

NORTHWEST BRONX COMMUNITY AND CLERGY COALITION

# Challenging Systems and Liberating Dreams In Times of Purpose



## ANNUAL REPORT 2010

VICTORIES FOR 2010/ PRESIDENT'S REPORT/ AFFILIATIONS

FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2010/ HOUSING REPORT/ SISTAS AND BROTHAS UNITED/

KINGSBRIDGE ARMORY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/ WEATHERIZATION AND GREEN JOBS/

EDUCATION/ LIST OF SUPPORTERS

NORTHWEST BRONX COMMUNITY and  
CLERGY COALITION  
PRESIDENT'S REPORT



*The Leaders in the Flywheel*

2010 has been a year of transition, growth and redefinition. While winning significant external victories, internally we sewed our stories together to craft an innovative organizational vision that stays true to the heart and soul of the NWBCCC. This required taking a hard look at who we are and how we enact our values in the world at large. Adapting some of the best practices in the book, Good to Great, we implemented the

“flywheel” concept in order to 1- Line up the right people, 2- Develop our strategic goals for the organization, 3- Move to action (enacting both inside and outside strategies for change), 4- Evaluate In and 5- Communicate Out. We recognize that great organizations constantly run this cycle in order to increase capacity and sustain a culture of transparency and accountability.

- REPORTS:**
- HOUSING
  - SISTAS AND BROTHAS UNITED
  - EDUCATION
  - WEATHERIZATION/GREEN JOBS
  - KINGSBRIDGE ARMORY/ LIVING WAGE JOBS

We continued to blossom in that great tradition during 2010 by training a new set of leaders and surfacing people with real issues ready to confront institutional and structural injustices. Staying grounded in the grassroots, we impacted policies and corporate agendas not only in the Bronx, but also at the city/state-wide and national level. All of this was possible because we realized that the experiences that keep us interconnected give us the ability to speak truth to power. While our NWBCCC flywheel highlighted strengths and challenges, it solidified our commitment to raise our organizing capacity to the next level by developing a sophisticated organization that tackles root causes and develops world leaders. Since our foundation, we have been dedicated to working on the issues that are tightly woven into the fabric of society; a society that consistently disregards and exploits the majority working, poor people of color while idolizing and benefiting the rich. Our issue campaigns are a core part of the strategy to dismantle the ills of this society and implement the world we want to see in the Bronx and beyond. The NWBCCC engaged in strategic issue campaigns that spoke directly to the symptoms of the economic crisis on our community including: preserving affordable housing by stopping foreclosures, holding banks accountable, saving student metro-cards, school overcrowding, environmental sustainability (food and climate justice), stimulus organizing and

oversight and job creation—specifically, living wage and green jobs. These are the issues that are neglected or controlled by a City and a Mayor that routinely puts profit over people. In the Bronx, the poorest urban county in the United States with 95% people of color and 90% from low-income households, the need for our work is crucial. We see it as our responsibility to work on issues that will change structural poverty, the unequal distribution and privilege of wealth and institutional racism and discrimination. Our campaigns take calculated risks and create opportunities for every day grassroots leaders to become agents of change as they realize the value and power in themselves individually and collectively. Through this work, our members witness concrete change and sustainable development in their lives and communities.

That is why I can say without hesitation that our hard work from years past has paved the way for a bright future for the NWBCCC in 2011. You can expect that we will create a media and technology center in our office, enhance our training of leaders through our Community Leadership Academy, expand the reach of the Northwest Bronx into the East and South Bronx, shift our political power by creating a new politicized branch of the organization and build a state-wide coalition of organizing groups within NYS that can leverage statewide power to influence the Governor, State Assembly and Senate. We are forever ruthless in our quest for justice!

## CELEBRATING VICTORIES 2010

### HOUSING WINS

We recently held a press conference in the winter of 2011 with Mayor Bloomberg, HPD Commissioner Cestero and the City Council to introduce the citywide Proactive Preservation Initiative to help tenants in foreclosed buildings in the Bronx and NYC that have dangerous conditions and are in need of extensive repairs.

