On behalf of the board, staff, interns, and thousands of park volunteers, we thank you for supporting the work of Van Cortlandt Park Alliance.

Charlie Samboy
Board Chair

Stephanie Ehrlich
Executive Director





Honorees



Betty Campbell-Adams Park Angel Award

- Nina Habib Spencer and Carol J. Samol
VCPA Founding Co-chairs

Cultivating the Bronx Award

Tibbetts Brook Daylighting Project Team:

- NYC Department of Environmental Protection
- NYC Parks Environment and Planning
- Hazen and Sawyer
- Starr Whitehouse Landscape Architects & Planners
- Bronx Council for Environmental Quality

Betty Campbell-Adams Park Angel Award

Nina Habib Spencer and Carol J. Samol

VCPA Founding Co-chairs



VAN CORTLANDT PARK ALLIANCE FOUNDERS

Formed in 2019 by merging two preexisting nonprofits whose 35 years of combined history lay the foundation for excellence in educational programming, cultural events, advocacy, and restoration projects, Van Cortlandt Park Alliance (VCPA) is now 5 years old! Nina Habib Spencer, a founding board member of the Van Cortlandt Park Conservancy, and Carol J. Samol, a long-time board member of the Friends of Van Cortlandt Park, led the negotiations that culminated in the Alliance's successful formation. Both Nina and Carol live in Riverdale and are frequent users of Van Cortlandt Park.

Photo: Nina Habib Spencer (left) and Carol Samol

Cultivating the Bronx Award

Tibbetts Brook Daylighting Project Team:

- NYC Department of Environmental Protection
- NYC Parks Environment and Planning
- Hazen and Sawyer
- Starr Whitehouse Landscape Architects & Planners
- Bronx Council for Environmental Quality

ABOUT DAYLIGHTING

The Daylighting of Tibbetts Brook is a project that has been more than two decades in the making. In partnership with the Parks Department, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will daylight Tibbetts Brook and construct a greenway in what is the City's largest Green Infrastructure project to date. Hazen and Sawyer and Starr Whitehouse have been integral to designing the project's hydrology and connection to the community and the park. Bronx Council for Environmental Quality has been a leading voice in advocating for this important environmental justice initiative.

Tibbetts Brook historically ran from Westchester down into Van Cortlandt Park's Hester and Piero's Mill Pond and then meandered south to its natural outlet into the Harlem River. In the early 1900s, the brook was routed into the sewer that runs along Broadway, and today its flow contributes to combined sewer overflows (CSOs) into the Harlem River when the sewer reaches capacity.

Daylighting will restore the historical connection of Tibbetts Brook from Hester and Piero's Mill Pond in Van Cortlandt Park to the Harlem River via a new water conveyance system consisting of an open channel stream in Van Cortlandt Park and the former railroad right-of-way (CSX) and a closed conduit through the Metro North property, reducing flows to the combined sewer system by approximately 220 million gallons per year. DEP has incorporated this project into the City's CSO Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) to meet the water quality standards set by federal CSO Policy and the Clean Water Act. Phase 1 of the project is scheduled to begin in 2024.



The Daylighting Team visits the CSX property. Photo courtesy of DEP.



Sponsors



Dragonfly

Horace Mann School
Dr. Thomas M. Kelly, Head of School

Wood Duck

Lisa Cintron and Ezra Borut
Ethical Culture Fieldston School
Nina Habib Spencer and G. Parke Spencer
Hazen and Sawyer
Tom, Rachel and Emma Kelly
Montefiore Einstein
SAR Academy and SAR High School
Rabbi Binyamin Krauss, Academy Principal
Lee Sossen and Sherri Williams
Stacey Wieder

Sunfish

BronxCare Health System
Neal Garelik
Groundwork Hudson Valley
Kathryn and Vincent G. Heintz
John Park and Jeanne Jang
Starr Whitehouse Landscape Architects
and Planners

Spring Peeper

Bob Bender and Loretta Nash
Victoria Berger-Gross and Family
Bronx Council for Environmental Quality
David N. Cohn, CIVIC
Linda R. Cox and John G. Robinson
Stephanie Ehrlich and Matthew Unger
Dr. Heather Erhard and Andrew Cohen
Holly Leicht and Adam Weinstein
Lemle & Wolff Companies
Lloyd's Carrot Cake
Lilka Adams
Manhattan College
Judy Mills-Johnson and Ian Johnson
NewYork-Presbyterian
Riverdale Country School
Christopher Rizzo, Carter Ledyard & Milburn LLP
Stuart Ruderfer, CIVIC
Carol J. Samol
Nate Schreiber, CIVIC
Marvin Shandler and Linda Shandler Friedman
Kathryn Stoeth
Terry Grant Stoeth and Bob Stoeth
Mandi Susman
Tishman Speyer





Van Cortlandt Park Alliance Board of Directors



Charlie Samboy, Chair

Judy Mills-Johnson, Vice Chair

Teresa Grant Stoeth, Secretary

Stacey Wieder, Treasurer

Lilka Adams

Gary Axelbank

Robert Baron

Lisa Cintron

Erin Clarke

Linda Cox

Colin Greene

Nina Habib Spencer

Dr. Thomas M. Kelly

Rabbi Binyamin Krauss

John Park

Carol J. Samol

Nicole Sin Quee

Lee Sossen

Amit Stern

Jeff Torkin



Springtime Shindig Host Committee

Judy Mills-Johnson, Committee Chair

Lilka Adams

Gary Axelbank

Lisa Cintron

Dr. Thomas M. Kelly

Rabbi Binyamin Krauss

Charlie Samboy

Nina Habib Spencer

Amit Stern

Jeff Torkin

Stacey Wieder



Urban Ecology Teen Internship 2023

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



May 16, 2024

Dear Friend,

As United States Representative of NY-15 in the Bronx, it is my great pleasure to celebrate the fantastic work of the Van Cortlandt Park Alliance (VCPA) on this year's Springtime Shindig.

In a city renowned for its numerous parks, Van Cortlandt Park stands out as one of the largest and most beautiful parks and a vital piece of the Bronx. Through cultural, educational, ecological, and recreational programs, the VCPA continuously works to preserve and improve the park for all of its visitors. But VCPA's commitment to environmental justice and conservation is at the core of its mission. VCPA remains a leader and critical stakeholder in our shared mission to ensure equitable access to green spaces for all Bronx residents.

Today, we honor the VCPA team, volunteers, and community partners, like the recipients of this year's Betty Campbell-Adams Park Angel Award, Nina Habib Spencer and Carol J. Samol, the founding board co-chairs, for their exceptional leadership. We also recognize the Tibbetts Brook Daylighting Project Team, comprised of NYC Parks Environment and Planning, NYC Department of Environmental Protection, Starr Whitehouse Architects, Hazen and Sawyer, and the Bronx Council for Environmental Quality, as the recipients of this year's Cultivating the Bronx Award for their outstanding contributions to the community.

On behalf of the constituents in the 15th Congressional District, I congratulate the Van Cortlandt Park Alliance on another year of historic wins for the people of the Bronx and wish everyone many more years of success.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ritchie Torres".

Ritchie Torres
Member of Congress
NY-15, The Bronx



Enjoying a quiet moment at Woodlawn Family Fun Day!



