

Summer 2023



# COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY NEIGHBORS NEWSLETTER

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# Community & Connection

## Columbia's 20th President, Minouche Shafik, Starts Her Term This Summer

Earlier this year, it was announced that Nemat “Minouche” Shafik—a leading economist whose career has focused on public policy and academia—will serve as the university’s 20th president.

On July 1, Shafik will officially begin her presidency at Columbia, marking an exciting time for the university’s leadership.

When Minouche delivered remarks on January 18, she spoke about the importance of deepening connections with surrounding communities.

“One of the things that attracted me so much to Columbia was your commitment to the notion that universities can and must engage beyond their walls,” Shafik said. “That engagement is even more critical in overcoming skepticism in some quarters as to what and whether universities actually make a positive contribution to



society. For Columbia, that commitment starts in our neighboring communities and extends across the globe.”

Also in January, during her appointment as president, Shafik met with local elected officials and community leaders on the Manhattanville campus. See the photos at [neighbors.columbia.edu/minouche-shafik](https://neighbors.columbia.edu/minouche-shafik).

Learn more about Minouche Shafik at [president.columbia.edu](https://president.columbia.edu).



## Harlem Native Phoebe-Sade Arnold's Uptown Roots and Reverence Runs Deep

For Phoebe-Sade Arnold, Harlem native and director of Community Affairs at Columbia, walking across 135th Street conjures a sense of nostalgia.

“135th Street will always have a special place in my heart,” she shared. “I always feel immediately at home when I’m there.”

Arnold leads an array of local social impact initiatives at the university. Playing a pivotal role in the community, her reverence for the neighborhood and the needs of Uptown residents guides her work.

*Columbia Neighbors* spoke with Arnold about the inspiration behind her career, how she navigates a role that sits at the intersection of Columbia and the community and her favorite Uptown gems.

Read the full conversation with Phoebe Sade-Arnold at [neighbors.columbia.edu/phoebe-columbia](https://neighbors.columbia.edu/phoebe-columbia).



## Join the Columbia Community Network



The **Community Advisory Council** aims to support and expand partnerships and programs with community leaders and organizations in Harlem and Upper Manhattan. If you would like to collaborate with the Council, consider joining the **Columbia Community Network**, which is designed

to strategically connect the communities surrounding Columbia with the University’s public-facing programs and initiatives to benefit low-income, low-wealth, and other disadvantaged communities. More information can be found at [neighbors.columbia.edu/community-network](https://neighbors.columbia.edu/community-network).



# Programs & Resources

## Free Youth Programs at Columbia University



Looking for free after-school programming for your little ones to enjoy in the upcoming school year? Check out these opportunities across Columbia University, for local students, that your children can take part in.

- **Columbia Astronomy Public Outreach** holds a public lecture and stargazing series during the semester that invites families onto campus for a full night of astronomy.
- **Columbia Engineering Outreach** has events ranging from physics demonstrations and lab training for elementary students to Saturday programs for high-performing high school students.
- **The Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory** in the Palisades hosts fun, educational youth programs for students interested in climate science. Join their Open House in October or one of their Science Saturday events to enjoy hands-on climate science activities.
- **Lenfest Kids** is a free film series available for the whole family. Typically organized under a central theme, films are often followed by Q&As, discussions, and other activities.

## Learn the Workings of the Brain at the Zuckerman Institute

Are you or your family looking to satisfy your curiosity about the brain?

Columbia University's Zuckerman Institute on the Manhattanville campus is dedicated to unlocking the brain's mysteries and how it affects our mind and behavior. Through its free programming, the Zuckerman Institute shares the excitement and challenges of neuroscience. To stay updated on upcoming events from Zuckerman Institute, subscribe to our newsletter at [neighbors.columbia.edu/newsletter](https://neighbors.columbia.edu/newsletter).

