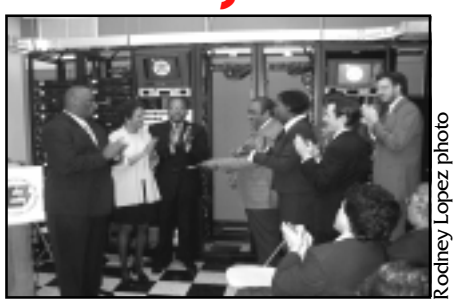
THE EZ WORKS

Quarterly News For and About the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone | Vol. II No. 2 | Summer 1998

Uptown Residents Begin New Careers at Broadway Video



Rodney Lopez photo

Left: UMEZ President Deborah Wright, Empire State Development Corp. Senior Vice President Randy Daniels, Congressman Charles Rangel, Broadway Video Vice President Mark Yates and HUD Secretary Representative Bill de Blasio cut the ribbon that officially opens Broadway Video for business.

On April 27, 1998, government officials and community leaders celebrated Broadway Video's Harlem facility ribbon cutting and the hiring of 12 local residents through the STRIVE/ASAP program.

Superintendent and Bank Execs Spend Day in Harlem

Karl Crutchfield photo

Elizabeth McCaul, Acting Superintendent of Banks (seated, second from right) led top executives from various banks, the New York City Partnership and UMEZ in a tour of Harlem. McCaul hopes to increase the presence of lenders uptown.

First Community Home Buyers Fair Attracts 3,000

Franklin Bonifacio photo

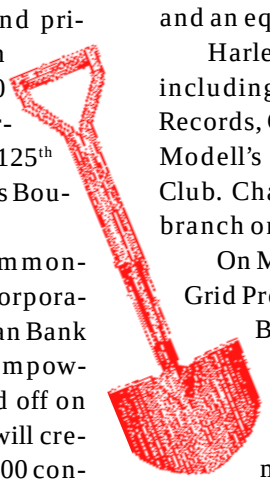
Over 3,000 local residents attended the First Annual Harlem Community Home Buyers Fair on Saturday, May 29, 1998. The fair was sponsored by the Greater Harlem Real Estate Board (GHREB), the Fannie Mae Foundation, Chase Manhattan Bank and UMEZ. The all-day fair, held at North General Hospital (NGH), included free seminars on the basics of home buying, renovating historic property, credit, and buying affordable housing in Upper Manhattan.

Above, L-R: UMEZ Director of Gov't and Community Affairs Steven Carbo, NGH Director of Public Affairs Blanca Perez, GHREB President Kenyatta Punter, State Senator Olga Mendez, UMEZ General Counsel Lucille McEwen, GHREB Co-Chairman Tony Fair.

Note: Maximize your chances to purchase a home! On Saturday, September 12, 1998, the Fannie Mae Foundation will hold its Sixth Annual Home Buying Fair at Madison Square Garden from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free and workshops will be held in English and Spanish.

The Shovels Are Here!

One of Harlem's most talked about developments is one step closer to reality as public and private partners closed on **Harlem USA**, the 275,000 square foot retail and entertainment complex at West 125th Street and Frederick Douglass Boulevard.



Grid Properties, the Commonwealth Local Development Corporation (CLDC), Chase Manhattan Bank and the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone (UMEZ) signed off on the $64 million project that will create 500 permanent jobs and 200 construction jobs. In addition to the jobs created for community residents, CLDC, a local non-profit organization who spearheaded the project for a decade, is the owner of the land upon which the complex will be built and an equity partner in the venture.

Harlem USA will house retailers including The Disney Store, HMV Records, Cineplex Odeon, Old Navy, Modell's and the New York Sports Club. Chase Bank will also operate a branch on the site.

On Monday, July 27, 1998, CLDC, Grid Properties, Chase Manhattan Bank and UMEZ held a groundbreaking ceremony to celebrate Harlem USA's development. Local and national business leaders, public officials and communty residents attended. See the next edition of *The EZ Works* for highlights.

