

NYC WORKFORCE WEEKLY

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The next issue of Workforce Weekly will appear Oct. 9

**NYC
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New York City
Employment &
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Master Teacher Serves Six Agencies Sunset Park Alliance for Youth Links Partners in Brooklyn

Sixteen women ranging from college age to post-retirement, including Arabs, Asians and Latinas, sat close together in a Brooklyn basement room on Smith Street in Brooklyn, learning English. The group included former lawyers, cleaning women and beauticians among other occupations.

Tacked on the walls were news clippings about new Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor and photos of the Obama Inauguration along with sayings like "Study today for a better life." "Encourage each other." "You're never too old to learn."

At the urging of their teacher Carolyn Wright, they wrote essays about work as part of an assignment created by Cara Tuzzolino Werben, master teacher of the Sunset Park Alliance for Youth. They wrote about work they had had and would like to have, whether they worked day or evening, and in what country they had the job. Afterwards, the women went around the room reading each other's efforts and making notes. They wrote "Please tell me more about your country." "Add more details." "What did you sell at the store?" That night they would take them home and make revisions. "It gets them thinking about the workforce and also understanding language through revision," Wright said.

The younger women are particularly fluent. "I want to go to college, so I must improve my English," said one, who already speaks Mandarin and Cantonese. "This country is really diverse," said another. "I need for others to understand what I am talking about." A third said of the entire group, "We feel like sisters. We celebrate each other's birthdays. It's like we're a family."

Earlier that morning before the larger class came together, Werben had worked with a handful of the students separately. One day a week she coaches them in putting articles before vowels, plural verb tenses, and other grammatical

(Sunset Park, continued on pg. 3)



City Extends Cash Transfer Program

Opportunity NYC, the Bloomberg Administration's antipoverty program that uses cash rewards to promote changes in work and lifestyle habits, has been extended for a third year. More than \$11 million has been distributed to 2,400 households in six low income communities in the city (*Workforce Weekly*, July 10). The program, which is intended to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty, is based on an initiative that originated in Mexico and is implemented in 20 countries.

Rewards for work in the program include such cash payments as \$300 for each parent working at least 30 hours per week for 6 of 8 weeks, up to a maximum of \$1,800 per year. Early reports indicate the program has improved school performance and attendance of high school students.

The Mayor's Center for Economic Opportunity launched the program here in September, 2007 with \$54.4 million in funding from the Rockefeller and Starr Foundations and the Bloomberg Philanthropies. Money for the third year is coming from the Rockefeller Foundation and Bloomberg Philanthropies. Later this month the board of the Robin Hood Foundation will vote on whether to renew its support.

Speaking of the program at the launch of a new anti-poverty program at the Organization of American States, Mayor Michael Bloomberg said, "Financial incentives have already proved to be a powerful tool in so many areas. The federal government puts them in our tax code through policies such as the mortgage interest tax deduction for homeowners. And the private sector uses them too, in the form of compensation packages. So why shouldn't local governments also harness the power of incentives?"

Chamber Reports ARRA Impact On Brooklyn

Brooklyn is weathering the current recession better than the city as a whole and it is losing jobs at a slower pace, according to *2009 Brooklyn Labor Market Review* just released by the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce. Carl Hum, president and CEO of the Brooklyn Chamber, said, "The borough shows strength in a number of sectors, such as professional services, tourism, retail and educational services." The report, which draws on projections from the Fiscal Policy Institute, says that Brooklyn has received slightly less than one percent of the total of \$787 billion in stimulus funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. It notes that about \$300 million has been pumped into Brooklyn-based infrastructure projects, notably the Brooklyn Bridge, which received \$47.2 million for rehabilitation.

To access the report go to www.ibrooklyn.com

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NYCETC is an association of more than 200 workforce development providers - small and large community-based organizations, community colleges, and union training programs - that provide employment services to approximately 600,000 New Yorkers each year in concert with our city's business community.

Rebecca Brown, Interim Executive Director
Kathy Brady, Communications Director
Charlotte Volage, Association Manager



(Sunset Park, continued from pg. 1)

rules and stumbling blocks. “The master teacher idea works out on a couple of fronts. She can be a guest teacher in some classes and help with staff development in others,” Werben says. “It’s very collaborative. I try to customize what I do.”

Sunset Park Alliance for Youth is a partnership of six organizations in the Brooklyn community that together serve 1,300 young adults aged 16 to 24. One of few consortiums in the city, it is considered by some experts to be an example of the future direction of service providing and of funding. The six member organizations are Fifth Avenue Committee and Brooklyn Workforce Innovations; Opportunities for A Better Tomorrow; Center for Family Life in Sunset Park; Lutheran Family Health Centers; South Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation; and Turning Point. While several do not concentrate on youth alone, all serve youth through their work with parents and relatives of young people.

The Mayor’s Office of Adult Education suggested that the Alliance have a master teacher and funded Werben’s position. With a background in trade magazine publishing and marketing and teaching business English to adults, she holds a Master of Education degree from Teachers College at Columbia University. She specialized in English for Speakers of Other Languages.

