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THROGGS NECK COMMUNITY CENTER RIBBON-CUTTING CEREMONY SPONSORED SITE WILL BE RUN BY KIPS BAY BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB

By Eileen Elliott



MAKING IT OFFICIAL (left to right) NYCHA General Manager Douglas Apple, Senator Jeffrey Klein, Assistant Deputy General Manager Michelle Pinnock, Chairman Tino Hernandez, Resident Association President Dwayne Jenkins, DYCD Commissioner Jeanne Mulgrav, Kips Bay Executive Director Daniel Quintero, Vice-Chairman Earl Andrews, Jr., Board Member JoAnna Aniello, Community Operations Bronx Borough Director Deidra Gilliard and Deputy General Manager Hugh Spence cut the ribbon signifying the official opening of the Throggs Neck Community Center.

YOUNG RESIDENTS OF THROGGS NECK HOUSES, RANDALL-BALCOM HOUSES AND THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY IN THE BRONX HAVE A NEWLY RENOVATED 18,000 SQUARE FOOT COMMUNITY CENTER TO CALL THEIR OWN. A celebratory ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Throggs Neck Community Center on Balcom Avenue was held on the afternoon of December 12th, and the many partners who worked together to make the Center a reality, including executives from the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) and the Kips Bay Boys and Girls Club, elected officials, the development's Resident Association leader and residents, joined together in the airy auditorium to commemorate the occasion with words of dedication and thanks.

The \$7.3 million expansion doubled the size of the original center, adding a new gymnasium with adjacent locker rooms, a dance studio, classrooms, and a computer lab.

Bronx Community Operations Director Deidra Gilliard served as Mistress of Ceremonies for the afternoon introducing the many distinguished guests. "Today we celebrate this beautiful facility where your children and grandchildren will have an opportunity to do things that

will stagger us," Ms. Gilliard said.

NYCHA Chairman Tino Hernandez, the first speaker, began by asking for a moment of silence for the two police officers who were slain over the past weeks. (See Mayor's Column, page 2.) The Chairman then commended the highly dedicated team of elected officials who represent the Throggs Neck community, many of whom were present,

(Continued on page 10)

BEAR HELPS NYCHA YOUTH KEEP OUT THE COLD Donation of 2,000 Down Coats to Young Partners In Reading

By Eileen Elliott

BACK IN THE SUMMER OF 1992, A RIOT IN THE MANHATTAN NEIGHBORHOOD OF WASHINGTON HEIGHTS TEMPORARILY ENDED THE DREAM OF ONE IMMIGRANT FAMILY — the Hong's, from Seoul, Korea. The violence left their sneaker and sporting goods store on the corner of 145th Street and Broadway a shambles, with 10,000 pairs of sneakers lost to looters. But the neighborhood spirit was stronger than the Hong's storefront window. In the aftermath, neighbors rallied together to clean up the broken glass and offered cash to help the Hong's re-establish their business. The Hong family plight caught the attention of the City's Mayor, David N. Dinkins, who presented the family with a \$25,000 check from an anonymous donor. When they accepted the gift at a press conference that year, Andrew Hong and his wife Susan made a vow to someday return the kindness that was shown to them.

That was 13 years ago, and today the business that was launched with those donations, Bear, U.S.A., Inc. is world-famous for its cold-weather gear. Unfortunately, Andrew Hong has passed away, but on November 28th, together with her three sons, Mrs. Hong made good on her promise by presenting Bear down jackets to hardworking New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) children from the

Partners In Reading (PIR) program at the Rutgers Community Center on the Lower East Side. She also had a jacket for one very important guest — David Dinkins — who appeared to be only too pleased to help the Hong's bring their story full circle.

The Rutgers event kicked off a two-day distribution of 2,000 hooded down jackets to children in the PIR program in each of the five boroughs. The

giveaway was made possible by a collaboration between the Hong's and the nonprofit Korean American Community Foundation (KACF).

PIR is a collaboration between the Mayor's Office, NYCHA and the Department of Education, currently serving approximately 2,000 children in the first, second and third grades at 120 NYCHA locations. The overall goal of the

(Continued on page 4)



DOWNSIZING Children from the Rutgers Community Center Partners In Reading Class joined (right to left) ABC News Anchor JuJu Chang, Vice-Chairman Earl Andrews, Jr., former Mayor David N. Dinkins and Susan Hong wearing their new down jackets, courtesy of the Hong family.

PAGE 2
Meet Cap't.
Johnson



PAGE 5
Forty More
Dreamers!



