



DJJ's Herman Dawson speaks at Central Family Life Center Legislative Breakfast and Town Hall Meeting on Staten Island

DJJ's Herman Dawson Attends Annual Town Hall Legislative Breakfast And Town Hall Meeting

On Saturday, February 21, 2009 DJJ's Deputy Commissioner for Legal Affairs and General Counsel Herman Dawson attended an Annual Town Hall Legislative Breakfast and Town Hall meeting sponsored by the Central Family Life Center Inc., a local community-based organization offering Individual/Family Services in Staten Island. The theme of the event was "Building Bridges", a platform from which greater community, political, educational and business collaboration can be realized on Staten Island. At the event, community leaders were given an opportunity to voice concerns and present questions to a host of key political leaders.

Congressman Charles B. Rangel was the honoree and keynote speaker for the Town Hall Meeting. Also in attendance were Congressman Michael McMahon, State Senator Diane Savino and Assemblyman Matthew Titone, along with representatives from the Governor's office.

Topics of discussion included: education, business opportunities for minorities, health care, and the need for youth programs and support. Deputy Commissioner Herman Dawson spoke about current initiatives such as Weekend Arraignment of juveniles to expedite their release to their families, and the Life Transitions Program where residents explore the skills needed to succeed in school and become productive members of their communities. Also discussed was the Collaborative Family Initiative, a further example of the reform of the City's juvenile justice system.

Deputy Commissioner Dawson detailed the need for more youth programs in the community in response to a question concerning an increased police presence in the community designed to deter juvenile crime. He said, "While the increase of police will undoubtedly help in maintaining public safety, community-based programs focusing on youth education, recreation, and support are far more effective in the long run in reducing juvenile delinquency."