At the Alliance, one of her primary tasks is to provide direct service to participants in the various programs. At the Center for Family Life, Werben helps young people apply for college. Elsewhere she teaches English, job skills and writing. She also works to establish linkages between the agencies. “I am connecting two GED teachers, one who excels in helping students with drills, the other who is good at test preparation. They want to hook up and work together to help their students.” She also conducts trainings, working with a GED teaching assistant from the Fifth Avenue Committee to help prepare her to teach ESOL students.

This fall she is working on a new program called SPIN – Supporting Potential in the Neighborhood. “The idea is that our students are not used to being on time and sticking to a schedule. These concepts aren’t in their lives, but they are essential when we transition them into the workforce or the classroom. SPIN is about resumes, confidence building, connecting them with their abilities and interests.”

Stacie Sanchez, executive director of Sunset Park Alliance for Youth, notes that before the Alliance was formed the six agencies did collaborate informally and referred participants to each other, but they did not follow up. Now they do. “We do intense case management for 16 to 24 year olds,” Sanchez says. “We might even go to their first appointment for GED prep or ESOL classes with them. And we provide follow-up services to make sure the young adults are educated and employable.”

SPIN began as a pilot program over the summer with 25 youth. Brooklyn Workforce Innovations helped them get their drivers licenses, which are an asset on many jobs.

The Alliance is working with two CUNY colleges, Kingsborough College and the Borough of Manhattan Community College, to prepare disconnected youth for college. “It’s not hard to get students to college,” says Sanchez, “but it’s hard to keep them there. I am getting more involved with outcomes.”

Meanwhile, Sanchez and Werben do extensive promotion of the idea of the consortium and of its services. “We are the Alliance road show,” says Sanchez. “We spend hours at workshops and community board meetings and we do street outreach at basketball courts and tattoo parlors.”

To learn more about The Sunset Park Alliance watch for the new website www.sunsetparkalliance.org



House Passes Community College Bill

The U.S. House of Representatives has passed the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2009 (H.R. 3221), which calls for significant investments in community college programs that lead to degrees, certificates and work credentials. This follows the July announcement of the Obama Administration's American Graduation Initiative (*Workforce Weekly*, July 17), and now moves to the Senate.

The House bill would shift all student loans to the Federal Direct Loan Program and would end the Federal Family Education loan program. The resulting savings, estimated at \$87 billion over a ten-year period, would be applied to a range of programs and policies, including increases in the Pell Grant and Perkins loan programs, significant new funding for community college completion initiatives, early childhood education reform, and school infrastructure. In a speech at Hudson Valley Community College in Troy, N.Y., this week, President Barack Obama criticized large U.S. banks, particularly those receiving bailout money for trying to block the legislation, and said they get an "unwarranted subsidy" from it.

Although the legislation focuses on traditional students, it offers provisions for funding industry-recognized certificates. "Completion" of a certificate is emphasized, without a clear definition of what that might mean.

The bill would authorize nearly \$6 billion over four years in competitive grants to states and localities to provide services that promote the completion of post-secondary education, support data systems, and modernize facilities. For example, the bill would provide \$630 million for each of fiscal years 2010-2013 for four-year competitive grants. Title VI, the Community College Initiative, Section 503, would support innovative programs leading to completion of a post-secondary degree, certificate or industry-recognized credential in a high-wage occupation or high demand industry. Half of the grant money would go to states or consortia including states and or industries for activities that are not already supported by other federal funds. The minimum grant would be \$750,000.

To access the bill in its current form go to <http://thomas.loc.gov>



In Accountable Development, The Bronx Takes the Lead

-- **Bettina Damiani, Project Director, Good Jobs New York**

Under the Bloomberg Administration, our neighborhoods have been re-zoned to a greater extent than any time in recent history. Adding the use of tax-payer subsidies in many of those developments should guarantee broad community benefits and good jobs. But unfortunately, the city has hasn't leveraged its land use or subsidy policies to make sure that they yield new, good paying jobs for New Yorkers. But times are changing. Earlier this month Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. voted against the land use proposal for the redevelopment of the Kingsbridge Armory because the developer refused to sign a community benefits agreement.

The city and Related Companies are proposing that the Kingsbridge Armory be redeveloped to create "Shops at the Armory". The city's Industrial Development Agency has approved approximately \$17 million in subsidies and agreed to sell the landmarked building (with a new roof paid for by taxpayers) for \$5 million to Related. The developer is also eligible for various historic tax credits. As many in workforce development know, job placement alone isn't the ticket out of poverty, so we should be thrilled that Diaz is advocating for an inclusive and equitable planning process that guarantees that his constituents have access to good jobs. Subsidizing the retail industry, which is known for largely hiring part-time workers with no health benefits, often leaves taxpayers to pick up the tab for employees' basic necessities through food stamps, health care, housing and daycare vouchers. In essence, taxpayers are paying twice when wealthy businesses get subsidies that pay employees low wages.

