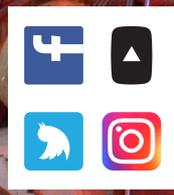


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**FALL 2020**  
ORIGINAL DOWNTOWN, EST. 1625





## FALL SNAPSHOT

Halloween might have been a little muted this year, but that didn't stop Pier 17 from getting into the spooky holiday harvest season. Their famed Pumpkin Arch made its annual return, lighting up the Seaport and Brooklyn Bridge view with more than 500 pumpkins and festive autumnal leaves.

### DID YOU KNOW?...

Stone Street, the oldest recorded paved street in the city, has been pedestrian-only since the 1990s, making it a prime spot for outdoor eating and drinking even before COVID.



### FROM THE PRESIDENT

# DEAR NEIGHBOR



Lower Manhattan is slowly starting to wake up. Though COVID-mitigating lockdowns led to months of business closures and quiet streets, by summer and early fall, popular programs like outdoor dining and Open Streets began bringing the neighborhood and city as a whole back to life. Restaurants, bars, retail establishments and offices are reopening, slowly but surely bringing diners, shoppers and daily commuters into a bruised but resilient Lower Manhattan.

We've done our best to help with the rebuilding process. To aid local restaurants and retailers in bringing back business, we partnered with retail consultant Streetsense to teach owners how to reconfigure their spaces to meet social distancing and new hygiene guidelines. We worked with BentoBox to create the Online Ordering Sponsorship Program, which provides restaurants with their own delivery and takeout platforms in an effort to separate them from third-party services like Seamless and Grubhub. We handed out thousands of masks to local businesses, restaurants and schools.

And we've worked to keep Lower Manhattan clean, safe and healthy, with a dash of added whimsy and color. Two new art installations, Ziggy and Fantástica's "Out-of-Office," went up in our district this fall, offering a new perspective on how to utilize public space and animating Lower Manhattan's open space at a time when we are appreciating it more than ever. Our Sanitation team members helped our neighbors in Tribeca clean up graffiti adorning their hard-hit businesses. We upgraded our popular Downtown Connection buses with socially distant seating and state-of-the-art UV-C air filtration system.

There is still much work to be done. Lower Manhattan's businesses are still hurting. The streets are still quieter than they were in February. Winter is approaching, and with the change in weather, we will have to find new ways to support our restaurants and open spaces. But I have faith that if we work together, we can continue to bring Lower Manhattan back to life, and make it stronger than ever before.

Sincerely,

*Jessica Leppin*



# WHAT'S UP DOWNTOWN

## Meet Ziggy, A Colorful New Art Installation Adding Some Perspective To Water Street Plaza

In October, Ziggy, the Downtown Alliance's newest public art installation, went on view at 200 Water Street, where it immediately began delighting Lower Manhattan's pedestrians and added a touch of color and a fresh perspective to the neighborhood.

Created by design studio Hou de Sousa, Ziggy uses cords tied to a steel structure illuminated by colorful lights to create exciting views of the surrounding landscape. The installation welcomes visitors from all angles and simultaneously frames views of the surrounding context. The structural footprint features several "gateways" that are designed to serve as benches. The linear elements that define Ziggy's volume and form are lightweight, visually transparent, and impervious to wind. As pedestrians

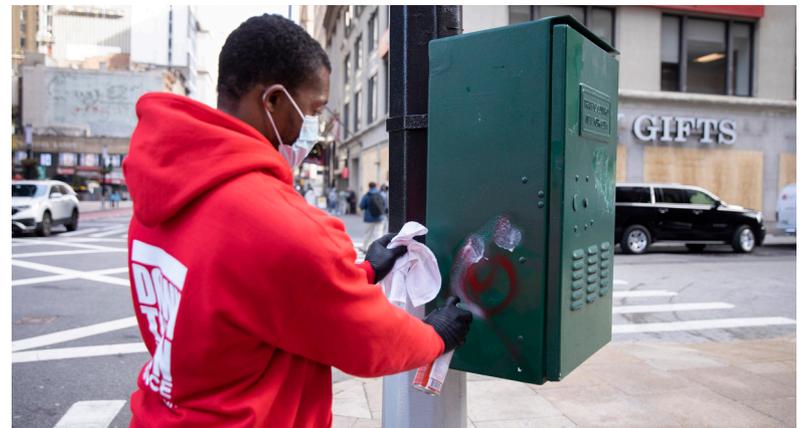
enjoy the colorful display, they can see their surroundings from a new perspective.

