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*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

Legal Aid and Guns Down, Life Up Launch Know Your Rights Ambassadorship Training in The Bronx

(NEW YORK, NY) - The Legal Aid Society and Guns Down, Life Up (GDLU) announced a Youth Ambassadorship series which will educate youth on interactions with law enforcement groups - including prevention, de-escalation techniques, and how to avoid entering gang databases, as well as youth organizing and mobilization.

The Youth Ambassadorship program consists of a series of workshops aimed at empowering the youth to become facilitators of important know your rights information to effectively share that information with their peers. During the Ambassadorship program, the youth will grasp presentation techniques, deepen their critical thinking skills, learn about their rights when encountering law enforcement, become involved in advocacy and law reform, and create their own presentations with community organizers guiding them in the process.

In the “Law Enforcement Gang Database” workshop, participants will learn about the gang databases, social media surveillance techniques and other intelligence gathering, and the impact on Black and Brown communities.

In “Youth Organizing,” participants will learn about grassroots organizing techniques and the history of Black and Brown youth organizing from the 60's to present day.

“We are proud to bring this Know Your Rights series to The Bronx where it is critical to build awareness and expand education efforts to empower youth to advocate for themselves when facing potentially unethical and harmful law enforcement tactics,” said **Anthony Posada, supervising attorney in the Community Justice Unit at The Legal Aid Society.** “Communities are stronger and healthier when they are empowered and know their rights.”

“I’m honored and extremely excited that Guns Down Life Up is working with The Legal Aid Society to inform our children of laws and their legal rights. I believe this knowledge will prevent conflict, could possibly help them stay out of jail and ultimately save lives. GDLU wants to offer this workshop throughout the corporation and we’re working with the Legal Aid Society to make this happen,” said **James Dobbins, Director Guns Down Life Up and NYC Health + Hospitals’ Violence Prevention Initiatives’ Community Initiatives Director.**

“Offering developmental activities to educate our youth and to provide them with positive alternatives is critical to stemming the tide of violence in our communities. Legal Aid has been an incredible partner and we look forward to bringing their expertise across NYC Health + Hospitals,” said **Christopher Philippou, NYC Health + Hospitals’ Violence Prevention Initiatives’ System Lead.**

The program will expand across the NYC Health + Hospitals network of hospital-based violence prevention program sites to bring these workshops as part of a joint community outreach initiative. For more information or to join a class, please contact Anthony Posada at (917) 494-3687.

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The Legal Aid Society exists for one simple yet powerful reason: to ensure that New Yorkers are not denied their right to equal justice because of poverty. For over 145 years, we have protected, defended, and advocated for those who have struggled in silence for far too long. Every day, in every borough, The Legal Aid Society changes the lives of our clients and helps improve our communities. www.legalaidnyc.org