Upper Manhattan Receives $25 Million Boost for Tourism, Entertainment, Workforce Development & Technical Assistance

Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone Positions Area to Capitalize on New York City's Booming Tourism Industry; Latest Round of Approvals Creates 1,000 Jobs

On Monday, June 15, 1998, the UMEZ Board of Directors approved an $8.8 million tourism initiative, along with investments in office and retail development. This action follows UMEZ's May 4, 1998 approval of over $13 million for entertainment and retail attractions, workforce development and technical assistance initiatives. These and other initiatives, totaling $24.6 million were approved by the New York Empowerment Zone Corporation's Board of Directors on July 10,1998.

Some of the Local Businesses and Organizations Assisted by Latest UMEZ Approvals

Edwin's Cafe
Lenox Lounge
Patsy's Pizzeria
Showman's Cafe
Well's Restaurant

Gateway LDC

Greater Harlem Real Estate Board

Harlem Venture Group

Mount Morris Park Assn.

United TIL Coalition of Harlem

Washington Heights Vendors Assn.

(See page 3 for local companies funded by BRISC.)

Heritage Tourism is the Future

The UMEZ Tourism Initiative will accelerate Upper Manhattan's focus on heritage tourism, the fastest growing segment of the tourism industry.

UMEZ will use $8.8 million to embark on a comprehensive approach to support its overall mission to create jobs and generate greater community wealth. Initial projects include: design and formation of a Tourism Council; an Adopt-an-Avenue pilot to improve the physical streetscape on Lenox Avenue between 110th and 125th Streets; an historic preservation loan fund; research to define tourism traffic uptown; a visitors center developmental study; and a marketing and promotion kickoff.

The National Jazz Museum, a New York non-profit organization, received a grant to develop, in conjunction with the Smithsonian Institution, a proposed 65,000 sq. ft. multipurpose facility that will recapture Harlem's jazz legacy. The facility is to include a collection commemorating the history and development of jazz (recordings, instruments, manuscripts, photographs, costumes, etc.), a library, concert and recording center, media center/archive (for old films and other jazz-related media), a gift shop and a commercially operated restaurant/nightclub.

Business Recruitment and Retention

The VIBE Store, a collaboration between Quincy Jones' VIBE Ventures, the controlling entity for VIBE Magazine, and P/N Entertainment, a corporation formed by three young African American entrepreneurs will sell music along with video games, books and apparel designed to celebrate and appeal to urban contemporary music listeners and will feature urban personalities in music, film, sports and literature.

Black Americans of Achievement, an African American-controlled publicly-traded company will create a local telemarketing call center that will train and employ up to 400 workers in high growth jobs. Training and placement will be provided in conjunction with local organizations.

UMEZ will provide up to $2 million in loan funds for **Madison 125** at East 125th Street between Fifth and Madison Avenues. This project will remove blight and stimulate development on the eastern portion of 125th Street. The center, being developed by Madison 125, L.L.C. — a private developer — will provide 26,100 square feet of built-to-suit office space for the Social Security Administration and 20,300 square feet of commercial retail space.

Through its **Real Estate Initiative**, UMEZ has identified real estate

See Boost, p. 4

From:
Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone
Development Corporation
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Message from the Chairman

The end of the Empowerment Zone's second year is an exciting time for all of us. This year's 11 approvals bring our total to 40 initiatives, for a two-year investment of over $50 million. Our latest investments will build on Upper Manhattan's strengths as a hertiage tourism destination as well as provide assistance to our residents, small businesses and community-based organizations.

An $8.8 million tourism initiative will begin to bring Upper Manhattan's tourism economy in line with the rest of the city. UMEZ will work with community partners in ensuring that tourism efforts preserve and celebrate the community's character.

Over $7 million will be invested over the next two years in preparing our residents for 21st century jobs and in helping our local residents and organizations in accessing EZ and other funding. We will also help EZ residents gain some of the tools they need to acquire a home.