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

May 16, 2024

Dear Friends:

It gives me great pleasure to welcome everyone as the Van Cortlandt Park Alliance (VCPA) hosts its annual Springtime Shindig.

The third-largest park in the five boroughs, Van Cortlandt Park is a cherished resource for Bronx residents, offering more than 1,000 acres of land that features a richly forested heartland; hiking trails; playgrounds; fields for baseball, cricket, and soccer; the country's first public golf course; the borough's largest freshwater lake, and the Van Cortlandt House Museum, an 18th-century Georgian style manor house that is both a New York City Landmark and a National Historic Landmark. Working in close partnership with the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, the VCPA excels in its mission to preserve, support, and promote the recreational, ecological, and historical value of this sprawling park. Its initiatives include the Enslaved People Project, which focuses on educating New Yorkers about the history of slavery on this former colonial-era plantation. As you gather to support VCPA's important programming, I applaud everyone associated with this innovative organization for their efforts to enrich our beautiful environment and provide vital green spaces for people from this diverse borough and beyond.

On behalf of 8.3 million New Yorkers, I offer congratulations to tonight's honorees: Nina Habib Spencer and Carol J. Samol, who are VCPA's founding board co-chairs and the co-recipients of this year's Betty Campbell-Adams Park Angel Award, and the Tibbetts Brook Daylighting Project Team, which is receiving the alliance's annual Cultivating the Bronx Award for its ongoing work to reroute Tibbetts Brook above ground—our city's most ambitious climate infrastructure project. Please accept my best wishes for a festive evening and continued success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric Adams".

Eric Adams
Mayor



Urban Ecology Teen Internship 2023

SENATOR
GUSTAVO RIVERA
33RD DISTRICT



CHAIRMAN, MAJORITY MEMBER
HEALTH
COMMITTEES:
ALCOHOLISM AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE
CRIME VICTIMS, CRIME AND CORRECTION
FINANCE
HIGHER EDUCATION
HOUSING, CONSTRUCTION AND
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
MENTAL HEALTH

May 16, 2024

Dear Members of the Van Cortlandt Park Alliance,

I am pleased to write this letter in celebration of the Van Cortlandt Park Alliance's (VCPA) Spring Shindig.

It is my privilege to congratulate this year's honorees of the Springtime Shindig: Van Cortlandt Park Alliance's Founding Board Co-Chairs, Nina Habib Spencer and Carol J. Samol, who will receive the Betty Campbell-Adams Park Angel Award and the Tibbetts Brook Daylight Project Team who will receive VCPA's annual 'Cultivating the Bronx' Award.

These honorees play a significant role in the Van Cortlandt Park Alliance's ability to preserve, support, and promote the recreational, ecological, and historical value of Van Cortlandt Park, New York City's third largest park and one of the last spaces in our City that features real vestiges of our native woodlands and wetlands.

I want to commend the honorees and the members of VCPA for the commitment you demonstrate to improving not just our beloved park, but our entire borough. I am so impressed by the The Tibbetts Brook Daylighting Project Team for their work removing the Brook's clean water from the sewer system to reduce Combined Sewer Overflows into the Harlem River, which will lessen flooding that occurs throughout the Bronx.

I once again want to wholeheartedly congratulate today's award recipients for this hard-earned and well-deserved recognition. I look forward to continue working with the Van Cortlandt Park Alliance as your determination and integrity will bring The Bronx to new heights and serves as an example of how to build and maintain green spaces across New York.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "GRIVERA".

Gustavo Rivera
New York State Senator
33rd Senate District, The Bronx



Hiketoberfest = fall fun!



JEFFREY DINOWITZ
Assemblyman 81st District
Bronx County

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

CHAIRMAN
Codes Committee

COMMITTEES
Rules
Ways and Means
Health
Election Law

MEMBER
Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task Force

CHAIRMAN
Bronx Delegation

May 16th, 2024

Dear Fellow Supporters of Van Cortlandt Park Alliance:

The Van Cortlandt Park Alliance is a cornerstone of our community. I am honored to support this exceptional organization and applaud your dedication to nurturing Van Cortlandt Park, a treasure within the Bronx and the best park in New York City. Congratulations to Nina Habib Spencer and Carol J. Samol, this year's distinguished honorees at the Springtime Shindig.

Nina Habib Spencer and Carol J. Samol are slated to receive the Betty Campbell-Adams Park Angel Award for their remarkable contributions to the Bronx community. Their steadfast commitment has positively impacted countless lives.

Nina Habib Spencer is a lifelong New Yorker, visionary entrepreneur, and founder of Colleague LLC, an executive recruitment firm specializing in various sectors. With 15 years of unwavering dedication, she champions the cause of Van Cortlandt Park and serves as the co-founding chair of the Van Cortlandt Park Alliance.

Carol J. Samol is an accomplished urban planner and co-chair of VCPA and has played a pivotal role in the development of the Bronx. With expertise in diverse areas such as community engagement and economic growth, she has secured funding for transformative projects like the LINC in New Rochelle. Currently serving as Peekskill's Director of Planning, Carol is shaping the city's future. She has been a Bronx resident for 36 years and holds degrees from NYU and Fordham University.

Once again, I extend my heartfelt gratitude and congratulations to Nina Habib Spencer and Carol J. Samol for their tireless endeavors. I also commend the Van Cortlandt Park Alliance, its board, and dedicated staff for their ongoing efforts on behalf of Bronx residents. We are fortunate to have such a positive influence on shaping our community, and I eagerly anticipate our continued success and collaboration in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Dinowitz
Member of Assembly



Hike-toberfest attendees after finishing a hike through Van Cortlandt Park.



BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT VANESSA L. GIBSON

May 16, 2024

Congratulations to the Van Cortlandt Park Alliance on the occasion of their Springtime Shindig at the Van Cortlandt Park Golf House. It is an honor to share in this celebration with all of you and to highlight the incredible work your team is doing in our borough.

I commend the Van Cortlandt Park Alliance for their commitment to preserving our borough's greenspaces and promoting the environmental sustainability of New York City's 3rd largest park. It is through their team's leadership that we are able to enhance the beauty of Van Cortlandt Park and empower others in our community to also prioritize environmental activism and sustainability.

This is evident in their work spearheading the Daylighting of Tibbetts Brook. This ambitious project to uncover and restore parts of a 6-mile natural stream that begins along the north section of Van Cortlandt Park not only provides parkgoers and nearby residents access to a freshwater stream but will also protect this waterway from mixing into the New York City Sewer System during floods. This project demonstrates Van Cortlandt Park Alliance's unwavering support for improving the overall health and well-being of our communities.

Congratulations to this year's recipients of the *Betty Campbell-Adams Park Angel Award*, Van Cortlandt Park Alliance Founding Board Co-Chairs, Nina Habib Spencer, and Carol J. Samol, and the Tibbetts Brook Daylighting Project Team, receiving the *Cultivating the Bronx Award*.

Thank you, once again to the Van Cortlandt Park Alliance, for their work in making one of our beloved gems a welcoming destination for those ready to immerse themselves in nature.

Sincerely,

Vanessa L. Gibson

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Vanessa L. Gibson".

Bronx Borough President



Steam punk family at VCPA's first Howl-o-ween Pup Parade.