### YOUTH WINS

In the spring of 2010, Sistas and Brothas United along with the broader Urban Youth Collaborative, waged a major campaign to stop the city from ending the use of free Metro Cards for youth to be able to attend school. The campaign culminated in a citywide walkout of 23 NYC high schools. The largest contingents were from Bronx schools including 2,000 students from Dewitt Clinton High school. Shortly after the walkout it was announced that the metrocard program would remain intact for at least another year.



# NWBX

Social Justice  
Organizing  
and  
Sustaining  
Communities  
since 1974.  
Thank you to  
the work of  
our  
community  
leaders,  
board,  
affiliates and  
staff.

## NWBCCC BOARD 2010

Teresa Andersen  
(President)  
Isabel Malavet (Vice  
President)  
Wendoly Marte  
(Treasurer)

Adolfo Abreu  
Rev. Brenda Berry  
Fr. Nelson Belizario  
Marta Colon  
Lisa Cunningham  
Hilda Chavis  
Pastor Foster  
Fr. Joseph Girone

Margaret Groarke  
Pastor Hyacinth Stevens  
Heidi Hynes  
Larry John  
Msgr. John Jenik  
Father Thomas Lynch  
Desiree Pilgrim Hunter  
Yorman Nuñez  
Minister Pierce  
Miguel Rodriguez  
Chermel Rosmond  
Ramona Santana

## AFFILIATIONS

Bronx Community College  
and Hostos Community  
College - Campus Ministry  
Crotona Community  
Coalition  
Epiphany Lutheran Church  
Fordham Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
Fordham Hill Cooperative  
Owners  
Friends of the Oval Park  
King of Glory Tabernacle  
Kingsbridge Heights  
Neighborhood  
Improvement Association  
Leadership Institute High  
School  
Mary Mitchell Community  
Center  
New Day United Methodist  
Church  
Our Lady of Angels Church  
Our Lady of Mercy  
Our Savior Church  
Sistas and Brothas United  
Southern Baptist  
Convention—Tri State  
St. James Episcopal Church  
St. Martin of Tours Church  
St. Nicholas of Tolentine  
Church  
St. Simon Stock  
St. Margaret Mary  
University Heights  
Presbyterian Church  
2720 Grand Concourse  
Tenant Association

## STAFF

### **DIRECTORS AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

Laura Vasquez, Co-Executive Director  
Aleciah Anthony, Co-Executive Director  
Fran Fuselli, Director, Weatherization Assistance Program  
Maria C. Fernandez, Director, Sistas and Brothas United  
Abigail Barrios, Comptroller  
Lenina Nadal, Development & Communications Coordinator  
Peter Phillips, IT Coordinator

### **ORGANIZING DIVISION**

Gabriel Pendas, Lead Housing Organizer  
Patricia Torres, Community/ Housing Organizer  
Allison Manuel, Community/ Education Organizer  
Amanda Altman, Community/Armory organizer

### **SISTAS AND BROTHAS UNITED**

Ginette Sosa, Academic Support Program Coordinator  
Shaun Lin, Youth Organizer, Sistas and Brothas United  
Tiffany Otero, Youth Organizer, Sistas and Brothas United

### **WEATHERIZATION**

Vera Parpis, Assistant Weatherization Director  
Zaida Salaman, Intake Supervisor / Program Coordinator  
Bernie Smith, Construction Manager  
Marvin Marrero, Energy Auditor  
Robert Izzo, Davis Bacon Compliance Officer  
Carl King, Production Coordinator  
Taleigh Smith, WAP Intake Worker/ Outreach Coordinator  
Orlando Torres, Intake Worker  
Sonia Guzman, Intake Worker  
Gabriel Pendas, Intake Worker / Organizer  
Sherril Pires, Inventory Clerk  
Ingrid Del Orbe, Inspector / Installe  
Eduardo Olivo, Inspector / Installer  
Peter Sloane, Inspector / Installer  
Dayquan Salaman, Inspector / Installer  
Jordan Temple, Inspector / Installer