This year's approvals bring our total to 40 initiatives, for a two-year investment of over $50 million.

Small businesses have also benefited from EZ investment. Most recently, BRISC has helped four additional Upper Manhattan businesses gain access to over $200,000 in capital (see pg. 3). Vendors in *La Plaza de las Americas* in Washington Heights will be able to expand their businesses thanks to a $200,000 UMEZ investment.

In addition, our largest investment came to fruition on July 27th, when Harlem USA broke ground. Harlem USA will create 700 jobs and bring national retailers to 125th Street. The developer and retailers have agreed to target local residents for 75% of all jobs created and will receive a federal tax credit for hiring residents of the Empowerment Zone. These businesses will be welcome additions to Upper Manhattan residents, more than 70 percent of whom shop outside the community for goods and services. Construction has begun and is expected to be completed during the winter of 2000.

Harlem USA is leading a resurgence in commercial and economic development in Upper Manhattan. Its high-profile tenants will increase the area's visibility and enhance business activity in the community.

Furthermore, the large number of shoppers and tourists who visit Harlem USA will add to the demand for local services both inside and outside of the complex, which will also benefit local entrepreneurs through increased foot traffic.

All of these achievements are building blocks for our third year, when we hope to accelerate our business recruitment efforts in business services and health care. Assisting in improving our physical landscape and local access to first rate technology will be emphasized. As always, we look to you for advice and support.

As the unmistakable momentum builds we hope you'll agree that for Upper Manhattan: The Future's Looking Up!

Board Spotlight

The EZ Works turns the spotlight on two board members who are active community leaders.

Rev. Dr. Reginald Williams

Rev. Dr. Reginald Williams has an extensive record of service to Harlem and East Harlem.

Rev. Williams is Director of Operations for Addicts Rehabilitation Center Fund and pastor of the Charity Baptist Church of Christ. He has spent his last seven years working with and advocating for addicts in rehabilitation and homebound people with AIDS. He previously served as Deputy Executive Director of God's Love We Deliver.

He has served as trustee for the Terrence Cardinal Cooke Health Center; Chairman of the Anti-Narcotic Committee, Baptist Ministers' Conference of Greater New York & Vicinity; and as Special Assistant to former Mayor David N. Dinkins. He has also served as Chaplain & Executive Assistant to the Metropolitan Hospital Association.

Rev. Williams is a member of 100 Black Men and serves on Manhattan Community Board 11. He holds a B.A. in Sociology and Psychology from the University of Connecticut, a B.D. from Manhattan Bible Institute and M.P.A. from American International College.

Rev. Williams and his wife Sandra, have two daughters, Naomi Nicole and Tabitha Christine. He resides in Harlem.

Maria Luna

Maria Luna has served the Washington Heights and Inwood communities in various capacities for many years. She is the first vice chair of Community Board 12 and once served as its chairperson for four years and is now the Board's representative to UMEZ.

Her board memberships include: the Ambulatory Care Network Corporation, Fort Washington Senior Center, ARC Seniors Center, The Fort Washington Armory Track, and Healthy Heart of Washington Heights & Inwood.

Her affiliations include the National Womens Political Caucus, National Latino Women Association and the Caucus of Women of Color.

Ms. Luna's work in the community includes organizing tenants associations, sponsoring naturalization drives and immigration workshops, and working with local police precincts.

Ms. Luna is currently an accounting supervisor for the American Museum of Natural History and holds a B.S. in Accounting, B.S. in Natural Sciences and B.A. in Business Administration. She has resided in the Heights for over 35 years.

Commercial Revitalization for Washington Heights and Inwood

Franklin Bonifacio photo

The **Audubon Partnership for Economic Development** (APED) is one of the participants in the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone's Commercial Revitalization Initiative. The Initiative is a two-year pilot program to stimulate commerce on key uptown retail corridors and build the capacity of local merchants to expand. On May 29, 1998, the UMEZ presented APED with a check for $750,000 to implement the initiative in Washington Heights and Inwood. The initiative was approved by the New York Empowerment Zone on June 13, 1997.

