BROOKLYN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION HELPS HOMELESS

Charles Green, a CAMBA client, had one wish for the holidays: a home for his four young daughters. An out-of-work handyman, Green had difficulty finding work and an apartment during the recession. The Brooklyn Community Foundation teamed up with The Daily News, in partnership with CAMBA, to make it possible for Green and his family (shown on page 2) to move from CAMBA’s Brownsville Flagstone Family Shelter into permanent housing.

“We’re looking to help some of the most vulnerable young people in the borough,” explained Foundation President Marilyn Gelber.

Claire Harding-Keefe, a CAMBA executive responsible for the shelter where the family lived for six months, added, “We’re seeing more people enter the system than in a long time simply because of the economic crisis.”

CAMBA RESPONDS TO HAITIANS IN NEED

CAMBA’s Refugee Resettlement Program will be providing family reunification and short-term case management to Haitians joining family members in New York after receiving treatment at a United States hospital.

The U.S. government has evacuated many Haitians to VA hospitals in Miami, Tampa and Atlanta. After their initial hospital stay, the government will reunite these evacuees with U.S. family members where possible, in partnership with established refugee resettlement agencies like CAMBA.

CAMBA will help these newly arrived evacuees orient themselves here and access needed services. We are able to provide this assistance through funding from Church World Service, through its agreement with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. After this initial month of assistance, these individuals will be offered longer term assistance through our state funded Refugee Assistance Programs.

In addition, CAMBA Legal Services is providing application assistance to local Haitians eligible for Haitian Temporary Protected Status (TPS). Regular intake for Haitian TPS is held three days per week (Monday, Tuesday and Friday) at 2211 Church Avenue, Room 301, between Flatbush and Bedford Avenues, 718.940.6311. Larger Haitian TPS events are held monthly at churches and other organizations in the community in an effort to best meet the need for legal assistance for this important and time limited United States Citizen and Immigration Services benefit.

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- Girl Scouts Donate Winter Coats to CAMBA

From the Executive Director

Joanne M. Oplustil

WORLD EVENTS AND THE ECONOMIC RECESSION CONTINUE TO CHALLENGE CAMBA TO PROVIDE EVEN MORE ASSISTANCE TO THOSE IN NEED.

We have quickly adapted our existing programs and services to respond to the needs of those affected by the earthquake in Haiti. We can provide help with temporary assistance applications, case management and family reunification.

In addition to highlighting our work with Church World Service and various government agencies to aid Haitians, this issue highlights how our clients have benefited from our affiliations with One Warm Coat, Brooklyn Community Foundation and Youth, I.N.C.

We are especially proud of our five-year association with Youth, I.N.C.’s Celebration to Benefit New York Kids, which helped us raise in total nearly $650,000 for our programs and services. Even more important, it provided a foundation to plan our own major fundraising event for later this year.

As we move ahead, we look forward to sharing news of other CAMBA client successes built upon the foundation of CAMBA’s strong corporate, nonprofit and government agency partnerships.
Charles Green and his daughters (from left: Serenity, 10, Aliayah, 3, Alicia, 1, and Jamia, 8) were among a record number of families who have been forced into homelessness across the city. Brooklyn Community Foundation, The Daily News and CAMBA helped Green realize his holiday wish of finding a home for his family. He thanks everyone for their support and making his wish come true.

GIRL SCOUTS DONATE WINTER COATS TO CAMBA

Cadettes of Girl Scout Troop 2696 collected and donated winter coats to CAMBA’s Healthy Families and Community Health Worker Programs. Donors were asked to clean out their closets to find coats that were used but in great condition.

The coat drive was designed as an exercise in giving back to the community. Through their community service, which included the Dare 2 Care Coat Drive, girl scouts Alyssia King and Ariane King of Super Troop 2696 worked diligently toward their Silver Awards, the second highest award a cadette can achieve.

The Girl Scouts presented the coats at CAMBA’s Grey House with staff from our Healthy Families and Community Health Worker Programs looking on.

HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE HELPS NEEDY FAMILIES

From September 2007 to September 2009 CAMBA has seen the number of individuals serviced by our Beyond Hunger Emergency Food Pantry rise by 600%. The pantry’s 2009 Holiday Food Drive netted more than 1,400 food items and $2,000 in cash donations, all of which were used to purchase food for distribution to families in need.

To keep up with demand, the pantry always needs nonperishable canned and packaged goods that are low in sugar, saturated fat and/or salt, including but not limited to rice, beans, fruits, vegetables, pasta, canned tuna/salmon, canned chicken, canned or dried milk, 100% fruit juice, cereal and peanut butter.

“FAMILY READ NIGHT” TURNS PAGES AND YOUNG MINDS

Attended by 27 families, CAMBA Kids Unlimited staff and guest readers engaged children and parents during Family Read Night at P.S. 92. Participants joined the after school program in celebrating Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Eid Al-Adha and Three Kings Day.

Guests who read aloud for those gathered included Mariam Naraine, CAMBA Director of School and Community Partnerships at the School for Democracy and Leadership; Phoebe Westwood, Program Specialist Literacy Initiatives with The After-School Corporation; and two kindergarten teachers from P.S. 92, June George and Elizabeth Cruz.

In honor of Eid Al-Adha, an Islamic festival of sacrifice, the event kicked off a joint service project by CAMBA and the school. Families donated 81 coats to One Warm Coat and P.S. 92 families. More than 100 nonperishable items were donated to CAMBA’s food pantry.
CAMBA CARES CHEF CLUB HOLDS DESSERT COOK-OFF

CAMBA Cares Chef Club, a community service project at CAMBA’s Creative Kids after school program at P.S. 139, held a test kitchen dessert cook-off and donated the tasty treats to homeless guests at CAMBA’s Respite Bed Program site at Brooklyn Heights Synagogue.

P.S. 139 Site Coordinator Amanda Sammons Birdwell and other program staff delivered desserts and helped volunteers set up the evening’s respite beds. As one shelter coordinator noted, the project was a “wonderful addition.”

The goal of CAMBA Cares is to empower children to look outside themselves to think about others and help make changes in the community.

“GOOD MORNING AMERICA” FEATURES CAMBA CLIENTS

Participating in the One Warm Coat Drive for the second consecutive year, CAMBA received more than 1,000 coats from Good Morning America (GMA), Burlington Coat Factory and One Warm Coat. In addition, three CAMBA clients who received coats from an on-air GMA fashion show were featured in a nationally televised segment entitled One Coat Makes a Difference.

Tarajee Saleem-Little of CAMBA’s Healthy Families Program, Daria Cradle of LexBrooklyn Hotel and Lenora Gregory from Morris Manor shared their inspirational stories and the obstacles they overcame through CAMBA. The piece highlights how the coats allowed them not only to stay warm and care for their families, but also helped them to go back to school, learn a trade and obtain opportunities to enhance their quality of life. The segment can be seen online at www.abcnews.com/gma/warmcoats.

CAMBA RAISES FUNDS TO BENEFIT NEW YORK KIDS

Over 125 CAMBA supporters and 17 nonprofit organizations attended Youth, I.N.C.’s 2009 Celebration to Benefit New York Kids. CAMBA raised more than $185,000, only $15,000 less than last year’s pre-recession total. A list of donors and more event photos can be seen online by visiting www.camba.org and clicking the Celebration logo on the bottom right of the page.

The program at the Waldorf–Astoria consisted of a salute to all participating nonprofits. CAMBA was represented by student Maya Covington from the Kids Excel After School Program at Achievement First: Crown Heights.

As this is the fifth and final year of our involvement with Youth, I.N.C.’s Celebration, we will host our own Brooklyn event in 2010. Watch for details. We will provide updates about the event in upcoming issues and online.

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YOU CAN HELP CAMBA MAKE AN IMPACT.

Please consider making a tax deductible contribution of:

☐ $50  ☐ $100  ☐ $250  ☐ $500  ☐ Other: $________

☐ Enclosed please find my check

☐ Please charge my credit card:  __Mastercard  __Visa  __Amex

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Please mail this completed form and your contribution to:

CAMBA
Attention: Director of Development
1720 Church Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11226