



# NEWS



## The New York Times Creates Subprime Neediest Cases Program

by Jack Rosenthal, President, The New York Times Neediest Cases Fund

While policy makers and financial institutions struggle to find policy solutions to the subprime mortgage crisis, real people are suffering real pain. A growing number of families, victims of predatory lending practices, are on the verge of homelessness. Faced with suddenly mushrooming mortgage payments, they are not only losing their homes to foreclosure, but have nowhere to turn.

In response, The New York Times Neediest Cases Fund has created the Subprime Neediest Cases Program, a special initiative to help these families recover. This \$1 million initiative will provide up to \$10,000 per family to help them transition into stable and secure housing. The program will pay relocation costs, like moving expenses, security deposit and the first month's rent even if the family finds it necessary to move out of the New York area, so long as the family stays in touch for at least six months.

Even low-income families that don't

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## From the CEO Financial Literacy for All

The current subprime mortgage crisis reveals clearly that modern life contains many potential but avoidable pitfalls, and that all of us need to be well versed in the financial basics: knowledge of checking and saving in banks; what buying something on a credit card really means; creating budgets; using credit ratings, taking loans and mortgages, managing debt, etc.

Not everyone needs the knowledge and savvy of a financial planner. However, the list above contains some of the transactions an individual will make in his or her lifetime, and too many people have only a vague idea of what's legally involved when one makes a commitment by signing a credit card or a loan agreement, for example.

In this increasingly complex world, none of us should take basic financial literacy for granted. That's why we teach financial literacy to children, teens and parents at Children's Aid, and we hope that by starting before adulthood, we are giving children a foundation of knowledge that can guide them for a lifetime.

Now, our school-age children have a new, fun way of learning the ABCs of money and finance. Minyanville, the media company that creates branded content to entertain and educate audiences about the world of finance, has created Minyanland, a virtual economy game web site where children partici-

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### Brooklyn Case Shows Urgent Need For Assistance

*Shellyann Babb, 41, is a formerly homeless single mother of two who works full time as a baker at a Waldbaum's supermarket. She was placed in her Brooklyn apartment in October 2007, and shortly thereafter, was informed that the house*

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### Paving the Way to a Career in Broadcasting



Mike Quick of MSG (right) works with Torino Washington of the Frederick Douglass Center as part of the Garden of Dreams and MSG Classroom program on careers in sports broadcasting.

The path to a career in sports broadcasting has become clearer to the Frederick Douglass Center Intel Computer Clubhouse students who participated in the Madison Square Garden (MSG) Sports Clinic during the school year. Thanks to a partnership among The Garden of Dreams Foundation, Madison Square Garden Classroom and The Children's Aid Society, 10 students ages 13-18 visited MSG studios twice a month to learn

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Students from the Teen ACTION Club at the Manhattan Center for Science and Mathematics conducted a food drive to help alleviate shortages at local food pantries.

## Teens Show Commitment to Community Service

A highly-motivated group of high school students at the Manhattan Center for Science and Mathematics (MCSM), a

Children’s Aid Society Community School, traveled to Orlando, Florida in March to take part in a series of service learning

activities coordinated in conjunction with the Orlando Mayor’s Office.

Forty teens are involved with the Teen ACTION Club, a community service-oriented after-school initiative operated under the Department of Youth and Community Development service learning grant. These students collected over 7,200 cans of food to donate to local food pantries faced with dwindling supplies.

As part of a special service award from JetBlue Airways, the Teen ACTION club received eight free airline tickets to enable students to share their remarkable spirit of community service outside New York. With additional funds received by Teen ACTION, MCSM provided transportation for an additional 12 students to take part in this unique opportunity. ■

## Historically Black College and University Fair Seeks to Increase Higher Ed Options for City Youth



The 2007 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Fair was led by a collaboration of organizations that have historically sought to increase postsecondary education options for New York

City high school students. This coalition included the New York Urban League (lead agency), the Malcolm Bernard HBCU Fair, The Children’s Aid Society, Riverbank State Park and the New York Urban League Young Professionals.