In addition to providing daytime viewers with funky outdoor seating and a unique spot for lunch spot, at night, Ziggy's bright, colorful lights make for an inviting spectacle, offering up a convivial atmosphere for a round-the-clock crowd.

The studio describes Ziggy as "a kaleidoscopic spark of joy for our fellow New Yorkers. Showing the project Downtown is a dream come true."

You can stop by to see Ziggy anytime.

## Downtown Alliance Offers Neighborly Support With Tribeca Graffiti Cleanup



Lower Manhattan's not the only spot getting the Alliance-sponsored clean, safe and healthy treatment. In a show of neighborly support, the Alliance's Operations and Sanitation team recently helped out local Tribeca businesses by removing building graffiti on a four-block stretch located just north of the downtown business district.

In mid-October A local community leader reached out to the Alliance to ask for assistance with some trash and graffiti issues on Church Street and West Broadway from Chambers to Duane Streets. The Operations team lent a helping hand, sending Alliance Sanitation workers to work on removing graffiti from light poles, storefront roll down gates and mailboxes.

The project took about two weeks to complete. But thanks to our Sanitation team, the area looks sparkling as ever, and local residents even thanked us as they walked by during the process.





# ALLIANCE UPDATES

## Downtown Connection Bus

Lower Manhattan's famed free bus connector bus service has gotten a little facelift. In October, the Alliance for Downtown New York changed operators for the Downtown Connection, and new buses were put in service, ones with social distance-friendly seating and a new air filtration system.

As opposed to the previous fleet, which largely sat passengers face-to-face with a center aisle, seats in the new vehicles are configured in forward-facing rows, thereby allowing for the installation of plastic shields between rows for socially-distant seating.

The new fleet also features a state-of-the-art UV-C air filtration system. In scientific studies, UV light has been proven to kill 90% of microbial

contaminants after 10 minutes of exposure and 99% after 1 hour.

In addition to the new buses, the Alliance has launched a new COVID-19 dashboard, which provides up-to-date information and metrics for Lower Manhattan's COVID recovery data. The dashboard includes real estate market data across all sectors, as well as metrics related to transportation, population and pedestrian traffic in the district. You can find the dashboard, along with a lengthy collection of resources including links to our initiatives and grants, at [downtownny.com/covidresponse](https://downtownny.com/covidresponse).

## Alliance Distributes Thousands Of Masks To Schools, Local Businesses



In September, ahead of the start of the new school year, the Alliance distributed thousands of PPE face masks to area public and independent schools in the area as part of the organization's focus on keeping the neighborhood clean, safe and healthy in the COVID-19 era.

The Alliance delivered masks to a number of local schools, including several elementary, middle and preschools. Each one received two boxes of masks, totaling 4,000 per school. Alliance President Jessica Lappin personally made a delivery to the Spruce Street School.

As of November, the Alliance has distributed a total of 90,000 masks in the neighborhood, with PPE going to local restaurants, retailers and other businesses in addition to schools.

## BentoBox Collaboration Helps Restaurants Make Delivery And Takeout More Profitable



Over the summer, the Downtown Alliance partnered with BentoBox to launch the Restaurant Online Ordering Sponsorship Program — part of a continuing effort to support businesses that are being adversely impacted by the effects of COVID-19.

Through the program, BentoBox provides eligible restaurants their own delivery and takeout platforms in an effort to help make those services more profitable. The program offers access to a plug-and-play e-commerce experience that can be customized for each business and covers one year of services.

The program also includes a Zoom orientation webinar for BentoBox to introduce participants to its services as well as the procedures to activate and manage the online ordering platform.

37 eligible restaurants, from neighborhood favorites like Grotto Pizzeria and Restaurant to the historic Fraunces Tavern, are now able to connect directly with their online ordering customers, build these relationships, and grow their income from this increasingly important revenue stream, which has been negatively impacted by third-party, high percentage commission-based platforms like Grubhub and Seamless that do not provide access to customer data.

Learn to Cook with  
Lower Manhattan Chefs!

**DINE  
AROUND  
DOWNTOWN**

COOKING  
AT HOME  
EDITION



A Cook-Along Series Hosted by Rocco DiSpirito

Home for the Holidays

**SEAMORE'S**

Thursday, December 17 at 4:00pm

Register at [Downtownny.com/dinearound](https://Downtownny.com/dinearound)

**FREE!**

Donations support food security charities  
+ the Downtown restaurant community.