THE COUNCIL
OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK
ADRIENNE E. ADAMS
SPEAKER

May 16, 2024

Dear Friends:

As the Speaker of the New York City Council, I'm delighted to extend my personal greetings to everyone gathered tonight for the Van Cortlandt Park Alliance Springtime Shindig 2024!

Our public parks are near and dear to our hearts, providing us with the opportunity to connect with nature, ourselves, and each other. Just as our parks belong to all of us, we belong to them, and it's our job to be faithful and caring stewards of these public spaces.

No one understands this better than the Van Cortlandt Park Alliance, and I would like to thank everyone at the Alliance for the vital work they are doing to help maintain and support Van Cortlandt Park, the third largest park in New York City.

Congratulations as well to this year's honorees.

I hope everyone has a wonderful time tonight!

Sincerely,

ADRIENNE E. ADAMS
SPEAKER



Bronx dogs looking perfectly seasonal at VCPA's first Howl-o-ween Pup Parade.

DISTRICT OFFICE

277 West 231st Street
Bronx, NY 10463

TEL: (718) 549-7300

FAX: (718) 549-9945

CITY HALL OFFICE

250 Broadway, Suite 1868
New York, NY 10007

TEL: (212) 788-7080

FAX: (212) 442-7827

Dinowitz@council.nyc.gov



CHAIR
Higher Education

CHAIR
Jewish Caucus

CO-CHAIR
Bronx Delegation

COMMITTEES
Civil Service and Labor
Education
Housing and Buildings
Standards and Ethics
Senior Centers and Food Insecurity

To the Van Cortlandt Park Alliance Members, Supporters, and Staff Members:

Every year I see the fruits of your dedication to our public parks and green spaces, and I would like to convey my thanks and gratitude for your endless advocacy. Your partnership with NYC Parks has built a cleaner, greener, and safer place for the community to gather and engage in.

The Daylighting of Tibbetts Brook Project seeks to uncover parts of the Bronx's Tibbetts Brook that have not seen light in over a century, which would facilitate a more natural and environmentally friendly flow and lessen flooding. This ambitious project is one I am proud to support, but it has been in the works long before I took office. Its advancement would not have happened if it had not been for *the NYC Department of Environmental Protection, the NYC Parks Environment and Planning, Hazen and Sawyer, Starr Whitehouse Landscape Architects and Planners, and the Bronx Council for Environmental Quality*. For their diligence, they will be receiving the *Cultivating The Bronx* Award, which I can say is highly deserved by all our honorees.

As a Council Member, I work closely with the Van Cortlandt Park Alliance, an organization that exists because of the hard work of Nina Habib Spencer and Carol J. Samol. Your dedication to the park is truly inspiring, and receiving the *Betty Campbell-Adams Park Angel Award* is a well-deserved recognition of your efforts. Congratulations!

With that, I wish you all a very happy and festive Springtime Shindig, which is a time of celebration for all of the Van Cortlandt Park Alliance and its partners for their myriad of accomplishments in the past year.

I thank you again for all your hard work, passion, and commitment to making the Bronx a better place to live in for our families, children, older adults, and more!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eric Dinowitz', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Eric Dinowitz
Council Member, District 11



Susan M. Donoghue
Commissioner

**City of New York
Parks & Recreation**

The Arsenal
Central Park
New York, NY 10065
nyc.gov/parks



To Van Cortlandt Park Alliance, its Supporters and Benefactors,

Tonight, we join Van Cortlandt Park Alliance's board, staff, friends, and supporters in celebrating this year's accomplishments. Van Cortlandt Park Alliance, our partner in Van Cortlandt Park, works creatively and diligently to promote and preserve the park's vast resources -- ensuring continuing recreational, ecological, and historical value.

I am pleased to join you in congratulating this year's honorees: **The 2024 Betty Campbell-Adams Park Angel Award** will be given to VCPA Board Members and Founding Co-chairs, Nina Habib Spencer and Carol J. Samol.

This year's **Cultivating the Bronx Award** will be given to the team responsible for shepherding the Daylighting of Tibbetts Brook project: NYC Parks Environment and Planning, NYC Department of Environmental Protection, Starr Whitehouse Landscape Architects & Planners, Hazen and Sawyer, and Bronx Council for Environmental Quality.

Your support of this evening's *Springtime Shindig! 2024* makes wonderful VCPA programming possible, including youth internships, ecological restoration, recreational activities, field and trail maintenance, volunteering and stewardships, as well as cultural, historical, school, and arts programs – and for this, we thank you.

Because of supporters like you, VCPA will continue to ensure Van Cortlandt Park is the vital and welcoming oasis for the three million people who visit each year.

Wishing you all a delightful evening in the park!

Sincerely,

Sue Donoghue



Urban Ecology Teen Internship crew leader removing invasive species in Van Cortlandt Park.



NYC Parks

Iris Rodriguez-Rosa
First Deputy Commissioner

T 212.360.1307
F 212.360.1347

E iris.rodriguez@parks.nyc.gov

City of New York
Parks & Recreation

The Arsenal
Central Park
New York, NY 10065
www.nyc.gov/parks

To Van Cortlandt Park Alliance and its Supporters:

Thank you for supporting Van Cortlandt Park—a park that has always been near and dear to me.

Congratulations to the staff and board of Van Cortlandt Park Alliance on completing another successful year in the park. I am so very proud of the work you do maintaining the park's natural areas, providing excellent cultural events to the community, and introducing young people to the wonders of their local park.

Alongside VCPA and other organizations, I worked long and hard to bring the Tibbetts Brook Daylighting project to the attention of the City. I am delighted to celebrate this year's **Cultivating the Bronx Award** honorees, the team responsible for shepherding the Daylighting of Tibbetts Brook project: NYC Parks Environment and Planning, NYC Department of Environmental Protection, Starr Whitehouse Landscape Architects & Planners, Hazen and Sawyer, and Bronx Council for Environmental Quality.

As many of you know, for years, I was deeply invested and very much involved in the creation of Van Cortlandt Park Alliance. I am pleased to be part of honoring VCPA's founding co-chairs, this year's **Betty Campbell-Adams Park Angel Award** honorees, Nina Habib Spencer and Carol J. Samol.

Again, thank you for your support of Van Cortlandt Park Alliance's programs and your ongoing commitment to ensuring that Van Cortlandt Park is always a vibrant destination for people of all ages and backgrounds.

Sincerely,

Iris Rodriguez-Rosa
First Deputy Commissioner



Hike-toberfest attendees enjoying VCPA's Oktoberfest celebration!



NYC Parks

Jessenia Aponte
Borough Commissioner
Bronx

T 718.430.1801
F 718.430.1818

E Jessenia.aponte@parks.nyc.gov

City of New York
Parks & Recreation

Ranaqua
1 Bronx River Parkway
Bronx, NY 10462
www.nyc.gov/parks

Dear Van Cortlandt Park Alliance Board, Staff, and Supporters:

Congratulations to each of you for another excellent year in Van Cortlandt Park!

Van Cortlandt Park Alliance's partnership with NYC Parks is essential, ensuring that the park is always clean, safe, and welcoming to all. Thank you for all you do for the park.

In addition to providing internships, youth education, volunteer opportunities, restoration efforts, cultural events, and arts programming in the park, VCPA's advocacy efforts have made Daylighting Tibbetts Brook a reality.

