

HARLEM COMMONWEALTH NEWSLETTER

Volume 3 No. 2

Spring/Summer 2009

President's Note



Mr. George Marquez

In keeping pace with changing times, the Harlem Commonwealth Council (HCC) continues to broaden the definition of economic development. In the past economic development focused on business and real estate development for community revitalization. Today, we recognize that economic development must also involve services to community residents for inclusive revitalization.

For years, our public schools have graduated less than fifty percent of its students. Multiply that by numerous years and we have an extraordinarily high number of people (adults, disconnected youth) without basic reading, writing, and math skills. At HCC we are convinced that literacy skills are the basic entrée for pursuing meaningful career opportunities and citizenship participation. To this end, the Harlem Commonwealth Council will continue to focus on providing adult education classes and youth/career development services.

At HCC, we are pleased to offer services for businesses, adults, youth and aspiring entrepreneurs. Our programs are designed to help participants create a solid foundation through excellence, effort and perseverance.

As the new president of the Harlem Commonwealth Council, I am honored to build on the programmatic foundation established by CEO, Dr. Joseph L. Tait. I am also committed and optimistic about expanding services that assist residents and businesses for a holistic approach to community revitalization.

Each year the HCC Internship Program provides opportunities for Harlem youth, exposing them to career paths that are often not afforded to high school students in our community. Our corporate partners are A.A. Truck Renting Corp., City National Bank, Cogswell Realty Group, Grid Properties, Inc., Gotham Organization, and Van Wagner Communications, LLC.

The Summer Internship Program

On Saturday, April 18, 2009 Harlem Commonwealth Council hosted the pre-selection process of the Summer Internship Program. Eligible high school sophomores and juniors were interviewed by HCC staff and board members. 2008 HCC Summer Interns, Tony Adams, Denaé Howard and Tenisha Morrison, were present and discussed their experiences in the HCC program.

Summer 2009 celebrates the 4th year of this program. Our pool of applicants this year came from A. Philip Randolph High School, Frederick Douglass Academy, Rice High School, and the Manhattan Center for Science and Mathematics. Our association with these schools has provided HCC with a group of smart, serious and motivated young people.

The 2009 HCC Summer Interns will attend a series of workshops that will address program expectations, business etiquette, appropriate personal and professional behavior, the language and culture of the business world, and financial literacy. They will gain valuable experiences from their placements, be able to enhance their résumés, and receive a stipend.

Each year HCC sees the growth and maturity in the interns as a result of the program. They experience a boost in self-esteem and self-confidence as a result of their work experiences, while they learn the realities of working in the



2008 Summer Intern Alumni Tony Adams, Tenisha Morrison and Denaé Howard. Graduating Seniors Tony and Denaé are recipients of college scholarships. We look forward to hearing great thing about Tenisha, who is an 'A' student when she graduates in 2010.

“real world”.

Congratulations to HCC's 2008 Summer Interns!

Denaé Howard was granted a full scholarship to Howard University where she will pursue premed studies.

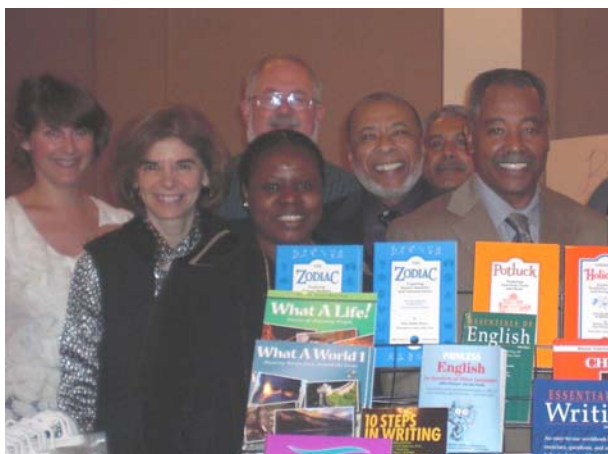
The McKelvey Foundation Scholarship for young entrepreneurs is granted to 70 students in the United States. Tony Adams one of this years recipients has been awarded \$40,000 to attend the college or university of his choice. He is on his way to Penn State.