Pictured from left to right: Kelvin Crucey, UMEZ Corporate Accountant; Herman Velazquez, BRISC Executive Director; Carmen Diaz, APED Loan Officer; Walther Delgado, APED Executive Director; Curtis Archer, BRISC Commercial Revitalization Director.

BMCC Uptown

The **Borough of Manhattan Community College** is now offering college credit courses at two locations in Upper Manhattan:

Theresa Towers
125th Street & Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd. (7th Ave.)

George Washington High School
191st Street & Audubon Ave.

Courses include:

English
Computing
Speech
Business
Statistics
Accounting

For more information call the BMCC Admissions Office at (212) 346-8100 or visit its downtown campus at 199 Chambers Street.

CVB Head Speaks at "EZ Day"

Karl Crutchfield photo

On February 20th, Fran Reiter, President of the New York Convention and Visitors Bureau spoke on "Entertainment and Tourism in Upper Manhattan" for UMEZ's Empowerment Zone Day. The day was an opportunity for community residents to hear firsthand about the UMEZ investment strategy and participate in several workshops. Over 400 people attended the event at the Julia de Burgos Latino Cultural Center in East Harlem.

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UMEZ is equally funded by the city, state and federal governments through the New York Empowerment Zone Corporation.

BRISC BRIEFS

News from the Business Resource & Investment Service Center Summer 1998

BRISC Loans Support Restaurant, Retail and Bed & Breakfast Businesses

BRISC ended fiscal year 1998 with loans to four local businesses. Through BRISC, Upper Manhattan businesses accessed over $1.5 million in capital to date. Through its Investment Fund, BRISC provided loans that helped create and expand the small businesses described below.

Cafe Largo: $100,000
Located at 3387 Broadway at West 137th Street, Café Largo is a full service restaurant that offers continental as well as Latin American and Italian cuisine. The restaurant, which opened on June 6th near City College, offers both take out and dining services for up to 70 people. Marc Calcano, a lifetime resident of the West Harlem/Washington Heights community, owns the business. The $100,000 BRISC investment was used for leasehold improvements, equipment purchases, inventory and working capital.

Urban Jem Guest House: $50,000
The Urban Jem Guest House, owned by Jane Alex Mendelson, is a four-room bed & breakfast located at 2005 Fifth Avenue. Ms. Mendelson purchased the 1878 brownstone in February 1997 and renovated it to include two studio apartments with a private kitchen and bath and two furnished rooms which share a bathroom and kitchen. The $50,000 BRISC investment will be used for leasehold improvements, working capital expenses and debt consolidation.

St. Mark's Place: $25,000
St. Mark's Place is the recipient of a $25,000 BRISC loan. Located at 2337 Frederick Douglass Boulevard at West 125th Street, St. Mark's has grown from its original location at Mart 125 to its current retail space in only two years. Owner Mark Brantley, a third generation Harlem entrepreneur, initially sold men's clothing: suits, shirts, belts and sportswear. However, after a few samples of women's and children's clothing flew off the rack, he decided to expand his inventory. St. Mark's Place will now carry women and children's sportswear, casual wear and dresses. The BRISC loan will be used to purchase the additional inventory and for store renovations to increase display and storage space.

Sylvia's Creative Novelty: $25,000
Sylvia's Creative Novelty, a start-up owned by Sylvia Lorenzo, is located at 1753 Lexington Avenue at 110th Street. Ms. Lorenzo opened this storefront beneath her apartment earlier this spring. Sylvia's Creative Novelty is a party goods store, offering a wide variety of products for all special occasions, including invitations, cards and helium balloons. In addition, Ms. Lorenzo creates custom handicrafts, wedding and baptism gowns. She also consults clients on the planning of functions such as weddings and sweet sixteens. The BRISC investment will be used for leasehold improvements, equipment purchases and working capital expenses.

