

## **Hollaback! Launches “I’ve Got Your Back” Campaign NYC Victim-Turned-Advocate Nicola Briggs Shares Her Story Campaign Empowers Bystanders to Intervene**

June 9, 2011 (New York, NY) – Today subway folk heroine Nicola Briggs partners with [Hollaback!](#) to launch [“I’ve Got Your Back”](#), a campaign to empower bystanders in the fight against street harassment. For six years *Hollaback!* has worked to empower and provide a meaningful response to folks experiencing street harassment – incorporating mobile technology and building an international movement. “I’ve Got Your Back” takes this work to the next level by providing a real-time response to those who are harassed.

“When we see a parent with a baby struggling to enter a building, we open the door for them. When someone drops their hat, we pick it up and give it to them. So why when we see someone being harassed do we look the other way?” said *Hollaback!* Executive Director Emily May. “That’s where ‘I’ve Got Your Back’ comes in.”

In November 2010, NYC resident Nicola Briggs stood up to a sexual predator on the subway and ensured with the assistance of bystanders that he would be arrested. Her brave actions were caught on a [cell phone video](#) and Briggs quickly became a subway heroine with over 1 million views on YouTube. The incident led to Briggs’ to become a regular blogger on *Hollaback!*’s website and a core partner for the “I’ve Got Your Back” campaign.

“When I was accosted by that creep, I announced his wrongdoing to as many people as possible, and to tell him in no uncertain terms that he wouldn’t get away with it,” said Briggs. “I also insisted upon the conductor being notified, as well as transit police. But aside from those actions, which were essential for controlling the perpetrator, immobilizing him by making him the center of attention, the most important thing that I did was to call upon the help of the other passengers. I asked ‘Men, guard the doors!’ And frankly, if it weren’t for their assistance, the creep would probably have been able to high-tail it out of there.”

However, even if someone doesn’t call out for assistance, it is still important that bystanders recognize their role in a situation – and feel empowered to support someone they believe is being harassed. Even if it’s just to ask, “Are you ok?” The campaign is designed to show people how to intervene, and to celebrate it when they do.

The campaign will include an interactive map, updated apps for iPhone and Android, a film, and a groundswell of support from advocates, city councilmembers, and site leaders internationally. But before campaign can get started, *Hollaback!* needs the public's support. They are launching a \$25,000 campaign through [Indiegogo](#), with tax-deductible donations to be matched by their board of directors.

How "I've got your back" will work:

- The free *Hollaback!* iPhone and Droid apps will be relaunched, so bystanders can report their stories on the go, just as folks can *Hollaback!* now.
- Bystander stories will be mapped with green dots (in partnership with the Green Dot campaign) alongside stories of harassment – highlighting not only the problem. But also the solution.
- For the times when you are alone, the campaign will launch a "We've got your back" button similar to Facebook "Like" button. At the end of the day the person who was harassed will get an email saying that hundreds people have their back. And they will know they aren't alone.
- Their campaign is partnering with Nancy Schwartzman, director of *The Line*, to create a short documentary that profiles a young man who tries to stand up for his friends when they are harassed. Using the film the campaign will create conversations about how to intervene and interactive workshops to go with it.

*Hollaback!* is an international movement dedicated to ending street harassment and assault using mobile technology. Street harassment is one of the most pervasive forms of violence against women, and one of the least legislated against. By collecting women and LGBTQ individuals' accounts of harassment and pictures of their perpetrators in a safe and shareable way, *Hollaback!* is creating a crowd-sourced initiative to directly expose and confront street harassment, transform the discourse and promote the attitude that any gender-based violence is unacceptable.

For more information or to book an interview with Nicola Briggs or *Hollaback!* Executive Director Emily May, please contact [holla@ihollaback.org](mailto:holla@ihollaback.org) or call 646-823-3082.