This year, over 3,000 students attended the Fair. This expanded population included middle school students, their parents and counselors from New Jersey, Long Island, Connecticut, Westchester County, and Albany, in addition to New York City. Middle school students were included to “plant the idea” of postsecondary education early and

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Miguel Montes, Director of Children’s Aid’s College EXCEL Program, and Angela Browne, EXCEL Program Instructor, conducted a workshop on college scholarships and financial aid at the HBCU Fair (see article). This is part of the financial literacy training that all students in the program receive through the EXCEL Economic Empowerment Initiative (EEI) workshops conducted using the Boys and Girls Clubs’ “Money Matters” curriculum.

## From the CEO

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pate in an interactive community and learn about the important concepts of earning, saving, spending and giving.

Featuring the iconic symbols of Wall Street and finance, Hoofy the Bull and Boo the Bear, Minyanland will help children learn the importance of strong financial understanding and planning. Minyanville is opening doors for children – at no cost to the children and their families – who don’t have access to this information,

making it available and fun, and bridging another gap in the digital divide.

To help the more sophisticated users of Minyanville.com learn more about the importance of giving as part of *their* financial literacy, Children’s Aid is launching a partnership with Minyanville at the end of April, Financial Literacy Month. The partnership will bring information about philanthropy and charities to the Wall Street audience, to help them understand the importance of strengthening our community through giving and to encourage them to give at a much higher level than

we’ve seen historically from that sector.

We all want to avert subprime or other financial crises in the future. By starting to educate children at an early age and promoting financial literacy on the same level as reading and arithmetic, we can make this most important subject a basic component of every child’s education. You can see how Minyanland works at [www.minyanland.com](http://www.minyanland.com).

C. Warren Moses  
Chief Executive Officer

## Funding Dreams of College and Beyond

The 2008 Children's Aid Society's Youth Speak Out on Education: "Finding Solutions to the Drop-Out Crisis," sponsored by the Audrey Miller Poritzky Education Fund for Children, featured performances and presentations from teens who suggested solutions to the staggering student drop-out rates in New York City schools.



While spending the day focusing on the importance of education, six of these outstanding teens received awards to help fund their pursuit of college degrees. Florence Wen received a \$5,000 award from the Audrey Miller Poritzky Memorial Scholarship Fund and The Children's Aid Society. In her application essay, she described her focus on education and commitment to

community service. Florence, a member of Children's Aid's Hope Leadership Academy, has also been selected as the Children's Aid/Boys & Girls Clubs' Youth of the Year; she will now compete regionally.

Florence is not alone in her commitment and determination to succeed. The Audrey Miller Poritzky Education Fund for Children (AMPEFC) received applications from many truly deserving students and responded by providing two new scholarships to help additional teens reach their goal of attending college, regardless of their families' economic means. The additional second place award for \$1,000 was donated by Greenwich Country Day School to the Hope Leadership Academy. AMPEFC provided \$500 for a third place winner.



Dr. Laurence Miller, president of the Audrey Miller Poritzky Education Fund for Children and Audrey's father, and Audrey's daughter Sophie presented the 2008 Memorial Scholarship to Florence Wen, a HOPE Academy participant. At left, Carlos Escarraman receives his Dare to Dream Scholarship check.

Brainstorm USA also awarded three "Dare to Dream" Scholarships to help worthy students. Carlos Escarraman,

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## Children's Aid's Mental Health Initiatives Grow in Number and Quality

Recently, The Children's Aid Society has unified its mental health services at 17 sites at community centers, in schools and at foster care clinics under a new Director of Mental Health Services, Richard Herstein. The Mental Health Service umbrella has been established within the Health Services Division. Based on ongoing program evaluation, we have improved the well being of many of New York's neediest children and their families through better trained staff, improved program quality and services integration.

Extending clinic hours into the eve-

ning has meant more parents can participate in mental health services with their children. Increasing the number of teen groups has helped adolescents engage in the therapeutic process. Locating the Milbank mental health clinic within its licensed medical center has helped provide youngsters with holistic treatment, for the body, mind, and emotions, a long-time Children's Aid school-based model that New York State is seeking to replicate. And through increased productivity, we are serving more patients who typically have suffered debilitating losses

and/or trauma.

Children's Aid has launched several new mental health programs. New Bronx programs are part of the agency's strategic plan to bring a constellation of supportive services to residents of this highest needs borough. And in Manhattan, Children's Aid received a grant to expand and enrich mental health services at seven Washington Heights middle and high schools, including a new partner, Luperon High School. Luperon High School is one of the few Department of Education schools created solely for new immigrants. ■

## Career in Broadcasting

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every facet of sports broadcasting. The participants were selected based on their attendance and behavior as Clubhouse members, as well as the quality of their required application essays.