Franklin Bonifacio photo

Cafe Largo
Friends and family celebrate the opening of Cafe Largo with owner Marc Calcano (5th from left).

Rodney Lopez photo

Urban Jem Guest House
Jane Mendelson is welcoming more and more guests at her new bed & breakfast on Fifth Avenue.

Franklin Bonifacio photo

St. Mark's Place
Customers have a greater choice of apparel at St. Mark's Place. Owner Mark Brantley showcases some of the store's clothing.

Franklin Bonifacio photo

Sylvia's Creative Novelty
Sylvia Lorenzo, standing, amongst the many items for sale at her new store.

BRISC/Trickle Up Program Supports Day Care Providers and Other Home Based Businesses

Twenty Upper Manhattan residents now have the financial support they need to start or expand home-based businesses thanks to the Trickle Up Program and BRISC.

The money allows these entrepreneurs to acquire the tools they need to expand their businesses. In addition, BRISC will provide the entrepreneurs with technical assistance in writing full business plans as they move towards qualifying for a loan.

On Monday, April 20, 1998, BRISC presented 12 checks of $500 each to entrepreneurs in the family day care business at a ceremony at the Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation in Washington Heights.

This initiative is a special partnership among several organizations. Sheltering Arms Children's Service will provide the training necessary for Family Day Care certification and will provide the entrepreneurs with clients from its waiting lists.

In addition, Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher, & Flom provided legal assistance in child care issues and the Hunts Point Business Outreach Center has offered space in their Entrepreneur Assistance Program (EAP) to permit each participant to develop a business plan. The Hunts Point program is the only EAP in the state offered in Spanish, which is particularly important to these entrepreneurs -- all are Spanish-speaking immigrants from the Dominican Republic and Ecuador.

Rodney Lopez photo

Trickle Up Day Care Participants in Washington Heights and the some of the little ones they care for.

Rodney Lopez photo

Praxis owner, Diana Taitt, shares an item from her art business.

On Thursday, April 30, 1998, two East Harlem residents, five Central Harlem residents and one Washington Heights resident received Trickle Up grants each to assist with the development of their home based businesses. The recipients, six women and two men, have a variety of businesses which include home cleaning services; silver jewelry; African-themed posters, photos & prints; property management; spiritual, natural, & health publications; family day care; beeper wholesale and distribution; and a T-shirt design & production business.

BRISC staff will continue to meet with these entrepreneurs on a monthly basis to monitor their progress in meeting projections made to spend the initial grant of $500 and to receive a final award of $200 at the end of three months. Additional support services will be offered through the BRISC's Business Information Center.

Free Legal and Business Counseling Sessions at BRISC

Legal Counseling
Every Tuesday from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

For Established Businesses and Start-up Entrepreneurs ONLY.

The assigned attorney will: listen to questions and concerns; provide legal counseling, including advice on appropriate action; and meet with clients on a "one-on-one" private consultation.

Sessions are 30 minutes and by appointment only. Discussion should be of business issues only (no housing, criminal, family or personal issues). Requirements: business must be located in the Upper Manhattan area; entrepreneurs must reside in Upper Manhattan (above East 96th St. & West 110th St.); and must present business card and/or personal identification.

Sponsored by: BRISC and Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison

Business Counseling
Every Thursday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

S.C.O.R.E. (Service Corps of Retired Executives) Representatives will be present to answer questions, help with business issues, give feedback on operating or starting a business, and other small business topics. By appointment only. S.C.O.R.E. services are free of charge.

Please call (212) 876-2246 for more information.

ATTENTION START-UP ENTREPRENEURS AND SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS IN UPPER MANHATTAN:

In September, BRISC will begin its next Business Workshop Series. The workshops will provide important information on: Selecting the Right Business Structure, Strategic Marketing, Computer and Internet Needs for Small Businesses, Real Estate and Leasing, and Accessing Capital. All seminars are conducted by experienced business professionals committed to seeing your business grow. To find out more, call BRISC at (212) 876-2246.

