

## FREE BEAR JACKETS FOR 4,000 NYCHA YOUTH THROUGHOUT CITY

THANKS TO A DONATION BY THE APPAREL GIANT BEAR U.S.A., INC., 4,000 YOUNG NEW YORK CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY (NYCHA) RESIDENTS HAVE BRAND NEW BEAR DOWN JACKETS TO KEEP THEM WARM THIS WINTER. NYCHA staff joined Bear's founders, the Hong family, along with representatives from the Korean American Community Foundation (KACF) to kick off the jacket donation/distribution at the Williamsburg Community Center in Brooklyn on December 5th.

Approximately 100 children received the jackets at the event in recognition of their participation in NYCHA's extracurricular activities. The remaining 3,900 jackets were distributed at NYCHA community centers around the City during the following two weeks.

As various members of the Hong family made clear, the jacket giveaway is their way of repaying the kindness that was shown to them after the family's sneaker business was destroyed during riots in Washington Heights in 1992. Because of an outpouring of help from the community and a special \$25,000 check from an anonymous donor, presented to the family by then-Mayor David Dinkins, the family was able to reestablish its business and launch the Bear, U.S.A. clothing brand in 1994.

Standing in the beautiful, glass-enclosed community center, NYCHA Vice-Chairman Earl Andrews, Jr. thanked Thomas Hong of Bear and Bomsinae Kim of the KACF. The Vice-Chairman pointed out that the giveaway, "... rewards thousands of young people who live in public housing for their extra special work after school in NYCHA's many educational and athletic programs."

Bear formed a partnership with the nonprofit KACF to promote inter-community relations. Last year, Bear also donated jackets to 2,000 children who live in NYCHA developments.



**MAKING WINTER BEARABLE** Approximately 100 young NYCHA residents came to the Williamsburg Community Center to receive free down jackets made possible by a donation from Bear USA, Inc. Bear donated a total of 4,000 jackets to NYCHA youth as a way of "giving back" to the community.



**NAVIGATORS** The new Community Health Navigators with Resident Support Services Director Richard Greene (far right), Healthy Families Executive Director Dr. Rev. Paul Smith (center), Program Director Necole Brown (standing, third from left), additional staff, and Wyckoff Resident Association President Marguerite Scott (in red) and Gowanus RA Charlene Nimmons (standing, second from left), both of whom are also Health Navigators, at Gowanus Houses on January 11th.

## New 'Healthy Families' Program In Brooklyn

By Eileen Elliott

WHEN IT COMES TO THEIR HEALTH THE RESIDENTS OF GOWANUS HOUSES AND WYCKOFF GARDENS, LOCATED IN THE BOERUM HILL SECTION OF BROOKLYN, ARE IN GOOD HANDS—THE HANDS OF 12 NEWLY HIRED "COMMUNITY HEALTH NAVIGATORS," WHO ARE ALSO RESIDENTS THEMSELVES. Under supervision from a newly created nonprofit organization called Healthy Families, the Community Health Navigators will conduct surveys in the two developments to determine what health issues residents are dealing with and what barriers are preventing residents from getting the health care they need—for example, lack of health insurance or available transportation, or limited proficiency in English. The Navigators will then work with the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), Healthy Families, and the nearby Long Island College Hospital (LICH) to overcome those barriers. "Our main focus is to get people connected to a primary care physician to prevent disease," said Healthy Families' Program Director Necole Brown.

One of the new Navigators, Marguerite Scott, who has been the Resident Association President of Gowanus Houses for nine years, said she was "overjoyed" when she first learned of the program. Why? Because neighbors would often tell her about the difficulties they had getting health care. "I never did have all the answers," Ms. Scott said at the first training session for the Community Health Navigators on January 11th. "Now with Healthy Families, the answers are all right at my fingertips."

"It's a very exciting program," said NYCHA's Resident Support Services Director Richard Greene. "I've been very impressed with the quality and commitment of the residents hired as Community Health Navigators; many already have a background in the health field."

The creation of Healthy Families was made possible by a substantial grant from John Wren, who, in addition to being presi-

dent and CEO of the Omnicom Group, is also on the Board of Directors of LICH. If all goes well with the Gowanus/Wyckoff pilot, the grant will also fund Healthy Families programs at other Brooklyn sites over the course of

six years. As announced in a press conference about the program last October, Mr. Wren sees Healthy Families as his way of giving back to the community he grew up in.

