



To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of the Lower East Side Young Historians (LESYH) program, founded by Alfonso Guerriero and Christopher Piccigallo at P.S. 126 in Manhattan.

I've been invited to engage with the LES Young Historians twice now, and I plan to continue this tradition because of my belief in connecting the next generation with their community. The work that this program does—making history come to life and contextualizing it in the present day—allows for students to become invested members within their community.

It is important for school programs to consider and involve community partners because we are a part of living history. There is a lot in today's curriculums covering the larger topics, but we should also be making sure that we cover the local aspects. As one of the oldest neighborhoods, it is imperative that today's students learn that they have a role in shaping the future. But meaningful conversations can only happen if they understand what has led up to this point.

Primary sources are a great way to learn about how the Lower East Side developed, and students should be able to take advantage of these readily available resources. With the neighborhood's long history with food, we can enmesh ourselves with a tangential connection to the past. For example, we were able to provide students with our famed egg roll, which was a staple at the restaurant when my Uncle Wally was running it, at my last guest talk.

With that said, it is also important to note that many generational businesses have moved on or closed within the last two decades (due to various reasons), so these opportunities are becoming fewer and fewer, which makes this work by Al and Chris that much more remarkable and needed. The genuine connections to local businesses made allow for students to not only be aware of their surroundings, but also a way for us entrepreneurs and small businesses to give back to these young minds, by telling them of our lived experiences.

The LESYH program is an example of what educators should aspire to when looking at ways to connecting this next generation with their local community. Making sure that we raise informed members of society is the first step to ensuring a better future. I hope to see this program continue for many years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Wilson Tang'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Wilson Tang