



Assemblyman

Mark Gjonaj



Community Update

Summer 2015

HIGHLIGHTED EVENTS



Women's History Month 'Women of Distinction' Breakfast

Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj honored a number of phenomenal women for their hard work, commitment and achievements during Women's History Month. Six community leaders were honored for their dedication to the betterment of their respective neighborhoods on March 28, 2015 at the F&J Pine Restaurant. Assemblyman Gjonaj opened by giving praise to the women in his own life before handing the ceremony over to the keynote speaker, Honorable Judge Llinet Rosado. The honored guests included distinguished women such as Edith Blitzer, chair of the Pelham Parkway Neighborhood Association and Ruth Mastro, Director of Business at Assisted Living Communities of Amber Court.



Spring Cleanups – Think Globally, Act Locally

In honor of National Volunteer Month and the 45th anniversary of Earth Day, a day devoted to raising awareness to environmental issues that impact our lives every day, Assemblyman Gjonaj took to the cause and hosted his annual Spring Clean Ups on Pelham Parkway and Mosholu Parkway on April 18 and April 25. Volunteers came to clean up trash, debris, and leaves from the parkways so that our families and friends can enjoy a clean, healthy and beautiful place to live.



Assemblyman Gjonaj Awarded Albania's Highest Medal of Honor

On May 6, 2015, Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj was presented with Albania's Honor of Nation Order Medal at Don Coqui for his strength of

character, ethics, and his work on behalf of all people. Albania's Honor of the Nation Order Medal is considered the highest medal of honor that can be awarded to a civilian as given by the Republic of Albania. Assemblyman Gjonaj was recognized as the first person of Albanian ancestry to be elected to public office in the United States of America.



Pillars of Education Teacher Appreciation Breakfast 2015

Assemblyman Gjonaj hosted his 3rd Annual Teacher Appreciation Breakfast on May 29th. Principals from all over the 80th Assembly District nominated a staff member to be honored at the breakfast for their hard work and dedication that went above and beyond the call of duty.

District Office: 1126 Pelham Parkway South • Bronx, NY 10461 • 718-409-0109
Albany Office: Room 633, Legislative Office Bldg. • Albany, NY 12248 • 518-455-5844
Email: gjonajm@assembly.state.ny.us

HIGHLIGHTED EVENTS (CONT.) / AROUND THE DISTRICT



Ghanaian Committee of Tracy Towers' Annual Durbar

Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj co-sponsored the Tracy Towers' Ghanaian Committee's Annual Durbar Celebration on July 12, 2014. The festivities included a colorful procession of community leaders and celebratory dancing and singing. Other guests included Congressman Charles Rangel, Assemblyman Keith Wright, and Councilman Andy King.



Rain Barrel Giveaway

On June 6, 2015, rain barrels were handed out at P.S. 83 to homeowners around the Bronx. Almost 200 homeowners were able to receive a 50 gallon rain barrel courtesy of The New York City Department of Environmental Protection and Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj. Some of the benefits of using a rain barrel include saving money, improving harbor water quality, keeping your plants healthy and lowering your carbon footprint.

Bronx Day in Albany

Assemblyman Gjonaj and Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. delivered another successful Bronx Day in Albany on June 15, 2015. State legislators, notable Bronx organizations and companies united in the Capitol to promote 'Bronx Pride' and express their needs from the legislators. The 'Best of the Bronx' reception was held in the evening to showcase the best that the Bronx has to offer.

Allerton Avenue International Festival

On August 22, 2014, Assemblyman Gjonaj co-hosted the 7th Annual Allerton Avenue International Festival. The festival featured an international food fest where patrons were able to enjoy tastes from around the world, including Italian, Jamaican and Bangladeshi, which can all be found right here in the Bronx.



Christopher Columbus High School Farewell Dinner

Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj and his staff attended the Christopher Columbus High School Farewell Dinner at the Villa Barone Manor on June 27, 2014. The last graduating class had set sail earlier in the week.



Independence Day at Orchard Beach 2014

On June 27, 2014, Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj joined other elected officials at Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. and New York State Senator Jeff Klein's official kick-off of the 2014 Independence Day fireworks celebration at Orchard Beach.



Senior Trip to Pomona

Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj along with Assemblyman Michael Benedetto and Senator Jeff Klein hosted the 2nd Annual Senior Trip to Platzl Brauhaus in Pomona, New York on August 12, 2014. Seniors enjoyed a day of dancing, bingo, mini golf, lunch and more!



International Family Day

Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj hosted his 2nd Annual International Family Day on August 17, 2014 by DeWitt Clinton High School on Mosholu Parkway.



Morris Park Columbus Day Parade

Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj walks with fellow elected officials and representatives at the annual Christopher Columbus Day Parade on October 12, 2014, on Morris Park Avenue.



Senior Game Day

Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj teamed up with Wellcare to host his first Senior Game Day on September 30, 2014, where seniors were able to take part in fun activities such as playing various games and dancing.