From after-school workshops to jazz concerts, here are a few programs you and your family can take part in:

- **Saturday Science** invites families to enjoy a full day of science learning around a monthly theme with scientists and educators.
- **Late Night Science** is a seminar series for students to have one-on-one discussions and lab tours with graduate students who are doing research.
- **STEM Starters** invites students to join Columbia graduate students for an afternoon of experiments in different science disciplines.

Learn about other programming and how to get involved at [neighbors.columbia.edu/zuckerman](https://neighbors.columbia.edu/zuckerman).

## Empowering a New Generation of Social Innovators

The Entrepreneurial Design Thinking Program is an eight-week course designed to empower New York City residents to use basic design thinking principles to create solutions to social issues they're passionate about.

Since it began in 2019, the program has led four cohorts, supported 100 Black and Brown entrepreneurs throughout the five boroughs, and awarded \$60,000 in funding to participants. *Columbia Neighbors* spoke to two Uptown-based social entrepreneurs who participated in the program, Alyna Brown and Kameron Johnston.

Brown is the founder of the nonprofit SELF Inc., an organization that provides girls of color a safe space to explore their passions, talents, beauty, and culture.

Johnston created the Harlem-based tour company, Our Story Tours, which merges her passion for preserving the community's rich cul-



Alyna Brown and Kameron Johnston

tural history and dedication to helping those affected by the criminal justice system.

Learn more about Alyna and Kameron's journey and the Entrepreneurial Design Thinking Program at [neighbors.columbia.edu/entrepreneurs](https://neighbors.columbia.edu/entrepreneurs).

## PROGRAMS & RESOURCES DIRECTORY

Columbia University has a longstanding commitment to cultivating community-driven partnerships in Upper Manhattan and hundreds of programs available to our neighbors at no cost. Columbia commits not only to funding, but also the time and energy of students, faculty, and staff who work in collaboration with a wide array of local organizations dedicated to making a difference in the lives of people Uptown.

We've compiled a comprehensive online directory of programs ranging from the A'Leila Bundles Community Scholars to the Grow Vendor Development Program to the Employment Information Center to the Workforce Training Program, and more. Check out the full list of programs at [neighbors.columbia.edu/resources](https://neighbors.columbia.edu/resources).



# Visit Manhattanville

## Five Spots to Explore on the Campus

When Pat Lilly gazes up at the glass structures that make up the landscape of campus, one of the first things that come to mind is—hope.

“As the campus continues to grow and the buildings come to life, my hope is that the community will start to embrace what Columbia has to offer,” Lilly—who serves as Senior Program Manager in the Office of Community Partnerships at Columbia Business School and has worked at the University for nearly a decade—told *Columbia Neighbors*. “They are for everybody, not just today, but every day.”

From the **Wallach Art Gallery** for gallery-goers, **The Café at David Geffen Hall** for local eats, **The Forum** for an open space for the public with free wifi, **Nash Building: Sheffield Farms, the Milk Industry, and the Public Good Exhibit** for historical exhibition, or **The Square** for green space—these are the five must-see public spaces at Columbia’s Manhattanville campus, according to Pat Lilly.

Learn about how you can visit these spaces at [neighbors.columbia.edu/explore-manhattanville](https://neighbors.columbia.edu/explore-manhattanville).



From left to right: The Cafe at David Geffen Hall, The Forum, 'Sheffield Farms, the Milk Industry, and the Public Good' exhibit at the Nash Building, The Square, and Wallach Art Gallery.

## Meet Harlem Wellness Center Leader Vivian Kurutz

The Harlem Wellness Center was born in 2003, when a circle of friends in Harlem asked founder Vivian Kurutz to teach them yoga. Over the next decade, she developed a series of popular yoga classes and pioneered an expanding array of healthy living workshops for Harlem residents. Through her leadership, the center has evolved into a dynamic, diverse, and close-knit community devoted to creating a city-wide, grassroots movement for health equity, racial healing, and healthy communities.

