

## CBO SPOTLIGHT:



## UPROSE SUNSET PARK ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TOUR



(Above: The UPROSE Hybrid Bus)



(Above: UPROSE Youth at UPROSE Hybrid Bus Press Conference & Ribbon Cutting)

**The Sunset Park Environmental Justice Tour** seeks to educate residents about the devastating impact of toxic sites in Sunset Park, as well as to show the victories and efforts that the UPROSE community has accomplished, and to highlight their efforts to address difficult issues. UPROSE struggles to address local and regional inequities through education, organizing, and activism.

Sunset Park is home to three highways, 51 power plant units, over 130 Brownfield sites, a dozen companies releasing chemicals and waste reported through the Toxic Release Inventory database, over 9 acres of Superfund sites, several waste transfer stations, a sludge treatment plant, truck traffic and over 50,000 young people. The community has less than 1/4 of an acre of open space for every 1000 people. The New York City Standard is 2.5 acres, which is one of the lowest metropolitan standards in the United States. Most cities require 6 to 10 acres per 1000 people. Our primary concerns are issues of waterfront development, land use, brownfields, transportation, air quality, open space, alternative energy, and environmental health.

### **What is an Environmental Justice (EJ) Tour?**

An Environmental Justice Tour is an educational tour of the community that demonstrates the environmental burdens that exists there. Our Sunset Park EJ Tour educates community members on the array of environmental harm and risks (i.e. particulates and noxious fumes from heavy traffic and power plants, poor open space and lack of waterfront access, etc.) that are present in the community and explain how the health of the community is impacted by them (i.e. high asthma rates, heart disease, obesity, cancers, etc.). UPROSE is enlisting the help of our youth leaders as we develop the tour. The tour will be open to community groups and members, schools and youth, our partners and other interested parties. In some cases we will incorporate hands-on learning by, for example, allowing participants to take readings using our mobile air monitoring equipment. Participants will also be invited to join our EJ tour volunteer crew to receive training and become certified to lead the tours.

### **Why an Environmental Justice Tour?**

The information we will provide through our Sunset Park EJ Tour will serve to further our community's knowledge and understanding of local environment harms and risks and engage youth and community members in our work to address them. By physically touring the community and pointing out existing burdens (types of contaminants and their sources) as well as incorporating hands-on demonstrations and educational activities, this project will expand common knowledge and understanding of environmental burdens within the community. In order to address the community's exposure to these burdens, we will

also engage and challenge the community members by encouraging them to get involved in local environmental remediation efforts. This involvement could be anything from becoming EJ Tour guides themselves to planting trees, giving testimony or attending community meetings. In addition to these educational components, our hybrid bus will benefit the community by providing cleaner-fuel transportation throughout the community and will bring green jobs. Furthermore, the bus, wrapped with our unique design and logo, will heighten our visibility within the community and ultimately garner more support for, and interest in, our programs.