### **FISCAL DIVISION**

Erastus Kilonzo, Senior Staff Accountant  
Rosemarie Quiros, Bookkeeper  
Katuska Lopez, Staff Accountant  
Luis Peralta, Staff Accountant  
Shawn Smith, Fiscal Clerk/office Manager

**NORTHWEST BRONX COMMUNITY AND CLERGY COALITION, INC.**  
**STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGE IN NET ASSETS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2010**

Audit Draft

	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Temporarily restricted</u>	<u>Total</u>
<b>Revenue</b>			
Government grants	\$ 3,670,204	\$	\$ 3,670,204
Contributions	218,112	388,927	607,039
Other	5,099	-	5,099
Special Event	56,822		56,822
Less: direct expenses	(11,835)		(11,835)
Program revenue	13,781	-	13,781
Interest and dividends	556	-	556
	<u>3,952,739</u>	<u>388,927</u>	<u>4,341,666</u>
Net assets released from restrictions	556,145	(556,145)	-
<b>Total revenue</b>	<u>4,508,884</u>	<u>(167,218)</u>	<u>4,341,666</u>
<b>Expenses</b>			
<b>Program services</b>			
Community outreach and education	264,401		264,401
Weatherization	3,262,028		3,262,028
Youth	286,271		286,271
Leadership Institute	39,718		39,718
<b>Total program services</b>	<u>3,852,418</u>		<u>3,852,418</u>
<b>Supporting services</b>			
Management and general	600,303		600,303
Fund raising	145,398		145,398
<b>Total supporting services</b>	<u>745,701</u>		<u>745,701</u>
<b>Total expenses</b>	<u>4,598,119</u>		<u>4,598,119</u>
Change in net assets before capitalization	(89,235)	(167,218)	(256,453)
Adjustment for capitalization	54,709	-	54,709
Change in net assets after capitalization	(34,526)	(167,218)	(201,744)
Net assets at beginning of year	192,066	533,549	725,615
<b>Net assets at end of year</b>	<u>\$ 157,540</u>	<u>\$ 366,331</u>	<u>\$ 523,871</u>

## NWBX AND NATIONAL PEOPLE'S ACTION

The NWBCCC, along with other community organizations from New York City and the rest of the country, participated heavily in NPA's Annual Conference in Washington D.C. in May 2010. The NWBCCC brought over 100 leaders to the event and was given recognition for the highest attendance of any organization at the conference. Our youth affiliate, Sistas & Brothas United articulated the issues of bank reform at a political education for youth training at the conference. Community leaders set up contacts to network and keep informed about similar work in places like Kansas, Atlanta, Iowa and Illinois. Milbank tenant Rebecca Benn of 2427 Webster Avenue spoke on a panel addressing members of the Federal Reserve and the Securities and Exchange Commission. Housing Steering Committee member Joseph Ferdinand again played a role in the leadership and marshal teams for the various actions over the weekend as well as the Showdown on K Street march in Washington D.C. at the end of the conference. SEE COVERAGE HERE - <http://showdowninamerica.org/showdown-kstreet>

The NWBCCC, as part of National People's Action Showdown in America, lifted up the story of Edda Lopez. A mother, widow of Latina descent and a lay leader who attends New Day Church (NWBCCC affiliate), Edda Lopez was facing foreclosure from Bank of America, who were refusing to honor the conditions of a loan modification from her previous mortgagor. Edda led two protests in front of Bank of America, garnering enough embarrassing media attention to force Bank of America to renegotiate her loan agreement and let Edda keep her home. Her story inspired others in our community to fight for their homes when faced with foreclosure. Video - Edda Lopez wins her home back: <http://showdowninamerica.org/edda-lopez-wins>

# HOUSING



Maggie Maldonado, NWBCCC leader

*"I knew that something had to be done. Our building was falling apart; we were paying rent and going without basic services."-Sergio Cuevas*

The foreclosure crisis hit the Bronx hard. Irresponsible lending and speculation by bank and financial institutions made it possible for private equity companies and real estate investors to purchase multi-family buildings with affordable rents in the Bronx at a value far exceeding their worth. Their hope was that by displacing low-income families and replacing them with young single professionals, they would be able to get in on the ground floor of one of the last sections of affordable real estate in New York City and make a long term profit. But when the economy crashed, so did the value of the loans that these private equity companies took out from the banks to buy Bronx buildings en masse. Unable to pay their debt to the banks, they harassed tenants for rents and sought evictions at a heightened rate to make up the difference. Landlords also refused to invest any money in repairs and Northwest Bronx tenants were left to deal with the consequences.