(Continued on page 6)

## A Window Guard In Every Window

NEW YORK CITY LAW REQUIRES LANDLORDS TO INSTALL WINDOW GUARDS IN EVERY APARTMENT WHERE A CHILD AGED 10 OR UNDER RESIDES, OR WHEN A RESIDENT REQUESTS THEM. To enhance the safety of residents NYCHA is going above and beyond the law and will install window guards in all apartment windows that do not have permanently installed air conditioners or security gates, starting this year. To schedule an appointment for the installation of window guards in your apartment: Residents of the Bronx and Brooklyn should call your Management Office, and residents of Queens, Staten Island and Manhattan should call the Centralized Call Center at (718) 707-7771. NYCHA will make every effort to install the window guards quickly, and at your convenience. Please call by March 30th.



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TAKING STEPS TOWARDS  
A BRIGHTER FUTURE

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GATEWAY TECHNOLOGY  
GRADUATION

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FEBRUARY IS HEALTHY  
HEART MONTH!

**MAYOR'S MESSAGE**

**Building on the Successes of the Past to Take Next Steps Towards a Brighter Future**



NEW YORK IS A SUCCESS STORY, WITH PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD WANTING TO COME HERE. Our streets are cleaner and safer, our schools are better, and everywhere you look, you can see a renewed sense of hope in the projects that will transform our City in the future.

In my annual State of the City address, delivered last month, I outlined a far reaching and ambitious agenda that takes advantage of the unique position of strength the City finds itself in as a result of five years of innovation, accountability and fiscal responsibility to prepare New

York for its strongest future. Our chief new initiatives are tax relief for homeowners and small businesses, a program designed to help low-income New Yorkers fully realize the Earned Income Tax Credit, elimination of the sales tax on clothing and shoes, and a package of educational reforms designed to foster innovation and continually increase accountability. I also unveiled proposals to fight poverty, increase government integrity and accountability, and further fight illegal guns and reduce crime. Here are some highlights:

**Creating Great Public Schools**

Since securing the responsibility and authority to reform and run the City's public school system, this administration has brought stability, accountability, and coherent standards to a system that had failed generations of children. Today, on-time graduation rates are the highest they have been in 20 years and reading and math scores have increased significantly.

In 2007, we will build on these gains by giving more decision-making authority and budgetary discretion to principals, establishing a more rigorous approval process for teacher tenure, and empowering parents—and the public—with unprecedented amounts of information about individual school performance. We will also implement a new plan this fall that allocates dollars to schools based solely on the number and needs of students.

**Fiscal Responsibility**

In the State of the City, I also announced that my preliminary budget will propose a \$1 billion tax relief package. It includes a one-year 5% reduction in property taxes, the elimination of the City sales tax on all clothing and footwear, and business tax reductions to help small businesses grow. I believe that a good portion of the surplus revenues we anticipate in the current fiscal year should go back to the New Yorkers who made sure that the City's recovery from 9/11 exceeded our wildest dreams.

**Creating Opportunity, Reducing Poverty**

The coming year will see bold new initiatives that "make work pay" for working low-income households. These include a first-of-its-kind program to help return money to those who qualified for, but failed to claim, federal, state, and city Earned Income Tax Credits, as well as a new track at the City University of New York that will be tailored to accommodate the schedules of working people. In addition, the Nurse Family Partnership (NFP) program will be expanded by 50%. NFP is a program in which public health nurses conduct regular home visits with young, low-income, first-time mothers during pregnancy and the first two years of the child's life. NFP has proved effective in improving maternal and child health and social outcomes.

New Yorkers are ready to take these next steps forward. Over the past five years we've shown what independence, accountability, and making decisions based on the facts can accomplish. Visit [www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov) to see the full text of my State of the City address.

*Michael R. Bloomberg*

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**Patrick Cimino: A Maintenance Worker with Heart**

By Heidi Morales

SOME MAY KNOW HIM AS M-1, MAINTENANCE #1, OR AS PATRICK "THE GO-TO GUY." His name is Patrick Cimino, Resident/Maintenance Worker for the New York City Housing Authority's (NYCHA) Isaacs Houses, which means that he resides in the same development where he works. A blessing or a burden? It depends who you ask. His wife might opt for the latter but the reality is that as part of his "residency" Mr. Cimino is on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week and he doesn't seem to mind one bit.

Mr. Cimino has been an employee of NYCHA for 15 years and has lived in the Stanley Isaacs Houses in upper Manhattan for nine of those years. But he has stood out for more than the upkeep of the development; he has proven himself to be a caring human being, an exemplary citizen, a distinguished civil servant and a respectable family man.

