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Brooklyn Medical Plaza - Three Decades and Just Getting Started



Photography by Francesca Andre:
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The Brooklyn Plaza Medical Center, Inc. is a model community health facility, with a stated mission to “[improve] the physical, spiritual, psycho-social and psychological well-being of residents of North Central Brooklyn by providing the highest quality preventive comprehensive family health services with particular concern for lower-socio-economic groups.”

The facility, located in the heart of Fort Greene (at the corner of [Fulton Street](#) and [Lafayette Avenue](#)), may look modest on the outside, but inside it continues to fulfill its longstanding mandate to deliver quality healthcare to the community—which is something more than modest and nothing less than life-sustaining.

Lazetta Duncan-Moore, the operation's Chief Executive Officer, is the ideal representative for such a place, by virtue of her long personal history with the center and the fact that she has always gravitated to this kind of work.

FAB: How long has the Brooklyn Plaza Medical Center been on Fulton Street?

Lazetta Duncan-Moore: We've been at the present location since 1987. Before that, starting in 1978, we were on Greene Avenue, off Fulton. So we've been in the neighborhood for more than three decades.

FAB: How did you get started in this business?

Lazetta Duncan-Moore: I started in the early '90s as a board member. Before that, when I lived in Fort Greene, I was a patient, and I brought my children here. I came on as HR director in 2003, and that led to my current role.

"We've changed, too, along with the neighborhood."

We're in the middle of a big renovation now. Plus we're moving into preventative care — healthy living, like nutrition counseling, including the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) .

We'd really like to see this become more of a community center..."

- *Lazetta Duncan-Moore*
Brooklyn Medical Plaza

FAB: Before you were associated with the center, what did you do professionally?

Lazetta Duncan-Moore: I was on the police force for 21 years, first as a transit cop and a patrol officer, then a detective. As a detective, I was an instructor at the police academy for eight years. I taught new recruits constitutional law and police procedures. My undergraduate degree was in education, so it was a natural fit. From there I went on to employee assistance counseling. A large part of that was helping officers in crisis, with personal problems and such. Before joining the police force I was a pre-school teacher. Throughout my career, I've sought to enhance my educational background. After receiving a Bachelors in elementary education from Long Island University, I received a Masters in instructional technology from New York Institute of Technology; certification in health care policy and management from the Harvard School of Public Health; and I've completed the program at the Healthcare Executive Program at U.C.L.A.

FAB: The center has been an important community health resource since it began. Can you talk about some of the history behind it.

Lazetta Duncan-Moore: We are known as a federally qualified health center. We're unlike other health centers, which are usually either independent or supported by a hospital. Brooklyn Plaza grew out of the War on Poverty in the '60s. Part of that was a major effort to address the health disparities in low-income communities, where a lot of people were (and still are) underserved and uninsured, in order to combat epidemic levels of diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, and the like.

FAB: What do you love about the area?

Lazetta Duncan-Moore: Oh, the energy, definitely; this community's always buzzing. We're part of its history and have been here for an exciting period. We've changed, too, along with the neighborhood. We're in the middle of a big renovation now. Plus we're moving into preventative care — healthy living, like nutrition counseling, including the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). We'd really like to see this become more of a community center, in addition to our basic practices, like internal medicine, dentistry, pediatrics, women's health, family planning, and the rest.

FAB: In what ways do you think your business complements the other businesses on Fulton Street, and the area in general?

Lazetta Duncan-Moore: Our employees patronize a lot of those businesses, all the time, and we try to encourage some reciprocity. We invite them to our open houses and health fairs. Really, we just make an effort to be neighborly. With new businesses, for example, we let them know that they're welcome to come see a doctor or dentist here, even if they don't have insurance. Some of them actually come in. We do other things, too. Like on the weekends we don't use our parking lot, so we made it available for the Fulton Flea Market, which is still going on, every Sunday.

FAB: What would you recommend to other businesses on Fulton Street to help them succeed?

Lazetta Duncan-Moore: Know the community you're in, who your neighbors and customers are. You're part of the community in which you serve.

FAB: What would you like the community to know about Lazetta Duncan-Moore?

Lazetta Duncan-Moore: For most of my life, public service has been my passion. I get a lot of joy and fulfillment from meeting the needs of the people I serve.

FAB: What would you like the community to know about the Brooklyn Plaza Medical Center?

Lazetta Duncan-Moore: We are here to help bring about a healthier community through quality medical care. We do whatever is needed to fully implement new initiatives that reduce disparities in healthcare and educate the community about healthy living. We collaborate with Benjamin Banneker High School on a program called School Base. We collaborate with tenant associations on a clinic serving Whitman, Ingersoll and Farragut Houses. We use Medical Home, a program recognized by the National Committee for Quality Assurance as measuring qualities to improve healthcare; and we use eClinical Works, an electronic medical records program.

We're here for the long haul, in good times and bad times. With that, as I said, it's important to be neighborly; to not only maintain good relations with the people who are here with us, but to do something extra. If there's a way we can help, let us know.

That's what we're here for.

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For more information on the Brooklyn Plaza Medical Center visit www.Brooklynplaza.org