It is fitting that this year, VCPA is honoring the team of experts who will make this long-standing dream a reality. I applaud my agency colleagues at NYC Parks Environment and Planning and NYC Department of Environmental Protection, as well as the engineers at Hazen and Sawyer, Starr Whitehouse Landscape Architects & Planners, and Bronx Council for Environmental Quality for receiving **VCPA's 2024 Cultivating the Bronx Award**.

VCPA Board Members and Founding Co-chairs, Nina Habib Spencer and Carol J. Samol very much deserve this year's **Betty Campbell-Adams Park Angel Award** for their years of service, working diligently to create the Van Cortlandt Park Alliance, ensuring its strong start and ongoing success.

I am pleased to celebrate every one of the honorees and thank them for their contribution to Van Cortlandt Park and the community.

Enjoy the party!

Sincerely,

Jessenia Aponte
Bronx Borough Commissioner
NYC Parks





VCPA organized free rowboating for the community on Hester & Piero's Mill Pond.



BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 8

5676 Riverdale Avenue ♦ Suite 100 ♦ Bronx, New York 10471-2194
P: (718) 884-3959 F: (718) 796-2763 E: bx08@cb.nyc.gov
<https://cbbronx.cityofnewyork.us/cb8/>



Julie Reyes, Chairperson

Vanessa L. Gibson, Bronx Borough President

Farrah Kule Rubin, District Manager

OFFICERS:

Vice Chairperson
Sergio Villaverde

Secretary
Margaret Della

Treasurer
Joy Campbell Priveterre

**Immediate Past
Chairperson**
Laura Spalter

COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

Aging
Oscar Martinez

Budget
David Gellman

Economic Development
Nicholas R. Fazio

**Education, Libraries &
Cultural Affairs**
Sylvia Alexander

Environment & Sanitation
Daniel Rowen

**Health, Hospitals &
Social Services**
Rabbi Bob Kaplan

Housing
Rosemary Ginty

Land Use
Charles G. Moerdler

Law, Rules & Ethics
Martin Wolpoff

Parks & Recreation
Debra Travis

Public Safety
Edward Green

Traffic & Transportation
Kelli Buford

Youth
Dr. Julia T. Gomez

May 1, 2024

Stephanie Ehrlich
Executive Director and Van Cortlandt Park Administrator
Van Cortlandt Park Alliance
80 Van Cortlandt Park South
Bronx, NY 10463

Dear Stephanie,

On behalf of Community Board 8, we would like to extend our congratulations to your board members Nina Habib and Carol Samol for being honored with this year's Betty Campbell-Adams Park Angel Award. We are also delighted to hear that the Tibbetts Brook Daylighting Project Team, who we have worked closely with for years, are being recognized with the Cultivating the Bronx Award.

Van Cortlandt Park holds a special place in the hearts of many Bronx residents and through the work of this year's honorees monumental changes have been put into place that will preserve, conserve and interpret this green space for generations to come. Through Nina and Carol's work, there exists a dynamic and essential not-for-profit to advocate for the needs of Van Cortlandt Park, particularly in the face of ongoing, crippling budget cuts. Through the vision of the Bronx Council of Environmental Quality, Starr Whitehouse, Hazen and Sawyer and NYC Parks and NYC DEP, our community will soon be the beneficiary of one of the most significant daylighting projects in the country, which will significantly reduce combined sewer overflow into the Harlem River while also raising awareness of the ongoing importance of water stewardship. It is with great admiration and appreciation that we write this letter to express our gratitude for the work that each of these honorees has done for our community. It has been truly transformational.

As you come together for your annual gala, let us take a moment to also celebrate the incredible impact of the Van Cortlandt Park Alliance itself. The Alliance so commonly makes the impossible possible that it is easy to forget that it is only through their hard work, advocacy, coordination, coalition-building and vision that we enjoy vibrant forests and lakes, powerful nature-based and historical programming and robust athletic offerings all in our back yard. We extend heartfelt thanks to VCPA, its board and all of its partners for your vision for a vibrant, inclusive and safe Van Cortlandt Park.

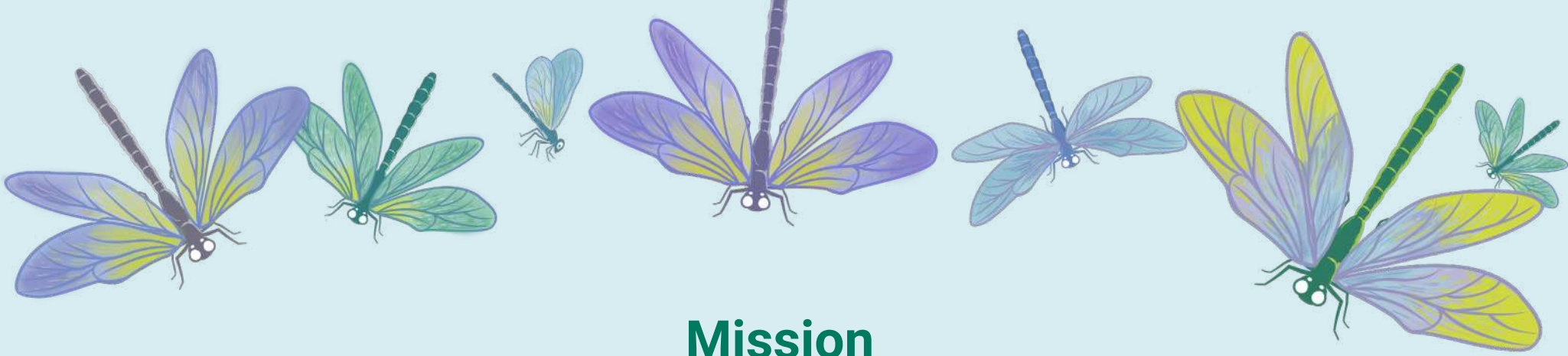
Warm regards,

Julie Reyes
Chairperson
Bronx Community Board 8

Debra Travis
Chairperson, Parks and Recreation Committee
Bronx Community Board 8



Let's Green NYC! Volunteers (including Assembly Member Jeffrey Dinowitz and Council Member Eric Dinowitz) just before painting Van Cortlandt Stadium with help from Broadway Green Alliance and Wicked the Musical. NYC Parks painters taught folks how to do it right!



Mission



Van Cortlandt Park Alliance's mission is to preserve, support, and promote the recreational, ecological, and historical value of Van Cortlandt Park.

VCPA's goals are to provide cultural, recreational, educational, and community programming in the park, generate public attention to the park's assets, and increase investments in maintenance, protection, and improvement of the park's recreational and natural areas.

VCPA offers youth internships, school programs, volunteer stewardship programs, and cultural programming. As NYC Parks' sole partner in Van Cortlandt Park, VCPA raises funds to support maintenance of the park's fields and trails, including the famous 100-year-old Cross-Country Trail.

Your support of the Springtime Shindig makes all of this possible!





