

September 2009

## MAYOR'S FUND TO ADVANCE NEW YORK CITY NEWSLETTER

### UPCOMING EVENTS



#### **The Sixth Annual Fete de Swifty**

On **Wednesday, September 23**, the Mayor's Fund will host its annual benefit. The 2009 Fete de Swifty event will support the NYC Family Justice Center Initiative, providing services to victims of domestic violence and their families. For more information or to purchase tickets, go to [www.nyc.gov/fund](http://www.nyc.gov/fund) or call (212) 788-7794. Also make sure to check out the online auction on [www.charitybuzz.com](http://www.charitybuzz.com) from September 15 to October 1 to bid on fantastic prizes including unique New York experiences, fashion and sports events, travel packages and more.



#### **MillionTreesNYC Fall Planting Day**

On **Saturday, October 24**, help plant more than 20,000 trees in one day as part of the MillionTreesNYC volunteer planting event in collaboration with It's My Park! Day. Go to [www.milliontreesnyc.org](http://www.milliontreesnyc.org) to sign up to help out at a site near you, or go to [www.nyc.gov/service](http://www.nyc.gov/service) to find out about other upcoming volunteer opportunities.

### HELP TREES DAMAGED BY RECENT STORM



On August 18 severe storms caused serious damage to more than 1,500 New York City trees in Central Park, Riverside Park, Randall's Island, Thomas Jefferson Park and other locations. The Mayor's Fund is accepting donations to distribute to organizations aiding the affected landscapes. To support the clean-up and restoration efforts please contact the Mayor's Fund.

### MAYOR'S FUND JOINS FACEBOOK



We are increasing our fan base by the minute since creating a new facebook page. Visitors can get updates on City initiatives, view pictures, browse links to relevant news stories, and receive details on upcoming events. To become a fan or view our page, please visit us at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and search: Mayor's Fund.

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## MILLIONTREESNYC STEWARDSHIP CORPS TAKES ROOT



The MillionTreesNYC campaign has yielded more than 248,900 trees planted since its launch in October 2007. These newly planted trees require ongoing maintenance and care to survive in New York City's urban environment. In response to this growing demand, the Mayor's Fund launched the MillionTreesNYC Stewardship Corps in conjunction with the Department of Parks & Recreation and New York Restoration Project (NYRP). Partners in this five borough effort include Trees New York, Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Queens Botanical Garden, New York Botanical Garden, Greenbelt Conservancy, GreenThumb, and City Parks Foundation. Program partners are charged with recruiting community-based tree stewards, distributing stewardship toolkits and developing incentive and recognition systems to promote long-term engagement in tree care. The Stewardship Corps is one of the many programs of NYC Service, Mayor Bloomberg's initiative to promote volunteerism in New York City. To sign up to be a tree steward, visit [www.milliontreesnyc.org](http://www.milliontreesnyc.org).

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## FIRST CLASS OF MTTP PARTICIPANTS GRADUATE



On May 29 an inaugural graduation ceremony was held at The Arsenal in Central Park for the first class of the MillionTreesNYC Training Program (MTTP). First Deputy Mayor Patricia E. Harris, Parks Commissioner Adrian Benepe and NYRP Executive Director Drew Becher presented the 25 participants with their graduation certificates. The seven-month MTTP curriculum combined classroom and field work instruction in arboriculture, ecological restoration, and garden design and management. The graduates completed over 1,000 hours of training and educational activities that assisted the MillionTreesNYC initiative. As a result of a \$2 million grant to the Mayor's Fund from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, members of this year's class were placed in paid positions at the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation, NYRP, Bronx River Alliance, Central Park Conservancy, Prospect Park Alliance, Wave Hill and the New York City Housing Authority. The MillionTreesNYC Training Program is gearing up to welcome its second class of participants this fall.

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## NEW CIVIC CORPS MEMBERS SWORN IN



NYC Civic Corps was launched as part of NYC Service on April 20. A partnership with the Corporation for National and Community Service and its AmeriCorps VISTA program, NYC Civic Corps members are dedicated to the mission of increasing meaningful service throughout the five boroughs. On July 30 Mayor Bloomberg swore in the inaugural class of 183 Civic Corps members. These members have been assigned to help 59 public and non-profit organizations for one year with the goal of developing sustainable volunteer programs and helping to increase organizational capacity. To find out more and to get involved in NYC Service, please visit [www.nyc.gov/service](http://www.nyc.gov/service).

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## FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT CENTERS OPEN IN MORE LOCATIONS



Following the success of the pilot Financial Empowerment Center in the Bronx, which opened in June 2008, the Mayor opened three new centers in May 2009. Co-located at the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation's Restoration Plaza in Brooklyn, the Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation in Washington Heights, and Catholic Charities/HomeBase location in Jamaica, the new centers offer free, one-on-one financial education and counseling to low-income New York residents. The bi-lingual help offered by counselors at these centers include money management, budgeting, financial planning, credit counseling, finding affordable banking services, government benefit screenings and referrals to other services and organizations. The Mayor's Fund is seeking funding to support additional centers in Brooklyn and Staten Island expected to open later this year.

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## \$AVENYC SHOWS PROMISING INITIAL FINDINGS



On August 6 the Department of Consumer Affairs released the first-year results of the \$aveNYC Account Program pilot supported by the Mayor's Fund. Initial findings revealed that, contrary to previous assumptions, individuals with low incomes can and will save when given simple and safe banking products. The pilot was open to families earning less than \$45,000 and individuals earning less than \$20,000 who filed their taxes at participating Volunteer Income Tax Assistance sites. Individuals who left the initial deposit in the accounts for one year received a 50 percent match, up to \$250, in addition to the 2 to 3 percent interest the savings accounts earned. The pilot revealed that 61 percent of program participants contributed at least \$500 to their \$aveNYC Account, totaling more than \$73,000 in savings by the end of the first year.

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## "BIKE IN STYLE CHALLENGE" ANNOUNCES WINNER



On June 2 First Deputy Mayor Patricia E. Harris joined LVMH Chairman Renaud Dutreil, Designer Donna Karan, and Actresses Hilary Duff and Marion Cotillard to announce the winner of the "Bike in Style Challenge." The challenge asked students from the Fashion Institute of Technology to design a unisex poncho, jacket and travel bag—three essentials for New York City bicycle commuters. Jessica Velasquez, 21, was awarded first prize and prototypes of her winning collection were presented in conjunction with this year's Summer Streets event.

**To support these or other innovative public projects, please visit [www.nyc.gov/fund](http://www.nyc.gov/fund).**

**Together we can make a difference.**

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