HCC Welcomes New Board Members

Harlem Commonwealth Council has announced the election of two new board directors-- Skip Finley, Vice Chairman of ICBC Broadcast Holdings, Inc., and Barbara Askins, President and Chief Executive Officer of the 125th Street Business Improvement District in Upper Manhattan. Mr. Finley has a long and distinguished career in television, advertising, radio and radio network sales and management. At ICBC Broadcast Holdings, Mr. Finley identifies business relationships that may assist the Company in its long-term goals.

Ms. Askins has done extensive work in the field of improving cities as a public involvement specialist; in 1993 she successfully created the first and only business improvement district in the Harlem community. Under her leadership, the 125th Street BID has received local, state, national and international recognition. In 2007, *Citichat*, a South African-based web-magazine, did an extensive article profiling the efforts and accomplishments of the 125th Street BID, citing its operations as a model that could be used in Johannesburg. “Now, more than ever, HCC must rely on dedicated leaders in the community who understand and support our mission, through economic development, academic empowerment and entrepreneurial support,” said HCC's president, George Marquez, “We are pleased to welcome our newest board members and are grateful to the entire board for their volunteer services, their collective wisdom and the ongoing leadership they provide to inspire our success.”

Harlem Commonwealth Council Hosts a Book Fair



HCC ESL students, CEO, Dr. Joseph Tait and President, Mr. George Marquez, join BookLink founders Monica Weiss and Steven Feiler at the HCC book fair.

Thursday, April 20, 2009 HCC hosted an all-day book fair for students in the ESL (English as a Second Language) and ABE (Adult Basic Education) classes. *BookLink*, our co-sponsor, is a book distributor that specializes in ESL and multicultural books, as well as other literacy materials. *BookLink* strives to make these items available to students in an easy accessible form.

HCC Offers Computer Literacy Classes

Harlem Commonwealth Council (HCC) is constantly striving to empower and enrich the lives of the residents of the Harlem community by providing them with the necessary tools to succeed in the 21st Century. Towards that end, HCC now offers **Computer Training with Microsoft Office Suite®**. During the 12-week program students learn basic computer literacy, Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint. They also become adept at “surfing” the internet. The daytime program meets Monday through Friday, 12:00pm to 2:00pm; the evening program meets Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 6:00pm to 8:30pm.

N.C. James is a Harlem resident and graduate from Berkeley College with a Bachelor of Business Administration. He has extensive knowledge in computer software applications and operating systems. The evening instructor, uses his experience to help beginners overcome their fears and anxieties over computer technology. His classroom techniques set the tone for his students to become hopeful and confident about acquiring new skills. “Those not yet empowered [with computer technological skills], must embark on an urgent quest to catch up with at least the basics in essential modern day communica-



HCC COMPUTER INSTRUCTORS N.C. JAMES AND MICHELLE McCLEARY

tion, telecommunication, banking and finance,” commented Mr. James. “If a citizen is to participate in the currency of our technological world, it is essential to reassert a commitment to learning and applying the tools of today’s technology.”

For many of the students, HCC’s Arlene and Robert C. Fauser Technology Center gives them significant time and



access to computer hardware and software that is simply unavailable in the home or other venues. Consequently, HCC seeks to bridge the so-called digital divide by providing up-to-date computer equipment and software.

HCC instructors have found a ready, able and willing constituency yearning to embrace and take advantage of this opportunity. The interactions between in-

structors and students are engaging and meaningful. “Teaching at Harlem Commonwealth Council gives me the opportunity to indulge my love of creating progressive and new environments so that people can grow and learn new skills,” states Michelle McCleary, the daytime instructor. Her students reflect on the reciprocity and mutual admiration between instructor and student, which was summed up by student Maitrey Villaman who said, “I have a new joke; Maitrey’s life before Michelle’s class and Maitrey’s life after Michelle’s class. Thus far, I have learned how to cut and paste, create tables, find and replace text. These skills have helped me to create my own fliers and business cards.”

