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**MAYOR DE BLASIO HOSTS SANDY RECOVERY OPPORTUNITY AND RESOURCE FAIR,  
ANNOUNCES TWO NEW WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES**

*De Blasio administration kicks off HRO-SBS Workforce1 partnership as part of commitment to providing opportunities to Sandy-impacted New Yorkers*

*Additional new Rockaways Economic Advancement Initiative – collaboration among SBS, NYCHA, CEO, and Citi – will connect Far Rockaway residents to high-quality, full-time employment*

**NEW YORK**— Mayor Bill de Blasio today hosted a Sandy Recovery Opportunity and Resource Fair in Far Rockaway to connect Sandy-impacted New Yorkers with workforce development and other opportunities with the City’s Hurricane Sandy recovery and resiliency programs. The fair also marked the start of a Workforce1 partnership between the Mayor’s Housing Recovery Office and the Department of Small Business Services.

Additionally, the Mayor, SBS, the New York City Housing Authority, the Center for Economic Opportunity, and Citi announced the new Rockaways Economic Advancement Initiative, an over \$1.1 million investment to expand place-based economic empowerment and mobility in the Rockaways and connect residents with high-quality, full-time employment.

“Sandy exposed long-standing inequalities across our city—and few places felt that as deeply as the Rockaways. That’s why our administration is committed not just to expediting our recovery, but to using it to take on inequality and provide opportunity to New Yorkers in our hardest-hit neighborhoods,” said **Mayor de Blasio**. “Through tonight’s Opportunity Fair and our new Build it Back local hiring initiative, we’re giving Sandy-impacted New Yorkers priority for recovery and rebuilding jobs. Additionally, the new Rockaways Economic Advancement Initiative will empower residents and provide comprehensive support that connects them with high-quality, full-time employment.”

**Sandy Recovery Opportunity and Resource Fair**

Tonight’s event, hosted in partnership with Faith in New York and the Alliance for a Just Rebuilding, brought together nearly 50 government agencies, businesses, and organizations providing career opportunities, job training, union apprenticeships, and recovery and community resources to Sandy-impacted New Yorkers.

Agencies offering information on career opportunities included construction firms and related non-profits, including those partnered with Build it Back, as well as the Department of Environmental Protection, NYCHA, the Human Resources Administration, FDNY, the Department of Sanitation, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS), and the

Department of Buildings (DOB). The over 200 specific career opportunities represented at tonight's event included construction engineers, project managers, and helpers, landscape cultivation and restoration workers, bioswale maintainers, welders and carpenters, office administrators, and quality assurance specialists, among other opportunities.

In addition to these career opportunities, the event featured workshops and trainings focused on resume building, interview skills, union apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities, financial empowerment, and accessing recovery resources. For example, the Department of Housing Preservation and Development and the American Red Cross were on hand to provide resources to undocumented victims of Sandy in need of rental housing vouchers—part of a program known as TDAP Private.

### **Build It Back Local Hiring Initiative**

Tonight marked the formal launch of a partnership between HRO and SBS, requiring all contractors, consultants, and vendors receiving Sandy recovery funds from the City for Build It Back projects to post job opportunities and work with Workforce1 on employment requirements.

Residents in Sandy-impacted neighborhoods will be given first priority to register for opportunities with the rebuilding effort at Workforce1 and Build it Back centers.

Additionally, the City will be launching a new procurement to significantly expand Build it Back design and construction capacity. The contracts will require a pathway for local residents to access jobs with the Sandy rebuilding, as well as long-term careers through a connection to apprenticeship and job training programs. This will help ensure that Sandy-impacted New Yorkers find opportunity with the recovery.

### **Rockaways Economic Advancement Initiative**

In addition to the new SBS-HRO Workforce1 partnership announced tonight, SBS, in collaboration with NYCHA, CEO, and Citi Community Development, is also launching a \$1.1 million investment to expand place-based economic empowerment and mobility and connect Far Rockaway residents to high-quality, full-time employment.

SBS' current Workforce1 system successfully connects New York job seekers to quality training and good jobs through 16 Workforce1 Centers across the five boroughs. The Workforce1 system operates at a city-wide scale, and this initiative would be the first to apply Workforce1's expertise to a neighborhood-level economic mobility effort.

