



East Harlem Preservation

DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS

Marina J. Ortiz, Founder and President

Marina Ortiz is the founder and President of East Harlem Preservation, a volunteer advocacy organization created to promote, preserve, and protect the neighborhood's rich cultural, architectural and environmental history. Since 2004, she has worked to address local environmental, over-development, and affordable housing issues. In 2008, Ms. Ortiz was among several plaintiffs that successfully challenged the privatization of public parkland on Randall's Island. Marina is affiliated with a number of other local agencies, including: Hope Community, Inc., Community Board 11, and the East Harlem Historical Organization. She is the recipient of a 2007 community service award from Women of East Harlem/Mujeres del Barrio, a local women's advocacy organization. Ms. Ortiz holds a bachelor's degree in media communications and is experienced in neighborhood planning and community advocacy. Marina has an extensive background in nonprofit public relations and administration, which she has applied towards the development and growth of Harlem Preservation.

Kathleen Benson, Vice President

Kathleen Benson has worked in East Harlem all of her professional life and has been actively engaged with the community for nearly 20 years. Throughout her career, she has organized a number of historical exhibitions about East Harlem at The Museum of the City of New York and in partnership with institutions such as Union Settlement Association, The Mount Sinai Hospital, and the Center for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College. Presently, she is a member of the East Harlem Historical Organization and a board member and an officer of the East Harlem Board of Tourism. Kathleen's experience has contributed greatly to the development of an informational database on East Harlem history to her ability to maintain records and gives notices in careful and accurate information on East Harlem history.

Michelle Cruz, Treasurer

Michelle Cruz has served as Treasurer of East Harlem Preservation since September 2008. She holds a BBA in Accounting from Baruch College. Ms. Cruz is a local resident and small business owner with a personal interest in the neighborhood. She will diligently maintain accurate financial records in a transparent manner, and help develop sustainable fundraising strategies for the organization. Average hours worked: Ms. Cruz has helped develop fundraising strategies; and created and maintains an open financial management and reporting system.

Gina Rusch, Secretary

Gina Rusch holds a B.A. in Education from Smith College, and an M.Ed. from Teachers College, Columbia University. She has worked with a number of local non-profit and educational institutions, including Union Settlement, the Settlement College Readiness Program, and the Hunter College Psychology Department. An expert in the areas of administration, financial operations, and program development, Gina currently serves as President of the Union Settlement Federal Credit Union, Chairperson of the East Harlem Historical Organization, President of the East 104th Street Housing Development Fund Company, Inc., and Treasurer of the Head Start Sponsoring Board Council of the City of New York, Inc. Her background in education and nonprofit management will be a key factor in the development and sustainability of East Harlem Preservation as a permanent neighborhood institution. Ms. Rusch provides expertise in the areas of nonprofit management and education.

1622 Madison Avenue, # 5A | New York, NY 10029 | (646) 271-6854 | www.eastharlempreservation.org

