

ADVANCE FEATURE REQUEST



BORN IN QUEENS. FROM MARCHES TO VOTEFEST.

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REPLICATION TOOLKIT & SOCIAL MEDIA ASSETS

VOTEFEST RETURNS TO MACDONALD PARK

The first **VOTEFEST** was held at **MacDonald Park** on **May 30**. The festival returns to Forest Hills on **September 19**, ahead of **VOTEFEST NYC** at **Washington Square Park** on **October 17**.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Queens Says No Kings grew out of **Let's Talk Democracy**, founded by **Ida Messana**. When **Sheldon Teicher** proposed a Queens march, volunteers, artists and local groups came together for **June 14 No Kings**, marching from MacDonald Park to the Queens County Courthouse. That collaboration continued through a summit of 32 organizations, **No Kings 2** in October and the **No Kings 3** mobilization that drew thousands of marchers to purple Forest Hills.

Queens attorney, filmmaker and protest artist **Alyce Wittenstein** chairs the group, which organizes **art builds, canvassing, visibility brigades and other actions** between major events. **Alyce conceived VOTEFEST** based on her daughter **Nova Wittenstein Brent's** Voter Registration Day event in Boston, where the guest of honor was a live goat. Nova is president of **VOTE DEIS at Brandeis University** and a dedicated **HeadCount** volunteer.



HOW IT WORKS

Supported by an **Indivisible GROW grant** and inspired by Stacey Abrams's work registering and mobilizing Georgia voters, VOTEFEST aims to **make voting contagious**. It combines live music and participatory art with voter registration, voting rights education and election protection information.

NEXT IN FOREST HILLS: VOTEFEST 2.0

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2026 | 2-4 PM

MacDonald Park, Forest Hills | Free and nonpartisan

Featuring military veteran **Salua Baida**, QSNK's **No Kings emcee** and chair of **Queens Community Board 6**, and **Diane Burrows**, former co-president of the **League of Women Voters of NYC**, who mentors young organizers and brings voter education into schools, hospitals and community groups. Music by the **Curtis Watts Trio**, whose bandleader has shared stages with **The Roots** and **Wyclef Jean**; **Great Neck Singing Resistance**; and **other musical guests**.

On October 24, the first day of early voting, **VOTEFEST 3.0** will be followed by a **march to the polls at Queens Borough Hall**.

CORE ORGANIZERS

Queens Says No Kings + Women's Action Group of Forest Hills

PARTNERS + PARTICIPATING GROUPS

Indivisible | League of Women Voters | Common Cause | HeadCount | NYCLU | Hands Off NYC | The Beacon | Team Get Off the Couch | Upper West Side Action Group | Let's Talk Democracy | First Presbyterian Church of Forest Hills | Central Queens Against Hate | Central Queens Mutual Aid | Forest Hills Asian Association | Forest Hills Green Team | 149th Street SOP Civic Assn.

ARRANGE AN ADVANCE INTERVIEW

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