



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
OFFICE TO COMBAT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**VERIZON WIRELESS CONTINUES TO SUPPORT THE MAYOR'S OFFICE IN ITS
EFFORTS TO COMBAT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN NEW YORK CITY**

The NYC Family Justice Center, Brooklyn Congratulates its Next Class of 'NYC STEPS' Program Graduates as the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence Looks Ahead to Future Classes at its Newest Center in Manhattan

Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence (OCDV) Commissioner Yolanda B. Jimenez and Citywide Chief Information and Innovation Officer Rahul N. Merchant today congratulated domestic violence survivors who completed 12 weeks of workplace and computer-skills courses through the New York City Supported Training and Employment Preparation Services (NYC STEPS) program, an initiative designed to help individuals prepare for entry-level jobs in the technology field. The Family Justice Center (FJC) clients comprising this Brooklyn class – hailing from six countries and ranging in age from 31 to 40 – are now working toward self-sufficiency, employment, and financial independence. These graduates join those from the Queens and Bronx NYC STEPS programs implemented over the past two years. This morning's ceremony was held at the New York City Family Justice Center in Brooklyn.

"It is always an honor to join our clients as they celebrate yet another step on their road to recovery and self-sufficiency," said Commissioner Yolanda B. Jimenez of the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence. "Today, the graduates stand a little taller, smile a little brighter, and have demonstrated that with great commitment and dedication a safe future for themselves and their children is possible."

"NYC STEPS is an example of the City's public-private partnerships at their finest," said Citywide Chief Information and Innovation Officer Rahul N. Merchant. "By harnessing the resources of private partners and City agencies alike, we're equipping New Yorkers with the technology and workplace skills they need to succeed in our digital economy."

Verizon Wireless, through its Hopeline program, has been a proud partner and supporter of the NYC Family Justice Center Initiative since its beginnings. The Center in Brooklyn opened in 2005; Centers in Queens and the Bronx opened in 2008 and 2010, respectively. As the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence continues to expand its services in order to reach all New Yorkers, Verizon Wireless will once again assist in these efforts with a \$10,000.00 donation to the newest NYC Family Justice Center in Manhattan to open later this year.

(more)

“The Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence and the Family Justice Centers embody the kind of innovative, empowering programs for survivors of domestic violence that we as a company champion,” said Pat Devlin president of the New York Metro Region for Verizon Wireless. “They serve as national models of urban excellence, reducing barriers and providing powerful options for NYC women and children.”

“We are thankful to count with this generous contribution from Verizon Wireless as we plan the space of the training room in our newest Family Justice Center,” said Commissioner Jimenez. “It will be in this room that future victims of domestic violence will attend courses like NYC STEPS as they seek to put their lives back together.”

An innovative public-private partnership, NYC STEPS was designed and coordinated by the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DoITT) and NetApp, one of the City’s strategic technology providers. Program participants attend weekly sessions assisted by FJC personnel with supplemental instruction from private and public sector volunteer guest facilitators. In addition to visiting instructors, NetApp and program partners Skillsoft, Microsoft, and CDW-G provided in-kind donations of laptop computers, secure storage of laptops, and software for the initiative. ManpowerGroup, a workforce training, consulting and solutions firm, has provided classes in networking and job searching techniques and provided personal guidance for program graduates. The company is also funding a six-month internship for one recent NYC STEPS graduate.

NYC STEPS also includes a six-month internship for a graduate of the program, funded by NetApp and new program partner ManpowerGroup, a workforce training, consulting and solutions firm.

The NYC STEPS program was launched in the fall of 2011 in Queens, expanded to the Bronx in spring 2012, and to Brooklyn in the fall of 2012. To date, the program has graduated 73 men and women from over 25 different countries.

Through HopeLine, Verizon Wireless collects used cell phones to be recycled or sold and donates the proceeds in the form of cash grants and pre-paid wireless phones to advocacy groups for use by survivors. Since January 1999, HopeLine has collected more than 10 million phones, properly disposed of 1.7 million no-longer-used wireless phones, and has raised over \$18.1 million in cash grants donated to domestic violence organizations nationwide.

The New York City Family Justice Center initiative is a public-private partnership in coordination with the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization established to promote partnerships between the City and the private sector. The City currently has Family Justice Centers in downtown Brooklyn, Kew Gardens, Queens, and in the Bronx. A fourth Center will be opening in Manhattan this year and a fifth in Staten Island is already in its planning stage. To date, all three Centers have assisted over 90,000 New Yorkers.

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