The Milbank Realty portfolio of ten overleveraged buildings in the Northwest Bronx is one such example. Tenants in these buildings had been living for months without heat and hot water, collapsing ceilings, mold infested walls and broken windows. Buildings boasted broken windows and lights and lacked basic security and maintenance. Maggie Maldonado, of 2785 Sedgwick Avenue, was tired of the conditions. "I knew that something had to be done. Our building was falling apart; we were paying rent and going without basic services. To top it all off, we weren't even sure who really owned the building or who was responsible." Maggie, like tens of other tenants in Milbank buildings, began organizing with the NWBCCC to create tenant associations in each of the ten buildings. These tenant associations have since won victories that having shaken up the housing community in New York City.

In an unprecedented move, Northwest Bronx Milbank tenants worked with lawyers at Bronx Legal Services-NYC and filed a lawsuit in April against LNR, the securities company who holds Milbank's mortgage. The lawsuit was announced in front of 3018 Heath Avenue, a Milbank building with over 900 violations. Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. and City Council Speaker Christine Quinn hailed the tenants for taking bold action. In September, a Bronx Supreme Court Judge ordered LNR to pay 2.5 million dollars towards building repairs. *For the first time in New York City, a financial institution was held accountable by the courts for the conditions of their foreclosed properties.*

October brought increased pressure on the City to make immediate repairs to the buildings. A prayer vigil held outside of 2770 Kingsbridge Terrace was organized with the help of NWBCCC affiliate Our Lady of Angels and garnered local press. After meeting with a group of a 100 Milbank tenants and going on a building tour of 2785 Sedgwick Avenue (led by tenant leaders Sergio Cuevas and Maggie Maldonado), HPD Commissioner Rafael Cesteros agreed begin roof to cellar inspections in all ten Milbank properties. Each day a group of 3-4 city housing inspectors went door-to-door cataloguing various violations, from broken carbon monoxide detectors to showers falling through the floor. Over 1,000 violations were added in 3 weeks, bringing Milbank's grand total to 4,392.

HPD also issued a subpoena against LNR, Milbank and the

receiver administrating the building. HPD had been reluctant to use such power in the past, but the organized tenant leaders of the NWBCCC would not take no for an answer. The hearing will force LNR and Milbank to publically explain how the buildings deteriorated physically and financially. The hearing will be taking place early next year at HPD headquarters, and tenants will surely be a presence in the entire process. The fight is far from over, but already Milbank tenants like Maggie Maldonado have made a serious impact in their community and changed the way that the city holds private landlords and financial institutions accountable to building conditions.

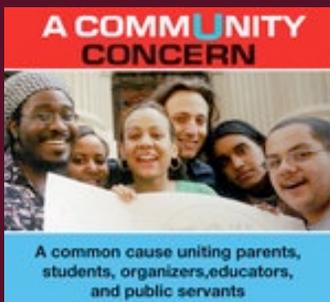
## HIGHLIGHTS 2010

April 15<sup>th</sup> - SBU spearheaded the Alliance for Educational Justices' S.O.S. (Save Our Schools) Action in front of the Penn Station Post Office. 300 NYC students gathered together to demand that the federal government invest public taxes into public education and put an end to the schools-to-prison pipeline.

In May 2010 after months of research and discussions, AEJ moved forward, tackling the re-authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) or No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), specifically focusing on ending the zero-tolerance policies in all schools and using community-based alternatives to school discipline.

