



FATHERHOOD: ITS OWN GREAT REWARD



OCSE TAKES DADS AND THEIR KIDS OUT TO THE BALLGAME

There are few things more heart-warming and American than a baseball game. Well, there's this: a father who calls his daughter, "the most precious thing in the world to me."



That's what Victor said of Faith, his 13-year-old who sat beside him at the Brooklyn Cyclones game against the Staten Island Yankees in Coney Island. Victor and dads from across the city joined Human Resources Administration Commissioner Robert Doar at the game as part of the August celebration of Child Support Month. The Office of Child Support collected three quarters of a billion dollars for three quarter of a million kids in New York last year, and the department wanted to thank dads for supporting their kids.



For the dads who came out to the game, giving to their children is really its own reward. "She is part of my American dream," says Victor, who emigrated from Nigeria in the early 1990s. There was an easy smile on Faith's face, as she listened to her dad carry on about her many accomplishments as a dancer. "Your child is your child. I shouldn't be given a present to be a good father. But this is nice."

Harold, a father from Staten Island who brought his two sons and god son, agreed: "I don't expect anything in return for being a dad. This is my job."



Gary Jenkins, HRA assistant deputy commissioner of NYC's Food Stamp Program, and also a father of three, was beaming proudly, having watched his daughter, Morgan, throw the ceremonial first pitch (along with Commissioner Doar's son, Bobby) of the game. "That's something we'll remember for a lifetime," Jenkins said. "It warms my heart to be involved."

And Jenkins, looking out at the field as the sun set (and as the Cyclones clobbered the Yankees), added; "Being rewarded for doing something one is supposed to do is not something I necessarily need. But, of course, it's nice to be recognized."