The Harlem Wellness Center hosts weekly Wellness Circles at The Forum. Join Vivian to engage in chair stretches and meditation sessions on Wednesdays in The Forum’s West Atrium.

Learn more about Vivian’s story at [neighbors.columbia.edu/vivian](https://neighbors.columbia.edu/vivian).



## Thanks for Coming to our Manhattanville Community Days in May and October!



Save the date for the next Community Day on **October 21, 2023**, for a free fun-filled celebration of community! Immerse yourself in the arts through film screenings and art activities, indulge in

Uptown cuisine from local vendors, explore the workings of the brain in science workshops for kids and families, learn about employment opportunities on campus — plus so much more.



# Continuing Education

## Indulge Your Curiosity and Learn New Skills with Free Course Auditing

Are you interested in keeping your mind active through courses at Columbia? If you live in Upper Manhattan, including Randall's Island or the South Bronx, haven't recently attended high school, and aren't enrolled at a university, you're probably eligible for the free Manhattanville Course Auditing Program at Columbia.

Manhattanville Course Auditing provides adults not currently enrolled in college with the opportunity to attend selected lectures from the University's offerings in the Arts and Sciences during the academic year at no cost and is available to the residents of Manhattanville and Grant Houses, and the local Manhattanville community. Auditors can observe one class per semester but don't receive credit toward a degree or grades. They also aren't required to take exams or write papers.

Manhattanville auditors have the opportunity to learn professional skills in marketing, accounting, and nonprofit management courses, or they can take a liberal arts approach and seek out classes in comparative literature, philosophy, and even biology and linguistics. Available courses vary each se-



mester, and often more classes are available shortly before the semester starts.

Roy Byrd, a retired computer science researcher and Columbia neighbor, has participated in the Manhattanville Course Auditing Program since 2018.

"Throughout my career, I always planned to 'move to a college town when I retire,' in order to remain intellectually vital and entertained," Byrd said. "Living near Columbia helps me achieve that and the courses are part of the intellectual stimulation."

Learn about the steps you need to take to become a Manhattanville Auditor at [neighbors.columbia.edu/auditing](https://neighbors.columbia.edu/auditing).

## Level Up: High School Equivalency Degree and Job Opportunities

The **Connecting Youth Initiative** identifies and engages youth and young adults ages 16-24 in the local community who have not completed high school (nor obtained a high school equivalency diploma) and are not employed, in order to connect them to educational and employment resources. For more information about how to access the program, please contact 212-854-4143 or visit [neighbors.columbia.edu/cyi](https://neighbors.columbia.edu/cyi).



# Construction & Small Business

## Harlem-Born Entrepreneur Jean Chatman Serves Award-Winning Cakes

If there's one thing Jean Chatman—the culinary architect behind Uptown's beloved bespoke bakery Chatman J. Cakes—has learned along her entrepreneurial journey, it's mastering the art of reinvention. Her business was born during a period of rediscovery; revisiting her grandmother's cooking traditions while writing her next chapter after retirement.

"It wasn't something that I planned," said Chatman. "It wasn't even on the radar at the

time, but you never forget your past. It's led me to discover a winning combination with what I do now."

With the support of workshops led by the Columbia-Harlem Small Business Development Center and other initiatives like Harlem Park to Park, Chatman has evolved her business and is a popular vendor at Manhattanville Community Day. Read more of our conversation at [neighbors.columbia.edu/jean-chatman](https://neighbors.columbia.edu/jean-chatman).

## Residents Join Pre-Apprenticeship Program for Union Careers in Construction



The Pathways to Apprenticeship's (P2A) Direct Entry Building Trades Pre-Apprenticeship is a workforce development program that provides residents from socially and economically disadvantaged communities a pathway towards a stable job with benefits in the construction industry.

The new cohort, which began in March 2023 at the Dempsey Center in West Har-

lem, prioritized minorities, women, and Upper Manhattan residents, although it was open to residents of all five boroughs. 25 people were admitted into the cohort, 7 of which are from Upper Manhattan.