JULY 2010, Sistas & Brothas United worked with the Center for New Community to create a documentary film targeting the Weeden Foundation for claiming that the rise in immigration was affecting climate change and problems with the environment. Entitled *The Green War on Immigrants*, the film showed the process of youth conducting in-depth research to uncover the matrix of relationships in the movement to stop immigration reform nationwide. The video had over 6,500 hits on YouTube. Watch here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TxQTnMgJ94w>

SBU participated in a national documentary about struggles for urban education reform. For more info contact: <http://www.acommunityconcern.org>



## SISTAS AND BROTHAS UNITED



*Que lo que queremos, que lo que queremos: JUSTICIA! Tell me what you want, what you really want: JUSTICE!*

### **Student Metro Card Fight:**

In December of 2009, the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) announced that they would no longer subsidize free student passes (Metro Cards). This meant that families would have to pay over \$1000 per child to travel to their schools. This was a direct attack on working class students across the City. From December through June 2010, SBU and UYC organized rallies and press conferences with hundreds of NYC students, parents, teachers and elected officials. On March 2010, over 60 SBU leaders attended both the Bronx and Manhattan MTA's Bronx Public Hearings. SBU leader Adolfo Abreu, 16 at the time, took control of the microphone and demanded that MTA Chairman Jay Walder meet with NYC students to discuss possible alternatives for students, the first time the MTA ever met with any public group. After the meeting, it was clear that NYC students had to organize harder to pressure the City, the State and the MTA to subsidize student metro cards. From March through June, SBU leaders met with local City and State representatives, traveled to Albany, and rallied in front of Governor Patterson's New York City Office. Finally, on June 11, 2010, SBU and UYC organized a NYC student walkout and march of over 1,000 youth over the Brooklyn Bridge to demand that the City, the State, and the MTA continue to fund the free student metro cards. A week later, the MTA caved in and announced that students would continue to receive free passes. SBU is working to ensure that student's Metro Cards are funded indefinitely.

### **Safety and Dignity in Schools:**

After 3 years of youth organizing efforts, the New York City Council passed the Student Safety Act on December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2010. The Student Safety Act mandates the NYC Department of Education and the NYC Police Department to release bi-annual data regarding the number of suspensions, expulsions and arrests made based on age, race, class and gender in NYC public schools. This transparency bill is the first of its kind in NYC, and across the country. SBU and UYC student leaders believe that this is the first step to holding the NYPD and the DOE accountable for the pushing of hundreds of low-income students of color and special needs out of school and into low-paying jobs and prison. For the past year, SBU has expanded our focus on ending zero-tolerance policies and implementing positive alternatives to harsh disciplinary policies in public schools both on a citywide and a federal level, specifically by becoming part of the Steering Committee of the Dignity in Schools NY Campaign (DSC-NY) and taking on a Strategy Team leadership role in the Alliance for Educational Justice (AEJ).

### **Bronxchanges Poetry Workshop**

14 youth participated in a spoken word workshop this summer. The specialty course included trainings by local Bronx renowned artists like Rebel Diaz and Read Next Poetry Squad. Other poets like Spiritchild and Yorman Nunez encouraged students to share their skills in order to shape and move their world.

Watch video here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JW-V8GVy9PY>

### **SBU Organizing Activities for 2011:**

- Continue to develop the Morris Educational Campus Restorative Justice Program, and model it in other school campuses, including the Evander Childs Campus, The Leadership Institute, the Roosevelt Educational Campus, and DeWitt Clinton High School.
- Continue to fight for an end to punitive disciplinary policies that are pushing low-income students of color out of schools and into low-paying jobs and prisons.
- Engage in the fight to stop the massive wave of schools closings and ensure that students and parents are involved in the decision-making process
- Coordinate the Bronx Education Summit with the Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. in October 2011.

Continue working with students and faculty at Roosevelt Educational Campus to revitalize and expand the existing school garden. This includes convening regular student and teacher wellness

council meetings, facilitating workshops to raise awareness on the relationship between individual health and community need for food justice and access resources to expand the physical space of the school garden.

- Develop a youth-led, youth-run garden in the Kingsbridge area, providing space and opportunity to share knowledge and skills with community members and eventually provide healthy food for the Bronx community.
- Continue developing a Bronx-wide network of teachers engaged in education reform in their schools through SBU's Educator's Roundtable.

