



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

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**NEW YORK CITY'S QUEENS FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER
HOSTS CEREMONY FOR SECOND CLASS OF NYC STEPS PROGRAM
GRADUATES**

Initiative Provides Training to Help Victims of Domestic Violence Prepare for and Access Entry-Level Jobs in the City's Growing Technology Industry

Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence (OCDV) Commissioner Yolanda B. Jimenez and the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DoITT) Senior Associate Commissioner Geraldine Sweeney today congratulated domestic violence survivors who have completed 12 weeks of workplace and computer-skills courses under the Supported Training and Employment Preparation Services (NYC STEPS) program, created to help individuals prepare for entry-level jobs in the technology field.

The ceremony was held at the New York City Family Justice Center in Queens. The second NYC STEPS Queens graduating class consists of 11 clients of the NYC Family Justice Center in Queens who are working towards self-sufficiency, employment, and financial independence.

"We are delighted to be celebrating the graduation of the second NYC STEPS class. We hope that with the knowledge and skills that our clients have acquired, they feel empowered and ready to continue their journey towards greater independence," said Commissioner Yolanda B. Jimenez of the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence. "Job-readiness is a key tool for victims of domestic violence in achieving a life of self-sufficiency and one that is free of abuse."

An innovative public-private partnership, NYC STEPS was designed and coordinated by DoITT and NetApp, one of the City's strategic technology providers. Today's graduates, all of whom are NYC Family Justice Center (FJC) clients, attended weekly sessions assisted by FJC personnel with supplemental instruction from private and public sector-sector volunteer guest facilitators. In addition to its own visiting instructors, NetApp and its partners provided in-kind donations of laptop computers, secure storage of laptops, and software for the program. NetApp also provided an internship opportunity for a member of the first NYC STEPS graduating class in October 2011.

(more)

“Through NYC STEPS we’ve developed a proven and replicable model for public-private partnerships at the intersection of technology and self-sufficiency, said DoITT Senior Associate Commissioner Geraldine Sweeney, architect of the NYC STEPS initiative. “I congratulate all of today’s graduates, who by dint of courage and dedication have opened for themselves a new range of personal and professional opportunities in the digital world.”

The NYC STEPS program is being piloted through the NYC Family Justice Center’s on-site Self-Sufficiency Program, which was launched in Queens in August 2008. With the support of the Avon Empowerment Grant from the Avon Foundation for Women, the Self-Sufficiency Program is now in its third year of helping survivors of domestic violence move from surviving to thriving. The Program is operated by a Self-Sufficiency Coordinator who supports, educates, and empowers while leveraging as many resources as possible.

NYC STEPS graduates have an array of training resources and career development opportunities available to them. Today’s graduates also have the opportunity to apply for a six-month internship with Experis/Manpower, a leading workforce training, consulting, and solutions firm. The NYC Family Justice Center will also provide information on paid internships, entry-level job openings, and mentorships, and refer the graduates to several partner organizations.

The Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications provides for the sustained, efficient and effective delivery of IT services, infrastructure and telecommunications to modernize, unlock, innovate and enhance service delivery to New York City’s residents, businesses, employees and visitors.

The New York City Family Justice Center in Queens 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 Queens Center is supported by a diverse group of companies, foundations, and citizens which includes: Avon Foundation for Women, Cisco Systems, Inc., City Council, Dell, Inc., Hewlett-Packard Company, IBM Corporation, Joe Torre Safe at Home Foundation, NetApp, Inc., Queens Borough President, Verizon Wireless, WebHouse, Inc., and WOR Radio/Dr. Joy to the World Foundation. Additional information on how to make a donation to the New York City Family Justice Initiative is available at www.nyc.gov/fund.

The City’s first Family Justice Center, in downtown Brooklyn, was opened in 2005, and the third Center in the Bronx, opened in 2010. To date, all three Centers have assisted over 89,000 victims.

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