PAGE 10
Sign Up
For B'ball



MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Let's Get Illegal Guns Off Our Streets



AT THE END OF NOVEMBER AND IN EARLY DECEMBER LAST YEAR, TWO OF NEW YORK'S FINEST WERE GUNNED DOWN IN LESS THAN TWO WEEKS. On November 28th, Detective Dillon Stewart of the 70th Precinct was shot and killed in Flatbush when a motorist opened fire in an underground garage. Then on December 10th, during a gun battle with apparent burglars in the Pelham section of the Bronx, off-duty Police Officer Daniel Enchautegui of the 40th Precinct

was struck by a bullet in the chest and killed. In honoring these brave men for making the ultimate sacrifice to protect us, we owe them two deeds.

The first is to help look after their families, who have suffered and I'm sure are continuing to suffer terribly. They need our support. If you would like to make a donation to the New York Police and Fire Widow's and Children's Benefit Fund, call 3-1-1 to learn how.

The second thing we owe Officers Stewart and Enchautegui is to continue making every effort to take illegal guns off our streets. My Administration has created special Gun Courts that have increased jail sentences for possession of illegal guns, and during my re-election campaign, I pledged to push for an increase in mandatory minimum sentences to three-and-a-half years — and to at least five years for those with prior convictions. In addition, we will work to push the State Legislature to pass legislation that closes the loophole in the State's illegal gun sale law.

And in June 2004, I announced a four-pronged initiative to fight crime in public housing called Operation Safe Housing. As part of this initiative, a special administrative hearing part was created at the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) to expedite eviction cases involving felony gun and other serious offenses committed on NYCHA grounds.

But even as we expand our efforts to take illegal guns, and those who carry them, off our streets, guns are flooding into the City from states like Pennsylvania and Virginia, where people can buy guns easily and then sell them in cities like New York to those who cannot legally acquire them, including drug dealers and other dangerous criminals.

New York and other cities have filed lawsuits that would require the gun industry to act responsibly by weeding out the small number of rogue dealers who sell the majority of guns that end up being used in crimes. And there is reason for hope: recently, a federal judge found that gun manufacturers and distributors could follow simple, economical measures that would reduce the number of illegal guns sold in major cities like New York, and that these measures would in no way restrict the rights of lawful gun owners.

We will continue our legal fight to hold unscrupulous gun dealers accountable for their actions, but the fact remains that we need national legislation to stop the insanity of illegal guns on our streets. Until Congress gets serious about shutting down the flow of illegal guns, it is only a matter of time before another tragedy occurs.

Officer Dillon Stewart came here from Jamaica when he was a boy. He left a stable career as an accountant to serve the public as a police officer, and even when he was mortally wounded, he continued to chase his suspect. He gave us his life. Officer Enchautegui, who was born in Long Island City and graduated from John Jay College, continued to fire at the suspects even after he was hit, striking both of them several times. These men were heroic until the end. We will forever honor their memory — and we must never forget the debt we owe the men and women who put their lives on the line every day to keep New York the safest big city in the nation.

Michael R. Bloomberg

**CALL 311 FOR ALL CITY
NON-EMERGENCY SERVICES**

**NEW YORK CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY'S FINEST
PSA Commanding Officer Got Her Start In St. Mary's Park**

By Heidi Morales

AN OLD SAYING GOES "IF YOU LOVE YOUR JOB YOU NEVER WORK A DAY IN YOUR LIFE." Police Service Area #7's (PSA #7) Commanding Officer, Captain Kristel Johnson, agrees. She's been on the job for 20 years now but each morning she wakes up "refreshed." Each day is a new beginning. She's a high-ranking official in the New York City Police Department and one of four African-American females to make it to the rank of Captain or beyond, but once upon a time Captain Johnson was just little Kristel Johnson from the New York City Housing Authority's (NYCHA's) St. Mary's Park Houses in the Bronx.

Beginnings

In 1971 Kristel Johnson moved to St. Mary's Park Houses with her mother and three brothers, where they lived for decades. As Captain Johnson reminisced about her childhood in public housing her eyes squinted just slightly and she started to fiddle with her thumbs—a playful characteristic for such a tough lady. She talked about her time at the Resident Association meetings, the holiday parties and events, and of course the summer activities, which she participated in religiously.

"I ran in the track and field events. They [NYCHA] used to have bowling tournaments during the summertime; I did the bowling thing. I really had a good time there." We used to run on Macombs Dam Park on 161st Street and bowl at the bowling lanes on White Plains Road, and then they'd move over to Randall's Island and do sporting events there. I worked in the Summer Youth Employment Program, so it was good," she said. But Captain Johnson remembers a time that, according to her, is long gone.

"It's different now than it was years ago. When we first moved there the tenants would watch out for each other. We used to have parties like Halloween or Christmas parties down in the Tenant Association room and they really don't do that anymore. Each building would take care of the kids in their own building." And, she said, it was this sense of family within the community and her mother's watchful eye that kept Captain Johnson and her siblings on the right path.