The Rockaways Economic Advancement Initiative will offer expanded services, to kick off in early 2015, including:

- Pre-employment services (including assessment, individual employment plans, and career counseling)
- Candidate services (including resume and interview development and support, industry-informed sector introductions and preparation in key sectors)
- Connections to supportive services (including High School Equivalency Diploma programs)
- Financial counseling to support smart earning and saving practices
- Screening and referral to employment opportunities
- Entrepreneurship education

- Delivery of occupational training for in-demand jobs (including in the health care, transportation/industrial, and technology industries)
- Assistance for businesses in Far Rockaway to find, hire, and train the qualified workforce they need to start, operate, and expand
- Development of a service that is fully integrated into the Far Rockaway community through building a strong network of community-based organizations, workforce development providers, training providers, faith-based organizations, and social service agencies

“We are committed to helping Sandy-impacted neighborhoods recover in every way, a big part of which is helping residents of these neighborhoods access the opportunities offered at tonight’s event,” said **Amy Peterson, Director of the Mayor’s Office of Housing Recovery**. “Tonight’s event connects Sandy-impacted residents with Workforce1, employment opportunities, union apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeship programs, and community-based organizations—helping residents access the opportunities and services they need.”

“We are deeply committed to ensuring that all New Yorkers, especially those impacted by Sandy, can access high-quality training and employment,” said **Maria Torres-Springer, Commissioner of the NYC Department of Small Business Services**. “Through tonight’s Sandy Recovery Opportunity & Resource Fair, we will connect residents in the hardest-hit areas to real job opportunities resulting from the rebuilding efforts, and we will continue that work through the Rockaways Economic Advancement Initiative, which will provide jobseekers in the Rockaways with a unique and comprehensive set of supports to gain high-quality employment.”

“We know this to be a successful model for increasing economic opportunities and are thrilled to partner with SBS, CEO, and Citi to see a similar program for job creation in the Rockaways,” said **NYCHA Chair and CEO Shola Olatoye**. “This initiative will enable us to connect more NYCHA residents in this area hard hit by Sandy to job opportunities and services.”

“In partnership with the Mayor’s Office of Housing Recovery Operations, the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, and other agencies HPD has worked hard to assist New York renters and homeowners whose lives were disrupted by Hurricane Sandy,” said **HPD Commissioner Vicki Been**. “In addition to our efforts to repair and rebuild the homes and apartments that were affected by the storm, HPD has been part of the City’s efforts to address the needs of displaced tenants. This includes launching a program in partnership with the American Red Cross to provide temporary rental subsidies to some of our most vulnerable New Yorkers, enabling these households to rebuild their lives and move them along the path back to independence.”

“As we approach the two-year anniversary of Hurricane Sandy, Faith in New York is proud to stand with Mayor de Blasio at the Sandy Recovery Opportunity and Resource Fair. This is an important first step in not only rebuilding infrastructure but rebuilding the lives of those who have been impacted by Hurricane Sandy. We know that the storm revealed the long-standing economic pressures in our communities. We believe local jobs will help not only Sandy survivors, but all New Yorkers in need of work with dignity,” said **Onleilove Alston, Interim Executive Director of Faith in New York**.

“We are excited by the breadth of opportunities and resources being presented tonight at the Opportunity Fair and hope that these opportunities can be brought to other neighborhoods in the future. Additionally, we support the prioritization of Sandy survivors in the new procurement contracts as a critical step to address the tail of two recoveries. We will continue to work with the de Blasio administration to further

expand access to opportunities and careers for all New Yorkers,” said **Susannah Dyen, coordinator of the Alliance for a Just Rebuilding.**

“We are pleased to partner with SBS and private funders on this new more comprehensive, place-based approach to help prepare residents for quality jobs” said **Center for Economic Opportunity Executive Director Matthew Klein.** “This effort tailors its services to the needs of residents in the Rockaways, and will work with local businesses and community-based organizations to help residents not only obtain jobs, but retain, and advance in them. If the approach proves effective, it will serve as a model for SBS to replicate in other neighborhoods.”

“We are proud to continue our support for the City of New York and the Far Rockaway community through this new initiative, which will help enable more individuals to become job ready and secure steady employment,” said **Eileen Auld, Tri-State Regional Director of Citi Community Development.** “Citi works to build a more inclusive city through programs that empower low- and moderate-income communities with services that strengthen financial identities and access, and the Rockaways Economic Advancement Initiative is the latest example of how we are committed to making a meaningful impact in the lives of New Yorkers.”

“A major component to the Hurricane Sandy recovery effort rests in the need to stimulate economic growth in the communities hardest hit by this disaster,” said **Queens Borough President Melinda Katz.** “The Mayor’s initiative to encourage local hiring by vendors and contractors receiving Sandy recovery funds, and to provide specialized job training opportunities for hurricane victims, will help jumpstart this growth. The announced partnership between the SBS and the Housing Recovery Office to develop a local workforce also sends the message to those who continue to struggle with the rebuilding process that they have not been forgotten.”