Indeed, Ms. Villaman eloquently speaks for all HCC participants, stating “This [HCC program] is beyond my wildest dreams. I have moved from fear of failure and fear of technology to a sense of confidence and hope.” Her sentiments describe exactly the tangible and measurable outcomes sought by Ms. McCleary, Mr. James and the HCC program.

HCC Awards Healthcare Scholarships

In March 2009, Harlem Commonwealth Council announced the recipients of its annual scholarship awards to deserving students pursuing careers in the healthcare



RODNEY COOPER



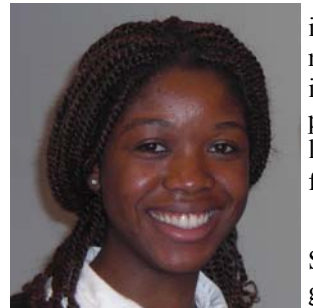
LATARSHA DAVIS

profession. Four Harlem residents received scholarship grants ranging in amounts from five hundred dollars to two thousand dollars that will help them defray the costs of tuition and books at their educational institutions. The 2009 scholarship recipients are **Rodney Cooper**, a first-year student at the Harlem Hospital School of Radiologic Technology, whose anticipated graduation date is October 2010; **Latarsha Davis**, a second-year student at Helene Fuld College of Nursing, whose anticipated graduation date is November 2009; **Denise Bass**, a third-year nursing student at Borough of Manhattan

Community College, whose anticipated graduation date is June 2010; and **Tomi Olaniyan**, a third-year nursing student at Borough of Manhattan Community College, whose anticipated graduation date is June 2010.



DENISE BASS



TOMI OLANIYAN

Each one of the scholarship recipients demonstrates steadfastness in purpose to complete their respective programs of study, a determination to succeed and a commitment to serving residents in the Harlem community by practicing as healthcare professionals in local healthcare facilities. The HCC Scholarship Program provides financial assistance to eligible Harlem residents who are pursuing careers in the various branches of the healthcare professions. For more information on the program please visit the HCC website: www.harlemcommonwealth.org, or call (212) 749-0900, extension 111.

Think and Create Students Snap, Crackle and Produce Works of Art



T&C Photography student, Dayana Garcia works on her "Personality Portrait", a collage of photographs and other materials.

During the Winter and early Spring months of 2009, some twenty-two third, fourth and fifth grade students from Harriet Tubman Learning Center (CS 154) had the opportunity to really get into the ins and outs of photography. Through the generous support of Harlem Commonwealth Council, these creative young people learned just how important a part light plays in how things are seen. [With photo] They learned how to apply this simple principle to taking photographs and, by extension, shooting and editing video.

ing video.

However, before they even saw a camera, the students were taken on an extended trip through teamwork and communication strategies and taught how to begin thinking about themselves in new, positive ways. This simple life skills work led directly to the creation of “Personality Portraits,” based on the photographic work they began to explore. This is the essence of Think & Create, a program designed to expose students at CS 154 to varied forms of art, industry and self-awareness. In addition, the class traveled to the Studio Museum In Harlem where they investigated the many styles of art presentation as they began to think about how they would display their own life-sized photo collages. Four of the top photography students traveled to Windy Crest Media Group’s state-of-the-art video editing suite on 125th Street to work on professional equipment as they began to edit the video they are making of their work.

The photography/video component of Think and Create was designed and presented by Windy Crest Media Group, LLC under the direction of Greg Freelon. Instructors for the course included Fernando Natalici, Antonia Badon and Sasha Dunn. School-based support was provided by math teacher, Ms. Carol Dominquez, and third-grade teacher, Anna Goldman.

Harlem Commonwealth Council-Community Partner in Literacy



Dr. Tait and Ms. King with her class enjoyed the reading of Leo Tolstoy’s *The Three Questions*

Dr. J. L. Tait (HCC) joined the Harriet Tubman Learning Center (C.S. 154M) to kick off National Library Week on Monday, April 20, 2009 as the first guest reader, reading to Ms. King’s fourth and fifth grade classes.

