CAMBA Names Valerie Barton-Richardson New President & CEO
30-Year CAMBA Veteran Succeeds Retiring Joanne M. Oplustil as Head of One of New York’s Most Effective Non-Profit Service Providers

Brooklyn, NY — After a comprehensive national search, the CAMBA Board of Directors has selected Valerie Barton-Richardson as the New York City non-profit service provider’s new President & CEO. She succeeds Joanne M. Oplustil, who has led CAMBA since 1982.

Ms. Barton-Richardson – who grew up in public housing in Harlem (St. Nicholas Houses) and then, later, the Bronx – has served as a CAMBA Chief Administrative Officer since 2013 and served as an Executive Vice President from 1993-2013.

Ms. Barton-Richardson has developed over 100 life-changing programs supported by over $150 million in annual funding. This includes the expansion of after school, summer camp and college/career prep services to 32 public schools in Brooklyn and Manhattan; starting and then growing to 12 sites CAMBA’s emergency shelter services; and leading the creation of the Brownsville In Violence Out (BIVO) gun violence prevention initiative.

A New York City public elementary school teacher and educator prior to joining CAMBA, Barton-Richardson holds a BA from Harvard Radcliffe College and an MPA from Columbia University. Ms. Barton-Richardson was also awarded a Rockefeller Fellowship, for which she spent a year teaching English to Southeast Asians in a refugee camp in Thailand.
With 2,000 employees, CAMBA offers nearly 200 integrated services and programs in economic development, education and youth development, family support, health, housing and legal services, serving more than 65,000 New York City individuals and families annually, including 13,000 youth. These services and programs help lay the groundwork for economic stability, educational fulfillment, strong families, and healthy lives.

CAMBA Board Chair Richard Roberts said: “Under Joanne Oplustil’s leadership, CAMBA has grown into one of New York City’s pre-eminent non-profit service providers. There’s no one better to fill her shoes than Valerie. She has the vision, experience and know-how to build on Joanne’s remarkable tenure and ensure CAMBA continues to connect people with opportunities to enhance their quality of life.”

Ms. Barton-Richardson said: “Joanne has been a friend and a mentor to me and so many others at CAMBA and it’s an honor to succeed her. I look forward to working with the entire CAMBA team and our partners in the community to improve the quality of life for New Yorkers who need support.”

Ms. Oplustil said: “CAMBA started all those years ago as a one-person operation from my home with a small budget, I could have never dreamt that small beginning would lead to the development of CAMBA Housing Ventures, CAMBA Economic Development Corp. and CAMBA Legal Services. It’s been a total team effort and I could not be happier to see Valerie continue our good work.”

CAMBA began in 1977 as the Church Avenue Merchants Block Association to try and revitalize Brooklyn’s Church Avenue commercial corridor. In the early 1980’s, CAMBA became involved with helping meet the emerging needs of the influx of southeast Asian refugees into central Brooklyn, and began with English language classes, job placement and citizenship support.

CAMBA’s work now reaches more than 65,000 individuals and families, including 13,000 youth in such areas as housing, education and literacy, youth development, family support, health, and economic development.

“I am so proud of all the work CAMBA does in communities across Brooklyn and the City. I look forward to working with our Board, senior leadership, all our staff and our community and governmental partners to continue improving what we do and how we do it, as well as being innovative to provide new and better ways to help those in our community meet their needs and follow their dreams,” Ms. Barton-Richardson said.

Barton-Richardson, who will also serve as President & CEO of CAMBA Housing Ventures, Inc., will officially begin her new position in May.

About CAMBA, Inc./CAMBA Housing Ventures, Inc.
Founded in 1977, CAMBA, Inc. is one of Brooklyn's largest community-based social service organizations. Our mission is to provide services that connect people with opportunities that enhance their quality of life and develop their communities. CAMBA annually provides services to more than 65,000 individuals and families in six core areas: Economic Development;
Education and Youth Development; Family Support; Health, Housing and Legal Services. CAMBA clients are those who are: moving from welfare to work; individuals and families experiencing, at risk of or transitioning out of homelessness; individuals living with or at risk of HIV/AIDS; immigrants and refugees; children and young adults; entrepreneurs; and others struggling to overcome barriers to self-sufficiency.

In 2005, CAMBA created CAMBA Ventures, Inc. (CHV), an affiliated development corporation. The mission of CAMBA Housing Ventures is to develop sustainable and energy-efficient buildings that provide safe and affordable housing for low-income and formerly homeless individuals and families. When provided with resources that are meaningful and culturally relevant, CAMBA's clients make tremendous contributions toward strengthening their own lives and communities.

Learn more about CAMBA’s life-changing services at www.camba.org.

For CAMBA Housing Ventures, please see www.cambahousingventures.org.

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