

GOOD EVENING EVERYONE.

I AM DR. CHARLES CORLISS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF INWOOD COMMUNITY SERVICES.

IT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE TO WELCOME THIS CITY'S FIRST LADY, MS CHIRLANE MCCRAY TO UPPER MANHATTAN.

INWOOD COMMUNITY SERVICES IS A COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATION FOUNDED BY A LOCAL PASTOR (FATHER SEAN FOLEY) AND A GROUP OF INWOOD RESIDENTS OVER 37 YEARS AGO.

WE OFFER AN ARRAY OF SERVICES INCLUDING:

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS IN SIX SITES IN INWOOD;

A YEAR ROUND AND SUMMER EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM FOR OVER 800 ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG ADULTS;

A LARGE, WELL ESTABLISHED ESOL AND CIVICS PROGRAM FOR ADULTS;

AND, AN EVIDENCE-BASED ALCOHOL AND DRUG PREVENTION PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

IN ADDITION, AND DIRECTLY RELATED TO TONIGHT'S AGENDA:

WE OPERATE TWO NEW YORK STATE LICENSED TREATMENT CLINICS (MENTAL HEALTH & CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY) OUT OF OUR HEADQUARTERS IN INWOOD: A **RENOVATED BOWLING ALLEY ON ACADEMY STREET.**

WE SERVE CLOSE TO 1,000 CONSUMERS IN OUR CLINICS AT ANY ONE TIME, AND WE KNOW WE COULD DO SO MUCH MORE.....

ALONG SUCH LINES, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT:

THIS COMMUNITY HAS A MANY DECADES OLD HISTORY OF ADVOCATING FOR THE MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS OF ITS RESIDENTS. UNDER THE AEGIS OF THE *NORTHERN MANHATTAN MENTAL HEALTH COUNCIL*, AND OF THE *WASHINGTON HEIGHTS/INWOOD SUBREGIONAL MENTAL HEALTH COMMITTEE* BEFORE THAT, I HAVE HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF SERVING WITH SOME OF THE FINEST, MOST DEDICATED, MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS IN THIS CITY.

(IN FACT, MY PERENNIAL CO-CHAIR, BILL WITHERSPOON, THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE EMMA BOWEN MENTAL HEALTH CENTER IS WITH US TONIGHT. BILL CAN TELL YOU:WE'VE BEEN AT THIS ADVOCACY THING SINCE IT SEEMS LIKE WHEN WE TEENAGERS...AND WE'RE NOT THAT ANYMORE)

YOU SEE AS A COMMITTEE, WE ALWAYS HAD ONLY ONE GOAL: TO HELP THOSE IN NEED.

FOLLOWING NYC DOH & MH FEDERATION GUIDELINES, WE ANNUALLY IDENTIFIED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE GAPS IN THE COMMUNITY, AND THEN LOBBIED THE CITY AND STATE TO TRY TO MEET SUCH NEEDS.

DOH WAS ALWAYS OUR PARTNER IN THIS ENTERPRISE, AND FORTUNATELY THROUGH ITS SUPPORT, MANY NEW

PROGRAMS WERE ESTABLISHED. DR. GARY BELKIN'S PRESENCE HERE TONIGHT CLEARLY SIGNIFIES THAT THIS STRONG PARTNERSHIP CONTINUES.

A SPECIAL EMPHASIS OF OUR COMMITTEE OVER THE YEARS WAS TO TRY TO BRING THE SERVICES NEEDED TO THE CLIENTS WHO NEEDED THEM.

*AS A RESULT, WE ALWAYS ENDORSED EASILY ACCESSED, CONTINUOUSLY AVAILABLE, NON-STIGMATIZED, COMMUNITY BASED **TREATMENT**,*

***EMBEDDED** IN WELCOMING NEIGHBORHOOD SITES,*

***STAFFED** BY COMPASSIONATE, CULTURALLY COMPETENT CLINICIANS WHO WERE*

***DEDICATED** TO THE PEOPLE WE WERE TRYING TO SERVE!*

OUR EXPERIENCE TAUGHT US THAT THIS IS WHAT WORKED BEST IN UPPER MANHATTAN.

*QUITE FORTUNATELY, IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT THE CURRENT **THRIVENYC INITIATIVE** LAUNCHED BY MAYOR DIBLASIO UNDER THE ABLE STEWARDSHIP OF MS. MCCRAY IS WHOLLY ALIGNED WITH SUCH A GRASS ROOTS FOCUS.*

CONSEQUENTLY, WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING VERY CLOSELY WITH THE ADMINISTRATION TO INSURE THE SUCCESS OF SUCH A TIMELY, COMMUNITY-BASED INITIATIVE