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Translating Your Vision Into Success

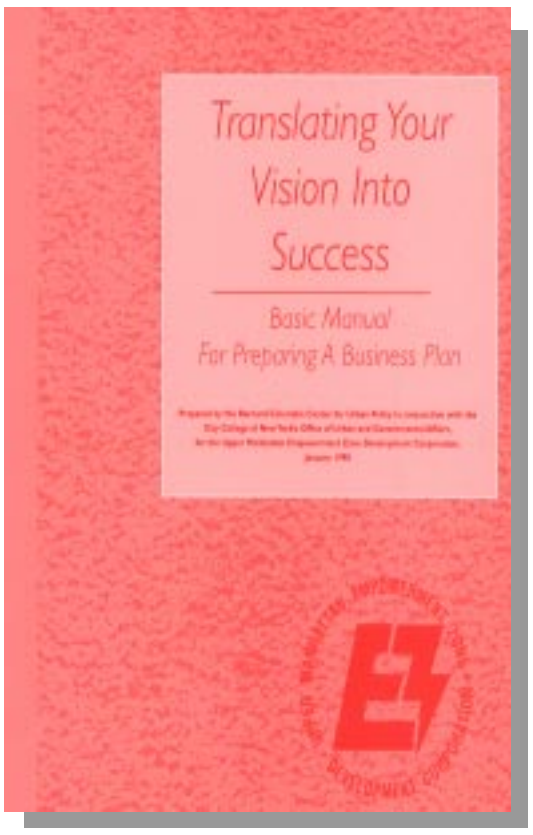
Barnard-Columbia, City College and UMEZ Team Up to Create Business Plan Guide

The most critical part of the EZ funding process is the proposal. The EZ, similar to banks, foundations, and venture capital funds, relies on a clear and complete statement of ideas in order to fund a project.

However, putting a proposal or business plan together isn't easy. That's why UMEZ funded a University Technical Assistance Consortium last summer to provide assistance to individuals and organizations in proposal writing and business plan development.

What grew out of the Consortium was a manual that walks applicants through the process of developing a business plan: *Translating Your Vision Into Success - Basic Manual For Preparing A Business Plan*.

The manual includes sections on Developing Your Business Plan, the Financial Plan and Supporting Documents. It also includes numerous worksheets to assist the entrepreneur in outlining cash flow, operating budgets and other crucial financial analyses. The appendices provide valuable tips on writing, presentation, packaging, not-for-profit fundraising, and a technical assistance directory and glossary of terms.



The manual is only one part of a larger UMEZ Technical Assistance Initiative. Basic and advanced technical assistance in proposal and business plan development will be offered by various providers later this year (see Boost story, this page).

Translating Your Vision Into Success is available in both English and Spanish and was prepared by the Barnard-Columbia Center for Urban Policy, the City College of New York's Office for Urban and Governmental Affairs and UMEZ. You can obtain a copy by visiting or contacting UMEZ at (212) 410-0030 or BRISC at (212) 876-2246.

Boost

Cont'd from page 1

firms to offer businesses professional assistance in optimizing their search for available property. An essential component of realtors' ability to provide this service will be the development of a real estate database for Upper Manhattan. UMEZ will work with the Greater Harlem Real Estate Board to develop this database, along with a user manual and training workshops for local brokers.

Small Business and Non-Profit Development

Five existing Upper Manhattan establishments, the **Lenox Lounge**, **Well's Restaurant**, **Showman's Café**, **Edwin's Café** and the original **Patsy's Pizzeria** are all well-known Uptown, and some get an occasional crowd of tourists who have heard (mostly by word-of-mouth) of their good food, jazz and/or hospitality. UMEZ has committed $3 million to a **Restaurant Initiative** designed to help these restauranteurs raise the competitive level of their businesses and increase their customer base. The local restaurateurs will be eligible for expansion capital upon completion of the planning stage.

