

CITIZENS BUDGET COMMISSION

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THE WINNER OF THE 2011 CBC PRIZE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE INNOVATION IS:

THE NEW YORK CITY CENTER FOR ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY'S INNOVATION FUND

New York, NY – March 2, 2011 – The Citizens Budget Commission (CBC) today announced that the winner of its 2011 CBC Prize for Public Service Innovation is the New York City Center for Economic Opportunity's Innovation Fund. The Prize will be presented tonight by New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg to the Center's Executive Director Veronica M. White at CBC's 79th Annual Dinner.

The CBC Prize, created in 1997, recognizes and promotes successful innovations in the delivery of public services by New York City or State governments. The Center's Innovation Fund was selected for its impactful performance-based approach to assessing and advancing poverty alleviation programs.

The Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) was established by Mayor Bloomberg in 2006 and located within the Office of the Mayor. It has implemented more than 40 new economic opportunity and poverty reduction initiatives. Its Innovation Fund provides financial resources – approximately \$100 million annually of public and private money – to test and assess interventions that are highly targeted and performance-based. The interventions are unusual in that they break down traditional social service silos, coordinating the work of 20 City agencies, and require rigorous data collection and outcome measurement to assure that only effective programs are continued.

“CEO's Innovation Fund is creative in multiple respects,” said CBC President Carol Kellermann. “It uses both public and private resources to rigorously test and assess performance-based interventions, many involving multiple City agencies, to determine the interventions' effectiveness before implementing the proven ones more broadly. That's the kind of fact-based objective analysis that taxpayers deserve when government determines how best to spend their money.”

“The Citizens Budget Commission Prize rightly acknowledges one of our City's most innovative efforts,” said Mayor Bloomberg. “The Center's commitment to gathering evidence and evaluating programs has helped the City to identify what works and invest resources wisely.”

“Since 2006, the Center has developed, tested, and expanded new strategies for serving low-income New Yorkers,” said Veronica M. White, CEO’s Executive Director. “The Innovation Fund brings us together with City agencies, providers, and other partners to strengthen the City’s programming in workforce development, youth education and employment, and asset development and financial literacy.”

Among CEO’s notably successful initiatives is the City University of New York’s Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP), which has helped 54.9% of enrollees achieve their associate’s degree in three years or less – more than double the rate of the general community college population. The CEO is currently working to replicate five of its most promising programs in New York and seven cities across the country with the support of the federal Social Innovation Fund, a new public-private partnership administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

“Veronica White and her team have changed the way the City thinks about its work,” said Linda Gibbs, Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services. “Through its focus on innovation and evaluation, the Center has succeeded at encouraging new collaborations and re-framing the way agencies approach anti-poverty programs.”

About the CBC Prize for Public Service Innovation

Awarded annually, the Prize celebrates creative thinking and shares government achievements with the public and other agencies. In alternating years, it is awarded either to a New York City or a New York State agency. Each year the winner is selected from nominations requested from more than 150 government officials. The nominations are reviewed by CBC staff and a committee composed of CBC Trustees, and that committee of Trustees – co-chaired this year by Alan M. Klein and Justin S. Steinberg – makes the selection.

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Founded in 1932, the Citizens Budget Commission is a nonpartisan, nonprofit civic organization devoted to influencing constructive change in the finances and services of New York City and New York State governments.