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## Dine Around Downtown: Cooking At Home Continues Into 2021



In June, the Alliance moved its popular Dine Around Downtown festival online, enlisting the help of award-winning chef and TV personality Rocco DiSpirito to host Dine Around Downtown: Cooking at Home. The weekly web series, which includes a full cooking demonstration and recipes you can make at home, was immensely popular, drawing 805 registrants over the summer and highlighting celebrated neighborhood spots like Delmonico's and Gnoccheria.

The series relaunched in the fall with favorites like Casa Taqueria, Benares and Temple Court, and plans are underway to continue it into 2021.

## LMHQ Is Open And Ready To Become Your New Flexible Office Space



After months of closure amid the pandemic, LMHQ has reopened with new COVID-ready safety measures in place. If you're itching to escape your home office and need space that adapts with you and/or your socially-distant team, LMHQ offers a flexible workspace with no long term commitments, in addition to a virtual community to help folks feel connected in these times. We'll help you customize your space according to your needs while adhering to COVID-19 safety guidelines, plus you'll have access to professional development workshops and a whole host of other virtual events. Visit [lmhq.nyc](https://lmhq.nyc) for more details and information on how to join LMHQ today.



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# SIX QUESTIONS



## Is the subway safe?

I did an exhaustive study over this using research around the world on contact tracing. I also interviewed epidemiologists, virologists and public health experts. And the findings, which are published in a report called “Public Transit and COVID-19,” found no clusters from any subway system around the world.

On the subway, one of the things is that people don’t talk to each other for the most part. If you’re just breathing and you’re masked — everything I’m saying presupposes that people are wearing masks on the subway — the velocity of the air being expelled, most of it will be captured through your mask, and if other people are wearing masks, the probability of it getting through is low.

## Can you talk about what the study found with regard to air circulation?

The ventilation system is measured in terms of air volume exchanges, and what that means is that quantity of air that is in an assembly car, and it is exchanged fully as one full exchange of air. In hospitals, the air exchange is 12 times an hour. The subway ventilation system was set, pre-COVID, at 18 times an hour.

Besides the ventilation system, besides the mask-wearing and the lack of talking, the fact that doors open with great frequency helps with the ventilation situation also. It doesn’t mean it’s impossible to get infected from somebody on the subway. It is incredibly unlikely.

## How has COVID affected commuters in specific geographic areas of the city?

We found the highest transmission outside of Manhattan, in places that relied mostly on cars. So something else was at work. Why would Staten Island be so high?

What we concluded was that it wasn’t how you were traveling — it was what you were doing when you got there. Before everybody had PPE, Staten Island had a lot of first respondents and civil servants who had no choice but to go to work. So people who were getting sick in the beginning were largely people that were exposed because of their jobs. We also found, and this continues to today, that the suburbs around New York City have higher case rates than New York City. When you look around the country, there are no subways. There’s very little bus usage. The highest zones are in places like New Mexico, Arizona — a number of places that are lower density, little transit. So what is going on?

## What are ways that the city can build confidence in getting people to take public transit?

I think people are still shellshocked from the awful period that we experienced in March, April and the first half of May, but when you look at things right now, New York City is for the

most part in the 99% range of tests that come back negative. We need public service messages that are out there. We need to see the mayor and the governor taking the subway. We need people to lead by example.

## Public officials aside, is the message at least getting out there about public-transit safety?

I don’t think it’s communicated enough. The media has done a terrible job. The New York Times at one point put out an article, “Are Cars Protecting Los Angeles?” Los Angeles County has a higher rate than New York now. It was just a matter of time for that to happen. The New York Times did run an article saying subways are safer than you think, then followed up with an article about an incident in China we all knew about back in January of a chartered bus ride for a religious visit in which 27 or so out of 67 passengers caught the virus. People were on that bus for a couple of hours. Nobody was wearing masks.

They highlight these extreme examples that have nothing to do with public transit. They’re building mistrust. So the MTA, the mayor, the governor and also city agents need to get the message out.

### **‘Incredibly Unlikely To Get Infected From Somebody On The Subway’: Talking Transportation In COVID With ‘Gridlock’ Sam Schwartz**

*Sam Schwartz is one of New York City’s leading transportation experts, having gotten his start as a cabbie in the 1960s and working his way up to New York City Traffic Commissioner in the 1980s. Some of his initiatives while working for the city included advocating for more bike lanes and pedestrian plazas; he also earned the nickname “Gridlock” Sam Schwartz for popularizing the concept of traffic gridlock.*

*Schwartz spoke on our recent panel that examined how to build New York back better after the pandemic, and we caught up with Schwartz afterward to learn more about transportation in the COVID era.*