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Brooklyn Rally for Adult Literacy Today

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The New York Coalition for Adult Literacy and Sunset Park Alliance for Youth, a newly-formed group of six community-based agencies in Sunset Park, Brooklyn will be joined by City Council Member Sara M. Gonzalez (District 38) at a rally for Adult Literacy programs today, Wednesday April 29, 2009, from noon to 2 p.m. at Widdi Hall (5602 6th Avenue, Sunset Park).

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“The rally will gather adult education students, educators, leaders and community members to increase awareness of literacy needs in Brooklyn,” says Stacie Sanchez, director of the Sunset Park Alliance for Youth (SPA). “Over 20 percent of youth in Sunset Park are out of school without a diploma. The Alliance is uniquely positioned to provide high quality adult education programs to serve disconnected youth.”

The National Assessment of Adult Literacy estimates that 37 percent of Brooklyn residents over the age of 16 lack basic literacy skills. The Alliance conservatively estimates that at least 40 percent of Sunset Park residents over the age of 16 lack sufficient literacy skills.

The Alliance is modeled on a “One Neighborhood” concept that acknowledges that while youth may be disconnected from school and/or work, they deeply identify with the Sunset Park neighborhood. The six agencies that form the Alliance—Center for Family Life, Fifth Avenue Committee and Brooklyn Workforce Innovations, Lutheran Family Health Centers, Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow, Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation and Turning Point—are known for their expertise in providing adult literacy programs. The agencies provide extensive instruction to its teachers, many of whom are full time. Classes are offered at every literacy level at times and locations convenient for every student. Classes include pre-GED, GED, ESOL and many others. Additionally, the agencies provide assistance with housing, healthcare, counseling and case management.