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 Subject: CCC E-News: Summer 2009

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Securing Every Child's Birthright(R) to be Healthy, Housed, Educated and Safe

June/July 2009

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City Budget Advocacy Produces Results



On June 19, 2009 the New York City Council voted to enact a \$59.4 billion budget for City Fiscal Year 2010. Throughout the budget negotiation process, CCC staff testified at 12 city budget hearings, held two trainings for approximately 30 volunteers, held 13 meetings with council members and sponsored and co-sponsored 4 press conferences with more than 200 attendees at each event. These press conferences generated press and informed the public of the negative impact proposed budget cuts would have on children. CCC obtained media coverage from media outlets such as The New York Times, New York 1, WNBC, Fox 5, WNYC, El Diario, The Daily News, Brooklyn News Services, The World Journal, The Epoch Times and the City Hall Press. CCC mobilized New Yorkers through 3 separate e-action campaigns, which

produced electronic letters urging New York City Council Members and the Mayor to prevent reductions to child welfare, child care, after school programs, children's health and mental health services, and eviction prevention programs, among others. Furthermore, CCC maintained a constant presence on the steps of City Hall from Memorial Day through the budget vote.

Ultimately, over \$100 million in funding was restored for New York City's children. Restorations were made to initiatives such as child health clinics, mental health services for children under 5, the infant mortality initiative, the child safety initiative, legal services to prevent evictions, and funding for food banks, which will go a long way towards helping children and families during this economic downturn. CCC is especially grateful that the Budget recognized the critical role the Administration for Children's Services plays in protecting the children of New York by restoring 100 ACS caseworker positions and maintaining 31 child care center classrooms. Finally, CCC was also pleased to see additional funding added for Out of School Time after school programs and mental health, substance abuse and developmental disability services. These restorations are especially critical during the City's economic crisis.

[Click here](#) to view a summary of budget actions taken by the City Council to restore service to children and families. Shortly our Impact Analysis of the City Fiscal 2010 Adopted Budget will also be available online.

Stalemate in Albany Impacts Bills that Support Children and Families

On June 8, 2009, two Senate Democrats (Hiram Monserrate and Pedro Espada, Jr.) joined with Senate Republicans in an attempted coup that would have ousted Democratic Leader Malcolm Smith from his Senate Majority position and shifted power from the Democrats to the Republicans. After Senator Monserrate switched his allegiance back to the Democrats, the Senate was mired in a 31-31 tie that could not be broken because New York has not had a Lieutenant Governor since Governor Paterson became Governor. This power struggle left many critical bills for New York's children and families pending while the Senators spent 31 days hashing out a leadership agreement.

During that time, CCC sent out an e-action message to New Yorkers interested in the issues facing children and families. Through this system, over 8,000 letters were sent electronically to Senators, urging them to get back to work and vote on important bills that impact children and families. In July, after the new Senate leadership positions were sorted out, CCC sent another e-action message to New Yorkers connecting them once again to State Senators urging them to pass important bills such as Mayoral Control of city schools and increasing the number of Family Court judges. With this e-campaign another 5,000+ e-letters were sent to Senators. In sum, in a few short weeks New Yorkers sent 13,000 letters urging Senators to put the interests of New York's children and families first.

Defying the demands of thousands of New Yorkers, on July 16, 2009 the Senate concluded their 2008-2009 legislative session. While several important bills were passed including laws authorizing counties to generate revenue and the permanent extension of Timothy's Law for mental health parity, many bills of pressing importance were not brought to the Senate floor. In fact, on July 1, 2009, because the Mayoral Control legislation was not enacted, control of New York City's schools returned to the Board of Education. In addition, bills that would have increased the number of Family Court Judges, provided property tax relief for homeowners and instituted a renter's tax credit, and made technical amendments to the Safe

Harbor Act, among others, were not addressed.

CCC will continue to advocate for these bills and we ask New Yorkers to continue to be vocal, active supporters of legislation that would improve the lives of New York's children and families.

