


BRONX NARRATIVES
REINVENTING OUR BOROUGH ONE STORY AT A TIME



Bronx Box: Six Individuals, Two Common Interests, One Space

Written by Decota Letman / Photos by Dondre Green / FEBRUARY 13, 2016

Six chefs, all Bronx based, recently joined forces and all for a good cause, promoting healthier lifestyles within our community. Rebecca Scott of [Sustainable Snacks](#), Linda Kim of [Pulse Foods](#), Tito Dudley of [Simple Eats](#), George Carney of [Poor Man's Kitchen](#), John Crotty of [Bronx Hot Sauce](#), and Dan Hildebrandt of [Uptown Roasters](#) together created Bronx Box, a box of various artisanal snacks that are all prepared and sold out of our borough. Founded by Rebecca Scott, it was her passion for helping others live a healthier and more natural life that inspired her to launch the Bronx Box initiative.

Originally from New Hampshire and a recent local resident of Guyana, Rebecca made the life transition in 2013 when she accepted a position at WIC, a special supplemental nutrition program for women, infant, and children, in the Bronx, managing their social media page. It was also around this time she rented a spot in WHEDco's Bronx Cook Space to begin making Sustainable Snacks. Bronx Cook Space is a commercial kitchen located near the Grand Concourse section of the Bronx as part of WHEDco, a Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation that promotes healthier and vibrant communities. They officially launched in 2010, after acting as a food service program for the community they decided to open the space for chefs, caterers, and cooks who were all Bronx based.



In the years to come, Rebecca would build lifelong relationships and friendships with her current partners on the Bronx Box initiative. Each collaborator on this project fully functions and operates out of the Bronx Cook Space. “It’s great to be able to share a kitchen space in the Bronx with health and fitness individuals and to collaborate on projects like this,” says Linda Kim of Pulse Foods. John Crotty of Bronx Hot Sauce shares a similar sentiment, “The Bronx Hot Sauce creates an opportunity for people to experience some of the greatness of the borough while directly supporting the communities cultivating this unique flavor.”

But it was personal trials and tribulations that really formed the heart of Bronx Box. “Being a cancer survivor has inspired me to pursue fitness, nutrition, and the culinary world by becoming a chef. I thought

this was a great opportunity to spread the awareness about health in a borough that is often overlooked,” mentions Tito Dudley of Simple Eats. Founder Rebecca Scott’s auto-immune condition also pushed her to live a healthier lifestyle, change her diet, and start to do yoga. After she realized this lifestyle change made a huge difference in her overall health, she was inspired to relocate and help others live healthier lives without the pressure of taking prescription medication.

“There’s such a sense of community that you don’t necessarily get in the other parts of New York City,” Scott says. Partners like Dan Hildebrandt explained “Our fledgling specialty coffee company, Uptown Roasters, is proud of our roots. We’re inspired by the history, culture, fellow craftsmen, and the edginess of the Bronx borough.”

Other partners like George Carney of Poor Man’s Kitchen have a more personal relationship with the Bronx as his ancestry stems right from our backyard, “I decided to personalize my product by incorporating elements from my family’s traditions and history. The name ‘Poor Man’ stems from a translation of my mother’s maiden name, Poveromo, and all of the photos on the label are of my family, mainly my grandparents, growing up in the Bronx. The project pays homage to my past while looking towards the future.”

Each of these individuals shares a personal story with the Bronx and with the space. Their love for healthier foods and the borough brought them together to create this box in which each of their snacks were included based on Valentine’s Day themes created by Rebecca.

There are three types of snack boxes that host a different theme to align with Valentine’s Day, Warm Your Heart, Healthy Heart Box, and Burn Baby Burn. In the Warm Your Heart box you will find a south bronx coffee blend from Uptown Roasters and a cinnamon simple syrup from Poor Man’s Kitchen.

In the Healthy Heart Box, which is closely tied in with February’s National Heart Health Month, you will find a Dark Chocolate Nut Granola from Simple Eats, a vegan dark chocolate from Pulse Foods, and cranberry and blueberry morsels from Sustainable Snacks. Last but not least, the Burn Baby Burn box will include spicy flavors including Bronx crafted hot sauce from Bronx Hot Sauce, spicy lemon zest roasted chickpeas by Pulse Foods, and smoky maple pecans, as well as, spicy cherry morsels from Sustainable Snacks.



The Bronx Box is currently available for purchase on [Farm to People](#) and they will continue to sell the products on a monthly basis as a different theme will be provided but Rebecca hopes to expand the concept of Bronx Box in which it will be made available in storefronts all over the Bronx. Each logo was handcrafted and designed by Katherine Hill.

Love and togetherness is definitely in the air so check out the Bronx Box online or feel free to contact any of the collaborators for more details.

Feel free to visit more of the programs and initiatives offered by WHEDco online at <http://www.whedco.org>

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