Dr. Tait read aloud “The Three Questions” based on a story by Leo Tolstoy. Ms. King, a first-year teacher at the school, when asked to share her students’ responses to Dr. Tait, said

Our guest reader was engaging and easily captured the students’ attention. He came into our classroom and set off the read aloud with an honest announcement – he had never read to a group of children before. Right at this point, the students were interested in what he had to say. Dr. Tait opened the reading session by asking questions that would build on the students’ prior knowledge (he activated their schema). The students related to his line of questioning well and continued to participate when asked various questions throughout the reading. Although he said he was nervous about this “new” task, Dr. Tait seemed like a natural teacher. He spoke warmly to the students, which allowed them to feel comfortable about receiving the story’s lesson. We would gladly welcome Dr. Tait back to our classroom again.

Dr. Tait said “It was a rewarding experience. They were on top of their game, they were concentrating. I was very proud of them!”

Getting Your Personal Financial House In Order



by
SABRINA PHILSON

Sub-prime mortgages, home foreclosures, rising default rates on loans, bank failures, consolidation and restructuring: Indy-Mac, Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, Lehman Brothers, WAMU, Wachovia, TARP (Troubled Assets Relief Program), failing domestic auto industry, the credit crunch, rising unemployment, recession. These terms, usually restricted to financiers and Wall Street type, are now being used in elementary school classes and barber shops and can be overheard in conversations on subways during our daily commute.

But why are people engaged? The answer is two-fold. The first, most obvious response, is that every American is directly feeling the pinch in his or her own pocket. Job loss, nominal or non-existent pay increases, reduced extension of credit, business closure and liquidation, rising costs of services and state and city budget cuts are collectively reducing our spending power and affecting the way we currently allocate our earnings. The state of the economy was such a pivotal issue that it was highlighted as a differentiating factor amongst the candidates. The interest that was generated during the last six months is still alive and fresh in our psyche.

So, what can the average consumer do to protect himself/herself? The answer: *Get your personal financial house in order!* Give yourself a financial check-up to gauge your personal financial well-being.

So what should you do?

1. Organize your financial documents.

This includes all bank statements, credit card bills, mortgage and 401K statements. Keep orderly files so that you know payment due dates, can verify new charges made on credit cards, can check bank balances and make sure transactions are ready for income tax filings. Also, maintain records of health benefits, life insurance coverage and inform trusted family members where your records are kept.

2. Protect your identity.

Identity theft is on the rise so use common sense when sharing and disposing of personal information (including health benefit coverage information). Protect passwords and pin codes and change them periodically. Visit <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/idtheft/idth04.shtm> for consumer protection information.

3. Obtain your credit reports / Know your credit score.

Get free copies of your credit report from all three credit agencies, TransUnion, Equifax and Experian. You typically have to pay for your credit score (FICO). Review and dispute inaccuracies. Declining credit scores are a major cause of reduction in credit lines or refusal of credit altogether, so be diligent in protecting your credit rating. Visit www.annualcreditreport.com for a free online copy of your credit report or call toll-free 1-877-322-8228 for a mailed copy. For information on credit scores, visit www.myfico.com to learn tips for improving your credit score and knowing what factors impact it.

4. Pay all credit card bills on time.

Credit card companies are closing accounts and reducing credit lines more now than ever before. Late payment patterns are a red flag and indicate potential credit risk. If you have a problem matching timing of your paycheck with your bill due dates, request that

your payment due dates be changed. Beware of rising credit card APRs. You may have the right to opt out of higher rates and pay down your current balance at the pre-existing lower rate (although you will not be allowed to continue using the credit card).

5. Build an emergency fund.

Target 6 months of cash reserves equal to 6 months of household expenses. Keep these funds in a separate bank account (can be invested in a short-term money market account or CD). This is a reserve fund that can be drawn down on in extenuating circumstances such as job loss, furlough or illness.

6. Create a money diary and eventually a complete budget.

A money diary is a precursor to a budget since it is a list of all money coming in (income) and going out (expenses). A budget is a planning tool that reflects income and expense but also allows for goal-setting (targets) and measurement of performance relative to financial goals.

