



YEAR IN REVIEW

IN AN UNEXPECTED YEAR FOR SPORTS ON STATEN ISLAND, NOT EVERYTHING WAS WONDERFUL IN THE BOROUGH, BUT THERE WAS MORE GOOD THAN BAD, MORE PRODUCTIVE THAN DESTRUCTIVE. **B1**

Q&A WITH ZOHRAN MAMDANI

Mayor-elect vows to deliver on the ‘concerns of Staten Islanders’



New York City Mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani paid a visit to the critically acclaimed restaurant Shaw-nae’s House in Stapleton earlier this month for a discussion with the Advance/SILive.com. Photos by Jason Paderon, Advance/SILive.com

Mamdani recently sat down with the Advance/SILive.com for a discussion about his vision for governing the borough.

Advance/SILive.com Staff and Advance Local Express Desk

On Dec. 19, Zohran Mamdani made his first visit to Staten Island as the incoming mayor-elect. Holding a press briefing in the morning at the site of future housing, Mamdani visited the renowned North Shore restaurant Shaw-nae’s House for lunch. In the small Stapleton space, owner Shaw-nae Dixon — a descendant of the original oystermen who founded Sandy Ground — talked to Mamdani about what the borough’s place in history and in the city means to her. With her words still hanging in the air, Mamdani sat down with the Advance/SILive.com for a discussion about his vision for governing Staten Island. Below is a transcript of the Q&A, with questions and some areas excerpted or condensed for readability.

On Staten Island about 23% of people voted for you in the general election. Why do you think the support for you was so low here and how do you hope to improve that?

Mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani: Right now is an opportunity for me to introduce myself as I am, and the focus of what my administration will be. Because it’s very much in line with what many Staten Islanders care deeply about — which is not only their ability to afford to live in New York City, but also build a life in New York City. Those are two separate things. Because too often people are able to scrape by to survive, but when they decide they want to raise a family, where Staten Island used to

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“I think of Staten Island as a critical part of New York City. You cannot tell the story of five boroughs without the story of Staten Island. And as Shaw-nae actually made clear to me just before we had this interview, this isn’t a forgotten borough. It’s a borough of many memories. There are so much history right here on this island.

NYC Mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani

Next NYC budget director, a former New Springville resident, has previously served in a variety of state, city government positions.

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The man tasked with figuring out how to pay for Mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani’s ambitious affordability agenda is no stranger to Staten Island. In fact, Sherif Soliman knows the borough better than most working in city government, having grown up and started his career here on Staten Island. Soliman, who moved to New Springville with his family at 11 years old, will serve as director of the Mayor’s Office of Management and Budget for the incoming administration. Though not born here and no longer living here, Soliman still considers himself a Staten Islander at heart, having spent most of his formative years in the borough. Soliman recently sat down the Advance/SILive.com for an exclusive interview to discuss his experiences here and what he views as the highest priorities for the borough in the coming years. After moving from Queens to Staten Island in 1986, Soliman attended the Rocco Laurie Intermediate School (I.S. 72) in New Springville before graduating from Port Richmond High School. “The best friends I have today are friends I grew up with on Staten Island,” said Soliman. Like any former Islander, he reflected fondly on the borough’s pizzerias, shouting out Denino’s, Joe and Pat’s, and Brother’s. “Going to Port Richmond High School, we used to always stop at Brother’s to get squares, as we called them, or the Sicilian slices, which were among the best I’ve had still to this day,” he reminisced. Soliman is well aware of the Island’s

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YEAR IN REVIEW

3 Staten Islanders lost their lives this year in violent acts

Homicides here show the human cost of violence through its victims.

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The lives of three Staten Island residents were cut short this year in violent acts: a devoted mother and grandmother trying to protect her daughter, a young man shot in broad daylight and a stepfather killed inside his own home. Their deaths left families grieving and communities shaken, a reminder that behind city homicide statistics are real lives and stories worth remembering.

JENNIRA ROUNDTREE, 43

On Tuesday, Jan. 7, 43-year-old Jennira Roundtree was fatally stabbed in the courtyard of the West Brighton Houses, where she lived. She was attempting to rescue her daughter from a violent confrontation, a law enforcement source said at the time. A mother of four and grandmother of one, Roundtree was described by friends and neighbors as fiercely protective. In the days after the slaying, family, friends and neighbors shared messages of condolence online. “I was just talking to my cousin last week,” one mourner wrote. “I’m so heartbroken right now.” Another added, “Wow, my heart just stopped! Love you, sis. I’m truly speechless right now.” “She only wanted to protect her baby,” Roundtree’s cousin, Nina Diggs, told the Daily News. “She went outside to get her child inside. When she got there, her daughter was surrounded by more than a dozen girls. She tried to pull her child away, and they all jumped her.” Jasmin Thompson, 25, of Richmond Terrace in New Brighton, turned herself in to police days later. She was charged with second-degree murder, first-degree manslaughter, first-degree assault, and criminal possession of a weapon. Thompson was arraigned and remanded without bail. She is currently considering a deal with prosecutors that would see her serve just over a decade in prison.

JESSE PIMENTAL, 25

On Friday, March 28, 25-year-old Jesse Pimental was shot and killed in broad daylight at Bay Street and Victory Boulevard in Tompkinsville. He was struck in the torso and died shortly after arriving at a local hospital. The shooting occurred shortly after Pimental had visited his parole officer to complete paperwork ending his parole. “At 2:00, he was released and told, ‘You’re free to go,’ and at 2:30, his freedom was taken away,” said Elizabeth Rokicki, who helped raise Pimental with her sister, Carol. A sports enthusiast, Pimental was known as the fastest runner among neighborhood children. He played baseball for South Shore Little League and excelled in football, winning a championship in the

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LIFE Home sweet home

These are the 10 most expensive Staten Island homes sold in 2025. **C1**

LOCAL New year nears

The Advance will not publish tomorrow, New Year’s Day. Happy New Year!