

September 27, 2018: Today, Brooklyn Legal Services' Tenant Rights Coalition (TRC) hosted an Open House Event to commemorate the opening of its new office in Brownsville, Brooklyn. For three years, the TRC's dedicated team of attorneys and advocates has been providing legal and advocacy services to tenants in East New York, Brownsville, and surrounding neighborhoods, assisting thousands of tenants to fight evictions, address bad housing conditions, and force scofflaw landlords to comply with the law. The TRC's work is funded by the NYC Human Resources Administration's Office of Civil Justice.

*"People need initiatives like the TRC, not only to represent them in court but to prepare and educate them for the assault that is going on in our communities. Landlords are trying to get us out of our homes that we've enjoyed for decades," said **Lori Sharpe, Tenant and TRC client living at 205 Sumpter Street.** "We don't only occupy our homes – we live in our communities, we raise families (children, grandchildren, and in some cases great grandchildren), we develop alliances with our neighbors, we make friends, and we understand each other. We are building communities and that is why it's so important for us to remain in our homes."*

*"The de Blasio Administration has made a historic commitment to supporting universal access to free legal assistance for New York City tenants facing eviction for one simple reason: we firmly believe that no New Yorker should lose their home because of unfair evictions or displacement by unscrupulous landlords," said **Department of Social Services Commissioner Steven Banks.** "We congratulate our partner Brooklyn Legal Services on this new office for tenants and we are proud to work with the legal services community to help thousands of tenants fight for their rights and remain in their homes and communities as evictions by Marshals have dropped by 27% while we have been implementing universal access to counsel."*

The new TRC office is located at the intersection of Eastern Parkway and Rockaway Avenue, across the street from Mt. Ollie Baptist Church and near Assembly Member Latrice Walker and Councilwoman Alicka Ampry-Samuels' district offices, the Broadway Junction Transit Hub, and the Pitkin Avenue Business Improvement District. In partnership with tenant organizers from the Urban Homesteading Assistance Board (UHAB), the TRC will continue to fight against tenant displacement, as well as defend the rights of all tenants to live in safe, healthy, affordable, and stable homes.

*"The harassment and frustration that I began to experience when my building changed owners in 2014 became a common thread that brought a group of diverse strangers together to form new friendships and a united front against the landlord. With the legal guidance and support of Brooklyn Legal Services, we were empowered to seek justice and redress for the ongoing disregard and abuse of our rights as tenants to live in an environment that is clean, safe, and without fear of harassment and displacement," commented **Vashti Phillip, Tenant and TRC client living at 344 Marion Street.***

*"We are here to fight for the rights of Brooklyn tenants and be a force against landlords who abuse and displace tenants," said **Luis A. Henriquez Carrero, Brooklyn TRC Director.** "With our new Brownsville location, we look forward to deepening our ties with local community organizations, elected officials, congregations, and, above all, tenants living in Brownsville and East New York."*

At the opening, Brooklyn Legal Services staff were joined by Department of Social Services Commissioner Steven Banks, NYS Assembly Member Latrice Walker, Councilmember Alicka Ampry-Samuels, the office of Council Member Inez Barron, the office of the office of NYC Council Majority Leader Laurie A. Cumbo, the office of NYS Senator Roxanne Persaud, the offices of NYS Assembly Members Tremaine Wright and Charles Barron, and other elected officials and community organizations, including UHAB and Just Fix NYC.

*"I have always been an advocate for tenants, whether it be as a lawyer or an elected official. I am truly grateful to have another partner in this fight for Brownsville residents have been harassed during this housing crisis that our community has been faced with. I'm confident that Brooklyn Legal Services will work vigorously in the fight for the rights of the tenants of Brownsville," said **NYS Assembly Member Latrice Monique Walker (D-55).***

Currently employing a team of over 30 attorneys and advocates providing tenant representation and advocacy services, Brooklyn Legal Services' new Brownsville office will also serve as a hub to connect community residents to the broader range of civil legal services offered by the organization, including foreclosure prevention, disability rights, family, education, employment, consumer, and population specific services for LGBTQ/HIV individuals and veterans.

ABOUT BROOKLYN LEGAL SERVICES AND THE TENANT RIGHTS COALITION

Brooklyn Legal Services, a program of Legal Services NYC (LSNYC), fights poverty and seeks racial, social, and economic justice for low-income New Yorkers. For nearly 50 years, we have challenged systemic injustice and helped clients meet basic needs for housing, access to high-quality education, health care, family stability, and income and economic security. Legal Services NYC is the largest civil legal services provider in the country, with neighborhood-based offices across all five boroughs helping more than 80,000 New Yorkers annually. The Tenant Rights Coalition is a citywide anti-displacement

project focused in neighborhoods where tenant displacement is increasing due to gentrification. The work of the Tenant Rights Coalition is funded by the NYC Human Resources Administration's Office of Civil Justice.

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