7. Educate yourself on financial issues.

Watch the financial news. Read the financial section of the newspaper. Stay informed of changes in consumer protection and privacy laws. For example, recent changes in FDIC laws allow for protection of bank deposits up to \$250,000 per depositor. Visit www.mymoney.gov and check for the free "My Money" Toolkit. "Money Smart," sponsored through the FDIC provides on-line training tools and the National Endowment for Financial Education provides financial literacy resources.

8. Update your resume.

In this era of employment uncertainty, revise your resume. Update your employment history and emphasize transferable skills. Also establish contact with old networks (professional and personal) to stay informed of opportunities. Addi-

tionally, consider creative ways of using existing skills to earn money on the side.

9. Plan for retirement and college tuition.

As part of your budgeting process, allocate a portion of your income to retirement reserves and planning for college tuition payments. If your employer provides 401K matching benefits, set a goal of maximizing contributions. Speak to retirement specialists regarding asset allocation for investment of retirement savings relative to your time horizon and risk profile. Take advantage of Qualified Tuition Programs (or 529 plans) that offer a means to save for college. As your investment grows, it is on a tax deferred basis and withdrawals for college attendance may be free of federal tax. New York State allows contributions of up to \$5,000 per year (individual taxpayer) and up to \$10,000 per year (married, filing jointly) that are deductible in calculating New York taxable income. Visit www.nysaves.org for 529 plan details.

10. Seek help.

If you are in need of assistance in answering financial questions, use your resources. Ask your banker for information or seek out a certified financial planner or accountant. For debt management services, use the Federal Trade Commission's "Choosing A Credit Counselor." Before choosing a credit counseling service, check credentials with the Better Business Bureau. As we ride out this economically challenging period, adopt these basic financial best practices. Even if expert predictions are true (that the earliest we can expect a turnaround in the economy is the summer of 2009), getting your personal financial house in order will create a firm foundation to sustain you and your family into positive economic conditions and far into the future!

The New Ventures Program

HCC continues to provide aspiring entrepreneurs with the "keys to business success" with our New Ventures Fast Track® Program. The 16-session program is offered over the course of 12-weeks, three times per year at the Harlem Commonwealth Building. In two years over 100 students have participated in this program. Many of them have started their own businesses or advanced in their jobs because of the training provided by HCC's program. New Ventures multiple workshops include: Setting Financial Goals, Exploring Entrepreneurship, Researching and Analyzing the Market and Time Management. The program culminates with a mandatory business plan designed by each student.

The New Ventures Program's instructors and guest speakers include successful entrepreneurs and business professionals who

share their knowledge and experiences with the aspiring business students. Among them are Andrew Morrison, president, *Small Business Camp*; Debra Clarke, president, *Image Organized*; Princess Jenkins, president *The Brownstone*; Sabrina Philson, principal, *Episilon Advisors LLC*; Betty Lacy, manager at the *Science, Industry and Business Library* branch of the *New York Public Library* and Bernadette Nation, Director, Business Outreach Team at the *New York City Department of Small Business Services*.

Recent New Ventures students are pursuing a wide array of business interests that include special events and promotions, a bookstore café, a gourmet barbeque sauce, a gift shop that specializes in African-American art and giftware, a natural beverage company, real estate renovation and development, a decorative furniture company, a production company, and daycare

businesses.

Georgia Scott participated in the Fall 2008 New Ventures Program. Since completing the program, she has realized her dream of opening a bookstore/café, GLOBETRIPPIN, which opened January 2009 in Harlem on Amsterdam Avenue between 143rd and 144th Streets. Georgia says, "The New Ventures Program forced me to think like a business person. It gave me a new level of maturity in terms of how business is conducted and better understanding of the business world in general. I am more effective at networking. This has allowed me to cultivate amazing relationships with my customers at GLOBETRIPPIN."

Kenyetta Coaxum, a participant in the winter 2009, New Ventures Program, is a nail artist who aspires to open a nail salon and spa. When asked to describe her experience as a program participant, she said, "The New Ventures Program has given me the

tools to make my dream of business ownership a reality. I now know the right way to start a business. The program allowed me to interact with and develop business peers who are supportive of my business goals." Program highlights include:

- How to write an EFFECTIVE business plan
- How to MARKET and SELL your product or service
- Planning for PROFIT

CLASSES MEET EVERY TUESDAY – 6:00pm to 8:30pm

The next New Ventures Program is scheduled September 22 through December 15, 2009.