# KINGSBRIDGE ARMORY and LIVING WAGE JOBS



Doug Cunningham, Pastor of NWBCCC affiliate, New Day Church

In the current economy, our Mayor Bloomberg wants us to take whatever job we can get. Corporate profits are at a record high and 1 percent of our population controls 40% of our nation's wealth. Fighting back against economic injustice, the Northwest Bronx community was victorious in shutting down a project to build a low wage shopping mall in the Kingsbridge Armory that have added another layer to the cycle of poverty in our neighborhoods. Ally Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. commented on the City Council's decision on Dec. 14, 2009: "We maintain that the notion of 'any job is better than no job' no longer applies. The overwhelming majority of the people who are against what we've done here today are A) individuals that are making more than a living wage, and B) don't live in the beautiful Borough of the Bronx." The NWBCCC Living Wage and Armory campaign is about creating an even economic playing field so that low income families can survive in this city. Poor people's work supports all of us, so we are going to have a say in how our communities are developed to ensure that our resources benefit us.

## **The Fair Wages for New Yorkers Act: Linda Archer's Story, an NWBCCC leader**

Many of us have had a retail job, been unemployed or had a job with some stability that we help onto afraid one day in would be gone. This is articulated by many of the leaders in the living wage job campaign. Particularly, Linda Archer. Linda says, "For years I had a middle-class job at True North Media. I had my own limo at night to take me home, with a decent salary of close to 30,000 a year. I had to leave this job, and upon returning to the workforce, I was only able to find employment in at the fast food restaurant in Times Square. The workers there are a mixed group of young adults and middle aged employees, with families to support.

I earn \$7.25 per hour without medical coverage or sick leave. I am a middle aged single adult, and even still, I cannot afford to live on my own with the money I earn. Right now I sleep in the living room of my mother's one-bedroom apartment. My job does not allow me to be self sufficient. The Fair Wages for NYers Act will help people like me who work in fast food chains in malls [built with] city subsidies. It will lessen the financial hardship and not force people to choose between things like rent and medical bills. My dream is to one

day go back to school to finish by BA and work in a justice clinic."

### **A Plan For the Armory**

KARA sits at the table of the Bronx Borough President's Kingsbridge Armory Task Force. We are turning our community benefits principles into a financially feasible plan for what should be in the armory. Our potential tenants include: community college space that meets the needs of students ranging from GED to PhD, training for green jobs, green industry, and a cooperative business incubator. The Kingsbridge Armory will be developed into a multi-use facility that will stand as a symbol of the development process. "It will be the touchstone, the crown jewel of the Bronx," says KARA member, Desiree Pilgrim-Hunter. In November 17th, 2010- The Living Wage Coalition delivers 6,000 postcards to city council.

# WEATHERIZATION AND GREEN JOBS

APRIL – The NWBCCC made our mark in the international movement for climate justice, joining 30,000 environmental justice activists from 150 countries in Bolivia for the World People’s Conference on Climate Change. The resulting [agreement](#) provides marginalized communities across the planet a platform to challenge UN climate change negotiations to truly address the needs of communities affected by climate change.



With over 27 years providing energy efficient retrofits to low-income housing, **NWBCCC's Weatherization Assistance Program** has launched into a new era in the midst of our nation's economic and climate crises. The program saves buildings at least 20% on their annual energy costs, primarily through weather-stripping and repairing doors and windows, upgrading heating systems, addition of insulation to walls or ceilings and other minor repairs to maximize energy efficiency. Selected by the Obama Administration as a model program to create green jobs while reducing energy consumption and carbon emissions, WAP funding has increased threefold under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. We welcome Vera Parpis as Deputy Director, hailing from 17 years of experience as program director at HANAC, a WAP subgrantee in Queens. Pete Sloan also joined as our newest field staff and Robert Izzo as the Davis Bacon Compliance Officer. We also hired two additional field workers, Dayquan Salaman and Jordan Temple (a star graduate of the [Green City Force](#)). Sonia Guzman and Orlando Torres, formerly a NWB housing organizer, have joined our intake team. Our increased capacity and insider experience offers a unique perspective to the [New York State Stimulus Alliance](#), where we are working with our allies across the

state to demand fairness, community participation and transparency in the administration of ARRA, to ensure that communities of color and distressed areas truly benefit.

