



HRA/DSS PERSPECTIVE

COMMITTED TO ASSISTING NEW YORKERS
REACH THEIR MAXIMUM LEVEL OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY



HRA's New Perspective

By Barbara Brancaccio

You might be curious as to why you've received a second newsletter within three weeks after not receiving any for a while. It's pretty simple. We wanted to have our four-page quarterly newsletter ready to go for the spring, which we accomplished. We also thought it a good idea to slightly change the format of the quarterly to serve both internal and external audiences, while creating something wholly unique for HRA/DSS's 16,000 employees.

Beginning this month, HRA/DSS Perspective will be printed as a two-page monthly bulletin, featuring items on HRA program areas, personnel information, useful tidbits, and reporting on recent events. The design of Perspective has been done by our new Media Director, Connie Ress, who is also working on a new Internet and Intranet design (to name just a few projects). In the coming weeks and

months, when you notice some of the agency's fresh new look, you'll know she was part of the project. Connie will be working closely with OPIC's two other very talented and dedicated staff members—Multi Media Coordinator Patrice Moller and Writer/Editor Melinda Mousouris—to present the message and the mission of HRA, and staff successes.

We welcome submissions for both the quarterly newsletter and the monthly Perspective staff bulletin. Please email Melinda at mousourism@hra.nyc.gov with articles. If you attend HRA events and would like to send us photos, please feel free to do so.

As we continue to provide HRA employees, our clients and the general public with information, we do hope you like what you see!

HRA Program Updates

HASA on the Move

For the first time in 15 years, the number of HASA clients placed in Single Room Occupancy Hotels (SRO) for emergency housing placement has dropped below 1,000. As of the end of March, 788 HASA clients reside in SRO's, a decrease of 64% from a peak of 2,171 people in September 2003.

The Brownsville Center, the first model center for HASA clients in Brooklyn, opened on May 3 to unqualified praise. Read about the innovations and ribbon-cutting ceremony in the upcoming issue of our newsletter.

Public Health Insurance (MAP)

As of April 30, 1,810,862 non-public assistance individuals are enrolled in public health insurance, an increase of 4% over April, 2005. The growth of enrollment represents progress in being able to help families remain healthy and independent.

Jamaica Job Center/OCCA

FIA's Jamaica Job Center and HRA/DSS's Office of Community & Constituent Affairs worked with HRA Community Advisory Counsel Q12/Q13 on organizing the 17th Annual Queens Community Resources Awareness Day. The expo, held at York College on April 18, gathered spokespeople for free programs and resources concerning education, employment, health and housing. More than 500 people attended.

W-to-W Workshops Provide Thoughtful Mentoring Focused on Success

HRA/DSS consumers put so much stock in the job preparation they receive from the FIA's Employment Services division that they have been coming voluntarily and regularly to



Photo by Marcia E. Wilson

Wednesday evening workshops at the program's newly completed model office at 109 E. 16th Street on the 9th floor. The New York Care workshops, which began in April 2003, are a collaboration between Employment Services' Welfare-to-Work program and the non-profit organization New York Cares. They bring professional volunteers from many fields into contact with Work Experience Program (WEP) interns whom they mentor in their job searches. The workshops include sessions devoted to job readiness, resume writing and mock interviewing.

There are also study groups on English as a Second Language. While the workshops follow a curriculum, the staff is always ready to help participants with a specific challenge as a need or particular opportunity arises. The professionals who offer their services and the interns who participate are very focused on getting results.

Participants say they really appreciate the help they are getting from HRA and outside professionals, as well as the atmosphere of mutual respect. Ten job placements have been verified since January 2006. Many others are in the process of being confirmed.

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Office of Public Information & Communications
Barbara Brancaccio, Director of Communications
Connie A. Ress, Media Director
Melinda Mousouris, Writer/Editor
Patrice Moller, Multimedia Coordinator

Event Calendar

5th Annual Commissioner's Forum

Wednesday, July 19, Thursday, July 20 and Friday, July 21. Save the dates!

PAI

Congratulations to the individual and team 2006 agency-wide PAI honorees. Look for the announcement of the awardees in your email. Learn more about and their winning accomplishments in the next Perspective.

PAI Lunch and Learn Workshops: Prostate Cancer - June 7. A new series of Weight Watchers' meetings sessions is being scheduled. Contact PAI Coordinator Karin Feldhamer at (212) 331-3325 for details on both.

Give Blood, Give Life

Friday, June 2, 2006: Grand Concourse Center #41, 1790 Grand Concourse, 4th Floor, Bronx, NY from 8:00 A.M to 1:30 P.M. For more information, contact Sandra Canady at (718) 716-2687.

Friday, June 30, 2006: Linden Center #67, 45 Hoyt Street, 5th Floor, Room 525, Brooklyn, NY from 11:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. For more information, contact Maria Ruparsic at (718) 237-7331.

At Your Library

In cooperation with HRA's Office of Refugee and Immigrant Affairs (ORIA), the McMillan Library now houses a comprehensive reference section (books, papers, etc.) on immigrant and immigration-related issues, with an emphasis on law materials.

These are just two of the items available:

- Immigration Law Service, 2nd Edition - (complete 8 volume set) by Anna M. Gallagher, 2004.
- Federal Immigration Laws & Regulations. (editions from 2003), published by West Publishing.

HRA Celebrates International Month



Photo by Eddie Aguilar

Here are a few comments from HRA Staff on the annual celebration:

Diversity: "With every difference there should be some humor."

Social divisions: "When we're small we don't notice differences, but as we grow, we are taught to see them."

Food: "Food bonds people. Food and communication are classic ways to build bridges between groups."

Pictures, top to bottom: Salamatu Sharrow, Ghana, and Margaret Jegede, Nigeria, serving national dishes at the Union Square Job Center; Commissioner Eggleston enjoying an exhibit; international buffet at HRA headquarters; colorful Indian evening wear; program director Linda Boyce welcomes staff to the USJC/WeCARE festivities.



AIDS WALK 2006

Staff, families and friends converged at Central Park on Sunday, May 21 to represent HRA/DSS in the 2006 AIDS Walk New York. Through the dedicated commitment of all who raised funds and made donations, HRA collectively contributed \$11,785.04 to the cause up to the day of the Walk. If you haven't done so already, it's not too late to make your contribution. Make your donation by calling 212-331-6095.

Photo by Francine DeJohn



Photo by Eddie Aguilar



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