Major Funders

Foundation & Corporate Support

Altman Foundation
 American Endowment Fund
 Baldwin Foundation
 Calhoun School
 City Parks Foundation/NYC Green Fund
 College of Mount Saint Vincent
 Collegiate School
 Con Edison
 Courts of Dreams Foundation
 Dr. Robert C. and Tina Sohn Foundation
 Edward F. and Sheri G. Leonard Foundation
 Ethical Culture Fieldston School
 Groundwork Hudson Valley
 Harris and Frances Block Foundation
 Horace Mann School
 Horizon Media LLC

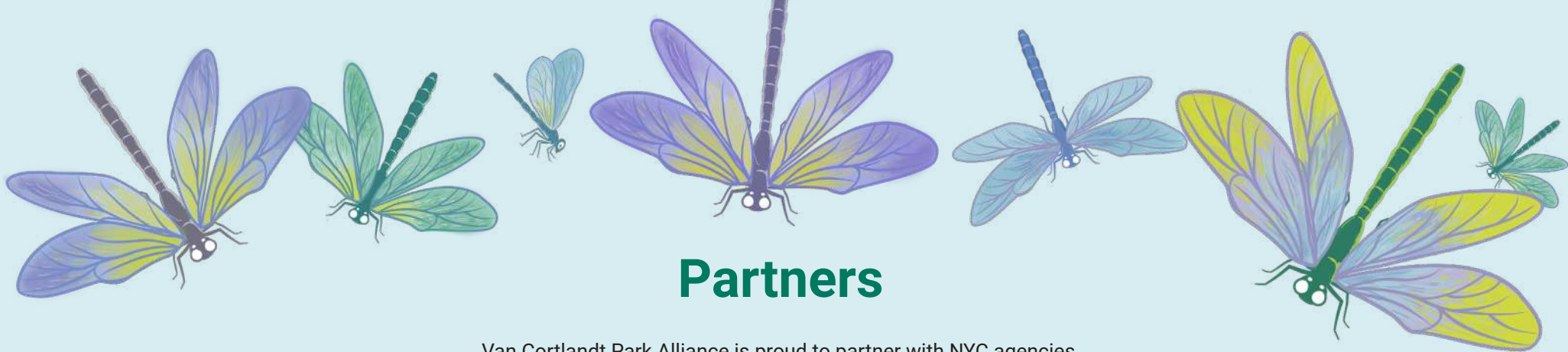
Laura J. Niles Foundation, Inc.
 Lemle & Wolff
 Lily Auchincloss Foundation
 Lloyd's Carrot Cake
 Manhattan College
 Montefiore Einstein
 New York Road Runners
 Optimum
 Patagonia
 The Pinkerton Foundation
 Ridgewood Savings Bank
 Riverdale Country School
 SAR Academy/SAR High School
 Sarah K. de Coizart Article TENTH
 Perpetual Charitable Trust
 Schoellerman Foundation

Select Equity Group Foundation
 SMPS Family Fund
 Stagg Group
 The Allen Shandler Fund
 The Fullgraf Foundation
 The Jockey Hollow Foundation
 The New Yankee Stadium
 Community Benefits Fund
 The New York Community Trust
 The Pinkerton Foundation
 Universal Television LLC
 Urban Forestry Organization
 Valentine Perry Snyder
 Van Cortlandt Track Club
 Whole Foods Market
 Woodlawn Run for a Cause

Government Support

NYC Civic Corps
 NYC Council - A Greener NYC
 NYC Council - Cultural Immigrant Initiative
 NYC Council - Local Initiative
 NYC Council - NYC Clean Up
 NYC Council - Parks Equity Initiative
 NYS Council on the Arts
 NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
 SUNY Environmental Science and Forestry
 U.S. Department of Agriculture
 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

VCPA's cultural programs are funded, in part, by funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the New York City Council



Partners

Van Cortlandt Park Alliance is proud to partner with NYC agencies, local academic institutions, and non-profit organizations.



- | | |
|---|---|
| Amalgamated Housing Corporation | Natural Areas Conservancy |
| Atmosphere Academy | New York Restoration Project |
| Beam Center | New Yorkers for Parks |
| Bronx Arts Ensemble | NY Road Runners |
| Bronx Council for Environmental Quality | NYC Audubon |
| Bronx River Alliance | Park and Open Space Partners |
| Calhoun School | Riverdale Country School |
| City As Living Laboratory | Riverdale Main Streets Alliance |
| Fieldston Ethical Culture School | Riverdale Neighborhood House |
| Friendly Fridge BX | SAR Academy / SAR High School |
| Groundwork Hudson Valley | SUNY Environmental Science and Forestry |
| GrowNYC | The New York Botanical Garden |
| Horace Mann School | Van Cortlandt House Museum |
| Kingsbridge Historical Society | Van Cortlandt Track Club |
| KRVC | Women of Woodlawn |
| Lehman College | Woodlawn Conservancy |
| Manhattan College | Woodlawn Taxpayers Association |

Special Thanks:

- Bronx Community Boards 7, 8, 12
- NYC Department of Environmental Protection
- NYC Department of Parks & Recreation
- NYC Department of Sanitation Compost Project at NYBG
- NYC Department of Transportation
- NYPD 50th Precinct



Garden 2 Market Interns help run a weekly farmstand in Van Cortlandt Village.



Volunteers plant trees in Van Cortlandt Park with VCPA. Volunteering makes you feel good!



Yahaya Kamate and Baba Don Babatunde perform at VCPA's annual Juneteenth celebration.



Van Cortlandt Park Alliance, in coordination with the NYC Parks Department and BEAM Center, unveiled Baobab Tree of Life, a temporary interactive public art installation by Ghana-born artist Tijay Mohammed.



Pinkster Players perform the Story of Pinkster at Pinkster Festival.



VCPA Executive Director, Stephanie Ehrlich, gave a free concert with her band Big Bowl of Soul.



Awo Juan Usera, Master Batá Drummer Anthony Carrillo, and Awo Xavier Rivera playing the sacred Batá drums and dedicating an Oro for Égun ceremony to the ancestors who are buried in the Enslaved African Burial Ground in Van Cortlandt Park.



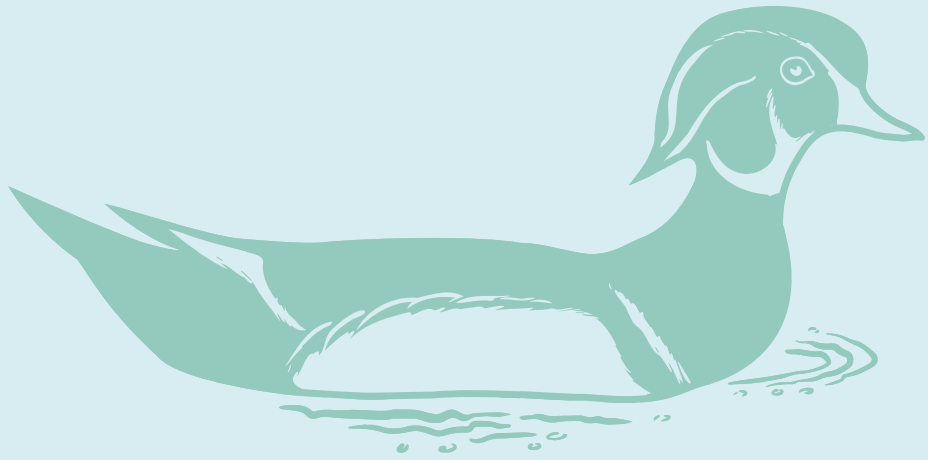
VCPA Deputy Director, Christina Taylor, advocates against the proposed Parade Ground Cricket Stadium with elected officials and community groups.



