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Legal Aid Society and Harlem Community Boards Host Successful Harlem Community Forum to Deliver Legal Support, Rights Education, and Civic Engagement Opportunities

Hundreds of Harlemites Attend Community Forum Alongside Local Elected Officials

(HARLEM, NY) - The Legal Aid Society, in partnership with Manhattan Community Boards 9, 10, and 11, hosted a Harlem Community Forum this past Saturday at the PAL Harlem Center, providing a full day of free legal support, educational workshops, and civic dialogue to hundreds of Harlem residents.

The forum was designed to empower local residents by offering access to legal guidance, in-depth know-your-rights programming, and a town hall-style conversation with nearly every elected official representing Harlem.

Throughout the day, Legal Aid attorneys provided free legal information and resources on a range of issues including housing, immigration, employment, public benefits, and youth justice. Residents also participated in focused workshops on tenants' rights and immigrants' rights, addressing urgent topics such as eviction protections, the housing court process, housing discrimination, and what to do if approached by federal immigration enforcement.

The event concluded with a community-led town hall where Harlem residents shared their concerns and vision for the neighborhood directly with elected officials. Legal Aid also used the opportunity to inform attendees about key policy initiatives currently before the New York City Council and New York State Legislature—and how community members can take action to support them.

To further amplify community voices, Legal Aid set up video booths for residents to record personal advocacy messages to leaders in Albany and at City Hall. These videos will be used to support campaigns for critical legislative initiatives addressing community concerns.

Food and refreshments were provided throughout the day, creating a welcoming and inclusive space for all attendees.

Photos (credit Afrikanspot)

- <https://tinyurl.com/ka9nebk3>
- <https://tinyurl.com/54mw9tyb>

“The Harlem Community Forum was about more than just providing legal services—it was about empowering Harlem residents with the knowledge, tools, and platforms to advocate for their rights and for the changes they want to see in their community,” said **Twyla Carter, Attorney-in-Chief and Chief Executive Officer of The Legal Aid Society**. “From free legal consultations to know-your-rights workshops, and an informative town hall with elected officials, the day was a testament to what’s possible when community and advocacy come together. We were especially proud to amplify local voices through video booths, allowing residents to speak directly to leaders in Albany and City Hall on urgent issues like housing, immigration, youth services, and criminal legal system reform.”

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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 nearly 150 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