“I applaud this initiative to provide much-needed support and resources to New Yorkers impacted by Superstorm Sandy. Combining the efforts of the City’s Workforce1 program and Build it Back will ensure that these programs to rebuild the Rockaways and other coastal communities reinforce each other in a way that is both efficient and thoughtful. I look forward to working with Mayor de Blasio and his administration as we build upon the progress being made in Rockaways and across New York City,” said **State Senator Joseph Addabbo.**

“Hurricane Sandy devastated my district nearly two years ago, and the residents have yet to fully recover. Many of the families are still trying to get back on their feet as they work to make the much-needed repairs on their homes and replace many other valued possessions. We have an obligation to prioritize the hiring of our friends and neighbors affected by Hurricane Sandy,” said **State Senator James Sanders.**

“It is critical that as we rebuild communities post-Sandy that we create meaningful employment for communities who have suffered from income inequality,” said **Council Member Donovan Richards.** “With billions of dollars slated to be spent in New York City to improve our infrastructure and rebuild homes over the next decade, we must seize this moment. I applaud Mayor Bill de Blasio for bringing the Sandy Recovery Opportunity and Resource Fair to the Rockaways and his commitment to fight inequity.”

“One of the most critical aspects of the recovery effort moving forward is to ensure that residents have a real role in the rebuilding of their communities and access to jobs that are created as a result. As someone who has long called for programs to connect the public with local jobs, I am pleased to see that this is a priority for this administration. This marks just the beginning of an ongoing focus on giving residents the tools, resources and information needed to play a key part in the rebuilding and recovery of their own neighborhood,” said **Council Member Mark Treyger.**

“We are very pleased with the Mayor’s announcement today that creates real opportunities for residents in the Rockaways and throughout New York City. We hope the announcement today is the first step in growing local hiring not only in the Rockaways, but across the city. We look forward to continuing to partner with the administration to make this a reality,” said **Pastor Arthur Davenport, First Church of God, Far Rockaway**.

“Since Hurricane Sandy, we have trained over 500 workers looking for work in the rebuilding effort, yet continue to see many people struggle to find work. We are hopeful that this opportunities fair will be a first step toward ensuring that local workers have access to the jobs created by Sandy rebuilding,” said **Deborah Axt, Co-Executive Director, Make the Road New York**.

“RDRC is ecstatic about the Mayor de Blasio’s commitment to enhance training and employment opportunities for Rockaway residents utilizing the Small Business Services Workforce1 Center. We believe that it is only fair that if companies—contractors, consultants and vendors—are receiving Sandy recovery funds from the City for Build It Back and other Rockaway projects, that residents have the opportunity to participate in the rebuilding of all the neighborhoods that comprise the Rockaway Peninsula and Broad Channel community,” said **Kevin Alexander, President & CEO of Rockaway Development & Revitalization Corporation**.

“Friends of Rockaway/St. Bernard Project, a locally based, non-profit rebuilding organization, is proud to partner with Mayor Bill de Blasio and the City of New York to increase employment opportunities through our long-term recovery operations on the Rockaway peninsula. We hire locally-based skilled contractors, and encourage local-residents to apply for long term service opportunities through our Americorps program,” said **Hunter Johansson, Client Services Manager at Friends of Rockaway**.

“When business owners on Beach 116<sup>th</sup> Street are looking to hire, they are looking to hire qualified, competent and preferably locally-based employees. Most business owners recognize the value of hiring locally. When merchants reach out to the Beach 116<sup>th</sup> St. Partnership to help with the hiring process, we always involve Workforce1 to connect us with qualified, local applicants. There is a perception that locally-based employees have higher retention rates, are more likely to understand the needs of local customers—I think that perception is correct. The Beach 116<sup>th</sup> Street Partnership expects to continue and expand our collaboration with Workforce1 as we work together to support a strong local economy in Rockaway,” said **Krzysztof Sadlej, Executive Director of the Beach 116<sup>th</sup> Street Partnership**.

“There has been a decades-long unemployment crisis in the Rockaways, particularly the east end, that was merely exacerbated by Hurricane Sandy. Rockaway Wildfire believes that meaningful employment for local residents, followed by means of keeping wealth and resources in the community, are essential steps toward sustainability. We are optimistic that the Workforce1 program will bring gainful jobs and careers to the many capable candidates here, and uplift a neighborhood long felt neglected,” said **Kalin Callaghan of Rockaway Wildfire**.

“As one of Rockaway’s premiere youth organizations, RYTF is dedicated to improving workforce development with training and employment opportunities for our local young people,” said **Milan R. Taylor, Rockaway Youth Task Force CEO**. “In the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, the Rockaways suffered a serious economic decline, and I commend Mayor de Blasio on this new venture to expand Workforce1’s new initiative for Sandy survivors.”

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