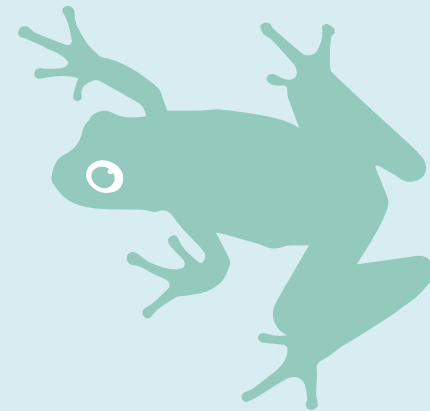
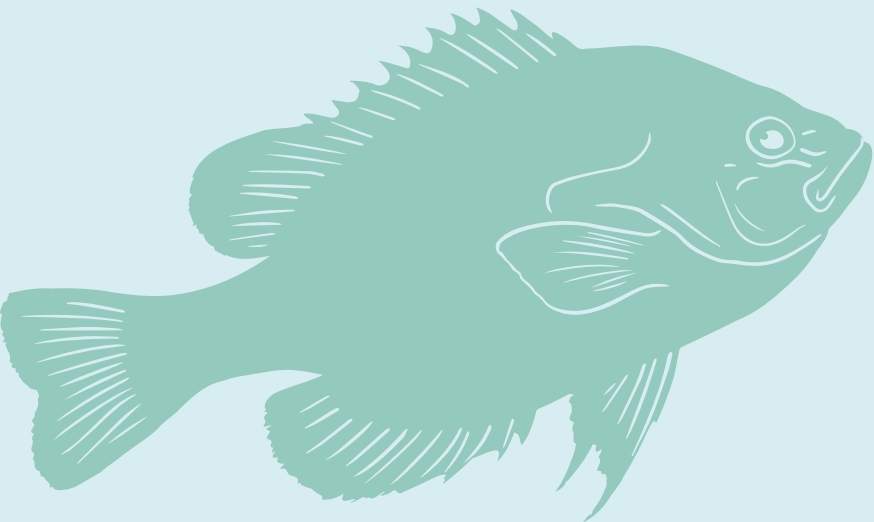
Volunteers help remove invasive water chestnut from Hester & Piero's Mill pond.



Hester & Piero's Mill Pond in Van Cortlandt Park.



Springtime Shindig Sponsors





Dragonfly

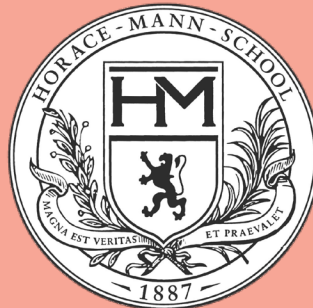
Horace Mann School
Congratulates this year's Honorees

Betty Campbell-Adams Park Angel Award

Nina Habib Spencer and Carol J. Samol
VCPA's Founding Co-Chairs

Cultivating The Bronx Award

Tibbetts Brook Daylighting Project Team:
NYC Department of Environmental Protection
NYC Parks Environment and Planning
Hazen and Sawyer
Starr Whitehouse Landscape Architects and Planners
Bronx Council for Environmental Quality





Wood Duck

Congratulations to our Honorees!

Thank you for your leadership,
dedication, and great work!

Lisa Cintron and Ezra Borut

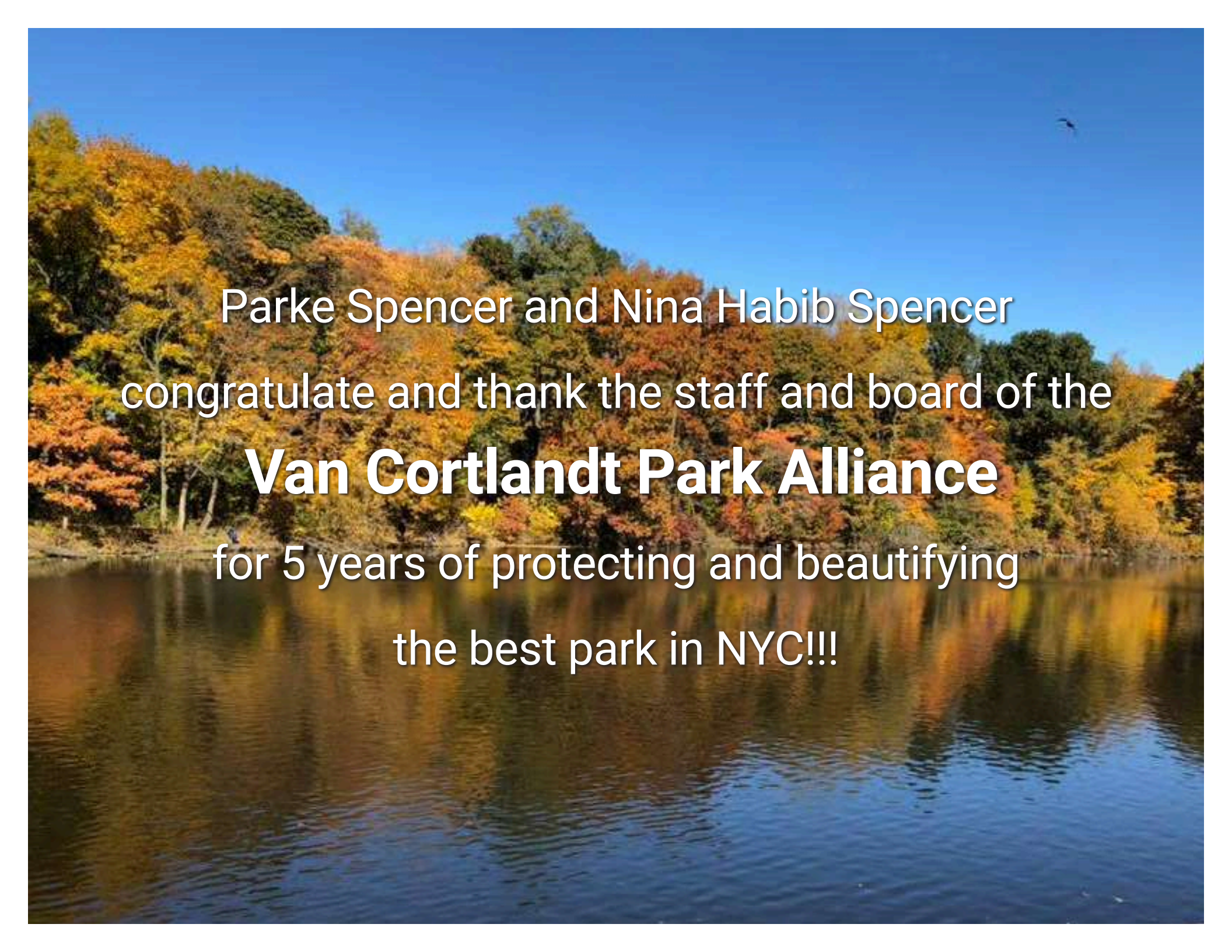


Ethical Culture Fieldston School



EXCEL | SECURITY CORP

LAW ENFORCEMENT & SECURITY SERVICES SINCE 1940



Parke Spencer and Nina Habib Spencer
congratulate and thank the staff and board of the
Van Cortlandt Park Alliance
for 5 years of protecting and beautifying
the best park in NYC!!!



