



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 4, 2022

For More Information:

Lauren Coakley Vincent, President + CEO
Bridgeport Downtown Special Services District
(203) 908-3622
lauren.dssd@infobridgeport.com

JANE & CESAR'S WAY FILM AND COMMUNITY TOUR EXPLORE COLORFUL BRIDGEPORT ON MAY 14TH

BRIDGEPORT, CT – May 4, 2022 – The Bridgeport Downtown Special Services District (DSSD) is excited to host the Jane & Cesar's Way event, an event where the unique story of how we see, interact with, and feel about our city will be explored on film, on foot, and in music. This year we are expanding the international Jane's Walk event concept to celebrate the history and legacy of one of Bridgeport's heroes, Cesar Batalla (more on him below).

The day of activities starts off at 11:30 a.m. at the Bridgeport DSSD office ([938 Broad Street](#)) led by the [Colorful Bridgeport team](#). From there we take a walking tour of the neighborhood, exploring Jane Jacob's approach to community-led, human-centered design; highlighting Cesar Batalla's connection to and impact on individual places in our neighborhood; and featuring the evolving uses of the historic buildings in our Downtown and the purposes they have served over time. Expert guides will take you through an exploration of colorful Downtown Bridgeport, its history, and unique places.

At 1:30 p.m. the walking tour will end at the Bijou Theatre where we will premiere the Jane & Cesar's Way film, followed by a panel discussion with the film's creators and stars. The film and panel discussion will dive deeply in to Cesar Batalla's life and impact in Bridgeport.

At 3:00 p.m., we will hop across the street to listen to live music, connect with neighbors, and contribute to thoughtful conversations about creative, community-driven city building.

"The Bridgeport DSSD is proud to host the Jane & Cesar's Way event this year. We are honored to incorporate the celebration of Cesar Batalla into this annual event which mirrors so much of what he contributed to our city," said Lauren Coakley Vincent, President and CEO of the Bridgeport DSSD. "The short film, which would not have been possible to produce without generous support from the Connecticut Humanities Fund, will serve to connect Mr. Batalla's legacy with colorful Downtown Bridgeport, its history, and unique places. We invite you to enjoy and explore our Downtown with expert guides, new neighbors, and friends."

Our Jane & Cesar's Way video tour project was made possible with generous support from the [Kuchma Corporation](#) and [the Connecticut Humanities Fund](#), supported by funding from the State Department of Economic and Community Development/Connecticut Office of the Arts (COA) from the Connecticut State Legislature. "Congratulations to the Bridgeport DSSD on their successful Quick Grant application! We're thrilled to support community-based projects like *Jane and Cesar's Way* and know that it will continue to inspire civic engagement and have a positive impact in Bridgeport and beyond," said Dr. Jason Mancini, executive director at CT Humanities.

For more information about the event, visit: colorfulbridgeport.com/jane-cesars-way. Register for the event here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/jane-cesars-way-a-janes-walk-in-bridgeport-tickets-320345490987>.

ABOUT CESAR BATALLA

Cesar Batalla's three decades of activism and energy touched the lives of thousands, from which he emerged as a significant figure in the political, ethnic, and community life of Bridgeport. The Batalla family arrived in Bridgeport in the early 1950s from Aguas Buenas, Puerto Rico, when Cesar was a child. Batalla later graduated from Bassick High School and went on to the University of Bridgeport. After service in the army during the Vietnam War, he worked briefly at City Trust before joining the Southern Connecticut Gas Company, where he would become community relations director. It was when low-income Latinos picketed the gas company over a new requirement for service deposits that Batalla's social awareness was awakened. Cesar talked to people in the picket lines and began learning about their problems. From then on, he never stopped learning about social concerns – and acting on them. During his lifetime, he worked with many social organizations, took key roles in lawsuits that charged discrimination toward minorities in the city's Fire and Police departments, as well as segregation in public schools. Roughly a decade after his death, one of Bridgeport's elementary schools was named in 2007 after this icon to honor his legacy. [Learn more about Cesar Batalla here.](#)

ABOUT JANE'S WALK

A [Jane's Walk](#) is a neighborhood tour inspired by the urban activist Jane Jacobs, whose focus on human-centered and community-led neighborhood development has made a lasting imprint on how cities are planned and built. A Jane's Walk is a unique story about how you see, interact with, and feel about a place or topic. We have held "Jane's Walks Bridgeport" for the last six years as a film series, walking tour, bicycle ride, and discussion panel of community leaders on how to make change in our neighborhood.

PARTNERS

We are privileged to partner in creating this celebration of Downtown Bridgeport, Cesar Batalla, and community-driven city building with the following local and regional arts, civic, and resident-led organizations: [American View Productions](#), [Art Simplicated](#), [Bridgeport Caribe Youth Leaders](#), [Bridgeport Generation Now](#), [City Lights Gallery](#), Edwin Rivera Quartet, [Greater Bridgeport Latino Network](#), and the [Kuchma Corporation](#).

#

Bridgeport
Downtown Special
Services District

DSSD

About Bridgeport Downtown Special Services District

As the Business Improvement District for the Park City, the mission of the Bridgeport Downtown Special Services District (DSSD) is to "promote the preservation and development of the downtown business district; make the area more attractive and accessible; and enhance the public perception of downtown Bridgeport through overseeing and managing its appearance, security, and cleanliness." The DSSD is operated under the direction of a nine member Board of Commissioners representing property owners in downtown Bridgeport. www.colorfulbridgeport.com.

About Connecticut Humanities

CT Humanities (CTH) is an independent, nonprofit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. CTH connects people to the humanities through grants, partnerships, and collaborative programs.

cthumanities

CTH projects, administration, and program development are supported by state and federal matching funds, community foundations, and gifts from private sources. **Learn more by visiting cthumanities.org.**