25 Youth Leaders Graduate

On June 1, 2009, the 25 participants of the Spring 2009 YouthAction Community Leadership Course graduated from CCC's Youth Community Leadership Course (YCLC) and are poised to be young leaders in their communities.

Over the course of 8 weeks, these 25 high school students from 12 different public and 7 different private schools conducted fact-based research and advocacy on access to healthy and affordable foods during an economic recession.

The young people conducted research in Mott Haven in the Bronx, East Harlem and Union Square, Manhattan -conducting food retail audits in bodegas and supermarkets, administering public opinion polls of local residents, interviewing community leaders, and visiting health-related community organizations as well as a local Greenmarket. After analyzing the facts collected, participants crafted findings and recommendations and wrote letters to New York City Council Members. A final presentation, held at CCC, permitted youth to facilitate a discussion with CCC's board and professional staff about what the youth had learned and what findings and policy recommendations they had developed.

CCC looks forward to continuing to engage many of these young leaders in our CCC Youth Action Members program, offering the opportunity to further hone research skills and bring a youth voice to CCC's child advocacy efforts in the coming program year.

CCC co-sponsors CFED's National Conference on Children and Youth Savings

CCC was proud to be a co-sponsor of CFED's National Conference on Children and Youth Savings, held in Brooklyn in June 2009. The conference brought together policymakers, researchers and advocates from every region of the country and abroad, along with forward-thinking business leaders who see the potential in children's savings accounts.

Keynote speakers included Dr. Michael Lomax, President and CEO of UNCF; Luis Ubinas, President of the Ford Foundation; and Dr. Michael Sherraden, Director of the Center for Social Development at Washington University. Dr. Sherraden's groundbreaking 1991 book, *Assets and the Poor: A New American Welfare Policy*, first proposed asset-building policy as a new approach to development of families and communities, including universal and progressive saving beginning at birth.

CCC's Executive Director, Jennifer March-Joly, presented on CCC's Securing Every Child's Birthright Campaign and our children's savings account proposal, the Birthright Trust Fund (BTF). This presentation was followed by a lively discussion of city and state advocacy for the BTF and other asset-building policies. Notably, the city's Department of Consumer Affairs was both a conference co-sponsor and presenter and the city's Administration for Children presented on asset building initiatives underway for foster children. A highlight of the conference was the performance by the Ifetayo Youth Ensemble, an artistic troupe of Brooklyn youth who are dedicated to creating awareness of social issues. This year, the troupe chose "money and savings" as the theme for their performance. Ifetayo Youth Ensemble members also now participate in financial literacy training and are provided with Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) in which their savings for post-secondary education are matched by private philanthropic dollars 2 to 1.

For more details on the conference, including the conference presentations, please [click here](#).

SAVE THE DATE: 2009 CELEBRATION BREAKFAST

Thursday, October 29, 2009
7:30 AM to 9:15 AM

Waldorf=Astoria Hotel
Grand Ballroom

Co-Chairs:
Katherine Kahan
Jonathan A. Knee
Nancy Solomon

The Gail B. Nayowith Keynote Address

Susan Fuhrman
President, Teachers College
Columbia University

Eleanor Roosevelt Award

Elizabeth Sheehan, CCC Board of Directors
Robert C. Sheehan, Pro Bono Partner (and former Executive Partner),
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP

Samuel P. Peabody Awards

Grace Chao
CCC YouthAction NYC Alumna and 2009 Presidential Scholar

Cynthia Rodriguez
Urban Policy Reporter, *WNYC*, New York Public Radio

Become a Child Advocate!

Time is running out to apply for CCC's Community Leadership Course (CLC)! Once again, CCC will be offering its 10 week course to New Yorkers seeking to learn about NYC's children and how government programs and resources impact their lives. For more details on the CLC and to become an advocate for children, [click here](#). Application deadline is August 1st, 2009.

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