"You know how the lights came on at 7 o'clock at night? Well, my mother worked nights, when we were younger and when the lights came on we had to be upstairs and she would actually call to make sure we were in the house. And back then you had neighbors who would tell your parents if you did something wrong...so we stayed upstairs." Coming back to her neighborhood now, in a different capacity, Captain Johnson said she can appreciate how lucky she was.

She pointed out that there are



TOP COP Captain Kristel Johnson in front of PSA #7 in the Bronx. The former St. Mary's Park resident is one of four African-American women to become an NYPD Captain.

things we can all do not only to bring positive change into our communities but also to help deter crime, such as returning to lend a helping hand, especially to a child. "I think the biggest problem now in any neighborhood is people who achieve and leave and so the role models that these kids have nowadays, a lot of them, are not positive role models. People need to go back and let them [youth] know that you don't have to do this [crime] in order to succeed."

She's the Boss

Captain Kristel Johnson is the Commanding Officer of PSA #7, and is the only woman captain in the New York City Police Department's Housing Bureau. However, Captain Johnson didn't always plan to be one of New York's finest.

Her education began at Immaculate Conception Elementary School on 151st Street and Melrose Avenue; then she moved on to Cardinal Spellman High School in the Bronx, and then went on to Fairleigh Dickinson University in New Jersey where she studied math and computer science. But it was in

(Continued on page 5)

**The Housing Authority
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**72
years
of Public Housing
in New York City**

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Michael R. Bloomberg.....Mayor

- Tino Hernandez.....Chairman
- Earl Andrews, Jr.Vice-Chairman
- JoAnna Aniello.....Board Member
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- Douglas Apple.....General Manager
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- Howard Marder.....Public Information Officer
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- Allan Leicht.....Staff Writer
- Deborah Williams.....Staff Writer
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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

**NYCHA's Capital Construction Projects
 What's Ahead In 2006**



NYCHA IS COMMITTED TO MODERNIZING AND PRESERVING OUR EXTENSIVE HOUSING STOCK. LAST MONTH IN THIS COLUMN I MENTIONED THE HISTORIC BOND TRANSACTION THAT TOGETHER WITH AN EXPECTED CAPITAL ALLOCATION FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HUD) WILL PROVIDE THE NEW YORK CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY (NYCHA) WITH \$2 BILLION TO ACCELERATE THE MODERNIZATION OF OUR 345 PUBLIC HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS OVER THE COURSE OF THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS.

To best utilize these resources, NYCHA has awarded a contract to an architectural and engineering firm to perform a comprehensive architectural and structural survey which will document, assess and prioritize the capital improvement needs of every housing development and non-residential facility the Housing Authority owns. In addition to highlighting immediate repair needs, it will include the life-cycle projections of all major building systems to allow for detailed scheduling of planned future replacement. Work on the survey began in May 2005.

Meanwhile, work is ongoing. NYCHA currently has seven contracts under our new CM/Build or Construction Management Build program, which seeks to improve the quality of work on NYCHA's major capital construction projects by utilizing private construction management companies. CM/Build will also ensure that work is completed on time and within budget. These seven contracts total more than \$780 million worth of services.

So, what kinds of capital improvements do these contracts cover, exactly?

In the Bronx this work includes: steam line replacement at Edenwald Houses; brickwork and boiler replacement at West Farms; roofing replacement at Adams Houses, Castle Hill, and Pelham Parkway; and brick repair at Bronx River and Pelham Parkway. Renovations are planned for the Community Centers at 1162 Washington Avenue and Betances.

In Brooklyn, a boiler replacement and heating distribution upgrade are nearly completed at Armstrong Houses. Heating plant upgrades are in progress at Independence Towers and Williamsburg Houses. There will be underground steam replacement work at Bayview; and roof replacement and brick repair at Red Hook Houses East. Renovations are planned for the Linden and Marlboro Community Centers.

On the agenda for Queens are exterior and lobby improvements at Oceanside and Bayside Houses, and roof replacement at South Jamaica. A renovation is planned for the Queensbridge Community Center.

In Manhattan, there will be a gut rehabilitation and major renovation at Randolph Houses. Water and fire mains have been replaced at Jefferson Houses. Fuel oil tanks will be replaced at Lafayette, and the sewer lines have been replaced at Lehman Village. Other improvements include an electrical upgrade at Polo Grounds and roofing at Chelsea Addition. The Baruch Community Center will be expanded.

In Staten Island, boilers will be replaced at Cassidy/Lafayette, and brickwork will be repaired at Todt Hill Houses.

NYCHA is doing its best to make sure that our 2,694 residential buildings and the 301 Community Centers on NYCHA property are in shape to last for generations to come.