70th Anniversary of the V-E Day and Tribute to Albania

On Tuesday, May 5th, 2015, Assemblyman Gjonaj and Senator Klein joined community members in Albany for the commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of the V-E Day, Victory in Europe, marking the ending of World War II. President of Albania, H.E. Bujar Nishani, was the keynote speaker for the tribute to the Albanians for their efforts in saving the Jewish population from the Nazi regime. During the luncheon reception, a photo exhibition of "Besa: Albanians that Saved Jews during WWII" by famed photographer and Guest of Honor, Norman Gershman, was presented.

Toy Drive at St. Joseph's School for the Deaf and the New York Institute for Special Education

Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj helped Santa Claus deliver presents to the students of St. Joseph's School for the Deaf and to the students of the New York Institute for Special Education in December 2014.



Interfaith Peace Rally

Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj hosted his Interfaith Peace Rally on January 19, 2015, in the wake of the terror attacks in Paris, France. The rally called for the community to unite and stand up against intolerance and violence everywhere in the world. Community leaders and members joined together to commemorate those lost in the senseless attacks and to pray for a peaceful future for all.



Albanian Independence Day

Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj hosts the 3rd Annual celebration of Albanian Independence in Maestro Catering Hall on November 30, 2014. The celebration featured traditional arts and entertainment from Albania, including a dance company from Morocco.



Menorah Lightings

Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj, Senator Jeff Klein and community leaders joined in lighting menorahs around the 80th Assembly District for the first night of Hanukkah on December 17, 2014.

A Message from Assemblyman Gjonaj

As this year's session comes to a close, I am proud of the accomplishments of our legislature in passing a number of bills that will directly benefit our neighbors in the 80th Assembly District. Along with passing an on-time budget, we have allocated a much-needed additional \$1 billion toward education in an effort to boost the performance of our troubled schools. All of our children deserve a quality education, and it is my hope that the addition of these funds will result in stronger performance and a better educational experience for the students in our district.

Another concern within our district is the state of our NYCHA housing developments. It was a major accomplishment of the legislature to get \$100 million allocated to address a major issue in our NYCHA houses: roof disrepair leading to significant health problems, including moldy conditions within the buildings. The health and well-being of our residents is of utmost importance, and I make it a priority to do everything I can to make sure we are all safe and comfortable in our homes.

Having confidence in the representation of your elected officials is not only important, it is a necessity. I am proud of the legislation we passed this session that brings more clarity and transparency to our election laws and clearly defines penalties for corrupt public officials. Honesty and integrity in our legislative system is the only way our system can operate efficiently and in the best interests of our constituents, and the legislation we passed this session will make it clear that corruption will not be tolerated. It is my hope that the passage of this legislation brings public confidence in our elected officials to a unprecedented level.

All of these issues, as well as other accomplishments including the rent freeze, bolstering SCRIE and DRIE programs, providing additional services for our veterans, promoting independent living, enhancing the quality of life of people with disabilities, and providing additional assistance for victims of domestic violence, all add up to a busy and successful session. I look forward to returning to the floor in January to continue representing your interests, and as

always, I thank you for the opportunity to serve the great people of the 80th Assembly District!

-Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj

Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj: Freezing rent brings relief for tenants

The decision by the Rent Guidelines Board to freeze rents for one-year leases for one year is great news for tenants across New York City. Preserving access to affordable housing through rent regulation is critical for middle- and low-income families. Bronx families are struggling to make ends meet, and taking action to keep rents at their current level is the right thing to do, because no one should have to choose between paying their rent and feeding or clothing their family.

The Assembly successfully fought to extend and strengthen rent laws for another four years, but there is much more work to do. I'm committed to protecting tenants and keeping housing affordable so working families can keep their homes.

Assemblyman Gjonaj on the Floor

During this past Assembly session, Assemblyman Gjonaj introduced and co-sponsored a number of Assembly bills including Assembly Bill A.07607, which establishes tax credits for premiums paid for life insurance which is used for long-term health care. The bill will encourage more individuals to finance their own long-term care and nursing home care as they get older and will help to curtail future expenditures from the State's Medicaid program.

The Assembly Bill A.07607 was passed by both the Assembly and the Senate and awaits passage by the Governor.

Assemblyman Gjonaj also helped pass a number of bills, including A.421C which took effect on July 1, 2015 which requires compensated school coaches to report cases of child abuse, and A.7704, which strips pensions from corrupt public officers.



Assemblyman
**Mark
Gjonaj**

Community Update

Summer 2015

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September

Hispanic Heritage Celebration
Saturday, September 19
Pelham Parkway

October

Team Gjonaj is walking at
Orchard Beach!
Breast Cancer Awareness Walk
Sunday, October 18, 2015

Halloween Parade
Saturday, October 24, 2015

November

Veterans Day Blood Drive
Tuesday, November 10

Assemblyman Gjonaj
Annual Turkey Drive
Contact our office after November
1st for more information

December

Annual Tree Lightings
• Allerton Ave
• Pelham Parkway
• At the 'Christmas House' on
Westervelt Ave.

Annual Menorah Lightings
• Pelham Parkway
• Einstein Hospital