Hazen all
things
water®

If you're trusted to protect public health
and the environment, **we can help.**

hazenandsawyer.com

Tom, Rachel and Emma Kelly
Salute

Stephanie Ehrlich

VCPA Executive Director and
Van Cortlandt Park Administrator

and

Van Cortlandt Park Alliance Staff

for all they do to make
Van Cortlandt Park
everything it can be!

Montefiore Einstein

**Congratulations to
Van Cortlandt Park Alliance's Honorees**

Betty Campbell-Adams Park Angel Award:

Nina Habib Spencer

Carol J. Samol

Cultivating the Bronx Award:

Daylighting Tibbetts Brook Team

NYC Parks Environment and Planning

Department of Environmental Protection

Hazen and Sawyer

Starr Whitehouse Landscape Architects & Planners

Bronx Council for Environmental Quality

**SAR Academy and High School are proud to salute the invaluable work these
community partners do on behalf of so many in the Bronx.**

Rabbi Binyamin Krauss (AC'84), Principal, SAR Academy

Rabbi Tully Harcsztark,

Founding Principal, SAR High School;

Dean, Machon Siach

Rabbi Jonathan Kroll, Principal, SAR High School

Jack C. Bendheim, President



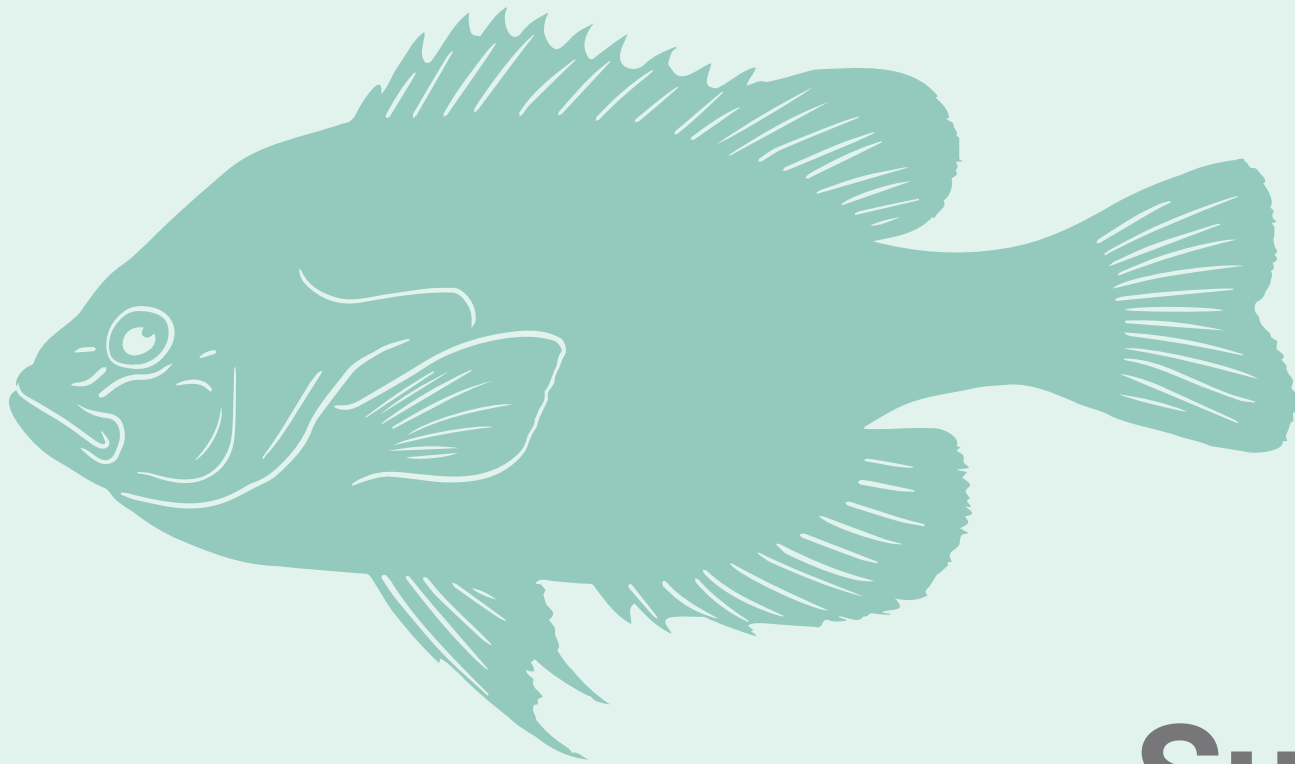
Nina and Carol

Congratulations

on this well-deserved honor and
thank you for all you have done
for **Van Cortlandt Park!**

It has been wonderful working
with such champions of the park.

Lee Sossen and Sherri Williams



Sunfish



Congrats to
VCPA!



GROUNDWORK

Hudson Valley

Great work VCPA!

John Park and Jeanne Jang



Tibbets Brook, Van Cortlandt Park, Bronx, NY

*Thrilled to be honored at the Van Cortlandt
Park Alliance's Springtime Shindig!*



STARR WHITEHOUSE
Landscape Architects
and Planners PLLC



Spring Peeper

WE'RE FOR EVERY TREE.

**EXPERT TREE CARE
FOR 117 YEARS —
AND GROWING.**

Magnolia stellata, *Magnolia x soulangeana*. Better known as Star Magnolia and Saucer Magnolia, these are two of the thousands of species we specialize in. For 117 years, our family-owned company has brought a rare mix of groundbreaking science, award-winning safety practices, and global resources to every tree and shrub care task at hand. And at the heart of our success are our people — experts who know and champion every tree, no matter the species. Discover how our passion is inspiring one beautiful property after another.

Call **914-592-4520** or visit
bartlett.com/elmsford-ny

PRUNING | FERTILIZATION | CABLING & BRACING
INSECT & DISEASE MANAGEMENT | TREE INSPECTIONS
STORM DAMAGE | LIGHTNING PROTECTION | REMOVALS

The F.A. Bartlett Tree Expert Company
NYC 1290709-DCA | Westchester WC-05518-H93



**BARTLETT
TREE EXPERTS**

SCIENTIFIC TREE CARE SINCE 1907

CONGRATULATIONS

to all of the honorees

Nina Habib Spencer

Carol J. Samol

**NYC Department of
Environmental Protection**

**NYC Parks
Environment and Planning**

Hazen and Sawyer

**Starr Whitehouse
Landscape Architects & Planners**

**Bronx Council for
Environmental Quality**

And thank you to all the dedicated
staff and volunteers who maintain

Van Cortlandt Park.

Bob Bender and Loretta Nash

BCEQ is Celebrating 53 Years
of Bronx Environmental
Stewardship and the Largest
Green Infrastructure Project
in the City of New York



Congratulations and appreciation
for all the honorees.
We are proud to be community partners
of the Tibbetts Daylighting Team.