Tino Hernandez

BOROUGH DIGEST

Bronx:

To better serve NYCHA residents who live in the Bronx, and better manage developments there, 275 staff from five departments are settling into their new digs at 1200 Waters Place in the borough. From now on Bronx Management, Bronx Community Operations, Bronx Social Services, Asset Management and the Capital Projects Bronx field office will be relocated from numerous former residential units and community spaces into a single floor at this new office complex. The old offices will be returned to their original residential and community uses, yielding more than 20 apartments that will be returned to the rent roles. This initiative will ultimately result in better service to NYCHA's Bronx residents by enhancing coordination between departments, while providing borough staff with a clean, efficient and professional office environment.



Brooklyn:

The seniors at NYCHA's Saratoga Square put on a dazzling Holiday Concert on the evening of December 23rd to celebrate their accomplishments for the year. It was the first such concert at the senior building, which houses approximately 250 families. The performers kicked up their heels and lifted their voices to the accompaniment of an eight-piece band. The event was initiated by NYCHA's Department of Social Services which runs the Saratoga Square Congregate Housing Services Program. The program provides assisted daily living services to help the frail and disabled who live in the building.

Manhattan:

The NYCHA Youth Chorus helped Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg ring in the holiday season by singing some of the old favorites at the annual lighting of the City Hall Holiday Tree in City Hall Park on the evening of November 29th. Among the distinguished

(Continued on page 4)

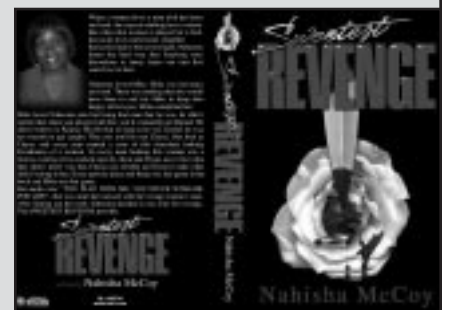
DEBORAH'S DIARY

By Deborah Williams



Poet of the Year—She was nominated by the Poets International Society for Poet of the Year 2005, but she's more than just a nominee she's a single working mom with three little boys ages, 11 months, 8 and 12 years old. Her name is Nahisha McCoy and she is a resident of Red Hook Houses, in Brooklyn and a NYCHA employee assigned to Drew Hamilton Houses, in Manhattan. As a young girl

Nahisha began writing stories using her spelling words but then soon discovered that writing was her outlet, a way of releasing negative energy, anxiety, and stress. "I would use my pen and put a voice to paper and make the worst possible things happen to those that made me mad. As I got older I would write plays about people who made me angry. Through writing I could get even with them and believe me I had a very vivid imagination," said Nahisha. In 1995, Nahisha started writing poetry. "Every night about 2:00AM I would lie down in bed and write at least four to five poems," said Nahisha. In 1997, while working with the AmeriCorps program at Red Hook Houses she was asked to write a short play for Domestic Violence Week focusing on domestic violence and the effect it has on the entire community. The play was performed the following month and what took her only one day to write proved to be a great success. From then on Nahisha began to write more. However, writing to Nahisha was only a hobby, in fact she never took her writing seriously. That is until life or fate tossed her another round of heartbreak. Having no one to turn to she began writing about her failing relationship with her fiancée. One day, after sorting through her writings, Nahisha realized that she had the makings of a book. She arranged her work into book format, e-mailed it to a select group of friends, acquaintances, and authors, and they all replied favorably, most saying, "After you get it edited and published let me know where I can go buy it." After five years of editing and going through the publishing process, her book entitled, "Sweetest Revenge," a story of love and betrayal, is available on line at www.freewebs.com/nmcoy2, or you can Google Nahisha McCoy to find her store front. Now when Nahisha speaks of her past she does it with confidence and pride. "I had to get this book completed because in the end it would all be worth it. Now that it's done my children are proud of me and their teachers know who I am. I enjoyed every aspect of the publishing process, meeting people, and having them recognize me as an author," said Nahisha in a self-assured tone. *Well girl, I admire you because you found a way to channel all of that negative energy stemming from your broken relationships and turn it into positive energy—that took strong character and perseverance. Now you are experiencing SWEET success! My congratulations to you, author, and I wish you all the best. Keep writing. I hope to see your name on the best seller list!*



The Saint — Vincent

DeLeon, resident of O'Dwyer Gardens in Coney Island, Brooklyn receives great praise from his neighbor Roseanna Moore for all his acts of kindness. Ms. Moore, an elderly woman who is wheelchair bound is not always able to do things for herself and that's when Mr. DeLeon steps in. "He always checks on me to see if I am all right. Every day he knocks on my door and during the Black-out of 2003 he walked up six flights of stairs to help me. He came up with batteries, flashlights and water," said Ms. Moore. Ms. Moore lives alone and at times during the night the sounds of the street scare her. What calms her down is knowing that Mr. DeLeon will make his evening rounds and check in on her. Ms. Moore refers to Mr. DeLeon as, "The Saint," the helpful concerned neighbor. That's why Ms. Moore contacted me at the *NYCHA Journal*, because she wanted Mr. DeLeon to know how grateful she is for having him around and even more for being a friend to her. She wanted me to say THANK YOU for being there in her time of need. *So, on behalf of NYCHA I thank you and applaud you, Mr. DeLeon, for being such a good, kind person. Mr. DeLeon, if the world had more people like you, it would be a much better place to live in.*