So much so that on December 20th of last year Mr. Cimino became one of the recipients of the 2006 Isaac Liberman Public Service Awards, sponsored by the Hundred Year Association of New York, an organization which recognizes and rewards public service among New York's career civil servants. "I was excited and very surprised that they would choose me for something like that. I've gotten a couple of awards from the Housing Authority but to be chosen by an organization outside of the Authority and to be recognized for what you do every day...I was very honored."

Although Mr. Cimino said he doesn't do anything out of the ordinary, Isaacs' Manager Efrain Diaz and Resident Association President Rose Bergin thought otherwise and decided he deserved to be nominated for this prestigious award.

"Patrick is constantly working. He finishes a job and he goes on to the next and to the next job. He accomplishes a lot because of the way he is," Mr. Diaz said.

Mr. Cimino said he does his work diligently and always lends a helping hand just because that's his nature. "I'm very grateful that I do get the awards and mostly the recognition because even a thank you from your supervisor means a lot to people. It tells you that someone's actually recognized that you are doing your job and you are doing it well. That means a lot to me. It's great that I get them [the awards] but even if I didn't I would still work the same way."

There have been instances when Mr. Cimino has been on vacation or on a weekend outing with his



**AWARDEE** Patrick Cimino at Stanley Isaacs Houses. Mr. Cimino received an Isaac Liberman Public Service Award from the Hundred Year Association of New York.

family when he's been called in to take care of an emergency situation at the development and without hesitation he has responded with a smile on his face and his tools in his hands. "If I'm around I will come out even [while] on vacation because that's my job," he added.

Mr. Cimino describes himself as "useful." However, Mrs. Bergin describes him as knowledgeable and humble. "He's a very dedicated worker. If we didn't have Patrick at Isaacs Houses..." But Mr. Cimino disagrees. "They would still get things done. I mean Isaacs was here before I got here and it will be here long after I'm gone," he remarked. Mrs. Bergin said that even the handymen from a co-op building across the street seek the help and knowledge of Mr. Cimino from time to time.

"No matter what you need—I don't care what it is—we always say find Patrick, literally."

Mr. Cimino has received awards from the City Council, a Certificate of Merit from the New York State Assembly, and Special Congressional Recognition for his "outstanding and invaluable service to the Stanley Isaacs Community during the Blackout of 2003."

Overall, Mr. Cimino is a quiet and humble man who finds joy in what he does and in providing the services that the predominantly elderly population at Isaacs Houses needs. "I'd like to say that during my career with Housing and my career at Isaacs I've made the residents' lives a little better, their quality of life a little better, their day-to-day lives a little better by being efficient."

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**73**  
years  
of Public Housing  
in New York City

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**CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE**

**Making New York City Affordable**



MANY OF MY COLUMNS OVER THE PAST YEAR HAVE TOUCHED ON THE FINANCIAL CHALLENGES THE HOUSING AUTHORITY CONTINUES TO FACE. Obviously, there are no easy answers when funding fails to keep pace with the rising cost of operating 344 public housing developments. Yet, I can't help but be pleased by the creative responses of New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) staff and residents as we work together to make sure that public housing is here to stay.

Even as NYCHA strategizes to find the resources we need to maintain our existing hous-

ing stock, we are also working to help expand the City's affordable housing. As a partner in Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg's New Housing Marketplace Plan, NYCHA is working with the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) to contribute to the Mayor's goal of creating or preserving 165,000 units of affordable housing by 2013.

Here are some of the highlights:

First, the University Macombs Apartments in the Morris Heights neighborhood of the Bronx. Four buildings from University Avenue Consolidated (UAC) were renovated and are now home to 180 low-income families. A beautiful new building was also constructed on what had been a vacant lot and rentals are in progress there. In addition, the developer who completed these projects, Bronx Pro, is now renovating three more UAC buildings with 111 apartments, which are expected to be ready for occupancy by the end of 2007.

In East New York, Brooklyn, a parking lot at Linden and Boulevard Houses will be the site of a mixture of two-family, three-family and condominium townhouses, creating approximately 180 homeownership units. The City Council has allocated \$2 million towards this project.

In Manhattan, parking lots at Chelsea-Elliott, Fulton and Harborview Houses, all on the West Side, will be used to develop affordable rental and homeownership units for 600 low-, moderate- and middle-income families.

In Staten Island, NYCHA and HPD are redeveloping Markham Gardens as a mixed-income development with a total of 290 new affordable residential units, including 240 mixed-income rental units and 25 two-family homes. One hundred and fifty of the units will be reserved for Section 8 voucher recipients referred by NYCHA, including former Markham Gardens residents. NYCHA residents will be given priority for the purchase of 25 two-family homes.

