



**Dear UPROSE Community,**

In the midst of the Coronavirus (COVID-19), we are hoping that you and your families are safe and protected. Acknowledging this is a difficult time, we are concerned about our community and the folks who are most vulnerable.

UPROSE has been working at the intersection of racial justice and climate change in Sunset Park and beyond for years. What makes Sunset Park unique is that through Superstorm Sandy, we—as a community—understood the importance of social cohesion - and that is what will keep us, and our neighbors alive during times like this. The relationships and structures we've built throughout the years allow us to tap into collective resources in moments of instability and disaster. Now is the time, more than ever to come together in solidarity and use the collective knowledge and power we've built over the years. As we isolate in our homes to protect ourselves and our community, we recognize that some of us will be impacted more than others. As we work on strategies to facilitate virtual spaces for the community, we ask that you let us know if there are particular ways that we can support you.

It has come to our attention through engagement with small businesses that some auto shops are struggling to keep afloat. The situation was difficult prior to COVID-19 with rent prices increasing in the neighborhood but even more so now with a slow pace of businesses altogether. Some are experiencing the difficult decision of closing their business in the upcoming weeks and months. It is important that we come together in the midst of this pandemic and support each other in any way possible. We've done some research and found that the City is giving out no-interest loans to small businesses and offering grants to cover employee wages of up to 40% for the next to months. For more information on applying for this, please visit this [link](#).

This pandemic has made it clear how our well-being is directly tied to our social and physical health. Let's make the commitment to stay at home so we can limit our, and others' exposure to the virus. Even if we're feeling healthy, we can contribute to its spread. Let's cover our mouths while coughing and sneezing, and wash our hands frequently. We can practice physical distancing and still look out for one another! One thing we have to remember is that our minds and hearts are stronger together than divided. At UPROSE, we practice collective care which is at the heart of social cohesion!

It seems now, more than ever, that our strength and resiliency is being tested. Whether it be disastrous xenophobia and racism, job insecurity or the challenge to convene with one another, it is time to resist and be skeptical of these modes of control. Please take care of yourself at this time and check-in with one another; let us channel our energy into supporting the most vulnerable folks among us. #CollectiveCare

**With Peace, Love and Solidarity,  
Your UPROSE family**