If you have good news you would like to share with your neighbors, drop me a few lines care of The NYCHA Journal/250 Broadway, 12th Floor/New York, New York 10007 or by fax at (212) 577-1358, or better yet, you can e-mail me at: williamd3@nycha.nyc.gov. Or hey, make it personal! Give me a call at (212) 306-4752. I can't 100% guarantee it but I'll do my best to see that your good news makes it into this column.

The NYCHA "Not Wanted" List

In this issue we continue our editorial policy of publishing the names of individuals who have been permanently excluded from our public housing developments. This list is part of NYCHA's effort to keep residents informed of the Housing Authority's ongoing effort to improve the quality of life for all New Yorkers in public housing and to allow for the peaceful and safe use of our facilities. Here follows a list of the people excluded after hearings were held on August 4, 11, and 18, and December 8, 15, 27, and 29, 2004.

**REMEMBER,
IF YOU SEE ANY OF THESE INDIVIDUALS ON
HOUSING AUTHORITY PROPERTY, PLEASE CALL
YOUR MANAGEMENT OFFICE OR THE POLICE!
THIS LISTING IS PROVIDED TO ALL
POLICE SERVICE AREAS.**

Prohibited as of August 4, 2004

Rashad Fleming Case 7113/04 formerly associated with the sixth floor of 2976 Avenue W, Sheepshead Houses, Brooklyn.

Prohibited as of August 11, 2004

Sade Abraham Case 7230/04 formerly associated with the first floor of 80 Osborn Street, Howard Houses, Brooklyn.

Ivis Arriola Case 7193/04 formerly associated with the eleventh floor of 3603 Third Avenue, Morris Houses, Bronx.

Clifford Randall Jr. Case 7120/03 formerly associated with the first floor of 2811 Exterior Street, Marble Hill Houses, Bronx.

Prohibited as of August 18, 2004

Aaron Franklin Case 7424/04 formerly associated with the twenty-first floor of 2430 7th Avenue, Drew Hamilton Houses, Manhattan.

James Smith Case 7446/04 formerly associated with the third floor of 464 Columbia Street, Red Hook West Houses, Brooklyn.

Christopher Mills Case 7494/04 formerly associated with the second floor of 215-217 Alexander Avenue, Mitchel Houses, the Bronx.

Jerry Clayton Case 4131/04 formerly associated with the seventh floor of 131 St. Nicholas Avenue, St. Nicholas Houses, Manhattan.

Theodore Brown Case 7528/04 formerly associated with the third floor of 40-10 12th Street, Queensbridge North Houses, Long Island City, New York.

Prohibited as of December 8, 2004

Jose Roldan Case 9768/04 formerly associated with the first floor of 553 5th Walk, Kingsborough Houses, Brooklyn.

Prohibited as of December 15, 2004

Christopher Jones Case 6498/04 formerly associated with the second floor of 2238 Batchelder Street, Sheepshead Bay Houses, Brooklyn.

Godfrey Smith Case 10006/04 formerly associated with the third floor of 17 Avenue W, Marlboro Houses, Brooklyn.

Carlton Gaffney Case 10038/04 formerly associated with the fifth floor of 2140 Madison Avenue, Lincoln Houses, Manhattan.

Israel Valentin Case 10101/04 formerly associated with the eighth floor of 840 Columbus Avenue, Douglass Houses, Manhattan.

Gregory Spann Case 10139/04 formerly associated with the fourth floor of 54-09 Alameda Avenue, Ocean Bay Apartments, Far Rockaway.

Prohibited as of December 22, 2004

Derrick Roberts Case 10187/04 formerly associated with the ninth floor of 735 East 165th Street, Forest Houses, the Bronx.

Terrence Arrington Case 8635/04 formerly associated with the first floor of 335 East 166th Street, Claremont Consolidated Houses, the Bronx.

Jean Carlos Morillo Case 10275/04 formerly associated with the fourth Maxime Garrett floor of 745 East 152nd Street, Adams Houses, the Bronx.

Enrique Gonzalez Case 10310/04 formerly associated with the sixth floor of 315 Sutter Avenue, Langston Hughes Houses, Brooklyn.

Osvaldo Estevez Case 10304/04 formerly associated with the second floor of 2946-50 West 23rd Street, Carey Gardens Houses, Brooklyn.