To register or for additional information please call Elisa Moore at (212) 749-0900, extension 111.

HCC Awarded Department of Youth and Community Development Contract

Harlem Commonwealth Council continues to expand its portfolio of employment and education initiatives designed to empower the adults

and young people living in the Harlem community. Under its latest initiative, HCC will serve young people by delivering employment opportunities under the auspices of the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development's Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). HCC's SYEP will give vulnerable youth,

ages 14 through 24, important and meaningful work experiences during the summer months.

Participants will work a maximum of 25 hours per week for seven weeks. An essential component of the program is the 18 hours of education workshops participants will be required to take over the summer in areas such as business etiquette, work readi-

ness, conflict resolution, financial literacy, college preparation, career exploration and career development, to name but a few. For many of our participants, these work opportunities may very well be the first time they are introduced into structured work environments. We are committed to working diligently to provide meaningful work experiences for all our summer youth participants.



Sophie Davis – White Coat Ceremony

An ebullient crowd of over 300 friends and well-wishers gathered in City College’s Shepard Hall to witness the White Coat Ceremony presentation to 70 students of The Sophie Davis School of Biomedical Education.

The White Coat Ceremony is an eight-year tradition at Sophie Davis and marks a rite of passage for students who are entering the medical profession. The Ceremony is a bit different here; at most programs, it is done at the beginning of four-year medical school training. At Sophie Davis, where there is a combined seven year program, it is done on the first day of Gross Anatomy class.

One of HCC’s scholarship students Serene Rich, a summa cum laude student, was one of those participating in the White Coat Ceremony. It was a proud moment for her parents, James, a physician’s assistant himself, and Karen Rich.

Sophie Davis, which exists in the Harlem community at City College, is unique in that it was founded with the stated purpose of training “minority students to serve [the] underserved community.”

The keynote speaker was Dr. AnkhNu UasKhem, a 2001 Sophie Davis graduate who now practices in Brooklyn with a specialty in acupuncture for which he was trained in China. In his address, he welcomed the students into the profession and exhorted them to be proud of their alma mater.

City College Student Serene Rich (in white coat) with her parents and Dr. Tait at ceremony

“The Sophie Davis program is a community treasure of which we should all be proud,” said Dr. UasKhem, “If I had the power I would replicate this program in every major metropolitan area in the United States.” The Ceremony ended with the administration of the Hippocratic Oath led by Dr. Donald Kollisch, Deputy Dean of Academic Affairs. HCC wishes these students well and acknowledges that the Harlem community will be all the better for their efforts.

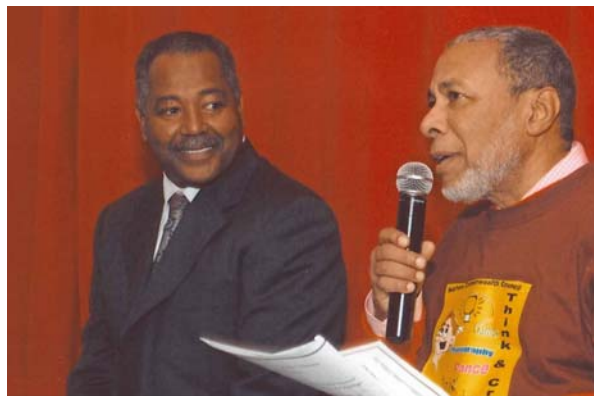
HCC’s Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration

“The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

For those in the audience, thoughts of the January 20, 2009 inauguration of Barack H. Obama as the first African-American to become President of the United States were certainly foremost in their minds. And, it was only fitting that on January 19th, the timing of Harlem Commonwealth Council’s 2009 holiday observance of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birthday was a pre-celebration to marking one of the most auspicious historical events in this century. Themes of African-American progress and pride highlighted by the accomplishments of both Dr. King and President Obama were thoroughly infused throughout the two-hour afternoon program.

