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**Civic Engagement Priorities**

United Neighborhood Houses, an association of 39 settlement houses, is working with its members to promote higher levels of civic engagement across New York City. Civic engagement describes activities which communities may use to promote a higher quality of life through socially conscious action directed at promoting better policies. By responding to the constantly changing political needs of a community through neighborhood-based solutions, settlement houses are drivers of civic engagement, which ultimately leads to expanded access to services and good policies that benefit all New Yorkers.

**Voter Mobilization for All New Yorkers:** To support settlement houses and the communities they serve in receiving support and acknowledgment across all levels of government, UNH leads:

* Nonpartisan Voter Registration with member organizations working to register and educate voters in each election cycle
* Get Out the Vote phone banking campaigns to improve voter turnout
* Community Forums organized to address various political and community issues, such as the Constitutional Convention
* Efforts to promote Participatory Budgeting among settlement house communities and participating Council Members to ensure the neighborhood’s budget is responsive to resident’s needs

**Community Empowerment Opportunities**: To ensure that community members have access to opportunities within the community to develop a strong, collective voice in the face of problems facing a neighborhood, UNH leads:

* Lobby days, rallies and press conferences for staff and community members to advocate for themselves in Albany and NYC on key budget and legislative priorities
* Self-Directed Leadership Teams of older adults dedicated to advocating for better conditions in their neighborhood
* Annual advocacy trainings, offered through partnership with Advocacy Institute, to provide educational opportunities for our members to learn about the legislative process
* Coordinated efforts with statewide partners to ensure the 2020 Census is a fair, accurate and nonpartisan process in which all New Yorkers are counted in a manner that protects and safeguards their confidentiality

*For more information, please contact Lena Cohen at* [*lcohen@unhny.org*](mailto:lcohen@unhny.org) *or (212) 967-0322 x 313*