Prohibited as of December 29, 2004

Gary Coleman Case 3661/04 formerly associated with the seventh floor of 1810 Watson Avenue, Bronxdale Houses, the Bronx.

BOROUGH DIGEST

(Continued from page 3)

guests at the event were NYCHA Chairman Tino Hernandez, Board Member JoAnna Aniello, and Hugh Spence, who oversees Community Operations. It may have been chilly, but there was plenty of hot chocolate going around to keep the crowd of New Yorkers warm. Currently 45 NYCHA youth between the ages of 12 and 19 perform with the Chorus, led by Director Larry Matthew. Numbers for the evening included "Here We Come A' Caroling," "Angels We Have Heard On High," and, "In The Giving We Receive."



Queens:

A Holiday Showcase at the Hammel Houses Community Center provided a rare opportunity for approximately 300 young residents who participate in programs at all ten Queens Community Centers to get together and show their stuff. The December 28th variety show began with an art exhibit late in the morning and from there went on to singing, dancing, poetry readings and a dramatic performance. The performances were all by youth in the after-school program, and teens.

Staten Island:

NYCHA residents who frequent the borough's eight Community Centers have got to be on their toes! Staten Island residents have been practicing their checkers, chess and pool to compete in the borough's first-ever "Checker Challenge." Staten Island Community Operations Director Carl Billington and staff Eugene Kitt, Andre Cirilo and Sarah Nanton began showing up at each of the centers by surprise to compete with residents in the games mentioned and will continue to do so through the month of January. The residents know they're coming — they just don't know when. All winners have received, or will receive trophies.

BEAR JACKET DONATION

(Continued from page 1)

program is to improve the children's literacy skills through a combination of classroom instruction, homework help, individual tutoring, interactive projects, and parental involvement.

ABC News correspondent JuJu Chang, who is on the Board of the KACF, served as Mistress of Ceremonies for the event. "Bear U.S.A. today is donating \$200,000 worth of down jackets. It's about healing, giving back. It's about people coming together to fulfill a promise. Today is the happy ending," Ms. Chang said to a gymnasium filled with children wearing the green, red and blue jackets.

Mayor Dinkins spoke of his love of children and emphasized once again that the important part of the Hong's story was their desire to give back. "I hope when other people hear of this they will think of giving back too," the former Mayor said. "[The Hong Family] couldn't do better than doing this through the New York City Housing Authority."

On behalf of NYCHA Chairman Tino Hernandez, Vice-Chairman Earl Andrews, Jr. thanked the Hong's and the KACF for choosing to give the jackets to NYCHA residents. Board Member JoAnna Aniello was also present.

KACF President Sung Chul Whang described the mission of the three-year-old organization as raising funds to provide social services to Korean-Americans and to help serve as a bridge between the Korean-American population and the community at large.

Speaking in Korean, with her son Robert serving as translator, Mrs. Hong recalled the emotion she and her husband experienced at the unexpected outpouring of support after the riot. "Our hearts were filled with overflowing gratitude," she said. "I am able to stand here today because of this great country. Thank you all from the bottom of my heart."

Anther son, Thomas Hong, closed the event, vowing that the the Hong's would continue to support Partners In Reading, NYCHA and the KACF in developing community-based businesses for entrepreneurs.





N.Y.C.H.A. YOUTH CHORUS NOTICE!



We are looking to AUDITION new members during our recruitment drive!

If you enjoy singing, performing and would like to develop your music skills give us a call. **DON'T WAIT.**
Our facility is located at:



Taft Houses
1385 Fifth Avenue (1st floor)
(Cross Street is 115th Street)
(212) 427-6648 or (212) 427-8603 24 hrs



We are SEARCHING for **New VOICES!**

Audition are held for boys and girls 12-19yaa

WE ARE WAITING TO HEAR FROM YOU

CALL US FOR AN AUDITION




New York City Housing Authority
Department of Community Operations
Citywide Programs & Contract Management

FLU SEASON IS STILL HERE!

It's Not Too Late To Get A Flu Shot

Each year, thousands of New Yorkers get the flu and as many as 2,600 die from it. Most of these deaths are preventable. Receiving your flu shot every year is the best way to prevent the most severe complications of influenza. The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) urges New Yorkers at highest risk for serious illness or death from the flu to get a flu shot now, if they haven't already. Talk to your doctor about getting the flu shot or click on the "Find a Flu Shot" link at the Health and Mental Hygiene agency link on nyc.gov for more information on DOHMH's walk-in clinics. You can also call **311, the City's all-purpose, non-emergency hotline, or 212 NEW YORK.**

High risk categories include:

- Adults age 65 and over;
- All children 6-23 months of age;
- All persons age 6 months and older with chronic medical conditions, including heart disease, pulmonary disorders (including asthma), diabetes, kidney disease, hemoglobinopathies, and compromised immune systems (HIV or immunosuppressive therapy);
- People with conditions that can cause breathing problems (such as cognitive dysfunction, spinal cord injuries, seizure disorders, or other neuromuscular disorders);
- Pregnant women;
- All residents of nursing homes and chronic-care facilities;
- All children and adolescents, age 6 months to 18 years, receiving long-term aspirin therapy;
- Health care workers involved in direct patient care; and
- Out-of-home caregivers and household contacts of children aged under six months.