NYCHA is happy to do what it can to help expand the City's supply of affordable housing, while working to maintain over 400,000 public housing apartments that are one of this City's greatest assets. Stay tuned over the coming year as we report our progress on these exciting endeavors.

*Tino Hernandez*

**BOROUGH DIGEST**

**The Bronx:**

For the third year in a row, NYCHA and the Wildlife Conservation Society are collaborating on a special program for NYCHA youth in celebration of Black History Month at the Bronx Zoo. The theme of the February 21st event is, "Celebrating Black Explorers, Scientists and Inventors," and 300 youth from community centers in the Bronx are expected to attend. The day's roster of entertainment includes a performance by The NYCHA Youth Chorus and readings by young Bronx essay contest winners. Each of the three winners will receive a \$500 Savings Bond.

**Brooklyn:**

The Neighborhood All Stars Team received a visit from a representative for its anonymous sponsor (who is affiliated with the New York Mets) at its home base, the Carey Gardens Community Center in Coney Island, on December 21st. The Neighborhood All Stars Team, run by the Police Athletic League (PAL), isn't really a team but an education and recreation program that serves between 80-90 youth between the ages of 10-14, from 3PM to 6PM, October through May. It is a collaboration between the Mets, which provides funding to PAL to run the program; NYCHA, which provides the space, staff, supplies and equipment; and Kingsborough Community College, which places interns at the site to work with the youth. Interested residents of Coney Island should call: 718-996-5893.

**Manhattan:**

Thanks to a collaboration between the Morningside Heights West Harlem Sanitation Committee, NYCHA's Technical Services Department, Grant Houses Resident Association President Sarah Martin and resident leader Gloria Allen, the Harlem development has two brand new state-of-the-art plastic recycling bins. To make sure they are put to good use, the Sanitation Committee and resident leaders conducted a floor-by-floor, door-to-door education campaign to teach residents about recycling and so far it seems to have paid off. "We've gotten a ton of recycling out of this," said NYCHA's Waste Management Coordinator Anthony Solomita. The recycling effort and the receptacles, located outside of the entrance at 3150 Broadway in Grant Houses, even caught the interest of local elected officials who supported the effort.

*(Continued on page 4)*

**DEBORAH'S DIARY**

*By Deborah Williams*



**A Five-Year Plan**—You may recall last month's Diary featured an article about the NYCHA Culinary Arts Program graduation. Well, at that graduation ceremony there was one individual who really stood out. Now, I'm not talking about his cooking skills (even though they were great) but rather his determination, his drive and commitment to the cooking profession. It was seeing that in him

and hearing of his five-year plan that prompted me to write this article. Tyler Robinson, of Clason Point Gardens in the Bronx, wasn't a stranger when it came to cooking. In fact, he said his first encounter with the culinary arts was as a child. He recalled how at his mother's insistence he sat in front of the television and watched every episode of the "Galloping Gourmet," a daytime television cooking show that aired from 1968 – 1971. Now at 26 years of age, Tyler says he cooks not only for the love of it but more so for his son, two-year-old Jaheel. "I want to teach him everything I know about cooking and show him firsthand that life's goals are attainable. That's why I signed on for the Culinary Arts Training Program and I can honestly say that the training I received, well, it takes the cake," said Tyler. Tyler has what he refers to as his five-year plan. It started back in 2006 with the Culinary Arts Program—now successfully completed. The next step is earning a degree in the culinary arts from the Art Institute of New York City. Once Tyler has acquired all of the necessary credentials he will implement the final phase of the plan and open a restaurant. "In five years I will be on the food map. My business will be small at first but I am confident that it will grow. More importantly, I will serve the best macaroni salad you will ever taste as well as different soups, rack of lamb and a variety of other foods," said a confident Tyler. "But where would one go for a sample of those delectable dishes?" I asked Tyler. His reply, "To J & T Gourmet of course. That's what I will name my restaurant—'J' for Jaheel and 'T' for Tyler." As far as the funding for the restaurant, Tyler has been saving for years and said he has enough saved up to open up his business right now. In the meantime, Tyler is working diligently with NYCHA's Resident Employment Services to find work in the culinary field. ***Tyler, I wish you all the best. It seems you have put a lot of thought into your five-year plan and that's great. Just keep in mind that you have to be steadfast in pursuing your goals. Stick to your five-year plan and you will succeed. You have the character, resilience and determination to make your goals a reality. I hope one day to be able to say I dined at J & T Gourmet when it first opened and wrote about Tyler Robinson before he became a world renowned chef. Until then, keep me posted and let me know how your five-year plan unfolds.***