Through a progressive series of workshops, participants learned about

camera work, editing, voiceovers, playback and scripting for live events. The students' training culminated in a video they created that was broadcast on the MSG network.

Through this program, students have been able to speak to MSG employees about how to prepare for this career track. This extremely valuable educational program is not only teaching Club-

house participants how to run a TV network and prepare for a possible career, but how to plot out the path to achieving their goals.

We are happy to announce that a new group of students from the HOPE Leadership Academy has been selected to explore careers in sports broadcasting through the Madison Square Garden Sports Clinic. ■

## Subprime Neediest Cases

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own a house can be devastated by the subprime mortgage crisis. Families renting in multi-family houses who have conscientiously paid their rent, are faced with sudden homelessness when their landlords are faced with foreclosure.

The Children's Aid Society, one of the seven agencies that benefit from

The Times' annual Neediest Cases Campaign, administers the program through its Office of Public Policy and Client Advocacy. It selects recipients from families referred by social service agencies, including the other six Neediest Cases agencies: Brooklyn Bureau of Community Service, Catholic Charities – New York, Catholic Charities – Brooklyn and Queens, Community Service Society of New York, Federation of Protestant Wel-

fare Agencies and UJA-Federation of New York. Families from the greater New York area are eligible and need no affiliation with any Neediest Cases agency.

In addition to administering this Subprime Neediest program for families already in distress, The Children's Aid Society also offers a preventative service: financial literacy programs to show people how to avoid unwise financial decisions. ■

### Brooklyn Case, Continued from page 1

would be auctioned off. After that, she faced an unbearable series of obstacles: the gas was turned off, pit bulls greeted her one day when she opened her door to go to work, the power to her apartment was cut off by other tenants.

Fearing for her own safety and that of her children, Ms. Babb moved into a hotel, and then located a two-bedroom apartment in Brooklyn for \$1,259 per month. Her case was brought to the attention of Children's Aid's Office of Public Policy and Client Advocacy, which administers the New York Times Subprime Neediest Cases program, and she received \$7,120 in assistance for the first month's rent, security and broker's fee, as well as funds for new furniture. Ms. Babb and her two children are currently living in their new apartment. ■

## HBCU Fair

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talk to parents about how to fund their children's education.

It is critical that this occur in traditionally underserved communities where the League and The Children's Aid Society do most of their work. Because of the large student caseloads of most middle and high school guidance counselors, it is equally important that the parents of middle school students begin to understand early the benefits of a college edu-

cation, the college admission process, the financial costs of postsecondary education, financial aid and the scholarship search and application processes. The rising costs of a college education cause many families to believe that their children will not be able to attend because the families can't afford it.

Another benefit of an early start is that the goal of attending college also motivates youngsters to prepare themselves for the academic rigors of high school, which are required to meet most college admissions entrance requirements.

Today, Historically Black colleges and universities provide more than 200,000 students of color with a well-rounded, culturally-based education that effectively prepares them for a diversity of careers as well as a first step to a number of graduate and professional schools.

We look forward to your support as we plan our next HBCU Fair on November 15, 2008 at the Riverbank State Park on Riverside Drive @ 145th Street, NY, NY. For more information, please call Miguel Montes, Director of College EXCEL Program, 212-865-6337. ■

THE CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY

# NEWS

The Children's Aid Society  
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## Funding Dreams

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the \$5,000 Brainstorm USA "Dare to Dream" Scholarship winner, described his goal of becoming a zoologist and protecting endangered species in his scholarship essay.

There are many other students like

Florence and Carlos—students who dream of going to college, helping their community and making the world a better place. AMPEFC and Brainstorm USA are helping students reach their goals. Please contact Michael Roberts at 212-949-4696 or michaelr@childrensaid-society.org if you want to help provide scholarships to deserving students. ■



### Charity Navigator

(www.charitynavigator.org) has ranked Children's Aid a 4-star charity for seven consecutive years.

The Children's Aid Society is a proud participant of the BBB Charity Seal Program, which indicates that our organization has met the 20 Standards for Charity Accountability. For more information, please visit the BBB of Metro New York's website: [newyork.bbb.org](http://newyork.bbb.org).