HOUSING AUTHORITY'S FINEST

(Continued from page 2)

1984 when a friend who lived in the building mentioned she should take the Police Department test — an idea that at first she wasn't sold on. "I realized that it was a good opportunity; that I could go back to school, which is what I did. In 1990 I went to John Jay School of Criminal Justice and I have a bachelor's degree now in computer information systems." Captain Johnson rose in the ranks of the Police Department. She was promoted to Sergeant in 1994, Lieutenant in 1998, and finally in May of 2002 she was promoted to Captain.

But is it more difficult for a woman to be in charge? "It's hard sometimes being a woman. You're going to have your struggles but I spent my entire career on the streets so there's really not a lot I haven't seen or been involved with," she said.

Homecoming

In May of 2005 Captain Johnson was appointed Commanding Officer of PSA #7. "It's actually been good coming back here. I think the fact that I grew up in public housing gives me a little more credibility with the residents. I can relate to the things that they want and don't want to see [at their developments]. They want a peaceful life just like everyone else."

Captain Johnson has been back to Saint Mary's Park for Resident Association meetings where she has been received with open arms, especially by people who knew her as a child. "People who know I'm back have been by to see me or have called to see how I am doing. It's good to come back home," she added.

All in all, Captain Johnson is a true success story. She climbed to the top with the help of her family, her determination and her great belief in what she referred to as her "rock," God. Her ultimate message to the youth from her neighborhood and NYCHA developments is, "You can do anything you want to do in life. How they [the media] portray residents in the developments...you don't have to fit into that stereotype." She urged today's youth never to forget their roots but to also remember that there is a world waiting to be explored. "Just because your parents are there [public housing] doesn't mean you have to stay there. Just because your friends are there doesn't mean you have to be. And you can still stay there and achieve your goals; just don't let someone else kill your dreams."

Chelsea-Elliott First-Graders Dream Big in the "I Have A Dream" Program



DREAMING OF THE FUTURE Eugene Lang (left), who founded IHAD, leads young Dreamers (right) in the IHAD Pledge. In return for guaranteed tuition assistance for college or vocational school, these first-graders made a commitment to work hard, stay in school and keep dreaming.

By Eileen Elliott

Forty first-graders from P.S. 33, also known as Chelsea Prep Elementary School in Manhattan, were officially "adopted" at the Chelsea-Elliott "I Have A Dream" (IHAD) Project launch on the evening of December 7th. These "Dreamers" as program participants are called, all live in the New York City Housing Authority's (NYCHA's) Chelsea-Elliott Houses, and all will receive free after-school programming, extracurricular enrichment, tutoring and mentoring from the first through the 12th grades with the promise of tuition assistance for college or vocational school after they graduate from high school. They are the second group of Dreamers from the development, in the fourth IHAD Project NYCHA has supported.

"'I have a dream' is itself a profound statement," said Chelsea-Elliott IHAD Program Director Elizabeth Cooke to the young Dreamers and their families. "This program has been an opportunity to see that dreams do come true."

NYCHA General Manager Douglas Apple told the first-graders who sat together in the first few rows of the auditorium, "I think you have a lot to be proud of as residents of Chelsea-Elliott Houses. There's a lot you have to do over the next 12 years and I know you'll do well. Stay with it, stay in school, work hard and take advantage of this opportunity."

The IHAD program relies on the long-term personal and financial commitment of each IHAD Project's local sponsors. Jeffrey Gural, Chairman of the Newmark global real estate firm, will contribute \$250,000 a year to the Chelsea-Elliott Dreamers, as will Howard Kaye, former Chairman of Kaye Insurance. Combined with contributions from NYCHA and other sponsors, the total amount that will be invested in the program is \$3 million. This is the second group from Chelsea-Elliott Houses Gural and Kaye have made this commitment to and adopted into the IHAD Program.

In his remarks, Mr. Gural called his participation in the IHAD Program, "a real labor of

love. I guess 13 or 14 years ago I stood up here and adopted a class from Chelsea-Elliott and over the past 14 years really got to know the children. The highlight of my experience is to see these children go on to college and become freshman and sophomores."

Mr. Gural made a point of

mentioning that the Dreamers whose parents took the most interest in the program did the best. "You're really key to this," he told the parents, "as well as teachers, principals and IHAD staff."