Dr. Joseph L. Tait, chief executive officer of Harlem Commonwealth, opened the program with remarks on the



HCC President, Mr. George Marquez and CEO Dr. Joseph L. Tait give their opening remarks. Think and Create! Students perform for the seniors

achievements made by African-Americans in the United States and provided the overarching theme of the day’s program.

The MLK holiday program is dedicated to the senior citizens residing in Harlem, honoring them as village leaders, teachers and elders in our community.

The afternoon entertainment activities featured presentations by Harlem-area teens and young adults. Dance, poetry and oral performances were given by children in HCC’s Think and Create! program at P.S. 154, the Uptown Dance Academy, the Ghanaian Royal Dancers, The Wizdom Knot Steppers, Frank Miller, Marquis G. Thompson and Alicia Appiah. Throughout the program, the audience was treated to a crowd-pleasing classical

jazz performed by the Kenny Williams Trio, featuring soloist Lee Olive Tucker.

When George Marquez, HCC’s new president, was introduced, he pledged HCC’s continued commitment to the Harlem community. At the conclusion of the entertainment, E. Randy Dupree, HCC’s chairman, led the audience in taking the African Pledge and singing the Negro National Anthem, “Lift Every Voice and Sing.”

During the repast that followed, the crowd was still abuzz with positive energy and enthusiasm over the day’s events. “When I return to the Center and am asked ‘how it [the program] was’, I will tell them the program was just fabulous, declared Joseph Smith of the Central Harlem Senior Center, “The kids were just great. The jazz was great. Excellent program.” Added Jean Hill, “I love to see children perform, that’s our future.” Equally impressed was Henry Williams who said “Wonderful show. We’ll be back. The show was inspiring. Right on time.”

Harlem Entrepreneurial Fund Hosts Informational Session

The Harlem Entrepreneurial Fund (HEF) hosted its first Microloan Informational Session on Monday, April 6, 2009 in the auditorium of the Harlem Commonwealth Council (HCC) Building at 361 West 125th Street in Harlem. The purpose of this forum was to present the possibilities of alternative funding to small business owners.

Ms. Carmen Tomlinson, Assistant Vice President/Branch Manager of Banco Popular, Ms. Yurinha Schmidt, Risk Analyst/Loan Consultant at ACCIÓN NY, Ms. Elisa Moore, Director of Special Projects at HCC, and Ms. Ericka Powell Sinclair, Manager of The Harlem Entrepreneurial Fund were the guest speakers.

Over twenty prospective borrowers attended and were impressed with the information they received. The attendees



Yurinha Schmidt, Risk Analyst/Loan Consultant at ACCIÓN NY speaks with Meagan Williams from Harlem Talk Radio with regard to micro lending and how it has impacted

asked questions in regards to personal credit, the importance of well-developed business plans, and acquisition of a micro-loan as a funding source. Harlem Entrepreneurial Fund’s application process was outlined in detail-- eligibility requirements, loan products and services, and what makes a successful applicant. What an applicant should do if he or she is not approved was also discussed.

Because of the enthusiastic reception by the attendees, another session was held on Wednesday, May 13, 2009 from 6pm – 7pm. All Harlem-based business owners were invited to partake in that informational event.

The HEF loan program is Harlem Commonwealth Council’s latest

economic development initiative to encourage and support business expansion and job creation in Harlem by assisting small businesses to succeed through the acquisition of loan capital and technical assistance. Since its inception, HEF has provided low interest loans to several Harlem-based businesses which has resulted in the creation of new jobs in the Harlem community.

HEF microloans primarily serve eligible minority and women-owned businesses, and entrepreneurs operating businesses located in Harlem. Each borrower must commit to creating one or more jobs.

To learn more about HEF small business loan program or to register for the next informational session, please call Ericka Powell-Sinclair at (212) 749-0900 X122 or visit www.harlemcommonwealth.org

HCC Sends Well-Wishes To Isaiah E. Robinson, Jr.



Isaiah E. Robinson, Jr., a founding member and a member of the Board of Directors of Harlem Commonwealth Council, has been in ill health for the past four months. Mr. Robinson’s distinguished career includes service as a Tuskegee Airman and Chairman of the New York City Board of Education. HCC wishes him a speedy recovery.