**Author**—Since August 2001 with the printing of his very first book, "The Figure: A Short Story," Davy Johnson, a resident of Woodside Houses in Queens, has been publishing book after book. To date, Mr. Johnson has written four books ranging from science fiction to his most recent, a suspense thriller. In 2002, he wrote, "Dream Leapers," and in 2003, "Walkers," both science fiction novels. Each book has a distinctive cover that will surely draw you in. Log on to the Barnes & Noble website at Barnes & Noble.com for a glimpse of Mr. Johnson's latest thriller, published in August 2006 and entitled, "The Killing of Sparrows." "It's a metaphoric tale filled with suspense and intrigue that is certain to keep readers on the edge of their seats," said Mr. Johnson. Keep reading Deborah's Diary for information on the release of his next book, "The Star Child of Kaslimi Prime." ***Congratulations! Thank you for sharing your accomplishments with me and the NYCHA community. Your entertaining and exciting prose is sure to capture many young minds and help youth develop their reading skills.***

**THE SENIORS' CORNER**

**DIABETES EXPO – MARCH 24TH**

The American Diabetes Association's "Diabetes Expo" will be held at the Jacob Javits Convention Center on March 24th from 10 AM to 4 PM. Admission is FREE. There will be product demonstrations, free samples, and lots of information on diabetes.

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## THE NYCHA NOT WANTED LIST

In this issue we continue our editorial policy of publishing the names of individuals who have been permanently excluded from our public housing developments. The purpose of publishing this list is to keep residents informed of the Housing Authority's ongoing effort to improve the quality of life for all New Yorkers in public housing and to allow for the peaceful and safe use of our facilities. Here follows a list of the people excluded after hearings were held on October 26, November 30 and December 7 and 14, 2005. **Please note: These exclusions are based on NYCHA's Administrative Hearing Process and should not be confused with the Trespass Notice Program under Mayor Bloomberg's Operation Safe Housing Initiative.**

**REMEMBER,  
IF YOU SEE ANY OF THESE INDIVIDUALS ON  
HOUSING AUTHORITY PROPERTY, PLEASE CALL  
YOUR MANAGEMENT OFFICE OR NYCHA'S  
SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT AT (212)306-8595.**

### Prohibited as of October 26, 2005

- Darryn Alston Case 3898/05 formerly associated with the second floor of 41-15 10th Street, Queensbridge South Houses, Long Island City.
- Harold Soto Case 8046/05 formerly associated with the tenth floor of 730 East 163rd Street, Mckinley Houses, the Bronx.
- Kenneth Melendez Case 8038/05 formerly associated with the fourth floor of 345 Sutter Avenue, Hughes Apartments, Brooklyn.

### Prohibited as of November 30, 2005

- Devon Hyman Case 8035/05 formerly associated with the sixth floor of 3736 Tenth Avenue, Dyckman Houses, Manhattan.
- Natasha Adorno Case 1018/05 formerly associated with the tenth floor of 2375 First Avenue, Wagner Houses, Manhattan.
- Damon Williams Case 8133/05 formerly associated with the eleventh floor of 1345 Fifth Avenue, Taft House, Manhattan.
- Charles Newberns Case 8083/05 formerly associated with the third floor of 875 Irvine Street, Murphy Private (BMA) Houses, the Bronx.
- Charlie Newburns
- Michael Burton Case 8080/05 formerly associated with the third floor of 2777 Dewey Avenue, Throggs Neck Houses, the Bronx.
- William Springer
- Billy Lazala Case 8087/05 formerly associated with the seventh floor of 1986 Randall Avenue, Soundview Houses, the Bronx.
- Ricardo Lazala
- Senque Reed Case 8162/05 formerly associated with the seventh floor of 2245 Randall Avenue, Castle Hill Houses, the Bronx.
- Robert Reid
- Alex Walker Case 8123/05 formerly associated with the first floor of 17 Avenue W, Marlboro Houses, Brooklyn.
- Donnell Walker
- Archie Davis
- Dennis Almonte Case 8239/05 formerly associated with the second floor of 930 East 4th Walk, Wald Houses, Manhattan.
- Alex Almonte

### Prohibited as of December 7, 2005

- Eric Ettson Case 4838/05 formerly associated with the tenth floor of 75 Baruch Drive, Baruch Houses, Manhattan.
- Marquese Martinez Case 8271/05 formerly associated with the fifteenth floor of 3170 Broadway, Grant Houses, Manhattan.
- Keith Adams Case 8269/05 formerly associated with the first floor of 152 North Elliott Walk, Whitman Houses, Brooklyn.
- Derwin Adams
- Terique Collins Case 8296/05 formerly associated with the sixteenth floor of 1420 Amsterdam Avenue, Manhattanville Houses, Manhattan.
- Christopher Grier Case 8311/05 formerly associated with the fifth floor of 280 Stone Avenue, Howard Houses, Brooklyn.
- Cassius Grier
- Darien Patterson Case 8328/05 formerly associated with the seventh floor of 1780 Watson Avenue, Bronxdale Houses, the Bronx.
- Anthony Furr Case 8404/05 formerly associated with the seventh floor of 2946-50 West 23rd Street, Carey Gardens Houses, Brooklyn.