UMEZ has also approved $1.5 million for a **Technical Assistance Initiative** to help build the capacity of local organizations to secure funds from various sources, including UMEZ. Experienced technical assistance providers will offer general proposal-writing workshops, one-on-one consulting, specialized workshops and management training courses over a two-year period.

To help local residents take advantage of the city's focus on privatizing government-owned buildings, UMEZ has approved $1 million for a **Home Buyer Education and Home Owner Assistance Initiative,** which will inform residents of home-buying opportunities in the area, provide credit counseling and connect them with other resources and services needed to buy and maintain a home.

Workforce Development and Other Human Capital Initiatives

To prepare local residents for jobs created through its business recruitment and small business initiatives, UMEZ approved a two-year $6 million **Workforce Development Initiative**. The Initiative is employer-driven and leads directly to job placement. In addition, $50,000 was committed to a Summer Youth Employment initiative which will link The Valley, Inc. with Time Warner to train and provide summer employment for 50 high school students.

Washington Heights Vendors Market Receives Permanent Shelter

UMEZ will provide a $200,000 grant for ***La Plaza de Las Americas***, the only outdoor vendors market in Washington Heights, located on 175th Street between Broadway and Wadsworth Avenues. The goal of this initiative is to make the market more attractive to neighborhood shoppers, tourists and vendors by increasing marketing and creating an all-weather environment.

What's HOT

The latest news from Upper Manhattan

East Harlem has a new place to purchase the latest Salsa and Merengue CDs. **Rincon Musical** is a new music store at 1936 Third Avenue and 106th Street. In addition to CDs and cassettes, Rincon offers a selection of Latin percussion and other instruments. The 15,000 square foot store opened on April 15, 1998.

In February, Inwood gained two new businesses thanks to the efforts of an enterprising entrepreneur. Josefina Rodriguez has opened **Josephine's Spa** at 17 Nagle Avenue. The spa offers the work-weary customer a choice of massages, facials, waxing, sauna and other services. Next door, at 17A Nagle Avenue, Ms. Rodriguez also operates **B&J Antiques and Collections**. The store buys and sells antiques and restores old furniture. Its staff also provides interior decoration services.

The first African American interior design show house came to Harlem in June in support of the **Harlem United Community AIDS Center**. The **Harlem United Show House 1998** celebrated the work of nationally-renowned African American interior designers at 459 West 141st Street in the Hamilton Heights Historic District. In addition to showcasing the designers' work and raising funds for Harlem United, the show's press increased the appeal of Hamilton Heights as a tourist destination.

On April 6th, HUD Secretary Andrew Cuomo designated a one-halfsquare mile area of Central/East Harlem as HUD's twelfth **Homeownership Zone** and awarded New York City a $4.65 million grant. The grant is expected to attract an additional $42.7 million in investment to the area and create 119 new homes.

The **Washington Heights/Inwood Neighborhood Strategies Project (NSP)**, through the **Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation**, is one of three economic development initiatives in New York City that received a $4,871,904 welfare-to-work grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. The grant will aid NSP in serving 200 hard-to-serve welfare families over a 30-month period with job searching, testing and assessment, retention support and career development and advancement services. The grant is being administered by the Local Initiatives Support Corporation and the New York Community Trust.

In April, **Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement** (HCCI) received a HUD Safe Neighborhood Grant for $217,500. The grant will be used for community policing and other efforts to improve the quality of life.

On June 17, 1998, President Clinton announced nearly $40 million in grants to establish 21st Century Community Learning Centers which are after-school programs for children based in local schools. **Community School District Five**, which covers parts of Central and West Harlem, was awarded $1.2 million to implement this initiative. One of the most highly competitive programs ever managed by the Department of Education, only 5% of the applicants were awarded grants.

Have a HOT News item? Send it to Rodney López, Editor, *The EZ Works* at the street or e-mail address at right.

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