Our WAP program also worked with community partners and the mayor's office this summer to implement the city's ["Cool Roof Initiative,"](#) which aimed to paint one million square feet of black tar roofs white; decreasing the city's carbon footprint, lowering energy consumption and mitigating the Urban Heat Island Effect, where weather patterns are actually altered as a result of the concentration of roofs with temperatures up to 180 degrees during the summer months. This is a first step toward promoting other innovative building modifications that will complement the services provided by WAP. By leveraging training opportunities in these government sponsored programs, we aim to prepare our youth and members to generate income in the private sector.

An additional state program called [Green Jobs Green NY](#) is launching next year, designed to retrofit one million New York homes for energy efficiency within five years, lower fossil fuel emissions and combat climate change. It aims to save households an average of 30-40% of energy consumption, create 12,000 green jobs (healthy for the worker and the environment) and obviate the need for new power plants. For over two years we have served on the community advisory committee for this program and are currently applying to [NYSERDA](#), the New York State Energy and Research Development Authority, as lead Constituency-based organization for outreach in the Bronx.

### **Green Jobs**

We continued to anchor the monthly [Bronx Green Jobs Roundtable](#) ([bronzgreenjobs.org](#)) with local environmental justice groups, work training programs, community organizations and labor & political allies. The roundtable brought together over 150 community leaders to the Bronx Green Jobs Summit in April 2010 to develop a Bronx-specific vision for the [“New York City Green Collar Roadmap.”](#) a challenge by a broad coalition of community and labor groups to supersede PlaNYC with a comprehensive path to addressing environmental concerns across the city with a green economy based upon living-wage jobs particularly for people of color, youth and women. This work led us to be selected as part of the [Applied Research Center’s Green Equity](#) Cohort, a cutting edge national organization for racial justice building capacity to ensure women and people of color are on the forefront of the emerging green economy.

Through our work with the Green Jobs Roundtable, NWBCCC has sophisticated our understanding of a green economy; where jobs can be created through energy-efficient construction, green product manufacturing, urban farming and food production, clean waste management, alternative transportation and fuels and waterfront management. Together with Sistas & Brothas United, [The Point](#), [Urban Agenda / Jobs with Justice](#) and [Goodwill Industries](#), we launched the Bronx Green Jobs Academy as part of Hostos Community College’s continuing education program, offering [ROOTS OF SUCCESS](#), a ten-week curriculum on environmental literacy, social justice and urban planning. The class was co-facilitated by Taleigh Smith, a ROOTS certified instructor and the outreach coordinator of our WAP team.

Looking forward to 2011, we are setting our sites high. Our spring semester of the Bronx Green Jobs Academy will offer youth internships, more hands-on activities and field work. We have formed a Bronx Cooperative working group that will survey anchor institutions in the Bronx to identify procurement patterns and research the viability of forming worker-owned co-ops to match existing demand, a model for strengthening the local green economy that has gained international recognition in Cleveland and is also modeled by our [NPA](#) & Green Cohort allies in Massachusetts, the [Alliance to Develop Power](#). We will continue to be vigilant within city, state, national and international frameworks to ensure this moment of economic and climate crisis serves as a motivation to reorganize ourselves into a society that values justice, environmental sustainability and the

voices of historically oppressed communities.

# EDUCATION



**PS 86- We Need Room for Success!!!**  
Lisa Sills-Short, parent of a pre-schooler at PS 86, did not plan on picketing when she signed on to be Co-President of the Parent Association of her son's school. But as she listened to the Department of Education's (DOE) proposals for PS 86 in a meeting between the School's Leadership Team and the Office of Portfolio and Planning and considered what it would mean for her son, she says she could feel her claws shooting out like a protective mother tiger. DOE representatives had requested the meeting to discuss a plan to eliminate the Kingsbridge Heights school's zone of choice along with its 6th grade. What's more—they said that this proposal would shrink enrollment enough to warrant putting a second proposal on the table—the opening of an entirely new middle school on the first floor of their building. With 1776 students currently enrolled in a school that was originally intended to house under 1200, neither the DOE's math nor logic was adding up. Parents, teachers and administrators demanded to know why the DOE would force a proposal on their school that would limit parent choice and eliminate such a successful component like their sixth

grade. The DoE responded that their neighborhood needed a middle school option, but the DOE would only allocate funds to construct one new school for the rest of the Capital Planning Period ending in 2014. Lisa refused to sit still and keep quiet.

