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**MAYOR BLOOMBERG, DEPUTY MAYOR GIBBS AND SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES
COMMISSIONER WALSH ANNOUNCE \$4.2 MILLION IN FUNDING TO REDUCE POVERTY BY
HELPING SMALL BUSINESSES STRENGTHEN THEIR WORKFORCES**

***Innovative Program Will Provide Funding Directly to Businesses That Commit to Job
Creation, Promotion and Training***

Mayor Bloomberg today announced that the [Department of Small Business Services](#) will award more than \$4.2 million in NYC Business Solutions Training Funds to employers that have developed training programs to increase the skills and salaries of the working poor. Currently, \$1 million is available that small businesses can apply for before October 15. This level of funding - in part provided by the Mayor's Innovation Fund, administered by the Center for Economic Opportunity - breaks with traditional workforce development strategies by giving companies the flexibility to tailor their job-training programs around their individual needs. The balance of the \$4.2 million will be distributed in the months ahead. Joining the Mayor at Hendrickson Custom Cabinetry, a Training Funds recipient in the South Bronx, were Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Linda Gibbs, Small Business Services Commissioner Robert Walsh, Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) Executive Director Veronica White, and Felix and Lisa Hendrickson, co-owners of Hendrickson Custom Cabinetry.

"If we are going to tackle poverty in New York, we have to try innovative alternatives to the same old strategies we've been using for decades," said Mayor Bloomberg. "Businesses are providing the jobs and training which can help lift New Yorkers out of poverty. We should spend our money helping those that have committed to job creation and promotion to train their entry level workers, instead of simply training New Yorkers with the hopes that jobs that match those skills will be available."

Consistent with the Center for Economic Opportunity's priority of identifying, developing, and funding new strategies to reduce poverty in New York City, these funds will help to create career pathways for entry level employees by giving them additional training so they can earn promotions and higher wages. At the same time, the funds will serve as a tool for businesses, helping them grow in New York City and aiding in the development of a qualified workforce trained to meet their needs.

"The Center for Economic Opportunity has committed funding to this program to help achieve our critical goal of not only creating jobs, but equipping New Yorkers with the skills and experience to earn living wages," said Deputy Mayor Gibbs. "These funds will help provide unskilled workers with the tools they need to move out of poverty and achieve better lives for themselves and their families."

"NYC Business Solutions Training Funds are helping businesses grow, compete and stay in New York by strengthening our quality workforce," said Small Business Services Commissioner Robert W. Walsh. "Since 2005, NYC Business Solutions has provided funding to train more than 2,100 New Yorkers - the vast majority of whom have received or will receive substantial wage increases upon completion of training."

Today, five training funds recipients were awarded over \$700,000 to train more than 300 employees in growing industries across New York City. An additional \$1 million is available to companies that apply by October 15. The five companies are:

- **Hendrickson Custom Cabinetry, Inc.**, a custom cabinetry and architectural millwork manufacturing firm located in the South Bronx, will address a shortage of skilled labor in the industry by training New Yorkers in: Microvellum software; Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED); construction project management; business communication; training on new machinery, and administrative skills development. As a result of the \$10,000 training award, to be matched by an employer contribution of \$19,045, Hendrickson will immediately hire 5 new employees, train 19 employees, and implement wage increases of 14-20%.
- **Charles B. Wang Community Health Center**, a provider of affordable health services for the underinsured and uninsured residents of Chinatown, will upgrade the skills of 103 frontline workers in customer service, cultural competency, conflict resolution and medical records management. The \$99,362 award, to be matched by an employer contribution of \$99,362, will result in wage increases and transferable skills for employees, while helping the Center attract and retain customers.
- **Elmhurst Dairy, Inc.**, a family-owned dairy based in Jamaica, Queens, will train 162 employees in new technology in the milk production sector. The program will also address a shortage of Commercial Drivers License (CDL) holders in New York City by promoting 40 employees and training them to obtain CDLs. The company has pledged to backfill the 40 positions by hiring unemployed residents of South Jamaica. The \$293,375 award, to be matched by an employer contribution of \$293,375, will result in the creation of 40 jobs and 50-57% increase in wages, and help the company remain competitive.
- **NPower NY**, a provider of information technology resources to nonprofit organizations within the tri-state area, employs disconnected urban youth ages 18-25 in its support staff. The company will recruit and train 15 support assistants and promote and train 4 current technicians to become senior engineers. The \$37,651 award, to be matched by an employer contribution of \$37,651, will create 15 jobs, result in wage increases of 19-92%, and teach transferable skills in the technology sector.
- **New York City Health and Hospitals Corporations (HHC)**, the citywide hospital system, is in short supply of Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs). HHC will train 30 employees who are currently Clerks, Patient Care Associates, Patient Care Technicians and Service Aides to become LPNs. The \$300,000 training award, to be matched by an employer contribution of \$858,350, will result in 10-22% wage increases and a major upgrade of the skills of entry-level healthcare workers.

"Manufacturing is costly and difficult," said Lisa Hendrickson, co-owner of Hendrickson Custom Cabinetry. "We constantly have to train our team members to continuously improve the quality of our work and keep us competitive in this global marketplace. This training award will allow us to grow our company and increase our market share in New York City while creating jobs and building long-term career skills for New Yorkers in our community."

In addition to today's awards, an additional \$1 million in funding is now available for employers in the healthcare, retail, financial services, manufacturing, food services/ accommodation, information/ professional services and transportation fields. Like today's awardees, recipients will be selected based upon their ability to provide entry-level and incumbent workers with career advancement opportunities and increased wages. Pre-applications for funding must be submitted by October 15. Businesses can call 3-1-1 and ask for "Training Funds" or visit www.nyc.gov for more information.

The CEO funding allows businesses to tailor its job training around its own needs, and include education in reading and math, English as a Second Language, and job preparedness. These types of training have not previously been funded by City, State or Federal governments. The CEO funds will be combined with those from the Workforce Investment Act to comprise the total \$4.2 million in fiscal year 2008 awards.

Center for Economic Opportunity

The Center for Economic Opportunity was established by Mayor Bloomberg to implement innovative ways to reduce poverty in New York City, and works with City agencies to design and implement evidence-based initiatives aimed at poverty reduction. The CEO manages an Innovation Fund through which it provides City agencies annual funding to implement such initiatives and will oversee a

rigorous evaluation of each to determine which are successful in demonstrating results towards reducing poverty and increasing self-sufficiency among New Yorkers.

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