### Prohibited as of December 14, 2005

- Clarence Reese Case 8287/05 formerly associated with the fourteenth floor of 159-20 Harlem River Drive, Rangel Houses, Manhattan.
- Jamar Kirkland Case 8313/05 formerly associated with the fifth floor of 1100 Teller Avenue, Claremont Consolidated Houses, the Bronx.

## BOROUGH DIGEST

(Continued from page 3)

Shown in the picture below, left to right, are Assembly Member Daniel J. O'Donnell, City Council Member Robert Jackson, and State Senator Bill Perkins at the "ribbon-cutting" ceremony on November 21st.



### Queens:

City Council Member John Liu held a press conference in Flushing on December 1st to announce the start of Chinese language classes at the Bland Community Center. Fifty-one residents of Bland Houses are registered for the course, which began on December 6th and will conclude this month. The program is funded by Council Member Liu. Shown below are City Council Member John Liu and Queens Community Operations Director Anthony Richburg.



### Staten Island:

In celebration of Black History Month, each of the borough's seven community centers will create a "Make A Dream" tree, based on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s famous, "I Have A Dream" speech. Youth from the centers will write the dreams/goals they have for their lives on cards that will be attached to the Christmas trees in their community centers, which have been left standing for just this purpose. Staff will choose two cards from each center, one for children and one for teens, and do what they can to make that dream come true. "Obviously, we can't make someone a doctor," said Borough Administrator Sarah Nanton. "But we can arrange a visit with a doctor, give the child books, do other things that can help."

## File For the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)!

Do you make less than \$38,000 a year? You might qualify for as much as \$6,000 from the EITC, just by filing your taxes. To make it easy, the New York City EITC Coalition partners will prepare your taxes for free at locations throughout the City.

### What Is the Earned Income Tax Credit?

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) returns federal, state, and in New York City, local government dollars to qualifying working families and individuals through either a credit on taxes or as cash refunds. This income helps people cover basic expenses.

The EITC will not change other benefits such as food stamps and housing vouchers. And if you didn't claim the EITC in the past, you can file your taxes for three previous years which could triple your refund. So, if you worked in 2002 and didn't file taxes, you could file a return now and claim this credit. If you were eligible for the maximum refund each year, that could mean more than \$15,000 for you and your family. Call 311 to learn where you can file your taxes for FREE!

To see if you are eligible, just refer to the chart below. Call 311 for the location of a New York City EITC Tax Coalition preparer to prepare your tax for free. And don't forget to file by April 17th!

Earned Income Tax Credit Eligibility Requirements and Credit Amounts Tax Year 2006 Returns					
	Maximum Combined Credit	Maximum Federal Credit	Maximum State Credit	Maximum City Credit	Maximum Income
Families with more than one qualifying child	\$6,122	\$4,536	\$1,360	\$226	\$36,348 (\$38,348 MFJ*)
Families with one qualifying child	\$3,708	\$2,747	\$824	\$137	\$32,001 (\$34,001 MFJ*)
Individuals	\$555	\$412	\$123	\$20	\$12,120 (\$14,120 MFJ*)
*Married Filing Jointly					

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## Health Matters...

### FEBRUARY IS HEALTHY HEART MONTH!

In honor of National Healthy Heart Month, the February "Health Matters" column is about heart disease—the #1 cause of death in New York City. The information below is from the City's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) Web site at [www.nyc.gov/health](http://www.nyc.gov/health).

#### Heart Disease

- Heart disease is the #1 cause of death for both men and women in New York City, regardless of race or ethnicity.
- Stroke is the 4th leading cause of death.
- Heart disease and stroke are two of the most common diseases that make up cardiovascular disease.

#### In 2004...

- 23,000 New Yorkers died from heart disease
- 2,000 more people died from stroke
- Almost 1/3 of the people who died from cardiovascular disease (heart disease and stroke) were under the age of 75.

