



HRA/DSS PERSPECTIVE

COMMITTED TO ASSISTING PEOPLE IN
REACHING THEIR MAXIMUM LEVEL OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY



MEET COMMISSIONER DOAR



As NYS OTDA Commissioner, you have been responsible for administering and developing New York State's welfare programs. How will your perspective help in steering the work of HRA?

For quite some time now, I've been involved in the oversight of human services programs throughout New York State. I am very familiar with the work of HRA. Over the past five years, I've worked closely with Commissioner Eggleston and Mayor Bloomberg and I share the same goals for the delivery of social service in New York City. I expect that HRA will move forward as it always has, doing great work and carrying out those goals.

What do you think HRA has best accomplished since the beginning of the administration?

HRA has done a great job placing clients in long-term employment. While the welfare rolls have declined, the agency has made over 400,000 job placements since the beginning of the administration. HRA has also done a good job of connecting working people to income supports such as food stamps and public health insurance. I think the City has worked hard to expand access within the federal rules. A project that I think is an achievement and has a lot of potential is the collaborative pilot with Food Change which allows community based programs to enroll eligible individuals in the food stamp program using a web-based application.

What do you think is the biggest accomplishment within our reach to achieve during these next three years?

We've got to meet the 50% work participation rate required for those who are on cash assistance. It's a very high priority. If we fail to do so, we will face significant penalties. Last year the Mayor introduced Back to Work, which was created to more effectively engage individuals in employment activities and permanent jobs. I'm confident we can do it.

Initiatives you implemented as the NYS OTDA Commissioner for the Office of Child Support Enforcement enabled major gains in Child Support collection. Are there further goals you would like to see achieved?

One of the findings of the Commission on Economic Opportunity is that this is an area worthy of attention. It's my opinion that in the past when we worked with non-custodial parents, mostly fathers, we just went after collecting the child support without offering any support to keep them engaged in parenting and connected to the community. We now have programs that offer employment training and placements if people need it, parenting classes and classes to help them navigate the child-support role. I think we should be creating and funding more of these programs, and coming up with solutions for fathers so they can stay in compliance and, in some cases, manage their arrears.

HRA WELCOMES ROBERT DOAR AS THE AGENCY'S 30TH COMMISSIONER

On January 8, 2007, Mayor Michael Bloomberg appointed Robert Doar as the Administrator and Commissioner of the Human Resources Administration and Department of Social Services (HRA/DSS). Commissioner Doar is the former Commissioner of the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), the agency which has leadership responsibility for local welfare, food stamp, child support and disability determination programs across the state. Prior to his appointment in October 2003, he served as OTDA's Executive Deputy Commissioner since May 2000.

Commissioner Doar also served as the OTDA Deputy Commissioner for the Division of Child Support Enforcement from November 1995 to May 2000. He implemented many changes to ensure the support of children by both parents. These included policies increasing child support collections as well as launching an innovative social services program to foster responsible fatherhood. During his administration, child support collections increased from \$600 million to more than \$1 billion.

Commissioner Doar is the recipient of numerous awards and commendations for his work in the field of human services, including, most recently, the 2006 State Leader of the Year Award of the National Child Support Enforcement Association. He holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Princeton University and is the son of John Doar, a former Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Justice under President Kennedy.

He and his wife, Sara, have four children.

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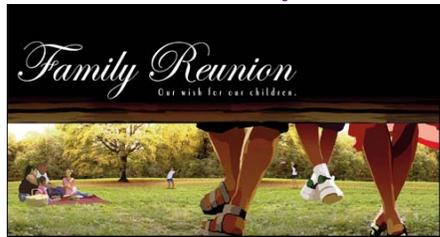
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Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor
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Event Calendar

African American History Celebration



AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH
2007

February 2007

Family Reunion: A Wish for Our Children is the theme of this year's celebration. Seminars on genealogical research and personal development were held, and two sessions of the Finale Celebration took place on Wednesday, February 21st. Look for photos in the March *Perspective*.