Lisa sprung into action, working with other parents and staff to educate the entire school community about the potential impacts of the proposals in store for their school. Their efforts mobilized close to 500 parents, staff and administrators to attend the October meeting of the District 10 Community Education Council (CEC). Their message was clear: "Don't break what doesn't need fixing." They demanded that the CEC reject any proposal to rezone their school and called on the DOE to abandon further proposals to cut their 6th grade and introduce a new middle school in their building. Eliminating their zone of choice, the entire sixth grade and opening a new school in their building made no sense as a plan to reduce overcrowding. District 10 Superintendent Sonia Menendez pulled the re-zoning proposal on the day of the CEC meeting, calling it "a lesson in community engagement."

## HIGHLIGHTS

**JANUARY** - Students from the Leadership Institute invited Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. to tour their school for the first time. Guiding him through hallways too narrow for lockers, a gym too small to shoot baskets standing up and an office with no space for private counseling, they told him of their persistent struggle with the Department of Education to relocate to an adequate high school space equipped with school essentials like a library and a computer lab. Borough President Diaz wanted to know what kept the students motivated with so many obstacles in their way. Their response was unified: The students, staff, and administration of the Leadership Institute are committed to each other and to their school's success. As a result, they won \$150,000 from the Borough President to equip each classroom with smartboards and printers.



Lisa's fight to preserve her school and construct new schools in her neighborhood carries on, and has connected her with a deeper struggle to build an informed, independent, politically-active body of parents that can impact DOE policies. She said the journey so far has been like a peeling onion. "There are decisions being made by [the DOE] all the time that parents are not consulted about and are not even aware of, but our children are the ones that live with their impacts," she said. "When it comes down to it, my struggle and the struggles of other schools like ours are about a parent's right to be informed about these decisions and to be able to decide what is best for their child." In the coming year, PS 86 parents plan to team up with other parent leaders from the Education Committee and leaders from the Coalition's congregational affiliates to build and mobilize a broader coalition of parents at home. The Education Committee will also convene meetings with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Defense to ensure the National Guard is relocated from Kingsbridge to Wakefield to clear the way for school construction beside the Armory.

### A Citywide Alliance to Save Our Schools

Parents and educators were thrown into alarm over the Summer of 2010 after the State DOE re-calibrated the grading of the state standardized Math and English Language Arts tests to reflect the minimum proficiency levels a student must attain to be on track for graduation from high school and college readiness. Out of the crisis, a broad-based citywide coalition emerged called Save Our Schools, and the NWBCCC is one of its 25 members. S.O.S. created an action plan to confront the 2010 State Test Scores Crisis and the culture of High

Stakes Testing that created it. The Coalition put forth three essential demands of the DOE: (1) Provide intensive interventions for all students who scored in Level 1 and Level 2, including those now in high school, (2) Provide comprehensive support and guidance to the city's most struggling schools and (3) Suspend for one year all high-stakes policy decisions based on standardized tests to establish a revised accountability system based on multiple measures.

Representatives of the Education Committee have participated in strategy sessions to shape the campaign agenda, stood in the Coalition's first successful press conference on the steps of Tweed, traveled to Albany to demand the State Assembly rescind the waiver for Academic Intervention Services and met with Deputy Chancellor for Accountability Shael Polakow-Suransky and Deputy Chief Schools Officer for Academics Josh Thomases to discuss the DOE's action plan for ensuring struggling schools and students receive comprehensive support. The Committee looks forward to cultivating these relationships to build a stronger and more strategic united front of parents, youth, and educators citywide.

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Thank you for the continued financial and resource support to build our mission, vision and organizing work.

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