#### The most important risk factors for cardiovascular disease include:

- Advancing age
- Gender
- Family history
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Tobacco use
- Obesity & overweight
- Physical inactivity



#### What You Can Do:

Control Your Cholesterol: Keep Your Heart Healthy

- High cholesterol is a preventable and treatable cause of heart disease and stroke.
- 1 in 4 adult New Yorkers has high cholesterol, but many don't know it.
- High cholesterol has no symptoms. The only way to know you have it is to get checked by your doctor.
- It won't go away on its own. High cholesterol stays high unless you take action—and keep taking action.
- Physical activity, healthy diet, and healthy weight can prevent and reduce high cholesterol.
- Cholesterol-lowering medications are safe and effective.

**A word about Trans Fat:** In December 2006, the New York City Board of Health voted unanimously to make all City restaurants remove artificial trans fat over the next 18 months. New York City is the first location in the nation to ensure removal of artificial trans fat from restaurants. Artificial trans fat increases the risk of heart disease, stroke, and death by increasing bad cholesterol and decreasing good cholesterol.

## New 'Healthy Families' Program

(Continued from page 1)

At the January 11th meeting, Healthy Families Executive Director Dr. Reverend Paul Smith, who is also on the Board at LICH, said that too often low-income people are not aware of available health care options. "Like in many large cities, the emergency room becomes the primary care provider. We can

make a difference with the Healthy Families Program."

The Community Health Navigators will begin by going door-to-door in each of the developments to ask residents to complete a health survey.

The Healthy Families program will be administered under the guidance of the Arthur Ashe Institute for Urban Health.

## Technology Gateway Centers Celebration



BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE TGC grads with their certificates on December 19th.

By Allan Leicht

TECHNOLOGY GATEWAY CENTERS (TGC) HELD ITS "END OF TERM CELEBRATION" ON THE AFTERNOON OF DECEMBER 19, 2006 AT NYCHA'S RESIDENT EMPLOYMENT SERVICES (RES) HEADQUARTERS IN DOWNTOWN BROOKLYN. This was the first event of its kind for TGC, a new program run jointly by the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) and The City College of New York (CCNY). TGC offers GED preparation, computer training, technology-based educational activities and job search assistance to NYCHA residents 18 years old and over. It is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The TGC courses took place at seven NYCHA locations throughout the five boroughs. Forty-one students completed the course and an additional nine students participated but did not actually finish for the best of reasons—they got jobs. Four of those who completed the 10-week program also found employment, bringing the newly employed TGC participants to a total of 13.

"You achieved a milestone leading to your goal," said NYCHA's Director of Resident Employment Services (RES) Sonia Torruella to the standing-room-only crowd at the RES headquarters. "You are going to go out there and be just as competitive as anyone looking for work. This is your day."

CCNY's Adult and Continuing Education Director Olida Martinez welcomed the TGC students to "the City College family" and asked them what their motivations were for taking the course. The answers included acquiring the skills to start a business, learning computer graphics and getting into the advertising field. CCNY's TGC Program Coordinator Tarell Rodger is one of seven instructors on the TGC faculty. He taught at Monterey Community Center in the Bronx where one of his five students was Ms. Helen Sisco, of whom Mr. Rodgers was especially proud.

Ms. Sisco, a Monterey Houses resident since 1973, had worked up until 1992. But then, "I had a stroke and now I really needed to rewire my brain," she said with confidence and a clear sense of purpose. "I used to do data entry and processing for a retail firm but I did not work on the systems they have now. These classes

helped me to get familiar with the new technology."

CCNY Adult and Continuing Education Associate Director Leiby Boom thanked the faculty who taught at East River, St. Nicholas, Highbridge, Weeksville and Brevoort Community Centers and at the RES headquarters.

Three of the participants addressed their classmates and teachers. Among them was Cynthia Brown-Allen who described herself as a mature person who had raised four children but who had just now learned that "We control the computer, not the other way around."

TGC will continue to run 10-week courses through May 2009. To find out more, call the RES hotline at: 718-250-5904.