The public investment expected at the Armory, the increase in car traffic associated with shopping malls, and the potential impact on existing businesses, are reasons why Borough President Diaz wants the developer to enter into a CBA with the Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment Alliance, a coalition of community and religious groups that teamed up with labor unions. In exchange for the zoning changes and subsidies, KARA wants Related to guarantee that employees at the Armory earn living wages; create affordable community space including recreational space for neighborhood youth; exclude big box stores that compete with existing businesses; and work with the city to make improvements to the traffic plan.

Ensuring that neighborhoods benefit from subsidized projects isn't a new trend. Cities all over the country leverage subsidies and/or changes in land use to ensure that tax dollars have broad benefits. Los Angeles is well out in front because of its 2001 agreement at the Staples Center and its 2004 deal with Los Angeles World Airports at LAX.

Diaz says that he hopes Related will return to the negotiating table with KARA to hammer out a CBA while the development winds its way through the land use approval process. None of KARA's requests are a surprise since they were mentioned in the Request for Proposal that was developed by an advisory committee convened by the Economic Development Corporation. That group included representatives from KARA and the requests have been discussed at numerous public hearings. It's been a bumpy road for accountable development in the Bronx where massive projects like Yankee Stadium and the Croton Water Filtration Plant have gone over budget, taken public space away from residents, and failed to generate meaningful new jobs for them. But it's precisely this history that helps pave the way for Diaz to demand that development benefits residents and taxpayers, not just developers. Let's hope other officials follow in his footsteps.

Express your Viewpoint! For more information, contact Kathy Brady @kbrady@nycetc.org or 212-253-6967.



Workforce Marketplace is the gathering place for act-on news such as funding opportunities, RFPs, job postings, training program recruitment, and event announcements. For other job announcements, visit www.nycetc.org. For information on submitting items to Workforce Marketplace, contact Charlotte Volage at cvolage@nycetc.org or 212-253-6811.

Jobs

Osborne Association is seeking a career specialist and a career coach for its Green Career Center in the Bronx. To learn more go to

www.osborneny.org

Year Up NYC is seeking a senior director of operations and strategic planning, a director of development, a career services manager, and a grants coordinator. For more information go to www.yearup.org

The Resident Association of Taft Houses in conjunction with NYC Housing Authority is seeking a consultant to provide basic computer training classes to Taft House residents aged 18 and older in Upper Manhattan. To learn more go to <http://a856-internet.nyc.gov/nycvendonline/vendorsearch>

Concept Paper

NYC Dept. of Youth and Community Development is seeking comments on its Adolescent Literacy Concept Paper prior to release of its RFP. The paper addresses strategies to improve literacy of adolescents in grades 6-8 through programming offering during out-of-school time. Deadline for comments is Oct.19. To learn more go to www.nyc.gov/dycd

Funding

Andrew Jackson Houses Residents Association and NYC Housing Authority are seeking proposals to provide an after-school mentoring program for 15 at-risk youths in the Jackson Houses and surrounding NYCHA developments in the South Bronx. Deadline is Oct. 9. Amounts are unstated. To learn more go

<http://a856-internet.nyc.gov/>

Events

Good Jobs New York, Urban Agenda, Center for Social Inclusion and others are holding *Ensuring an Equitable and Transparent Economic Recovery in New York City* Oct. 6 from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at 55 Exchange Place in Manhattan. To learn more go to

www.commoncause.org/ny/stimulus-training

City University of New York is holding the Black Male Initiative Fourth Annual Conference on Oct. 2 from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Lehman College, 250 Bedford Park Boulevard West in the Bronx. To RSVP go to

www.cuny.edu/bmi

Community Service Society is holding *From Basic Skills to Better Futures*, a briefing on its report on the city's current system of GED preparation, at 105 E. 22nd Street in Manhattan on Oct. 6 from 3 to 5 p.m. To RSVP e-mail cssevents@cssny.org

Federation of Protestant Workforce Agencies is holding its new workforce development task force meeting Sept. 30 from 10 a.m. to noon at 281 Park Avenue South in Manhattan. RSVP nlavan@fpwa.org

STRIVE is offering its Green Construction Training programs for the hard-to-employ starting Oct. 3. To learn more go to

www.strivenewyork.org

Workforce Professionals Training Institute is offering *No Magic Bullet: Connecting with Philanthropic Funders in Challenging Times* Oct. 7 from 9:30 a.m. to 4:40 p.m. To learn more go to

www.workforceprofessionals.org

Resources

CLASP has launched a data-finder to help those working with low-income people and families access state and national data, including information on TANF spending, the percentage of drop-outs in various communities, and the number of children serviced by assistance programs. To access it go to www.clasp.org/data

U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration has published *Toolkit and White Paper on Improving Transitional Outcomes of Youth with Disabilities Through Apprenticeships* that is available at <http://wdr.doleta.gov>