

**FORMER CONGRESSWOMAN GERALDINE FERRARO KEYNOTES
NYC EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT CAMPAIGN'S VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION
LUNCH**

DCA Honors the Volunteers and Partners of the New York City EITC Coalition

June 4, 2004

The New York City Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) today hosted a recognition luncheon for the volunteers and partners of the New York City Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Coalition at the New York Marriott Marquis in Midtown. The program included a keynote address by former Congresswoman Geraldine A. Ferraro highlighting the many accomplishments of this year's campaign, and remarks by DCA Commissioner Gretchen Dykstra. Coalition partners from New York's leading non-profit organizations and corporations were in attendance including representatives from Community Food Resource Center, Con Edison, McDonald's, Time Warner Cable, El Diario la Prensa, Robin Hood, Hoy, Independence Community Bank, and others.

"New York City has the best EITC coalition in the country," said DCA Commissioner Gretchen Dykstra. "The extraordinary success of this year's campaign can be attributed to tireless efforts made by hundreds of volunteers and a marquee group of not-for-profit, government, and corporate partners. We look forward to building on our successes and gearing up for next year."

In her keynote address, Ms. Ferraro heaped praise on this year's Coalition sponsors and volunteers stating, "In giving your time, energy, financial support, and advertising to the New York City EITC Coalition, you all have helped thousands of New Yorkers live better lives."

In 2002, New York City, spearheaded by the DCA, launched an inaugural coordinated campaign to increase the number of filers eligible for the EITC. With the help of numerous partners, dozens of free tax sites were set up and staffed citywide. In addition, hundreds of thousands of informational materials in ten languages were distributed during the tax season and advertisements featuring the tagline, "It's Your Money, Come and Get It!" blanketed subways, bus shelters, and media outlets. After the inaugural citywide campaign, an additional 30,000 New Yorkers filed for the EITC than in the previous year. This year, eligible filers benefited from 311, the City's 24-hour hotline, by being able to instantly locate free tax assistance nearest them.

The EITC returns federal and state dollars to filers either through tax credits or as cash refunds to working families earning less than \$34,692 annually. Last year, the average combined EITC credit for New York City was \$2,354. Qualifying filers can file retroactively for up to three years prior. Full-time and part-time workers, including self-employed workers, who are legally authorized to work in the United States, are eligible for the tax credit.

During the 2002-2003 tax season, nearly 800,000 New York City residents filed for the EITC and as a result, approximately \$1.8 billion dollars was returned and generated back into the City's local economy.

Participating partners in the New York City EITC Coalition include, but are not limited to, thirty New York City agencies, the New York City Council, dozens of community and not-for-profit organizations, and corporate sponsors including Cablevision, CD 101.9, Citigroup, Con Edison, Deloitte, Duane Reade, El Diario la Prensa, H&R Block, HOT 97, Hoy, Independence Community Bank, Keyspan, KISS 98.7, Marriott, McDonald's, Telemundo,

Time Warner Cable, and Radio WADO/ Hispanic Broadcasting Corporation.

EITC campaign materials are available in the following ten languages: English, Spanish, Albanian, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Haitian, Korean, Russian, and Urdu. For more information, go to the DCA web site at www.nyc.gov/consumers

About Keynote Speaker Geraldine A. Ferraro:

Ms. Ferraro has spent numerous years as a public policy advocate devoting a great deal of her time championing for human rights. Ms. Ferraro gained national prominence when she became the first woman vice-presidential candidate on a major ticket in 1984. In her many years of dedicated service Ms. Ferraro served three terms in the House of Representatives, was appointed the United States Ambassador to the United Nations Human Rights Commission by President Clinton, and was Vice-Chair of the U.S. delegation at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. She is currently executive vice president and head of the public affairs practice of The Global Consulting Group.

www.nyc.gov/consumers.