Learn more about the P2A Direct Pre-Apprenticeship program at [neighbors.columbia.edu/p2a](https://neighbors.columbia.edu/p2a).

## CONSTRUCTION UPDATES

Do you live in the area and are curious about construction occurring on the Manhattanville campus? You can get the latest on Manhattanville campus construction by signing up for weekly email updates at [neighbors.columbia.edu/construction-updates](https://neighbors.columbia.edu/construction-updates).



# Visit the Libraries

## Dive Into the Apollo Theater Oral History Project



It's no secret that the Apollo Theater is a legend in pop culture and music. But on its 75th anniversary, the Apollo set out to capture its own story. The Apollo Theater Oral History Project, which is available for public viewing at Columbia's Rare Book and Manuscript Library, recorded the theater's history through interviews with legends like Smokey Robinson, as well as managers, industry moguls, and many others.

The project was a collaborative effort. Mary Marshall Clark, former director of the Center, remembers many walks from Columbia's campus to the Apollo in the project's early days. "We acknowledged that the first few months would be a trust-building period," Clark said. "So we spent a lot of time with each other. We had months of conversations over tea and coffee, and lots of laughter."

The Apollo was inspired to continue preserving local community stories in Harlem. The theater began a new youth program that would teach students at Harriet Tubman Learning Center, C.S. 154, how to conduct their own oral history interviews with the group, Significant Elders of Harlem.

*Columbia Neighbors* dug into the archives to learn more about the theater—right from the mouths of music legends. From the secret celebrity guests who attended shows in a camouflaged seating area known as “the box” to index cards of performance critiques written by the Apollo's family of managers, there's plenty to uncover in the Apollo Theater Oral History Project.

See the secrets and little-known facts about the Apollo that be found in the archive at [neighbors.columbia.edu/apollo-theater](https://neighbors.columbia.edu/apollo-theater).

## Dominican-York Icon Josefina Báez's Archive



Poet. Storyteller. Dancer. Dramatist. Writer. Teacher. Director. Performance Artist. These words only begin to scratch the surface of Josefina Báez, the Dominican-York icon, whose archive was recently acquired by the Latino Arts and Activisms Collection at Columbia University at the Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Báez, who immigrated to New York from the Dominican Republic, has spent her artistic life transforming the concepts of the inner and outer identities of migrants into public explorations of language, culture, and community. Upper Manhattan has been a key part of her work she has shown in Harlem, Washington Heights, and Inwood.

“The inclusion of the Josefina Báez archive

is a watershed moment for the Latino Arts and Activisms (LAAS) collection,” said Frances Negrón-Muntaner, founding curator of LAAS and Julian Clarence Levi Professor in the Humanities. “It is impossible to tell the story of twentieth and twenty-first-century Latinos in New York, global Black thought, and performance history without Báez. Her archive is also our tenth collection, and the first of an Afro-Latina and Dominican artist at Columbia's Rare Book & Manuscript Library.”

Learn more about Báez's trailblazing life and accomplishments, and what can be found in her collection at [neighbors.columbia.edu/josefina-baez](https://neighbors.columbia.edu/josefina-baez).

### VISITING THE LIBRARY

To visit the archive at the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, you can book an advance appointment on the library website. Government-issued photo identification is required upon your first visit. Learn more about how to visit the Rare Book and Manuscript Library at [neighbors.columbia.edu/library](https://neighbors.columbia.edu/library).





# COMMUNITY. CULTURE. CONNECTION. UPTOWN.



*Columbia Neighbors* is where the University connects with its local community, its new friends and neighbors, anyone who looks to the diversity of ideas in our community and sees the possibility for shared growth, being of service, and connection.

*Neighbors* is part resource guide, part community news and storytelling hub, part gathering place. It is for everyone in the communities surrounding our campuses in Upper Manhattan.

COLUMBIA NEIGHBORS



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