



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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CITY COUNCIL SPEAKER STAFF EXPERIENCE AMIDA CARE'S “LIVE YOUR LIFE” WELLNESS EVENTS

On Tuesday, May 27, 2014, staff from The Office of New York City Council **Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito** visited Amida Care's "Food for Life" event held at Harlem United El Faro. On hand, were **Joe Pressley**, *Deputy Chief of Staff, Member Services*, and **Jennie Berger**, *General Welfare, Health & Jewish Community Liaison*.

"Food for Life" is part of a series of wellness programs organized under Amida Care's *Live Your Life* events, where each month, members gather to learn about ways to get healthy and take good care of themselves. This particular event included a live demo from Chef Sydele Bryant on how to prepare a healthy cuisine on a budget, along with questions and answers between an inquisitive audience and approachable chef.

Amida Care is a community-sponsored, not-for-profit Medicaid Special Needs Plan (SNP) that provides comprehensive medical, behavioral and wellness services to people with multiple chronic conditions, such as HIV/AIDS, severe mental illness, substance use and homelessness, throughout New York City. "The Live Your Life program was created in response to direct member feedback for health care to be about more than doctor visits and pill boxes. These events meet the social, physical and emotional needs of our members and build life skills. Our Member Advisory Council (MAC) is credited with their creation," says Doug Wirth, President and CEO of Amida Care.

Amida Care holds its Live Your Life events each month in the Bronx, Brooklyn and Manhattan, and is free to all of its members. They offer valuable opportunities for Amida Care members to learn about nutrition, healthy relationships, art therapy, meditation, yoga, African and Latin dance, as well as participate in Town Hall meetings. According to Dr. Jerome Ernst, Chief Medical Officer at Amida Care, “We believe that health is more than the absence of disease and are doing our best to help our members achieve what the World Health Organization defines as health, a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing.”

Programs such as these are a critical component of Amida Care’s unique approach to care and wellness, ensuring that each person gets the right care, at the right time and enough of it to get healthy. “Our members consistently express gratification about the joy and fulfillment that the Live Your Life events bring to them. Our goal is to help members to help themselves, real empowerment!” says Stephane Howze, Director of Special Projects and Interim Director of Member Services at Amida Care.

For June, building healthy relationships will be the next series of Live Your Life events, making it even more advantageous that tips on healthy cooking were covered first!

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