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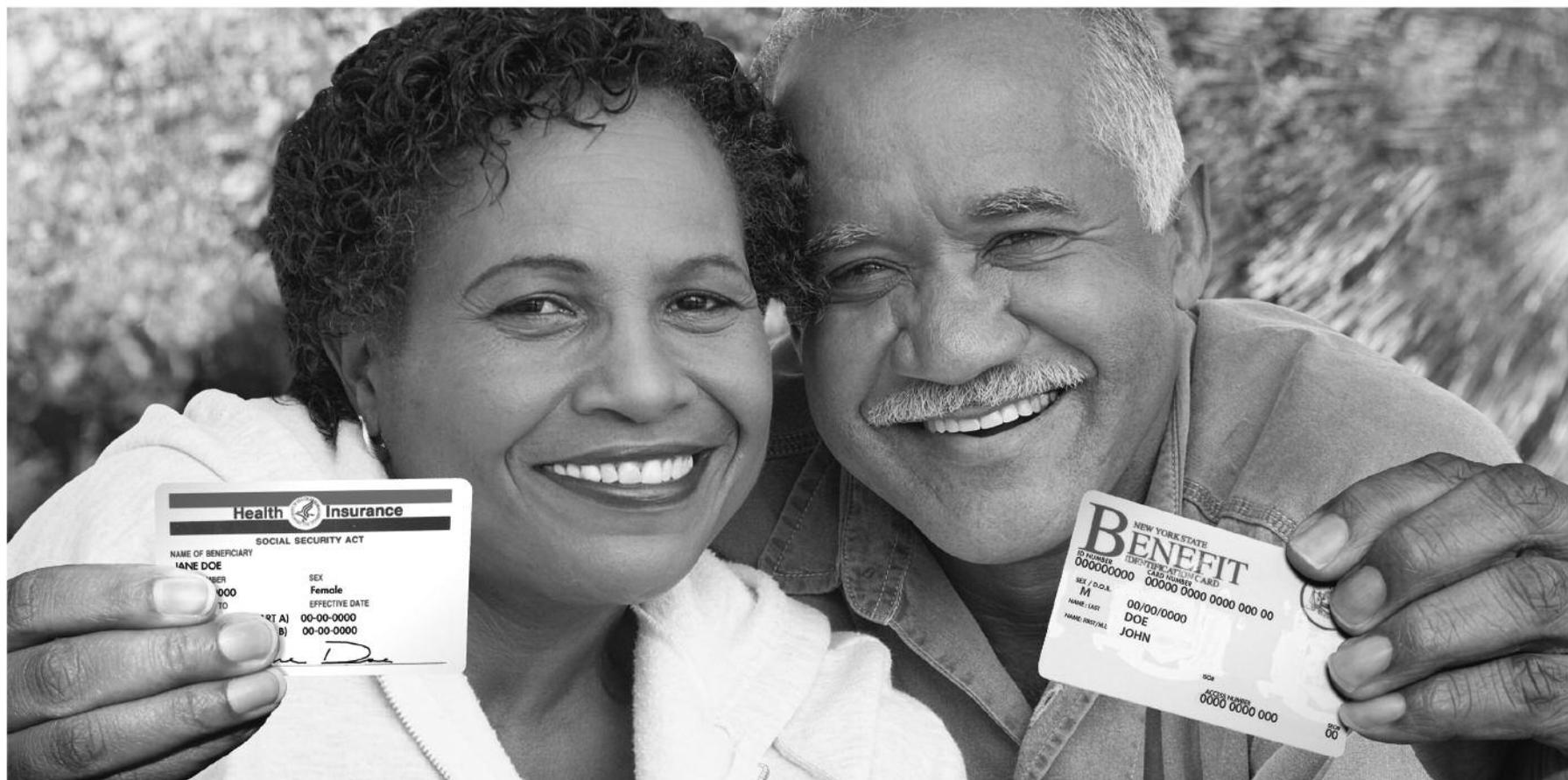


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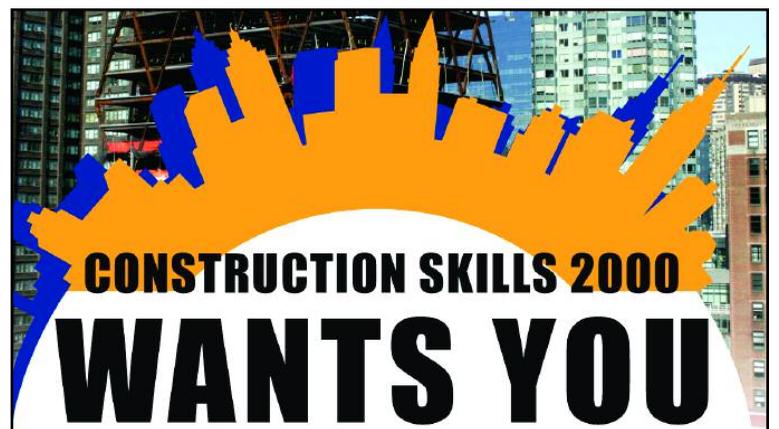
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**Manhattan**

February 15, 10:00 AM  
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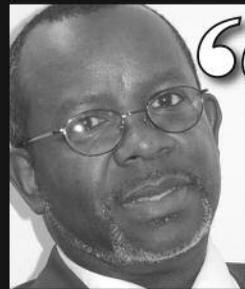
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