IHAD Foundation Executive Director Kara Forte introduced

(Continued on page 10)

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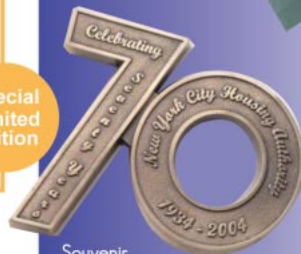
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Second-hand smoke causes serious and deadly health problems. Those who live with smokers have increased risk of cancer or heart disease. Children have more illnesses. Second-hand smoke can also contribute to low birth weight in babies, pre-term delivery, and miscarriage. Incidence of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) also rises among infants exposed to second-hand smoke. Teens are more likely to start smoking in homes where adults smoke.

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SCARVES FOR SENIORS



GROWING INVOLVED Thirty-five youth from P.S. 20 on Manhattan's Lower East Side visited the seniors at the nearby Meltzer Community Center on December 6th bearing gifts of scarves. The children made the scarves in a single afternoon, decorating them with magic markers and felt stickers, wrapped them up and tied them with ribbon. By all accounts, the seniors were delighted. "At the end of the event everyone started singing 'Feliz Navidad' and dancing," said Children for Children Executive Director Maggie Jones. The nonprofit organization encourages children to "grow involved" by reaching out to help children and others during the holidays and throughout the year. "Each month we put together a different service project," Ms. Smith said. This project was organized by staff member Katrina Poleski.

THROGGS NECK OPENING

(Continued from page 1)

including Senator Jeffrey D. Klein, Assemblyman Michael Benedetto, and Council Member Elect James Vacca. Also speaking was Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) Commissioner Jeanne Mullgrav, whom the Chairman thanked for her agency's role in providing funding for the site under the Mayor's Out Of School Time (OST) program. The Chairman also had kind words for Kips Bay Executive Director Daniel Quintero, and Throggs Neck Resident Association President Dwayne Jenkins.

Mr. Quintero, who described himself as a product of Kips Bay, spoke passionately about the collaboration between NYCHA and the 90-year-old organization he represents, as

well as the OST program. The OST program at Throggs Neck is just one of 32 OST programs slated for 24 NYCHA facilities. OST provides activities for youth at those times of the day when they are most likely to be alone.

Kips Bay is providing programs and services for 200 youth a day from ages 6 to 18 at the Throggs Neck Center. There is a long list of activities and programs for youth to enjoy, including Partners In Reading, which is a literacy program for children in the first through the third grades, arts and crafts, a computer lab and recreational activities. "We will also be able to bring youth to the Kips Bay main site on Randall Avenue [in the Bronx], once a week," said Center Director

Donald Jenkins. There, youth will be able to skate on the only ice rink in the borough and swim in the pool.

Long-time Throggs Neck resident Sandy McCartney, who sang an opening song with other members of the NYCHA Senior Chorus, said there was "no comparison" between the new center and the old. "Before it was over 60 years old. This is a brand new house."

Update: On December 13th, the day after the opening, parents began coming in to register their children. "It was a great day," said Mr. Jenkins. "It was the first time we had the chance to see 115 kids move through the building at one time. Parents keep coming to register their children, and the children seem to love it."

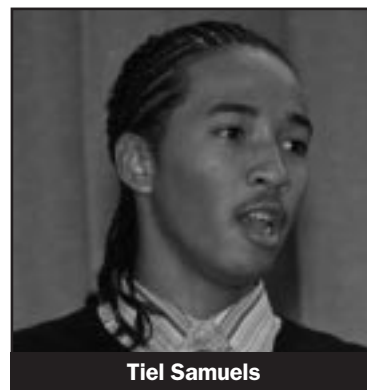
I Have A Dream

(Continued from page 5)

the sobering statistic that here in New York City only 20% to 40% of children from low-income families graduate from high school, while 90% to 100% of the IHAD Dreamers graduate and go onto college or vocational school. "We're proud of our relationship with NYCHA," Ms. Forte said. "We couldn't do it without them."

Shining examples of the program's success came in the persons of Natalie Corujo and Tiel Samuels, both alumni from the first Chelsea-Elliott IHAD Project, and both counselors in the program.

"I can still remember when I sat in this auditorium and said the IHAD Pledge with Eugene Lang," Ms. Corujo said to the



Tiel Samuels



Natalie Corujo

Dreamers. "I look forward to hearing you give a speech to another group of Dreamers." And Mr. Samuels also expressed his gratitude. "We had all sorts of tutors, mentors, went on tons of trips that were recreational or educational or both. My favorite was the mentoring part. My mentor treated me like a son. He taught me to reach for the sky."

After a skit featuring a paper castle on the stage (the castle of P.S. 33) and a song by the Dreamers, Eugene Lang lead the children in the IHAD Pledge. This group of Dreamers is the 29th in New York City since Mr. Lang adopted his first class at P.S. 121 in East Harlem.