HRA Blood Drives

Thursday, February 22, 2007

IREA Bureau of Eligibility Verification, Busmobile, 320 Schermerhorn Street, Brooklyn, from 10 AM to 3:30 PM. To make an appointment, call Tracey Bruno at (718) 473-8234.

Friday, February 23, 2007

HRA Headquarters, 180 Water Street, Manhattan, 12th Floor Conference Room, from 10:00 AM to 3:30 PM. To make an appointment, call Kettly Ménard at (212) 331-3374.

HRA McMillan Library: New!

In Our Hands: A Plan to Replace the Welfare State, by Charles Murray, 2006.

How to Conduct Surveys, by Arlene Fink, 2006.

If you have book suggestion for the library, contact 212-331-4437 or e-mail HRA Library.

Search the library's catalog from your desktop: <http://hrawebbackup.hra.nyc.net/hralib/default.asp>

OCHIA Hosts Landmark Private Insurance Brokers' Seminar

The Office of Citywide Health Insurance Access (OCHIA) held an all-day insurance brokers' seminar on Private Health Insurance Options on January 24th at HRA Headquarters, with CUNY's College of Staten Island as its partner. The seminar was the first of its kind in New York City and an important milestone in bringing information about affordable private health insurance options to New York City's small businesses, sole proprietors and working individuals.



First Deputy Commissioner Pat Smith and OCHIA Executive Deputy Commissioner Marjorie Cadogan welcomed the more than 130 brokers and industry representatives in attendance and provided an overview of the challenge of the uninsured in New York City. Dean Mohs, OCHIA's Director of Private Health Insurance Initiatives, presented research and survey data revealing that 97% of the City's businesses are small (under 50 employees) and many of these small businesses do not provide health insurance to their employees.

Representatives from New York's special private health insurance programs, namely Healthy New York, Brooklyn HealthWorks, Health Pass, LIA Health Alliance, Freelancers Union and Staten Island Wrap, presented their programs to the brokers, who will now be able to incorporate them among the health insurance options they offer their clients. Seminar participants were also briefed on the expanded availability of domestic partner coverage for small businesses.

HRA's first brokers' seminar is an important step in working toward the goal set by Mayor Bloomberg of increasing the number of New Yorkers covered by private employer health insurance by 100,000 by 2009.

Two from HRA Receive 2006 Public Service Awards

Only fifteen of 300,000 City employees are chosen to receive the prestigious public service award of the Hundred Year Association, and two of this year's awardees, Sarah Ng and Donna Hess, are HRA employees. The Hundred Year Association, which represents New York business and non-profit organizations that have existed for a century or more, in a partnership with the NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services, presented its 2006 cash and scholarship awards to civil servants and children of city employees at a ceremony held on December 20th at One Police Plaza. Mayor Bloomberg was the keynote speaker.



Ms. Ng, an Associate Job Opportunity Specialist with FIA's Bronx regional office, is noted for her patience and good counsel both to clients and co-workers in accomplishing their jobs. In addition to coordinating job fairs for the region and monitoring the performance of job search initiatives, she continually demonstrates her dedication to people, working diligently to prevent a client's eviction, calming an angry client and following through with calls to provide support in finding employment. "We are all human; we need to be able to listen and to want to communicate," Ms. Ng said, who in her spare time also visits seniors living alone in her community.



Ms. Hess is director of IREA's Real Property and Assets Division. Her unit is responsible for placing liens on real estate assets of welfare recipients so that the City can recover cash assistance received by clients when the property is sold. When she came to her position in 2002, she single-handedly cleared a backlog of 460 lien cases, working after hours on her own unpaid time. She implemented procedures to avoid unnecessary liens being placed against individuals' properties effectively saving the City on labor, operating costs and ultimately, in the avoidance of lawsuits. Through her diligence the Real Property unit has recovered more than \$6 million over the last two fiscal years.