



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**FIRST READY NEW YORK SENIOR CENTER OF THE YEAR AWARD PRESENTED
TO BROOKLYN'S FT. GREENE GRANT SQUARE SENIOR CENTER**

*More than 2,700 older New Yorkers across the five boroughs participated in
Ready New York emergency preparedness training this year*

September 28, 2012 — The New York City Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and the Department for the Aging (DFTA) today presented the first Ready New York Senior Center of the Year Award to Fort Greene Grant Square Senior Center, for its ongoing commitment to preparing its members for emergencies. As a part of Grant Square's emergency preparedness program, members are reminded yearly to update their Go-bags to include new medication information and contact names and numbers. In addition, the senior center formed a small emergency response team consisting of seniors and non-senior volunteers to aid homebound seniors and seniors in need. Over the past year, OEM has visited more than 60 senior centers and given preparedness presentations to more than 2,700 older New Yorkers. More than 100,000 copies of My Emergency Plan, a guide that was created by OEM, the Department for the Aging and other partners specifically for the City's older residents have been distributed throughout the five boroughs. The award ceremony marked the unofficial end of September's National Preparedness Month, a month-long, nationwide campaign, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, to promote emergency preparedness and encourage volunteerism. Commissioner Bruno was joined by Department for the Aging Deputy Commissioner Caryn Resnick, Fort Greene Senior Citizens Council Executive Director Claudette Macy, and Fort Green Grant Square Senior Center Director Debra Holland.

"The enthusiasm and thoroughness with which Fort Greene Grant Square Senior Center has approached preparing its seniors for emergencies has been truly inspiring," said OEM Commissioner Joseph F. Bruno. "It is my hope that all the other senior centers in the City will follow Grant Square's example, and take an active lead in preparing older New Yorkers for a potential emergency. I want to thank the Department for the Aging for being an incredible partner in preparing its senior centers and their members for emergencies."

"I would like to commend Claudette Macy and her staff for making a concerted effort to bring such important, potentially life-saving instruction to the center," said DFTA Commissioner Barrios-Paoli. "I would also like to thank the Office of Emergency Management for visiting senior centers and making older New Yorkers aware of what they need to do to prepare for an emergency."

"Fort Greene Grant Square Senior Center is committed to ensuring that seniors have the information they need before and during emergencies," said Grant Square Senior Center Director Holland. "We are grateful that the Office of Emergency Management and the Department for the Aging are honoring us with the first Ready New York Senior Center award. Building on our

strong foundation, we will continue to expand our preparedness education efforts for our members.”

The *Ready New York* program outlines three important strategies to preparing for emergencies:

- **Get Ready: *Make a Plan*** – Have at least two phone numbers – one local and one out-of-state number – which you can call in an emergency and practice the plan with adults in your home.
- **Get Set: *Prepare a Stay at Home Kit*** – During emergencies that require you to stay at home, it is important to have extra food and water for everyone in the house and a battery-operated radio for news updates.
- **Get Ready to Go: *Pack a Go Bag*** – During emergencies that require you to leave your home, have a Go Bag with emergency supplies.

Fort Greene Grant Square Senior Center is also an OEM Partner in Preparedness. The program challenges private, not-for-profit, faith-based, and government organizations to take an active role in helping employees, volunteers, and their families prepare for emergencies. More than 150 organizations representing over 500,000 employees have already committed their support as Partners in Preparedness. To become a Partner in Preparedness, organizations must complete five activities that help promote personal and family preparedness. These activities can include encouraging co-workers and volunteers to register for Notify NYC (the City’s free real-time emergency notification system), distributing and testing an emergency contact plan, and distributing OEM’s weekly preparedness messages via e-mail, Facebook, and Twitter.

Staying in Touch with OEM

The Office of Emergency Management communicates directly with the public through a variety of tools, including Notify NYC. This is just one way the City of New York communicates urgent information to city residents. In addition to sending e-mails, text messages, and phone calls, the emergency notification office has the ability to activate NYC’s Emergency Alert System (EAS), which sends information immediately via television and radio. Residents can also visit Facebook, Twitter, and the agency’s website, nyc.gov/oem for more information. The public can sign up for Notify NYC by calling 311 or going to www.NYC.gov/notifynyc.

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