*Board of Directors
Bronx Council for Environmental Quality*

**Carter Ledyard &
Milburn and Chris Rizzo**
are proud to continue
our decade-long support
of **Van Cortlandt Park**
and the **Alliance.**

CARTER/LEDYARD

We gratefully salute
Carol Samol and
Nina Habib Spencer
for kickstarting
the formation of the
Van Cortlandt Park Alliance.

And we hail the team
that is daylighting
Tibbetts Brook,
New York City's most
exciting and transformative
green infrastructure project.

*Linda R. Cox and
John G. Robinson*

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!



**van cortlandt
park alliance**



Carol & Nina,

Thank you for setting a clear course for sunny skies
and success. I am forever grateful to you both
for all of your wisdom and support.

xox - Stephanie

New York City Department
of Environmental Protection
Congratulates

***Betty Campbell-Adams
Park Angel Award***

Honorees

Nina Habib Spencer and Carol J. Samol
and

Celebrates Our Fellow

Cultivating the Bronx Award

Honorees

Tibbetts Brook Daylighting Project

NYC Parks Environment and Planning
Hazen and Sawyer

Starr Whitehouse Landscape Architects
and Planners

Bronx Council for Environmental Quality



**Environmental
Protection**

Congratulations to
Carol and Nina!

Thank you
for your leadership.

Warmly,
Holly Leicht and Adam Weinstein

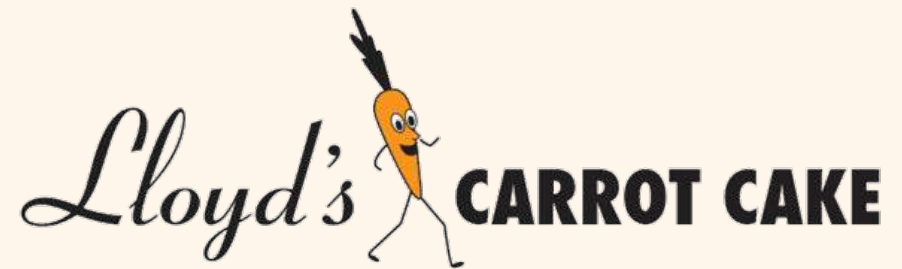


*Affordable Housing . Rentals . Housing Lotteries
Development . Construction*

5925 Broadway Bronx NY 10463 . 718-884-7676 . www.lemlewolff.com



Lloyd's Carrot Cake
is proud to be a
sponsor of the
VCPA's Springtime Shindig.



A legacy still lives on.

*For almost 40 years
Lloyd's Carrot Cake has been
a staple in the Riverdale community,
serving love and comfort in the
form of delicious baked goods,
to the Bronx and beyond.*



MANHATTAN
COLLEGE

is proud to support the

Van Cortlandt Park Alliance and
Congratulates the Springtime Shindig Honorees

Betty Campbell-Adams Park Angel Award

Nina Habib Spencer
Carol J. Samol

Cultivating the Bronx Award

Daylighting Tibbetts Brook Team
NYC Parks Environment and Planning
Department of Environmental Protection
Hazen and Sawyer
Starr Whitehouse Landscape Architects & Planners
Bronx Council for Environmental Quality

Milo Rivero '81, Ph.D., P.E.
President

A toast to our visionary
founding co-chairs

Nina and Carol!

And to the outstanding

**Tibbetts Brook
Daylighting Team!**

Thank you
for your stewardship
and service.

Judy Mills-Johnson and Ian Johnson

Riverdale Country School
adds its congratulations and
thanks to the honorees for
their dedication and
cultivation of a better life in
The Bronx.

Thank you for your service to
our Bronx community.



RIVERDALE

The Peace of Wild Things

Wendell Berry

When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

*With gratitude,
Carol J. Samol*



Congratulations Honorees

for your commitment to the
Community and Parks Service.

*From Marvin Shandler and
Linda Shandler Friedman,
proud supporters of the
Allen Shandler Recreation Area
and programs for youth in the Park*



Congrats to The VCP Alliance

Thanks for
taking good care
of our wonderful park

Bob and Terry Grant Stoeth

Congratulations to this year's Honorees!

Betty Campbell-Adams Park Angel Award

VCPA Founding Co-chairs

Nina Habib Spencer and Carol J. Samol

Cultivating the Bronx Award

Tibbetts Brook Daylighting Project Team:

NYC Department of Environmental Protection

NYC Parks Environment and Planning

Hazen and Sawyer

Starr Whitehouse Landscape Architects & Planners

Bronx Council for Environmental Quality

Mandi Sussman



TISHMAN SPEYER

Tishman Speyer is a proud supporter of

**Van Cortlandt Park Alliance
Springtime Shindig!**

Contributors

Mario Bulfamante & Sons



Anthony Bulfamante
Landscape Design
Installation & Maintenance
Site Development

75 Portman Rd.
New Rochelle, NY 10801

Tel: (914) 636-4428
Fax: (914) 636-4497
WC# WC-03175-H90
NYC# 1220879

E-mail: office@mariobulfamante.com

WCorkMaster
Wines & Spirits



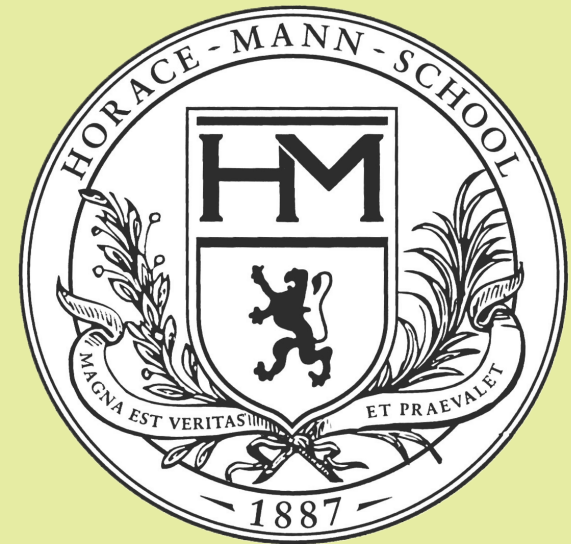
COLLEAGUE

LET'S BUILD YOUR BEST TEAM

Emiliano's
ITALIAN SPECIALTIES & MARKET



EXCEL | SECURITY
CORP
LAW ENFORCEMENT & SECURITY SERVICES SINCE 1940



90.7
WfUV
.org





Raffle Donors

Gary Axelbank

Beauty by Victoria/Victoria Carabello

Eco Salon

Emiliano's Market

Fieldston Farms/Mark Chernauskas and Margaret
Forgione

Get Fit Coaching LLC/Coach Mitch Lee

JetBlue Airlines

Horace Mann School

Moss Cafe

New Leash New York/Jorge Osvaldo Maciel

Amanda Salzhauer/Daryl Roth Productions

TCR The Club of Riverdale

The Bronx Beer Hall

Tod's

Whitehall Club





Photo Credits

Josh Cuppek Photography

Stephanie Ehrlich

Christina Taylor

Proceeds from the **Springtime Shindig** support Van Cortlandt Park Alliance's education, restoration, research, and community stewardship programs. Van Cortlandt Park Alliance works in close partnership with NYC Parks to preserve, support, and promote the recreational, ecological, and historical value of the park.

To learn more: vancortlandt.org

Follow us!
@vc Alliance



