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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DEP, Bronx Community College Salute Project H.I.R.E. Students

New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Emily Lloyd joined Bronx Community College (BCC) President Dr. Carolyn G. Williams today in congratulating 29 students who will complete 20 weeks of training in the construction trades on November 9th.

The successful partnership was developed as part of DEP's commitment to help Bronx residents qualify for jobs in the construction industry. The DEP is partnering with BCC's Project H.I.R.E. (Help in Re-entering Employment), a training and development program to prepare men and women for careers in the construction trades.

In the next weeks following completion, graduates will be referred to union apprenticeships and other employers in the property maintenance industry. Project H.I.R.E. has already begun testing and interviewing candidates for the next training cycle. Nine students from the current class have already been accepted into apprenticeships in various construction labor unions including the Laborers Local 79; Sheet Metal Local 28; and Painters Local 9.

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Commissioner Lloyd said, "Project H.I.R.E. is one of several initiatives we've undertaken to assist job applicants on job readiness training, and to facilitate employment and to achieve educational foundations such as a GED that will qualify them for work. This is a good start and we need to build on this. We are committed to helping Bronx residents get jobs."

BCC President Williams said, "We are proud of Project H.I.R.E. and the potential it has to meet the building trade's needs of new construction projects here in the Bronx and simultaneously providing a pathway to excellent careers for Bronx residents."



Project H.I.R.E. is a vocationally-based occupational skills training program that has been offered by BCC for 22 years and is led by Director Glenda M. Self. Participants completing the training course meet with the career counselor who matches each student with a job based on their skills. In the Spring 2007 class, graduates were placed with Local 8, Local 28, Local 79, Local 731, Columbia University and Safe Horizon.

DEP's efforts to train and place Bronx residents have been monitored by the Croton Facility Monitoring Committee (FMC), comprised of representatives of the Bronx Borough President's office; Bronx Community Boards 7, 8, 12; Council Member Koppell's office; Parks Department and DEP. Its Chairman, Gregory Faulkner, had been a driving force in DEP's decision to fund two training cycles at Project H.I.R.E.

Mr. Faulkner said, "In the Bronx we have one of the highest

unemployment rates in the city, yet our residents overwhelmingly want jobs. Many would like to help build the water treatment facility, which is scheduled for completion in 2011 and to be operational in 2012. Project H.I.R.E. is one of the programs that help prepare workers for construction industry jobs. The skills learned at Project HIRE will give graduates a lifetime career. I am pleased that the Croton FMC was instrumental in DEP's decision to pay for two training cycles, and I look forward to other initiatives to get Bronxites to work."



Director of Project H.I.R.E. Glenda M. Self said, "We are pleased to have a role in workforce development and very proud of our graduates."

The Croton Filtration Plant will treat water from the oldest portion of the City's water supply system. Water from the Croton system meets current Federal and State health standards. However, construction of the Croton plant was undertaken in anticipation of new, more stringent regulations and because Croton water experiences periodic problems related to its source -- a heavily developed watershed located in Westchester, Putnam and Dutchess Counties. The majority of the City's water comes from watersheds in less densely developed counties west of the Hudson. New York City is one of only five large cities in the country that provide water of such high quality that they are not required to filter. The City received authorization to build and operate the Croton Filtration Plant at the Mosholu Golf Course driving range in Van Cortlandt Park, which will be restored after the project is complete. In exchange for the use of this parkland, approximately \$240 million generated from water and sewer revenues has been committed to improvements to Bronx parks and recreational facilities over the next five years.



The Department of Environmental Protection manages the City's drinking water supply, serving more than half the population of New York State with more than 1 billion gallons of quality drinking water daily. Nineteen reservoirs provide water through a network grid of over 6,200 miles of water mains throughout the five boroughs. DEP also manages 14 in-City wastewater treatment plans, and an additional nine treatment plants upstate.