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– PRESS RELEASE –

*AIGA/INY unveiled the largest ever-created mural in a New York City Industrial Business Zone, and launched the final installation of the “We Mean Business” campaign on a 300-foot long construction site scaffolding at the corner of Atlantic & Pennsylvania Avenues, a project developed in collaboration with LDCENY and funded by an SBS/EDC Neighborhood Challenge grant.*

**New York, February 2, 2016** – AIGA/INY is proud to announce that *Identity Design Action: East New York*, an initiative that connects community and business development through design has culminated with the inauguration of two major graphic installations in East New York. On January 21 we inaugurated a 200-foot long banner wrapped around the IBZ of East New York (Industrial Business Zone), following a year of engagement from designers, researchers, small business representatives and various community organizations. The banner reflects the faces and voices of those who work and live here in East NY and is part of the final outcomes of AIGA/INY’s “**We Mean Business, Unite to Stay**,” a multi-platform advocacy campaign that aims to enhance small business awareness of current changes in the neighborhood, fast-track access to existing business development services and empowers them to unite as a resilient merchant alliance. The campaign was designed and conceived by WSDIA and 3x3 Design.

Prior to the ribbon-cutting ceremony, guests convened at the nearby Trey Whitfield School for a summary of the project, in the presence of **Councilman Rafael Espinal**, who acknowledged the critical role small manufacturers play in the area, one in which he grew up. He said, “At a time when mom & pop shops are losing out to large retail chains in Brooklyn, the “We Mean Business” campaign will give a much needed voice to those business owners whom wake up every morning to provide high quality jobs and services to the local community.” Bill Wilkins, Director of EBBID and Gail Davis, Business Manager at LDCENY, underlined how the campaign brought industrial and retail businesses together, with one visually impactful message that exemplified what “We Mean Business” really meant. “We are excited to see the unveiling of this beautiful banner that highlights the important work that industrial businesses in East New York do and the great products they create. We applaud the partnership of the AIGA/INY, ARTS ENY, and the LDC of ENY for their work to connect businesses and communities through design. This banner, alongside other City investments such as the revamped gateway signs to the IBZ, are crucial to improving the industrial area as part of our work to support all aspects of this vibrant neighborhood,” **says Maria Torres-Springer, NYCEDC President.**

Developed in collaboration with ARTS ENY, the banner complements the previous campaign deliverables, which included an impactful motto, the wild distribution of posters and flyers placarded on East NY streets over the fall, and hand-distributed to a selection of small business ambassadors, as well as digital tools such as an engaging website ([www.enywemeanbiz.nyc](http://www.enywemeanbiz.nyc)) and a user-friendly SMS platform that automatically informs businesses of local community organizations’ available support services, workshops and events. “We believe design is an invaluable tool in terms of creating powerful visibility and bridging the gaps between various community organizations and community members” says Sarah and Jonathan Jackson of WSDIA. All deliverables are downloadable **HERE**.

To refresh and further the urban impact of the campaign, more posters were installed this week on a construction fence of a future medical facility, located at a strategic crossroad of East NY, covering 100 feet on Atlantic and 200+ feet on Pennsylvania Avenue. “We are proud to support small businesses in East New York through this initiative,” said Jonas Rudofsky, Managing Partner of the 101 Penn development project. “This visual campaign is a great way for us to partner with AIGA/INY and LDCENY to promote local entrepreneurs and generate economic opportunities for East New York residents.”



To wrap up this year-long project, AIGA/INY will be publishing on February 15 an Impact Report, as a self-reflective summary of the community-centered approach the team has taken, demonstrating the power of design as a tool for social impact. “QUOTE FROM 3x3 HERE” The document, prepared by 3x3 Design, captures the lessons learned in the process and describes the strategies used to engage the various community stakeholders. It will be shared online at [www.aigany.org](http://www.aigany.org) and distributed to all parties involved in the project. “The banner in the IBZ and the fence installation at 101 Pennsylvania Avenue will hopefully stay as a highly visible marker of the East New York identity; but the report is also part of the project legacy, for those who like to read and are eager to pursue this kind of work in other neighborhoods,” says Laetitia Wolff, Program Director, Civic Initiatives at AIGA/INY.

### CREDITS

Funded by a Neighborhood Challenge grant from NYC Small Business Services and NYC Economic Development Corporation, this project is part of AIGA/INY’s *Making the City*, a platform that engages designers in shaping their city through participatory, place-based projects. It involved board members David Frisco, Manuel Miranda and Alicia Cheng. The initiative was directed by Laetitia Wolff, AIGA/INY program director, in collaboration with award-winning designers Jonathan Jackson and Sarah Nelson Jackson of WSDIA, and research and storytelling duo Megan Marini and Vanessa Smith of 3x3 Design. Our main community partner representatives were Gail Davis, Business Manager and Bill Wilkins, Director of the EBBID, Local Development Corporation of East New York. Additional support came from Lowell Herschberger, Raquel Olivares and Humberto Martinez of Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation; Darma Diaz of the Coalition for the Advancement of the Community of East NY and Cypress Hills, Catherine Green and Nick Savvides of ARTS ENY.

### About AIGA/INY | American Institute of Graphic Arts, New York Chapter

The American Institute of Graphic Arts, New York Chapter’s (AIGA/INY) mission is to demonstrate design’s impact and cultivate the future of design in NYC. AIGA/INY does this through connecting professional designers and students with ideas, information and each other, advocating for design within the city’s civic and cultural life, leading collaborative projects with local communities, and championing excellent work and innovative practices. [www.aigany.org](http://www.aigany.org)

**We Should Do It All (WSDIA)** is a contemporary design studio that translates clients’ needs into dynamic, visual systems that can be presented at multiple scales. These solutions take the form of branding, spatial, environmental, interactive, or print projects. WSDIA has been nationally and internationally recognized through various awards and publications.

**3x3 Design** is a social innovation consultancy that works at the intersection of urban planning, design, and technology to create smarter programs and services for more livable cities. 3x3 uses practical knowledge of today’s complex urban systems, collaborative engagement, and insights from context-based research to help clients launch scalable and resource-efficient projects that create social value.

**The Local Development Corporation of East New York (LDCENY)** empowers low-to-moderate income women and minorities with programs that promote economic sufficiency, build assets, and improve their lives. The LDCENY works with local businesses to retain and build industry and commerce, create jobs and improve economic opportunities for local residents and neighborhood enterprises.

**ARTS East New York (ARTS ENY)** is committed to presenting and promoting multicultural arts to address socio-economic issues that hinder the growth and development of the ENY community. ARTS ENY’s innovative efforts foster entrepreneurs and cultural industries that generate jobs and income, reduce crime and recidivism, heighten the level of education and awareness around healthy and sustainable living, to boost local economy and instill pride amongst residents.



**The Department of Small Business Services (SBS)** makes it easier for businesses in New York City to start, operate and expand by providing direct assistance to business owners, fostering neighborhood development in commercial districts, and linking employers to a skilled and qualified workforce. SBS and EDC are co-sponsors of the Neighborhood Challenge grant.

**New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC)** is the City's primary vehicle for promoting economic growth in each of the five boroughs. NYCEDC's mission is to stimulate growth through expansion and redevelopment programs that encourage investment, generate prosperity and strengthen the City's competitive position. NYCEDC serves as an advocate to the business community by building relationships with companies that allow them to take advantage of the City's many opportunities.

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